

AHMADIYYA Gazette

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CANADA 

A GLOBAL WARNING

“These calamities come from God Almighty as a result of people neglecting their rights towards Him and in fact due to growing injustices.”

(Friday Sermon of Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ V^{aa}, delivered on January 1, 2021)





His Holiness Ḥazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad, Khalifatul-Masīḥ V (may Allāh be his Helper!), said:

“

We have been enduring a very dangerous pandemic and there is not a single country which is safe from this; in some places, it is more widespread whilst less severe in others. However, it seems that the vast majority of the world does not wish to pay heed to the fact that perhaps this pandemic is from Allāh the Almighty in order to draw their attention towards fulfilling their duties and responsibilities. They do not want to consider the fact that perhaps Allāh the Almighty is drawing their attention through this; no one is pondering over this in this regard...

Not only are people being impacted by this pandemic at an individual level, but everyone is growing weaker with respect to their economy. Of course, there are the health implications [of this pandemic]; however, everyone is also being impacted financially as well. In fact, even the economies of powerful nations are also being heavily affected...

It is also entirely possible that an actual armed war begins, which will prove to be catastrophic and as a result of which these people will fall into an even darker abyss. Poor nations are already being crushed, but [in the event of a war] the people belonging to the wealthy nations will also be crushed in a horrific manner...

May every Aḥmadi man, woman, child and elder pledge that they will use all of their faculties to bring about a transformation in the world this year. May Allāh the Almighty enable every Aḥmadi to fulfil this pledge.

May Allāh the Almighty keep every Aḥmadi in every country of the world under His protection. May He make this year a means of mercy and blessings for all Aḥmadis and all people... May He make us recipients of His blessings and bounties and make us true believers. (*Al Hakam*, January 29, 2021, pp. 27–28)



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ABBREVIATIONS OF SALUTATIONS

- sa** Ṣallāllāhu 'alaihi wa Sallam - May peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him!
Usage: Salutation written after the name of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad^{sa}
- as** 'Alaihis-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 Allāh 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 Allāh have mercy upon him!
Usage: Salutation written after the names of deceased, pious Muslims who are not Companions
- aa** Ayyadahullāhu Ta'ālā binaṣrihi-'Azīz - May Allāh be his Helper!
Usage: Salutation written after the name of Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad, Khalīfatul-MasīḤ V^{aa}



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PEARLS OF WISDOM

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

THE HOLY QUR'ĀN

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ۝ وَالشَّمْسُ وَضُحَاهَا ۝ وَالْقَمَرُ إِذَا تَلَّسَهَا ۝ وَالنَّهَارُ إِذَا جَلَّسَهَا ۝ وَاللَّيْلُ إِذَا يَغْشَاهَا ۝

In the name of Allāh, the Gracious, the Merciful. By the sun and its growing brightness, and by the moon when it follows it (the sun), and by the day when it reveals its glory, and by the night when it draws a veil over it. (91:1-5)

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ وَبَارِكْ وَسَلِّمْ إِنَّكَ حَبِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ

HADĪTH

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ "لَا تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ حَتَّى تَطْلُعَ الشَّمْسُ مِنْ مَغْرِبِهَا فَإِذَا طَلَعَتْ وَرَأَاهَا النَّاسُ آمَنَ مَنْ عَلَىهَا فَذَلِكَ حِينَ لَا يَنْفَعُ نَفْسًا إِيْمَانُهَا لَمْ تَكُنْ آمَنَتْ مِنْ قَبْلُ"

Hazrat Abū Hurairah^{ra} narrated that "I heard the Messenger of Allāh, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, say, 'The Hour will not take place until the sun rises from the west. And when it rises, people will observe it and everyone on [the earth] will believe. But that will be a time when faith will not benefit anyone who did not believe before.'" (Sunan Ibn Mājah, Kitābul Fitan)

SO SAID THE PROMISED MESSIAH^{AS}

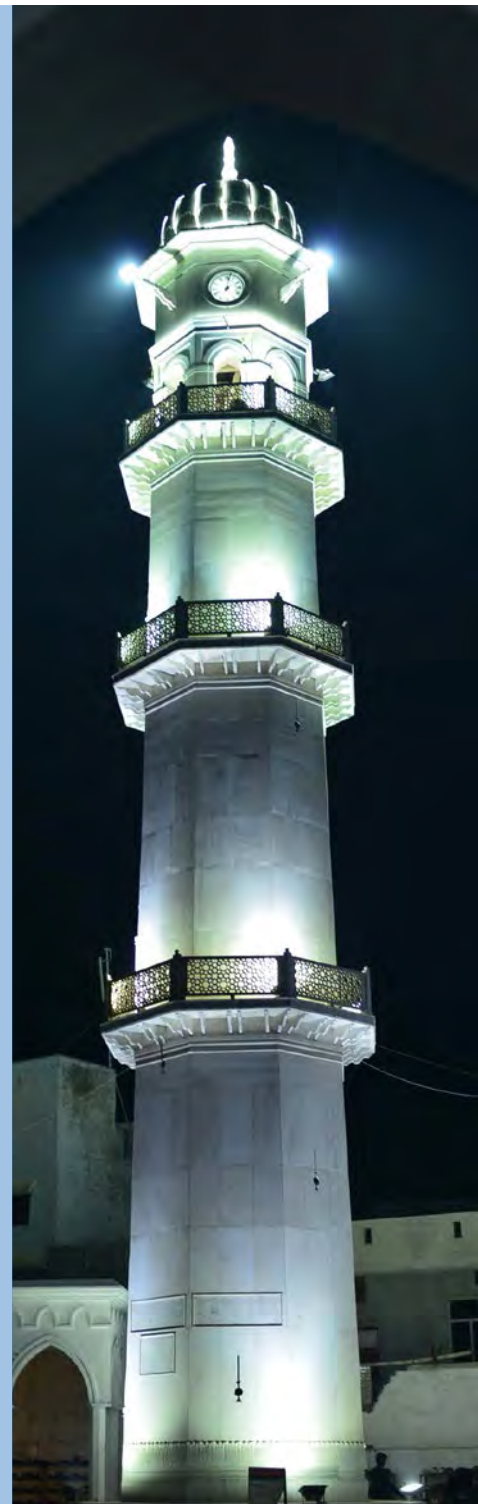


The Promised Messiah^{as}

THE ULTIMATE VICTORY OF ISLĀM

The ultimate victory belongs to monotheism; all deities shall perish and false gods shall be extinct of their divinity . . . There shall be a new Earth and new heavens. The days are now at hand when the sun of truth shall rise from the West, and Europe shall be acquainted with the true God. After this, the door of repentance shall be closed; because those who enter shall do so with force, leaving behind only such whose hearts are shut against the door of nature; and who love darkness rather than light. Very soon, nations shall perish, except Islām; and all designs shall fail, but the heavenly design of Islām shall neither fail nor slow down, until it scatters deception (*dajjālīyyat*) to pieces. The time is near when the true Unity of God, felt even by dwellers of the wilderness, [who are] devoid of all knowledge, shall spread in countries. That day, there shall remain neither an artificial atonement nor an artificial god.

(*Majmū'a Ishtihārāt*, vol. 2, p. 305, translated from Urdu)



Mināratul-Masīh
Qadian, India

GUIDANCE FROM HAZRAT KHALĪFATUL-MASĪḤ V (May Allāh be his Helper!)

The following summaries of Friday Sermons have been prepared by the Review of Religions, as posted on alislam.org



NOVEMBER 5, 2021

THE BLESSINGS OF FINANCIAL SACRIFICE: TAḤRĪK JADĪD NEW YEAR 2021

Reaping the Blessings from Financial Sacrifices & Commencement of the 88th Year of Taḥrīk Jadīd

After reciting *Tashahhud*, *Ta'awwuz* and *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah*, His Holiness, Ḥazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad^{aa} said that in the Holy Qur'ān, one of the qualities of true believers which has been stated is that they spend out of their wealth in the way of Allāh.

A SIGN OF A TRUE COMMUNITY OF GOD

His Holiness^{aa} said that people belonging to divine communities sacrifice their wealth in order to purify their wealth, and in order to please God Almighty and attain His nearness. Such is also the case with

the Community of the Promised Messiah^{as}. The Promised Messiah^{as} came to spread the true teachings of Islām throughout the entire world. Of course, there are certain expenditures required in order to fulfil this monumental task. To this end, Aḥmadis spread across the world present such examples of financial sacrifice, that it evidently proves that it was indeed the Promised Messiah^{as} who was to spread the true teachings of Islām to the world. Had the opponents' hearts not been turned to stone, then they would have been able to see these signs and realise the truthfulness of this Community.

HAVING THE RIGHT INTENTION WHEN MAKING FINANCIAL SACRIFICES

His Holiness^{aa} said that indeed, God has

said that those who spend in His way will be doubly rewarded. However, Aḥmadis who spend in the way of Allāh do so only with His pleasure in mind, and if some worldly gain comes about as a result, then that is an added benefit. Thus, the true essence of such contributions and sacrifices is to gain acceptance in the sight of Allāh.

His Holiness^{aa} said that God Almighty bestows His blessings in any project initiated by the Community, to the extent that people think many millions must have been spent on it. However, God bestows His blessings so that even small projects seem to be grand.

THE TRUE PURPOSE OF FINANCIAL SACRIFICES

His Holiness^{aa} said that there are some who wonder why financial contributions are necessary, and some even speak about this aloud at home which leads to the children wondering the same thing. His Holiness^{aa} said it is the duty of office-bearers to remove such doubts from the members of the Community. With regards to where these funds are spent, His Holiness^{aa} said that they are spent for the sake of spreading Islām through various different means, whether it is for the Community's television channel, or training missionaries to go out in the world and spread the true message of Islām. His Holiness^{aa} said that he did not mention this because a large number of people have started wondering such things, rather, even small numbers of people can try to raise disorder and create doubts in the minds of others.

EXTRAORDINARY EXAMPLES OF REAPING THE REWARDS FROM TAHRĪK JADĪD

His Holiness^{aa} said that he would present some examples of how God rewards those who spend in the way of Allāh.

His Holiness^{aa} presented an incident from Guinea-Conakry, where a lady had just heard a sermon delivered by His Holiness^{aa} about financial contribution. She called the missionary and said that she did not have money for household expenditures. It so happened that her father gifted her 100,000 Guinea. She wondered whether she should use this amount for her household expenses or offer it as a financial sacrifice. She decided to give half to the Community and keep half for her household. She says that later, she received triple the amount which she had received from her father, from somewhere where she could not have expected.

His Holiness^{aa} said that there was a person in Australia whose financial situation wasn't good, but he had made a pledge for financial contributions which he fulfilled. He did so with the prayer that God would bestow blessings in his wealth. That person had a plot of land, however there was no expectation for its value to



Syednā Hazrat Khalifatul-Masiḥ V^{aa}

increase. However, after he had fulfilled his pledge of monetary contributions, it so happened that the value of his land increased by more than 100%.

His Holiness^{aa} said that there is a person from Kerala, India who is quite affluent and would present large amounts as monetary contributions every year. During the previous year, due to the coronavirus pandemic, he faced some difficulties in offering his monetary contributions. Although he fulfilled his pledges, he did not have enough to offer in Tahrik Jadid. Just a few days before the end of the fiscal year, he was able to offer the amount of 1 million (rupees) for Tahrik Jadid. Then, during the Friday Sermon, the local missionary read out quotes of His Holiness^{aa} about financial sacrifice. As a result, this person increased the amount which he gave to 1.8 million, and said that he was hopeful to receive a government project, and if he did, he would offer an even larger amount. His Holiness^{aa} said that in this way, even the affluent members of the Community have a passion for presenting financial sacrifices.

His Holiness^{aa} said that there was a lady from Jordan who converted to Ahmadiyyat 22 years ago. In her experience, whenever she spends in the way of Allāh, somehow God rewards her even more. In fact, sometimes God grants her the exact amount which she had pledged to give. Once, she did not have anything to offer as a financial contribution and she was

worried as to how she would be able to fulfil her pledge. During this time, someone came to her and asked that she tutor her. In this way, she was able to use the amount she received from tutoring to fulfil her pledge of financial contribution.

His Holiness^{aa} said that even children living in poor countries have an awareness of presenting financial sacrifices. His Holiness^{aa} said that there were some children in Zanzibar who were playing outside of the mosque. An elder passed by and gave them 1400 Shillings so they could buy themselves sweets. The children went and changed the amount into smaller notes, and presented 100 Shillings each as a financial contribution. They were very happy to do so and safely kept the receipts with them. His Holiness^{aa} said that these are the children who will keep the foundation of this Community strong in the future.

His Holiness^{aa} said that the similar passion amongst children is found from another corner of the world. His Holiness^{aa} said that there was a 14-year old child who was from a poor household. He had already spent all of his pocket money for the building of the mosque. When the missionary delivered a sermon on financial sacrifice, he gave one dollar to the missionary and said that this was from his household. He said that this was not from himself however, as he would offer more on his own behalf. The next day, he brought 10 dollars to the missionary,

and said that he was certain God would shower His blessings upon his family.

His Holiness^{aa} said that a missionary from Argentina wrote an article about financial sacrifices in order to draw the attention of new converts, and he also included a quote from His Holiness^{aa} in his article as well. Later, a young man said that he wished to come to the mosque and present financial contributions. Thus, he came and gave 1000 pesos. The missionary was astonished because he knew that this person was not well-off, in fact he had not even eaten that day because of not having enough money. However, he said that the words of His Holiness^{aa} had a profound effect on him, and so he presented whatever he had.

These are just a few of the many incidents related by His Holiness^{aa}.

His Holiness^{aa} prayed that may Allāh enable us all to spend out of our pure wealth for the sake of spreading Islām and may these sacrifices be accepted by Allāh.

COMMENCEMENT OF THE 88TH YEAR OF TAḤRĪK JADĪD

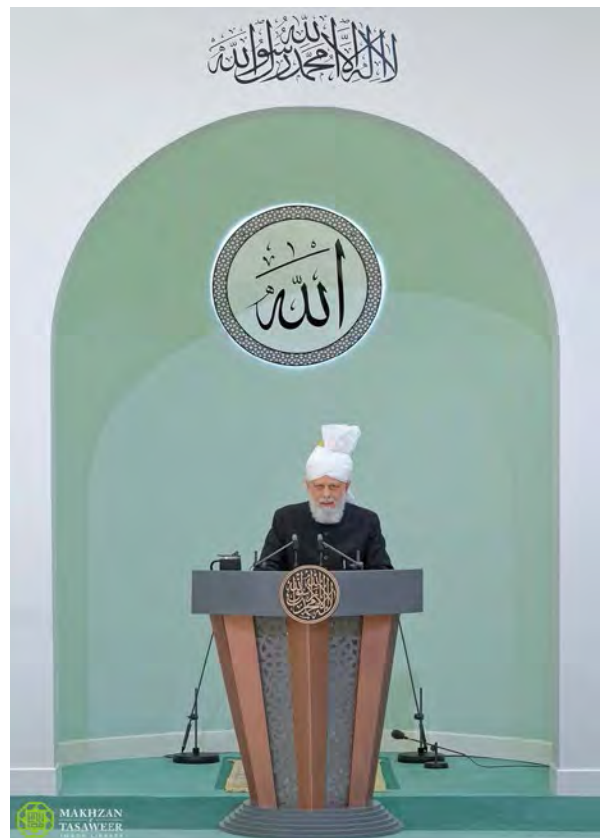
His Holiness^{aa} said that he would announce the new year of Taḥrīk Jadīd. His Holiness^{aa} said that the 87th year of Taḥrīk

Jadīd came to an end, and now the 88th year has commenced. His Holiness^{aa} said that over the last year, a total of £15.3 million were collected under Taḥrīk Jadīd which is an increase of £842,000 from the previous year.

His Holiness^{aa} said that among the countries of the world, Germany is at the forefront in contributions. His Holiness^{aa} said that Aḥmadīs are facing great hardships and difficulties in Pakistan, despite which they still present financial sacrifices. His Holiness^{aa} prayed for the betterment of their circumstances.

His Holiness^{aa} said that the top ten positions of countries are: (1) Germany; (2) United Kingdom; (3) United States of America; (4) Canada; (5) a Jamā'at from the Middle East; (6) India; (7) Australia; (8) Indonesia; (9) Ghana; (10) a Jamā'at from the Middle East.

His Holiness^{aa} presented the positions of local Jamā'ats and regions from the top



Syednā Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V^{aa}

countries in terms of contributions.

His Holiness^{aa} prayed that may Allāh bestow his blessings upon all those who have made financial sacrifices.

NOVEMBER 12, 2021

MEN OF EXCELLENCE: ḤAZRAT 'UMAR IBN AL-KHAṬṬĀB^{ra}

After reciting *Tashahhud*, *Ta'awwuz* and *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah*, His Holiness, Ḥazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad^{aa} said that he would continue highlighting incidents from the life of Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra}.

ADOPTING A SIMPLE LIFESTYLE

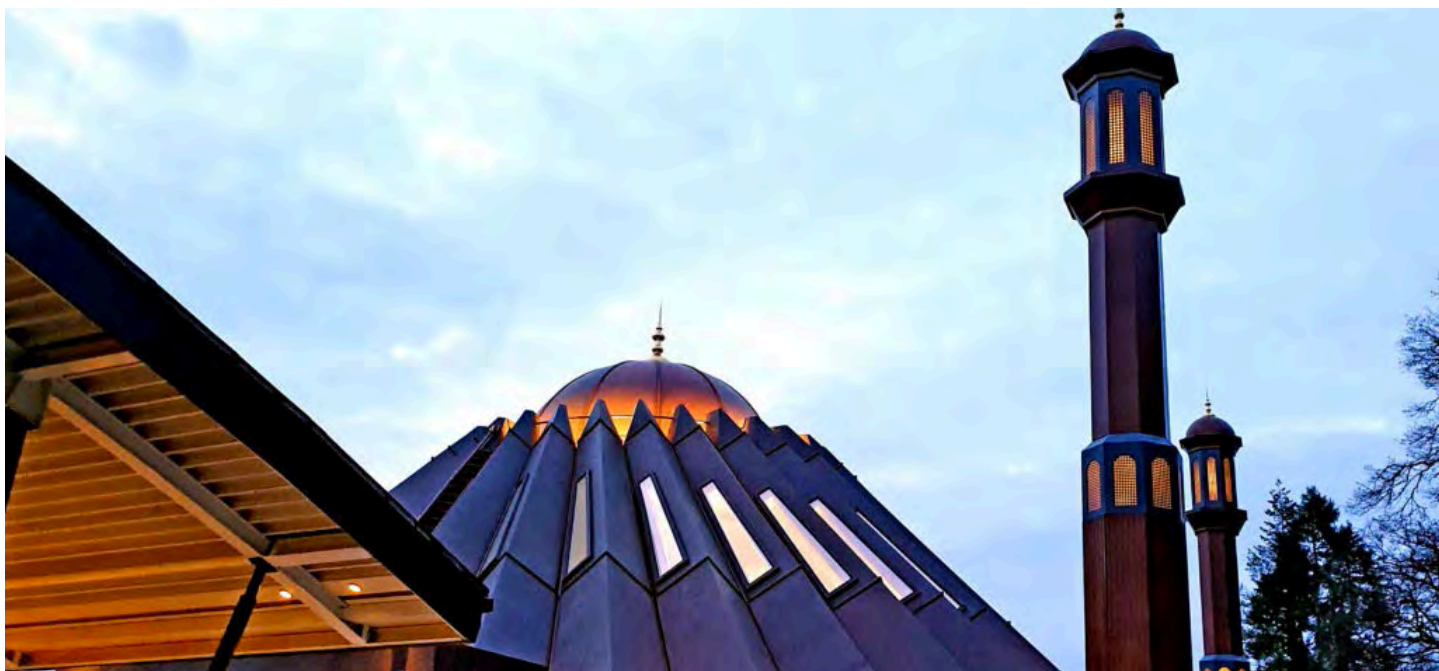
His Holiness^{aa} said that once, Ḥazrat 'Umar's^{ra} daughter said to him that he had been granted victories and wealth, so why did he not eat better foods and wear better clothes? Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra} replied by asking her, 'Did the Holy Prophet^{sa} not endure great hardships during his life?'

He said that he would continue to endure hardships, like the Holy Prophet^{sa} and Ḥazrat Abū Bakr^{ra} had before him, so that perhaps he too may reap the same blessings.

His Holiness^{aa} said that once, Ḥazrat 'Umar's^{ra} children and some others said to him, that if he ate better foods, he would be stronger and better able to fulfil his duties. Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra} acknowledged their sentiments, however he said that if he left the path of those before him, i.e. the Holy Prophet^{sa} and Ḥazrat Abū Bakr^{ra}, then he would not be able to achieve the same rank.

His Holiness^{aa} quoted the Second Caliph^{ra}, who explained that the Holy Prophet^{sa} taught simplicity, and said that while eating, there should not be more than one dish. The companions followed this very staunchly, in fact, once Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra} was presented with some vinegar, and salt. Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra} said that these were two separate dishes and that he would only take one. His Holiness^{aa} said that although these days people are living more comfortably, they should not be excessive in what they eat.

His Holiness^{aa} explained in light of the Holy Qur'ān, that true servants of God are those who are not excessive in spending their



Mubarak Mosque, Tilford, Surrey UK

wealth. If they eat, they do so not simply for enjoyment, but in order to nourish and strengthen themselves. Similarly, when they spend their wealth for certain things, they do so not to show others or in order to exult, rather they do so out of necessity.

His Holiness^{aa} said that once, someone saw Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} carrying a waterskin and asked him why he was carrying it himself? Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} responded that some people had come to see him and had shown the utmost obedience to him. This led him to feel important, and in order to rid himself of this feeling and humble himself, he decided to carry the waterskin on his own.

His Holiness^{aa} said that once there was a caravan accompanying Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} back to Madinah. On the way, Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} recalled how his father used to be quite strict, and he had to do a lot of work, bringing wood on the backs of camels, and then bringing shrubbery on the backs of those camels. He said now, he was the leader of an entire nation and that people came to see him from far and wide. He then recited a couplet which meant that no matter what he had, it was only God Who is the Almighty and Everlasting.

His Holiness^{aa} said that once, Ḥazrat Abū Bakr^{ra} and Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} had varying

views on a certain matter and they had a disagreement. Ḥazrat Abū Bakr^{ra} decided that it would be best to leave, however Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} wanted a response from him, so he took hold of his clothes, as a result of which they ripped. Ḥazrat Abū Bakr^{ra} left, and Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} was afraid that he would complain to the Holy Prophet^{sa}. So he went to where the Holy Prophet^{sa} was, but did not find Ḥazrat Abū Bakr^{ra} there. As he was already feeling bad for what had happened, Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} informed the Holy Prophet^{sa} of the incident himself, and took all the blame for it. Ḥazrat Abū Bakr^{ra} was informed of this, and so he too went to the Holy Prophet^{sa}, and upon seeing that the Holy Prophet^{sa} was displeased with the incident, Ḥazrat Abū Bakr^{ra} sat before the Holy Prophet^{sa} and took all the blame upon himself. His Holiness^{aa} said that this signifies true love for the beloved, that upon seeing him in a state of unhappiness, he took all the blame upon himself in order to ease his discomfort.

AWE OF ḤAZRAT ‘UMAR^{ra}

His Holiness^{aa} said that once, there were some women of the Quraish sitting by the Holy Prophet^{sa} asking him for more money. At this time, Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} came to the Holy Prophet^{sa} and sought permission to enter. The women immediately moved

aside and adopted the veil. Seeing this brought a smile to the blessed face of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} asked him why he was smiling, and the Holy Prophet^{sa} said that the women were so afraid of Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} that they immediately moved aside and adopted the veil. Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} asked them whether they were afraid of him, rather than the Holy Prophet^{sa}. They said they were, because Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} was quite harsh. The Holy Prophet^{sa} said that even Satan was afraid of Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} and would adopt a different path when he saw Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} coming.

His Holiness^{aa} said that once, the Holy Prophet^{sa} said that God had bestowed truth in the heart and tongue of Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra}. Once, the Holy Prophet^{sa} was preparing for a journey. He called Ḥazrat Abū Bakr^{ra} and Ḥazrat Umar^{ra} to ask their opinion, because there was a tribe who had broken their treaty with the Muslims, something which the Holy Prophet^{sa} had already been given prior knowledge of. Ḥazrat Abū Bakr^{ra} advised that they should not be attacked, but Ḥazrat Umar^{ra}’s opinion was that they should be as they had broken their oath. Thus, the Holy Prophet^{sa} instructed that preparations should be made for the journey.

His Holiness^{aa} said that when the Holy

Prophet^{sa} would come out to see the Muslims, no one would look directly at him, except Hazrat Abū Bakr^{ra} and Hazrat ‘Umar^{ra}. They would smile at the Holy Prophet^{sa}, and the Holy Prophet^{sa} would smile at them.

TRUST OF THE HOLY PROPHET^{sa} IN HAZRAT ABŪ BAKR^{ra} AND HAZRAT ‘UMAR^{ra}

His Holiness^{aa} said that once, the Holy Prophet^{sa} said to the people, that a heavenly person was approaching, and at that time Hazrat Abū Bakr^{ra} arrived. Then again, the Holy Prophet^{sa} said that a heavenly person was approaching, and at that time, Hazrat ‘Umar^{ra} arrived. The Holy Prophet^{sa} also once said that every prophet has two ministers in the heavens and two in the earth. His two ministers in the heavens were Gabriel and Mikael and the two on earth were Hazrat Abū Bakr^{ra} and Hazrat ‘Umar^{ra}. The Holy Prophet^{sa} also said that he did not know how long he would remain on this earth, and that after him, the people should follow Hazrat Abū Bakr^{ra} and Hazrat ‘Umar^{ra}.

His Holiness^{aa} said that he would continue highlighting the life of Hazrat ‘Umar^{ra} in future sermons.

FUNERAL PRAYERS

His Holiness^{aa} said that he would lead the funeral prayers of the following members:

Kāmrān Aḥmad Sahib Shahīd of Peshawar who was martyred in his office by opponents on 9 November. He was struck by four bullets and passed away on the scene, while the attacker fled. He had faced much opposition on account of being an Aḥmadi, and had to empty two stores he had obtained, due to being driven out by opponents. He possessed many great qualities. Once, he arrived home late, and when asked why he was late, he said that one of the opponents who was very staunch in opposition had a family member who needed blood. They were not well-off, and so he gave his own blood to help them. He was very regular in offering financial contributions. A few days before his martyrdom, he had a dream in which the Fourth Caliph^{rh} came to his home and



Syednā Hazrat Khalifatul-Masiḥ V^{aa}

said that they would stay together. He is survived by his parents, his wife and three children. His Holiness^{aa} prayed that his family may be granted patience to bear this loss. His mother is ill with cancer, and His Holiness^{aa} prayed for her as well. His Holiness^{aa} prayed that may Allāh treat the deceased with forgiveness and mercy.

Dr. Mirzā Nubair Aḥmad Ṣāḥib & ‘Āisha Amber Syed Ṣāḥiba both of whom passed away in an accident in Milwaukee, USA. Dr. Mirzā Nubair Aḥmad Ṣāḥiba was a Mūṣī and serving as the local Qā’id Majlis. Of the members in the local community, he had presented the largest donation for purchasing a property for a new mosque. He is survived by his parents, a sister and two brothers.

‘Āisha Amber Syed Ṣāḥiba was the sister of a missionary in Japan, Syed Ibrāhīm Ṣāḥib. She too passed away two days after her husband due to the same accident. She was an active member of MTA International and would translate the Friday Sermon into Japanese. She is survived by her parents, three brothers and a sister. She helped her brother in his Jamā’at work, and was an excellent translator. She had a diary in which she wrote about two things, her worldly life, and her spiritual life. She would propagate the message of Islām to her friends. His Holiness^{aa} prayed that may Allāh treat both with forgiveness and mercy and elevate their station.

Chaudhary Naṣeer Aḥmad Ṣāḥib from

Karachi. He was leading prayers, and was in prostration when he passed away. His Holiness^{aa} said that the Promised Messiah^{as} has stated that passing away during prayer is a very honourable demise. He served the Community in various capacities. He is survived by his wife. His Holiness^{aa} prayed that may Allāh treat him with forgiveness and mercy.

Sardārān Bibī Ṣāḥiba of Rabwah. Her family is Shia, however she accepted Aḥmadiyyat along with her husband. Despite her family’s opposition, she told them that since becoming an Aḥmadi, she had become a better Muslim. Even upon meeting her parents after 14 years, their demeanour towards her was the same. She loved the Community and Khilāfat and possessed many great qualities. She is survived by three sons and four daughters. One of her sons served as a doctor in Sierra Leone for five years and another son is serving as a Missionary in Cameroon. His Holiness^{aa} prayed for the family and prayed that may Allāh elevate the deceased’s station.

After reciting *Tashahhud*, *Ta'awwuz* and *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah*, His Holiness, Ḥazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad^{aa} said that there was a vast difference in the condition of the Companions^{ra} before they accepted Islām and after they accepted Islām.

REVOLUTIONARY CHANGE IN THE COMPANIONS AFTER ACCEPTING ISLĀM

His Holiness^{aa} quoted the Second Caliph^{ra} who said that these were people who were once staunch opponents of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra}, for example, set out one day to kill the Holy Prophet^{sa}. While on his way, he was informed that his sister and her husband had accepted the Holy Prophet^{sa}, so he detoured and went to his sister's home first. He reached there and heard the verses of the Holy Qur'ān being recited. He confronted his sister and her husband. He then asked to listen to the same verses that were being recited, upon which he was drawn to tears. He then went to the Holy Prophet^{sa} and rather than attacking him, pledged allegiance to him.

His Holiness^{aa} continued quoting the Second Caliph^{ra} who said that such was the condition of companions before accepting Islām. Then, after accepting the Holy Prophet^{sa}, they underwent a spiritual revolution, not only for themselves, but became a means for others to experience the same spiritual revolution. If one truly has the desire, then they can undergo the same spiritual revolution today.

HAZRAT 'UMAR'S^{RA} FEAR OF GOD

His Holiness^{aa} said that Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra} truly feared God. Once, someone heard him saying to himself, 'You are the leader of the believers, you must fear God'. On another occasion, someone heard Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra} reciting fervently during his prayer, 'I only complain of my sorrow and grief to Allāh' (12:87). He could be heard

reciting this prayer, by someone who was standing in the last row of the mosque.

His Holiness^{aa} said that Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra} honoured the family members of those who had presented sacrifices. Once a lady went to Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra} and told him that her husband had died, leaving behind young children. He had nothing to his name, and she feared that her children would die of hunger. She also mentioned that her father had fought alongside the Holy Prophet^{sa} during the Battle of Hudaibiyah. Upon hearing this, Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra} replied that this was a very close relationship, and so he gave her a camel and provisions to last her a year. He said that by the time these provisions finished, Allāh would grant her more.

CARE FOR THE ELDERLY

His Holiness^{aa} said that Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra} also used to tend to the elderly. Once, someone saw Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra} entering a home during the night. When he left, that person went into the home and found a blind elderly lady. He asked her why Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra} used to come to her home. She replied, saying that for quite some time, he had been helping her with her various needs and tasks.

TENDING TO THE NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE

His Holiness^{aa} said that Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra} had a profound sense of care for the people. For example, one night, he inquired why a young child was crying. He was informed that the infant did not have any food, as rations had not been stipulated for infant

children. At that moment, Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra} granted the child's mother rations for her child and announced that from then on, rations would be stipulated for infant children. This was the same person whom other great leaders were in awe of and feared, yet he did not rest until the child of a bedouin woman was satiated and soundly asleep.

His Holiness^{aa} said that once, Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra} was walking and took some time to rest against a wall which was close to a home. While there, he heard a mother telling her daughter that she should mix some water into the milk. The daughter said to her mother that Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra} had instructed not to mix water with milk. Her mother said that Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra} was not present, so it would not be any issue. However, the daughter replied saying it was not right to be obedient in the presence of Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra}, and be disobedient when he was not present. The next day, Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra} sent the marriage proposal for his son to that same girl. This was the standard Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra} adopted when looking for matrimonial matches.

DILIGENCE IN ENSURING FAIRNESS IN TRADE

His Holiness^{aa} said that Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra} would ensure that prices in the market were not unfairly raised or lowered, as is done today. Once, he saw that a merchant was selling grapes at such a low price, that other merchants would not be able to have competitive pricing. Thus, Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra} instructed the merchant to increase his pricing.

“This was the same person whom other great leaders were in awe of and feared, yet he did not rest until the child of a bedouin woman was satiated and soundly asleep.

His Holiness^{aa} said that Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} greatly cared and feared for people’s lives during the outbreak of an epidemic. There was a valley named Amwas, from where a pandemic began and spread through Syria, causing many casualties. According to some, there were about 25,000 deaths. Once, Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} set out for Syria, and along the way, he was informed of the outbreak, and consequently returned to Madīnah. Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} called the migrants (*muhājirīn*) for consultation. There were varying opinions, with some saying that they should not fear and move forward, while others were of the opinion that they should return. Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} consulted with the residents of Madīnah (*anṣār*) as well as the elders of the Quraish, and ultimately decided that everyone should go back. Someone asked Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} whether it was possible to divert from the decree of God. Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} said that they were diverting from one decree of God towards another decree of God. This decision was supported by a statement of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, who said that if an epidemic broke out, people should not go to that area, and those already residing in that area should not leave. Thus, Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} returned, however the soldiers who were already residing in the impacted areas were instructed to stay there. Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} feared for Ḥazrat Abū ‘Ubaidah^{ra}’s well-being, as he was residing in the impacted area. Out of love for him, Ḥazrat Umar^{ra} summoned him, however Ḥazrat Abū ‘Ubaidah^{ra} understood his intention. He replied saying that he understood Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra}’s sentiments, but he was one of the soldiers as well, so it was best for him to stay there. Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} was moved by this response, and then instructed that Ḥazrat Abū ‘Ubaidah^{ra} should at least go to an elevated place in the mountains. Ḥazrat Abū ‘Ubaidah^{ra} was working on implementing this instruction, when he fell victim to the epidemic.

Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra}’s Prayers Accepted

His Holiness^{aa} said that Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} also experienced the acceptance of his prayers. Once there was a famine, and so Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} went out to pray for rain. As he was praying, it started raining and the people rejoiced. It is also related that after



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the conquest of Egypt, Ḥazrat ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ^{ra} was informed that the Egyptians had a tradition in order to keep the Nile River flowing. The tradition was that they would take a young girl, adorn her in clothes and ornaments, and then throw her into the river. Ḥazrat ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ^{ra} said that such innovations would not continue within Islām. Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} was informed and he said that this was the correct response. Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} sent a small note, written from himself to the River Nile, and instructed that it should be thrown into the Nile River. The note addressed the Nile River, saying that if it flowed of its own accord, then it should remain still, but if it was flowing according to the decree of God, then he prayed for God to keep it flowing. It is recorded that the next day, the amount of water flowing in the Nile River significantly increased.

His Holiness^{aa} said that once, Caesar was experiencing an ailment of the head, and despite exhaustive efforts, he could not be cured. It was suggested to him that he should request Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} for help and prayers. Thus, Caesar sent a messenger to Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra}. Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} thought that Caesar was a prideful person, and would not have come to him had he not been in some sort of trouble. Thus, Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} thought to send something that would be blessed, but also break the arrogance of Caesar. Thus, Ḥazrat

‘Umar^{ra} sent him one of his old tattered hats. Upon seeing it, Caesar refused to wear it, but later when his pain increased, he had no choice but to wear the hat, and his pain went away. This pain would return after every few days, and so after every few days, Caesar would wear that same tattered hat.

His Holiness^{aa} said that Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} upheld the honour of the Holy Prophet^{sa}’s mosque. Once, there were two people speaking loudly in the Prophet’s^{sa} mosque. He asked for them to be brought to him, and asked them where they were from. They said they were from Ṭā’if. Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} told them that had they been from Madīnah, he would have punished them for speaking so loudly in the Prophet’s^{sa} mosque. Similarly, when leading prayer, Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} would not begin the prayer until he ensured that all the rows were straight.

His Holiness^{aa} said that he would continue highlighting incidents from the life of Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} in future sermons.

MEN OF EXCELLENCE: HAZRAT 'UMAR IBN AL-KHAṬṬĀB^{RA}

After reciting *Tashahhud*, *Ta'awwuz* and *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah*, His Holiness, Ḥazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad^{aa} said that Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra} had great regard for those who had knowledge of the Holy Qur'ān, no matter if they were young or old.

His Holiness^{aa} said that once, someone came to Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra} and complained that he did not give people enough wealth, nor did he decide justly in matters of wealth. This upset Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra}. One of his advisors, Hurr bin Qais, said that the following was instructed to the Holy Prophet^{sa} in the Holy Qur'ān:

“Take to forgiveness, and enjoin kindness, and turn away from the ignorant.” (7:200)

Hurr bin Qais said that this person was surely ignorant. Upon being reminded of these verses, Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra} did not take any action against that person.

His Holiness^{aa} said that once, a chief came to Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra}, and disliked that fact that a ten-year-old child was also sitting in such esteemed company. It so happened that later, Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra} became displeased at something that this chief did. That same ten-year-old child read the following: “and those who suppress anger” (3:135) The child then also read: “and turn away from the ignorant.” (7:200) The child said that this person was surely ignorant. Upon hearing the words of the Holy Qur'ān, Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra} remained silent. Then that chief was told that the same ten-year-old boy he was looking down upon was the one who saved him.

His Holiness^{aa} said that when matters would be presented to Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra}, he would also consult children, in order to sharpen their minds.



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DILIGENCE IN MATTERS PERTAINING TO THE TREASURY

His Holiness^{aa} said that Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra} was extremely careful when it came to the wealth of the treasury. Once, Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra} was given some milk to drink which he very much liked. He asked where this milk had come from. The person told him that it had been given to him from the camels which had been given as Zakāt. Upon hearing this, Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra} regurgitated the milk, saying he could not consume the wealth of Zakāt.

His Holiness^{aa} said that once, Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra} was ill and he was prescribed to use honey. There was some honey in the treasury. Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra} stood at the pulpit and said to the people that he would only use that honey if they allowed, which they did, and only then he used the honey from the treasury.

His Holiness^{aa} said that once, it was extremely hot outside, so much so that it would be difficult to get up and even open the door. In this heat, Ḥazrat Uthman^{ra} was informed that there was someone walking outside. When that person drew near, Ḥazrat Uthman^{ra} saw that it was Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra}. Upon inquiring what he was doing outside in such extreme heat, Ḥazrat

'Umar^{ra} said that a camel from the treasury had gotten loose and he was searching for it.

DEALING WITH PEOPLE EQUITABLY

His Holiness^{aa} said that Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra} would always be equitable. Once, a Jewish person and a Muslim person who were quarrelling came to Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra}. Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra} heard their case and felt that the Jewish man was in the right, and so he decided in his favour. On another occasion, an Egyptian man went to Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra} and said that he had raced the son of Ḥazrat 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ^{ra} and beaten him in the race. Upon this, he started beating him, saying that he was the son of an esteemed person. Upon hearing this, Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra} summoned Ḥazrat 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ^{ra} and his son, and then Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra} told the Egyptian that now he could strike the son of Ḥazrat 'Amr bin Āṣ^{ra} in return.

HIGH LEVEL OF FORBEARANCE

His Holiness^{aa} said that Ḥazrat 'Umar^{ra} was very forbearing. Once, he said in a sermon that if anyone saw any crookedness in him, then they should rectify it. A person stood up and said that if he found any crookedness in him, he would rectify it



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with his sword. Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} thanked God that there was someone who would rectify him with his sword.

His Holiness^{aa} said that once, a person went to Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} and in front of a crowd, told Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} to fear God. The people present wished to silence him, however Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} said that if he wished to say something, then he should speak openly.

UPHOLDING RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

His Holiness^{aa} said that Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} was very mindful of religious freedom. Once, an elderly Christian woman went to Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} for some matter. Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} incited her to accept Islām as she would be protected. She replied saying that she was elderly and nearing her demise. Thus, Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} fulfilled her need, and later repented, fearing that she may have perceived him taking advantage of the need and compelling her to accept Islām. He prayed to God saying that he merely showed her the right path, but did not wish to force her. This was the degree to which he was mindful of religious freedom.

CARE FOR ANIMALS

His Holiness^{aa} said that Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} was also caring towards animals. Once, Ḥazrat

‘Umar^{ra} inspected some camels who had been tied. He examined them, and he asked the owners if they really cared for their animals? If so, they should have let them loose so that they may graze freely.

A DAY OF TWO EIDS

His Holiness^{aa} said that once, a Jewish man went to Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} and said that there was a verse in the Qur’ān which, if it had been revealed to the Jewish people, they would have rejoiced and commemorated it as a day of Eid. The verse was:

This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favour upon you and have chosen for you Islām as religion. But whoso is forced by hunger, without being willfully inclined to sin, then, surely Allāh is Most Forgiving and Merciful.” (5:4)

Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} replied to him by saying that this verse was revealed on a day of two Eids; Friday, and the day of ‘Arafah.

His Holiness^{aa} said that people would say that during the era of Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra}, Satan had been shackled, and after Ḥazrat Umar’s^{ra} martyrdom, Satan was let loose and rampant.

LOVE FOR POETRY

His Holiness^{aa} said that it is recorded in history that Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} had a special affinity for poetry. It is said that often, when matters were presented to Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra}, while explaining, Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} would quote relevant couplets of poetry. He would quote such poetry that was in line with Islāmī teachings and the Islāmī way of life. He would also encourage others to memorise poetic couplets as well. Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} also refined Arabic poetry. For example, it was common to name women in poems and declare love for them. Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} eradicated this practice, and determined a punishment for doing so.

His Holiness^{aa} quoted the Promised Messiah^{as} who highlighted the esteemed rank of Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} along with the other Rightly Guided Caliphs.

His Holiness^{aa} said that now, the series of sermons on the life of Ḥazrat ‘Umar^{ra} was complete. His Holiness^{aa} said that with God’s grace, he will begin the series of sermons on the life of Ḥazrat Abū Bakr^{ra} in the future.

ISLĀM AND SCIENCE: CONCORDANCE OR CONFLICT?

Dr. Abdus Salam

This speech was delivered by Professor Abdus Salam (1926-1996), Nobel Laureate in Physics (1979), in Paris at the UNESCO House on April 27, 1984 at the invitation of the Organization “Islām and the West.” The format of the meeting was to invite two representatives of Islam and two Western representatives to speak comparatively. On the Muslim side were Professor Salam and Dr. Hussein Al-Jazaeri, former Minister of Health of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the then-regional director of the World Health Organization. Professor Louis Leprince-Ringuet and Professor Jean Bernard were representing the Western side.

The Aḥmadiyya Gazette Canada is honoured to reproduce this enlightening speech which was first published in the September 1984 issue of The Review of Religions.

THE HOLY QUR’ĀN AND SCIENCE

Let me say at the outset that I am both a believer as well as a practising Muslim. I am a Muslim because I believe in the spiritual message of the Holy Qur’ān. As a scientist, the Qur’ān speaks to me in that it emphasises reflection on the Laws of Nature, with examples drawn from cosmology, physics, biology and medicine, as signs for all men. Says the Qur’ān:

Can they not look up to the clouds, how they are created; and to the Heaven how it is upraised; and the mountains how they are rooted, and to the earth how it is outspread?¹

And again:

Verily in the creation of the Heavens and of the Earth, and in the alternation of the night and of the day, are there signs for men of understanding. They who, standing, sitting or reclining, bear Allāh in mind and reflect on the creation of the Heavens and of the earth, saying: ‘O our Lord! Thou has not created this in vain.’²

The Qur’ān emphasises the superiority of the ‘ālim—the man possessed of knowledge and insight, asking: How can those, not possessing these attributes, ever be equals of those who do? Seven hundred and fifty verses of the Qur’ān (almost one-eighth of the Book) exhort believers to study nature,



Photo by Ayesha Firdaus on Unsplash

to reflect, to make the best use of reason in their search for the ultimate and to make the acquiring of knowledge and scientific comprehension part of the community’s life.

The Holy Prophet^{sa} of Islām emphasised that the quest for knowledge and sciences is obligatory upon every Muslim, man and woman. He enjoined his followers to seek knowledge even if they had to travel to China in its search. Here clearly he had scientific rather than religious knowledge in mind, as well as an emphasis on the internationalism of the scientific quest.

This is the first premise on scientific knowledge with which any fundamentalist thinking in Islām must begin. Add to this the second premise, eloquently stated by

Maurice Bucaille in his perceptive essay on the Bible, the Qur’ān and science. There is not a single verse in the Qur’ān where natural phenomena are described and which contradicts what we know for certain from our discoveries in sciences.

Add to this the third premise: in the whole of Islāmic history there has never been an incident like that of Galileo or Giordano Bruno. Persecution there has been; denunciation, even excommunication (*takfir*) over doctrinal differences, but never for scientific beliefs. And paradoxically, the first Inquisition (*Mihna*) in Islām came to be instituted, not by the orthodox theologians, but by the so-called rationalists, the *Mu’tazzala*—theologians themselves—who prided themselves on the use of reason. The saintly Aḥmad ibn

Hanbal was one of those subjected to the lash of their fury.³

EARLY ISLĀM AND SCIENCE

How seriously did the early Muslims take these injunctions of the Holy Qur'ān and of the Holy Prophet^{sa}?

Barely a hundred years after the Holy Prophet's^{sa} death, the Muslims had made it their task to master the then-known sciences. Systematically, they translated the entire corpus of the then known knowledge in their religious language, Arabic. Founding institutes of advanced study (*Baitul Hikma*), they acquired an ascendancy in the sciences that lasted for the next 350 years.

A semi-quantitative measure of this is given by George Sarton in his monumental *History of Science*. Sarton divides his story of the highest achievement in science into Ages, each Age lasting 50 years. With each, he associates one central figure: thus, 500-450 B.C. is the Age of Plato, followed by the Ages of Aristotle, Euclid, Archimedes and so on. From 750 to 1100 CE, however, it is an unbroken succession of the Ages of Jābir, Khwārizmī, Rāzī, Mas'ūdī, Abū'l-Wafā, Bīrūnī and Omar Khayyām. In those 350 years, Arabs, Turks, Afghans and Persians—chemists, algebraists, clinicians, geographers, mathematicians, physicists and astronomers of the commonwealth of Islām—held the world stage of sciences. Only after 1100 C.E, in Sarton's scheme, do the first Western names begin to appear; however, for another 250 years, they share the honours with men of Islām like Ibn Rushd, Nasir-ud-din Tusi and Ibn Nafis.

An important reason for the success of the scientific enterprise in Islām was its international character. The Islāmic commonwealth itself cut across nations and colour; and early Muslim society was tolerant of men from outside it, and of their ideas.

An aspect of reverence for the sciences in Islām was the patronage they enjoyed in the Islāmic Commonwealth. To paraphrase what H.A.R. Gibb has written about Arabic literature to the parallel situation for the sciences: To a greater extent than elsewhere, the flowering of the sciences

“The trouble with most people is their extravagance in respect of Aristotle's opinions, they believe that there is no possibility of mistakes in his views, though they know that he was only theorising to the best of his capacity, and never claimed to be God's protected and immune from mistakes.

in Islām was conditional...on the liberality and patronage of those in high positions. Where Muslim society was in decay, science lost vitality and force. But so long as, in one capital or another, princes and ministers found pleasure, profit or reputation in patronising the sciences, the torch was kept burning.

THE GOLDEN AGE OF SCIENCES IN ISLĀM

The Golden Age of Sciences in Islām was doubtless the Age around the year 1000 C. E, the Age of Ibn Sīnā (Avecenna), the last of the medievalists, and of his contemporaries, the first of the moderns, Ibn al-Haytham and Al-Bīrūnī. Ibn al-Haytham (Alhazen, 965-1039 CE) was one of the greatest physicists of all time. He “enunciated that a ray of light, in passing through a medium, takes the path which is the easier and ‘quicker.’” In this he was anticipating Fermat's Principle of Least Time by many centuries.⁴ He enunciated the law of inertia, later to become Newton's first law of motion. He described the process of refraction in mechanical terms, by considering the movement of “particles of light” as they passed through the surface of separation of two media, in accordance with the rectangle law of forces—an approach later rediscovered and elaborated by Newton. Part V of Roger Bacon's “Opus Majus” is practically a copy of Ibn-Al-Haitham's optics. No wonder Bacon “never wearied of declaring that a knowledge of Arabic and of Arabic Science was the only way to true knowledge.”

Al-Bīrūnī (973-1048 CE), Ibn Sīnā's second illustrious contemporary, worked in Afghanistan. He was an empirical scientist like Ibn al-Haytham. He was as modern

and as un-medieval in outlook as Galileo, six centuries later, with whom he shares the independent (prior) discovery of the so-called Galilean invariance of the laws of nature—the liberating statement that the same laws of physics apply here on earth and on the starry-orbs in the heavens.

There is no question that Western Science is a Greco-Islāmic legacy. However, it is commonly alleged that Islāmic science was a derived science, that Muslim scientists followed the Greek theoretical tradition blindly and added nothing to the scientific method.

This statement is false. Like all periods of intense scientific work, one first builds on what one has inherited; this is followed by an age of maturity when doubts are raised on the teachings of the old masters followed by a break. Such a break came with the rise of observation and experiment, early in the sciences of Islām; its clearest exponents were Ibn al-Haytham and Al-Bīrūnī. Listen to this assessment of Aristotle by Al-Bīrūnī:

The trouble with most people is their extravagance in respect of Aristotle's opinions, they believe that there is no possibility of mistakes in his views, though they know that he was only theorising to the best of his capacity, and never claimed to be God's protected and immune from mistakes.

Or this on geology, with its insistence on observation:

But if you see the soil of India with your own eyes and meditate on its nature, if you consider the rounded stones found in earth however deeply

you dig, stones that are huge near the mountains and where the rivers have a violent current, stones that are of smaller size at a greater distance from the mountains and where the streams flow more slowly, stones that appear pulverised in the shape of sand where the streams begin to stagnate near their mouths and near the sea—if you consider all this, you can scarcely help thinking that India was once a sea, which by degrees has been filled up by the alluvium of the streams.

And finally, Al-Bīrūnī on medieval superstitions:

People say that on the 6th (of January) there is an hour during which all salt water of the earth gets sweet. Since all the qualities occurring in the water depend exclusively upon the nature of the soil...these qualities are of a stable nature...Therefore this statement...is entirely unfounded. Continual and leisurely experimentation will show to anyone the futility of this assertion.

According to Briffault:

The Greeks systematised, generalised, and theorised, but the patient ways of investigation, the accumulation of positive knowledge, the minute methods of science, detailed and prolonged observation and experimental inquiry were altogether alien to the Greek temperament. What we call science arose in Europe as a result of a new spirit of inquiry, of new methods of investigation, of the method of experiment, observation, measurement, and of the development of mathematics in a form unknown to the Greeks. That spirit and those methods were introduced into the European world by the Arabs. 'Modern' science is the most momentous contribution of the Islāmic civilisation.⁵

These remarks of Briffault are reinforced by Sarton:

The main, as well as the least obvious, achievement of the Middle Ages was the creation of the experimental spirit and this was primarily due to

the Muslims down to the 12th century.

One of the tragedies of history is that this dawning of the modern spirit in sciences with Al-Bīrūnī and Ibn al-Haytham was interrupted; it did not lead to a permanent change of course in scientific methodology. Barely a hundred years after they worked, creation of high science in Islām came to a halt. Mankind had to wait a full 500 years before the same level of maturity and the same insistence on observation and experimentation was reached again, with Tycho Brahe, Galileo and their contemporaries.

THE DECLINE OF SCIENCE IN ISLĀM

Why did creative science die out in Islām? Starting around 1100 C.E, this decline was nearly complete by 1350 CE. Why did we in the Islāmic lands lose out?

No one knows for certain. There were indeed external causes, like the devastation caused by the Mongol invasion, but, grievous though it was, it was perhaps more in the nature of an interruption. Sixty years after Ghengiz, his grandson Halagu was founding an observatory at Maragha, where Nasīrud-Dīn Tusi worked.

In my view, the demise of living science within the Islāmic commonwealth was due more to internal causes—firstly of isolation of our scientific enterprise and secondly of discouragement to innovation (*taqlid*). The later parts of the 11th and early 12th centuries in Islām were periods of intense, politically motivated, sectarian and religious strife. Even though a man like Imām Ghazali, in the first chapter of his great *Ihyā 'Ulūmud-Dīn, The Revival of Religious Learning*, writing around 1100 C.E, could say:

A grievous crime indeed against religion has been committed by a man who imagines that Islām is defended by the denial of the mathematical sciences, seeing that there is nothing in the revealed truth opposed to these sciences by way either of negation or affirmation, and nothing in these sciences opposed to the truth of religion.

Even though Imām Ghazali could write

this, the temper of the age had turned away from creative science, either to Sufism with its otherworldliness or to a lack of tolerance for *taqlid* and innovation in all fields of learning including the sciences.

To illustrate the apathy towards the creation of sciences which came over Islām, let me quote from Ibn Khaldūn (1332-1406 C.E), one of the greatest social historians and one of the brightest intellects of all times in his field. Ibn Khaldūn writes in his *Muqaddimah*:

We have heard, of late, that in the land of the Franks, and on the northern shores of the Mediterranean, there is a great cultivation of philosophical sciences. They are said to be studied there again, and to be taught in numerous classes. Existing systematic expositions of them are said to be comprehensive, the people who know them numerous, and the students of them very many...Allāh knows better, what exists there...But it is clear that the problems of physics are of no importance for us in our religious affairs. Therefore, we must leave them alone.⁶

Ibn Khaldūn displays little curiosity, no wistfulness. The apathy his words appear to convey led to a drawing inwards, to an isolation of our scientific enterprise. As everyone knows, isolation in the sciences and the veneration for authority it engenders, spells intellectual death. In our great days in the 9th and 10th centuries, we had founded, in Baghdad and Cairo, international institutes of advanced studies (*Baitul Hikmat*), and assembled international concourses of scholars there. But from 1300 C.E, no more. Any science that was cultivated was concentrated in religious seminaries, where tradition was valued more than innovation. "The learned men of Transoxiana, who upon hearing of the establishment of the first *Madrasah*, appointed a solemn menesional science, as tradition tells us, in commemoration of departed science, were shown to be correct in their estimate."⁷ The very encyclopaedic nature of knowledge and science in Islām was now a hindrance in an age of specialisation. The wholesome faculty of criticism, by which a young researcher questions what he is taught, re-examines

it, and brings forth newer concepts, was no longer tolerated or encouraged.

To complete the story, from Ibn Khaldūn's days, this intellectual isolation continued—even during the great empires of Islām, the empires of Osmani Turks, of the Iranian Safvis, and of the Indian Mughals. It is not that the sultans and the shah-in-shahs were not cognisant of the technological advances being made by the Europeans; they could hardly have been unaware of the intrusive superiority of the Venetians or the Genoese in the arts of gun-founding, or of the navigational and ship-building skills of the Portuguese who controlled the oceans of the world, including all oceans bordering on Islāmic lands, and even the Hajj sea routes.

But they seem never to have realised that the navigational skills of the Portuguese were not accidental; these had been scientifically developed and sedulously cultivated, starting with the research establishment of Sagres set up in 1419 by Prince Henry the Navigator.

Was this decline due to misplaced arrogance? William Eton⁸ the British Consul to the Ottoman Empire would write in the year 1800:

No one has the least idea of navigation and the use of the magnet...Travelling, that great source of expansion and improvement to the mind is entirely checked by arrogant spirit of their religion and...by the jealousy with which intercourse with foreigners...is viewed in a person not invested with an official character...Thus the man of general science...is unknown: anyone, but a mere artificer who should concern himself with the founding of cannons, the building of ships or the like, would be esteemed little better than a madman.

He concluded with the remark, with an ominous modern ring:

They like to trade with those who bring to them useful and valuable articles, without the labour of manufacturing.

MODERN SCIENCE AND FAITH

What is the situation today? Of all the major civilizations on this globe, science is the weakest in the Islāmic Commonwealth. I sometimes suspect that some of us Muslims believe that while technology is basically neutral, and that its excess can be tempered through an adherence to the ethics of Islām, science, on the contrary, is value loaded; that modern science must lead to “rationalism,” and eventually apostasy; that scientifically trained men



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among us will “deny the metaphysical presuppositions of our culture.” There is in this sentiment an implied insult to our cultural values for their fragility; but leaving this aside, to such thinking, all I can say is: Do not fight the battles of yesterday when the so-called “rational philosophers,” with their irrational and dogmatic faith in the cosmological doctrines they had inherited from Aristotle, found difficulties in reconciling these concepts with their faith.

One must remind oneself that such battles were even more fiercely waged among the Christian schoolmen of the Middle Ages. The problems which concerned the schoolmen were mainly problems of cosmology and metaphysics: “Is the world located in an immobile place, does anything

lie beyond it; Does God move the primum mobile directly and actively as an efficient cause, or only as a final or ultimate cause? Are all the heavens moved by one mover or several? Do celestial movers experience exhaustion or fatigue? What was the nature of celestial matter? Was it like terrestrial matter in possessing inherent qualities such as being hot, cold moist and dry?” No wonder when Galileo tried, first, to classify those among the problems which legitimately belonged to the domain of physics, and then to find answers to them through physical experimentation, he was persecuted. Restitution for this is being made now 350 years later.

At a special ceremony in the Vatican on May 9, 1983, His Holiness the Pope, in the presence of 33 Nobel Laureates and 300 other scientists, declared:

The Church's experience, during the Galileo affair and after it, has led to a more mature attitude...The Church herself learns by experience and reflection and she now understands better the meaning that must be given to freedom of research...one of the most noble attributes of man. It is through

research that man attains to Truth... This is why the Church is convinced that there can be no real contradiction between science and faith... (However), it is only through humble and assiduous study that (the Church) learns to dissociate the essential of the faith from the scientific systems of a given age, especially when a culturally influenced reading of the Bible seemed to be linked to an obligatory cosmogony.

THE LIMITATIONS OF SCIENCE

In his remarks, the Pope stressed the maturity which the Church had reached in dealing with science; he could equally have emphasised the converse—the recognition by the scientists from Galileo's

times onwards, of the limitations of their disciplines—the recognition that there are questions which are beyond the ken of present or even future sciences. We may speculate about some of them, but there may be no way to verify empirically our speculations. And it is this empirical verification that is the essence of modern science. We are humbler today than, for example, Ibn Rushd (Averroes) was. Ibn Rushd was a physician of great originality with major contributions in the study of fevers and of the retina; this is one of his claims to scientific immortality. However, in a different discipline—cosmology—he accepted the speculations of Aristotle, without recognising that these were speculations, and that future experiments may prove them false. The scientist of today knows when and where he is speculating; he would claim no finality for the associated modes of thought. And even about accepted facts, we recognise that newer facts may be discovered which, without falsifying the earlier discoveries, may lead to generalisations; in turn, necessitating revolutionary changes in our concepts and our “world-view.” In physics, this happened in the beginning of this century with the discovery of relativity and quantum theory. It could happen again; with our present constructs appearing as limiting cases of the newer concepts, still more comprehensive, still more embracing.

I have been asked to elaborate on this.

I have mentioned the revolution in the physicists’ concepts of the relativity of time. It appears incredible that the length of a time interval depends on one’s speed—that the faster we move the longer we appear to live to someone who is not moving with us. And this is not a figment of one’s fancy. Come to the particle physics laboratories of CERN at Geneva which produce short-lived particles like muons, or the laboratories here at Orsay, and make a record of the intervals of time which elapse before muons of different speeds decay into electrons and neutrinos. The faster muons take longer to die, the slower ones die early, precisely in accord with the quantitative law of relativity of time first enunciated by Einstein in 1905. It took time for physics to verify and comprehend Einstein. Fortunately,

“It is of interest to note that stars can form only if they can emit light and heat and emission of light and heat can take place only in a cold universe. . . .

it seems no philosopher has understood Einstein. To my knowledge, no system of philosophy appears to have been erected on his ideas of space and time.

The second and potentially the more explosive revolution in thought came in 1926 with Heisenberg’s Uncertainty Principle. This principle concerns the existence of a conceptual limitation on our knowledge. It affirms, for example, that no physical measurements can tell you that there is an electron on this table and also that it is lying still. Experiments can be made to discover where the electron is; these experiments will then destroy any possibility of finding simultaneously whether the electron is moving and if so at what speed. There is an inherent limitation on our knowledge, which appears to have been decreed. I shudder to think what might have happened to Heisenberg if he was born in the Middle Ages—just what theological battles might have raged on whether there was a like limitation on the knowledge possessed by God.

As it was, battles were fought, but within the 20th century physics community. Heisenberg’s revolutionary thinking, supported by all known experiment, has never been accepted by all physicists. The most illustrious physicist of all times, Einstein, spent the best part of his life trying to find flaws in Heisenberg’s arguments. He could not gainsay the experimental evidence, but he hoped that such evidence may perhaps be explained within a different theoretical framework. Such framework has not been found so far, notwithstanding Einstein’s repeated attempts. It appears unlikely, but who among us can assert that it may never be discovered.

Is the science of today on a collision course with metaphysical thinking? Let us consider some examples of modern scientific thinking in this context.

My first example concerns the

metaphysical doctrine of the creation from nothing. Today we believe in cosmology, that the most likely value for the density of matter and energy in the universe is such that the mass of the universe adds up to zero, precisely. The mass of the universe is defined as the sum of the masses and energies of the electrons, the protons, photons and neutrinos, which constitute the universe minus an expression for their mutual gravitational energies. If the mass of the universe is indeed zero, and this is an empirically determinable quantity—the universe shares with the vacuum state the property of masslessness. A bold extrapolation made as recently as a decade back then treats the universe as a quantum fluctuation of the vacuum—of the state of nothingness. I must emphasise here that what distinguishes physics from metaphysics is that this bold extrapolation can and will be tested by measuring the density of matter in the universe more and more precisely. We shall know empirically whether the idea can be sustained in the physicists’ sense. If it cannot be, we shall discard it.

My second example is the principle of the anthropic universe—the assertion by a number of cosmologists that one way to understand the processes of cosmology, geology, biochemistry and biology is to assume that our universe was conceived in a potential condition and with physical laws, which possess all the necessary ingredients for the emergence of life and intelligent beings. “Basically this potentiality relies on a complex relationship between the expansion and the cooling of the universe, after the Big Bang, on the behaviour of the free energy of matter, on the intervention of chance at various levels,” as well as on a number of coincidences which we shall have to explain and which have permitted the universe to survive a few billion years.

Consider some of the elements of this story as told by Carr, Rees and Hubert Reeves.⁹ The universe started with a Big Bang; as it expanded and thereby cooled,

quarks bound themselves through the well-known physical forces into nucleons, these with electrons into atoms, and the atoms into galaxies and stars.

It is of interest to note that stars can form only if they can emit light and heat and emission of light and heat can take place only in a cold universe. This is guaranteed by the expansion itself. If the universe was to stop expanding, all structure—including living structures—would be dismantled. If the night were not dark, there would be no one to notice it.

Now, normally, nuclear binding should proceed by reaching for the lowest possible stable state. Nuclear binding, on a cosmic scale, however, stops short of reaching this lowest state. In principle, Big Bang nucleosynthesis could have yielded a world of iron. In fact we hardly go past helium in the table of nuclei. Why? Because the number of relativistic particles per unit volume created was not high enough. Equilibrium ceased before nuclear evolution reached its lowest state. Did this happen because iron is hardly an appropriate element to promote life?

Next we come to a second chapter of organization of matter. The first chapter, from the Big Bang to the birth of the first stars is a chapter of global organization following the decline of cosmic temperature. The second chapter witnesses the rise of complexity in a local scale around the multitude of stars, with their hot interiors and warm surroundings.

The stars formed according to standard cosmological laws: they exploded whenever they were larger than a certain size. This time however heavy nuclei were formed—generating ices NH_3 , CH_4 , H_2O , complex molecules, and grains of dust of iron-magnesium silicate. And around a later generation of stars these grains and ices gave birth to planets with atmospheres and oceans into which chemical evolution pursued its course.

Is the future of the universe and in particular the course of events leading to this organization, implicitly written down in the laws of physics from the very beginning? It appears NOT. The

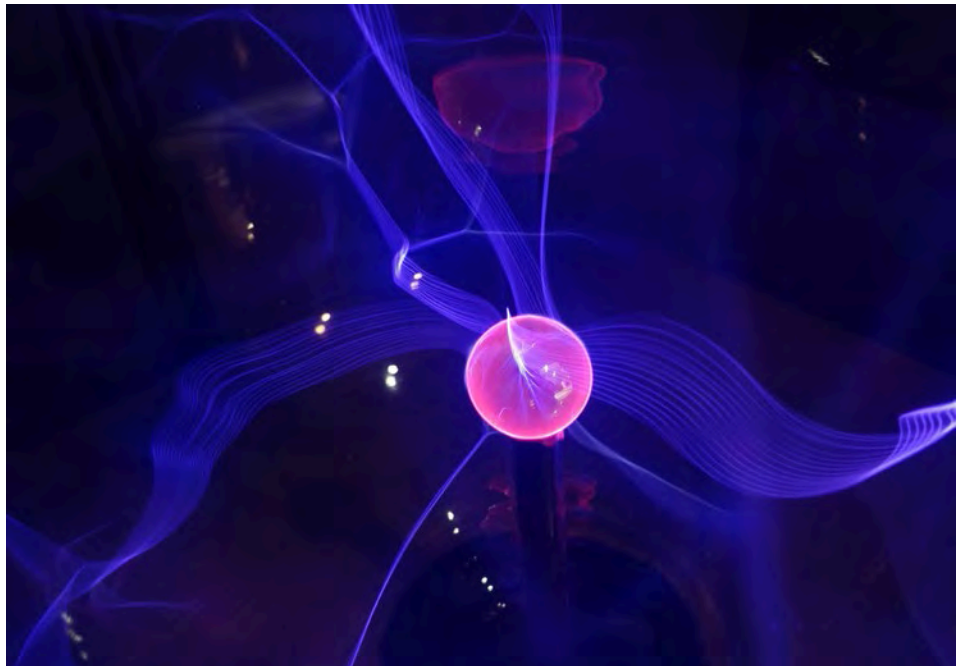


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chemist and the biologist tell us that the “physical processes have not always been in equilibrium. We have a large number of energetically equivalent states, and it is between these states that the game of organization takes place, largely through the effect of chance”—chance, presumably guided and driven by the biologists’ principle of “need for survival.

I am longing at this point for my biological colleagues to take up the story and tell us of the operation of their non-equilibrium and the principle of survival mechanism. The equilibrium physicist has, however, a principle analogous to this. We call it the principle of self-consistency. Since I am more familiar with it, I shall illustrate its operation, so far as the coincidences I referred to earlier are concerned, by taking an example of something I am currently working on myself.

As an extension of the recent excitement in physics—that is of our success in unifying and establishing the identity of two of the fundamental forces of nature, the electric and the weak nuclear—we are now considering the possibility that space-time may have 11 dimensions. Within this context we hope to unify the electroweak force with the remaining two basic forces, gravity and the strong nuclear. Of the 11 dimensions which we have postulated,

four are the familiar dimensions of space and time. The other seven dimensions are supposed to correspond to a hidden internal manifold—hidden because these seven dimensions are assumed to have curled in upon themselves to fantastically tiny dimensions of the order of 10^{-33} cms. We live on the surface of a cylinder in the 11-dimensional space: our major source of sensory apprehension of these extra dimensions being the existence of familiar charges—electric and nuclear—which in their turn produce the familiar electric and the nuclear forces.

Exciting idea, which may or may not work quantitatively. But one question already arises; why the difference between the four familiar space-time dimensions and the seven internal ones? And why 11 dimensions in the first place, and not a wholesome number like 13 or 19? Were these 11 dimensions on par at the beginning of time? Why have the seven curled in upon themselves, while the other four have not? At present, we make this plausible by postulating a self-consistency principle; we invent a field of force designed to guarantee this configuration as the only stable self-consistent dynamical system which can exist. But there will be a price to pay.

There will be a subtle physical consequence

of this hypothesis, for example, in the form of remnants, like the three degree radiation which we believe was a remnant of the recombination era following on the Big Bang. We shall search for these remnants. If we do not find them, we shall abandon the idea.

Creation from nothing, an anthropic universe, extra dimensions—strange topics for late 20th century physics—which appear no different from metaphysical preoccupations of earlier times. But so far as science is concerned, mark the provisional nature of the conceptual edifice, the insistence on empirical verification at each stage and the concept of driving self-consistency.

For the agnostic, self-consistency (if successful) may connote irrelevance of a deity. For the believer, it provides no more than an unravelling of a small part of the Lord's design—its profundity, in the areas it illuminates, only enhances his reverence for the beauty of the design itself.

I can offer no new resolution, except to make two remarks. First, I find the creationist creed insulting that while we are willing to ascribe subtlety to ourselves in devising these self-consistency modalities, the only subtlety we are willing to ascribe to the Lord is that of the potter's art—kneading clay and fashioning it into man. I do not see why once having created certain attributes within matter, and the laws which govern the operation of the fundamental forces, the path we follow in physics is not creationism in the wider sense.

My second remark is personal. Personally for me, my faith was predicted by the timeless spiritual message of Islām, on matters on which physics is silent. It was given meaning to by the very first verse of the Holy Qur'ān after the opening.

This is a [perfect] Book; there is no doubt in it; it is a guidance for the God-fearing who believe in the unseen.¹⁰

The unseen [meaning]—beyond the reach of human ken—the unknowable.

“Personally for me, my faith was predicted by the timeless spiritual message of Islām, on matters on which physics is silent. . . .

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Since in my audience today, there are a number of Muslims, who can influence decisions in their own countries, let me say in all humility that to know the limitations of science, one must be part of living science; otherwise one will continue fighting yesterday's philosophical battles today. Believe me, there are high creators of science among us—and potentially among our youth. Trust them; their Islām is as deeply founded, their appreciation of the spiritual values of the Holy Book as profound as anyone else's. Provide them with facilities to create science in its standard norms of inquiry. We owe it to Islām. Let them know science and its limitations from the inside. There truly is no dissonance between Islām and modern science.

Let me conclude with two thoughts. One is regarding the urge to know. As I mentioned before, the Holy Qur'ān and the teaching of the Holy Prophet^{sa} emphasise the creating and acquiring of knowledge as bounden duties of a Muslim throughout his or her life. I spoke of Al-Bīrūnī who flourished at Ghazna in Southern Afghanistan one thousand years ago. The story is told of his death by a contemporary who says: “I heard, Al-Bīrūnī was dying. I hurried to his house for a last look; one could see that he would not survive long. When they told him of my coming, he opened his eyes and said: ‘Are you so and so?’ I said: ‘Yes.’ He said: ‘I am told you know the solution to a knotty problem in the laws of inheritance of Islām.’ And he alluded to a well-known puzzle which had baffled the *Faqīhs* [jurists] in the past. I said: ‘Abu Raihan, at this time?’ And Al-Bīrūnī replied: ‘Don't you think it is better that I should die knowing, rather than ignorant?’ With sorrow in my heart, I told him of my resolution, and then took my leave. I had not yet crossed the portals of his house when the cry aros from inside: ‘Al-Bīrūnī

is dead.”

As my last thought, I would like to quote from the Holy Book which, more than anything else I know, speaks of the eternal wonder I have personally discovered in my own science:

And if all the trees that are in the earth were pens, and the ocean—seven more oceans to replenish it—were ink, the words of Allah would not be exhausted. Surely, Allah is Mighty, Wise.¹¹

ENDNOTES

1. The Holy Qur'ān, 88:18-21
2. The Holy Qur'ān, 3:191-192
3. A.J. Arberry, *Revelation and Reason in Islām*, (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1957), 19.
4. H.J.J. Winter, *Eastern Science*, (London: John Murray, 1952), 72-73.
5. Roger Briffault, “Making of Humanity,” quoted in *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islām*, ed. Muhammad Iqbal, (Lahore: M. Ashraf, 1971), 129-130.
6. Ibn Khaldūn, “The Muqaddimah,” in *The Muslim World on the Eve of Europe's Expansion*, ed. J. Saunders, (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1966), 131-134.
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8. William Eton, *A Survey of the Turkish Empire*, (London: T. Cadell & W. Davies, 1809), 190-193; 206-10; 231-233; 275; 278-281; 283-284.
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10. The Holy Qur'ān, 2:3-4.
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THE NEW YEAR: A TIME FOR SELF-REFLECTION AND REFORMATION

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The new year is a time for self-reflection and reformation. It is universally observed that people around the world—regardless of race or religion—make resolutions to bring about a good change within their habits and lifestyle. A person tends to rely on one’s own strength and ability to effectively bring about that change, but the Promised Messiah^{as} reminds us of the key to reformation. Underscoring the importance of reliance in God Almighty and seeking His help in the journey of self-reformation, he states:

Remember that for reformation of the self, mere suggestions and schemes cannot by themselves achieve anything. He who relies purely on his own plan of action is unsuccessful and fails because he considers his own effort to be ‘god’. Consequently, such people are deprived of the grace and blessing that kills their ‘capacity’ to commit sin and grants them the strength to protect themselves against evil and to fight evil. This is so because it comes from God Almighty Who is not a slave to schemes and plans...

Hence it is a false notion to imagine that one can achieve purification of the self merely through one’s own effort. This does not, however, mean that one should not make any effort at all or that one should not strive [in the path of God]. On the contrary, effort and striving is necessary and is, indeed, a duty. God’s grace does not allow hard work and true effort to go to waste. Hence, one should not abandon plans of action and effort required for reformation of the self but such plans should not be of the

kind that are contrived by a person himself, rather only such schemes and plans should be adopted that have been described [in the Holy Qur’ān] by God Himself and that have been adopted and practiced by the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa} of Islām. Follow in the steps of the Holy Prophet^{sa} and implore God for help through prayer. You are stuck deep in the mire of impurity but without God’s grace you cannot reach the clean spring that would lead to purification—you cannot achieve this through your own efforts alone.¹

It is also important to remember that before bringing about a change, one needs to examine oneself and take note of the things that need changing. Inward reflection is necessary for spiritual, moral, and practical reformation. In this regard, Ḥazrat Mirza Bashīrud-Dīn Maḥmūd Aḥmad, Khalifatul-Masīḥ II^{ra}, outlined how a person can bring about a positive change in *The Way of the Seekers*. Mentioning the steps to determine which vices one suffers from, he provided the following breakdown of how to conduct self-reflection:

By self-examination: When one comes to know what are the various virtues and vices, one should conduct a self scrutiny in order to identify the vice from which one suffers and the virtues that one does not practice.

By consultation with a sincere friend: One should consult some sincere and close friend who should be asked to study one’s overt behavior. Of course, he should not set out on a hunt for secret vices. That would in itself be an evil. The function of the friend should be to point out the faults in one’s overt actions, faults of which one

may not be fully conscious.

By self-identification: Even a friend is likely to overlook a friend’s faults. To remedy this, one should have recourse to a third method. One should try to identify in one’s own person the virtues and vices





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that one is able to identify in others.

By identification of faults by opponents:

One can go one better. One should know what faults one's enemy finds in him and proceed seriously to check up if those faults are really found in him or not. This

“One should have true knowledge with an enlightened understanding of divine attributes and allow them to envelope one's soul and study them at close quarters and try to imbibe their true spirit.

would bring to one's knowledge quite a few faults of which one was not aware before. Similarly, one could also check up on the virtues which one's enemies acknowledge for not un-often, even an enemy cannot help acknowledging one's merits.

Best method of self-appraisal: The best and most important method to be fully posted about virtues and vices is to study the Holy Qur'an. When the reader comes across the vices from which the earlier peoples suffered, he should reflect and consider whether he himself does or does not also suffer from them. Also when the Holy Qur'an mentions a virtue, the reader should check up whether he has that virtue or not. There is another great advantage of such a study. As it proceeds, all virtues and vices will gradually unfold themselves, one after the other. This is not possible otherwise. We cannot think of every virtue and vice all at once. Also, recitation of the Holy Qur'an gives rise to fear of God which should help the pursuit of virtues and avoidance of vices.²

A person may find himself in the predicament of knowing what his vices are, but unable to uproot them from his life. What should one do then? Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II^{ra} states the solution thus:

The primary remedy lies in *Istighfār* – in seeking God's forgiveness by invoking His attribute of covering up and forgiving sins. *Istighfār* has two aspects. In one, the sinner seeks divine forgiveness for the sins he has committed in the past, or prays to ward off sins to which he is a prey. In the other, the person concerned prays to God that his tendency towards sin be suppressed altogether and not

even a vestige of sin should touch him through His grace. It is in this sense that Prophets seek *Istighfār* of God.

One should have true knowledge with an enlightened understanding of divine attributes and allow them to envelope one's soul and study them at close quarters and try to imbibe their true spirit. For instance, while contemplating His grace, one should recall the bounties one has received from Him and say: Why should I not give to His creatures that which He, in His Infinite grace has given to me? Such reflection would inspire him with resistance to evil and love of virtue.

One should reflect on the good consequences of virtue and bad consequences of evil. One should visualize how virtue ultimately yields good and vice harmful results. This would help one acquire knowledge of good and evil.

Taubah (Repentance)

The next step is *Tauba*, or repentance before God with an awakened conscience. *Taubah* means:

Genuine remorse over past sins. This is a permanent state of the heart.

Fulfilling the obligations that were left unfulfilled. For instance, to perform pilgrimage to the Ka'ba if it has not been performed already. But neglect of prayer cannot be made good like this. For such default the only recourse left is to seek forgiveness of God.

Seeking pardon of each person affected by the sinner's defaults, such as God has caused to be forgotten.

Doing compensatory favors to those who have suffered at one's hands.

Firm resolve not to commit an evil act again.

These are, in fact, the conditions precedent to *Tauba* which is granted only if these conditions are adequately fulfilled.³

There are times when the burden of one's sins and errors bear heavily on a person. One could possibly feel hopeless and the task of reformation appears like an insurmountable peak. It is important to never give up hope at a slight falter or lapse; rather, a true believer is one who treks on, no matter the circumstance. This is the advice Ḥazrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II^{ra} gives:

One should not worry too much if the heart is not in it. One should persist in doing good as a duty. One should continue to be charitable, even if charitable acts hurt one. One should go on praying even when one is unable to concentrate. The important thing to remember is that duties must be performed with studied intent and without losing heart. The Promised Messiah^{as} used to relate this story which I have also related a number of times.

A disciple once visited his spiritual preceptor and mentor and stayed the night with him. The preceptor spent a great part of the night in supplicating and at the end the disciple heard God's response that the supplication was rejected. He was shocked, thinking that the preceptor was not a good guide since his prayers had been rejected although people came to him

“A famous saying of Jesus, peace be upon him, is that even if you have an iota of faith in your heart, you can move mountains.

to request for prayers. However, he kept his counsel and said nothing. The next night the same thing happened. The preceptor prayed through the greater part of the night and received the same reply. The same performance was repeated the third night.

Now the disciple could keep silent no longer and asked the preceptor: You have been praying for the last three nights. Every time you pray, God replies that your prayer shall not be heard. Why do you persist in offering the same prayer again and again? The preceptor replied: You do not know that I have been offering the same prayers for the last twenty years and I have not lost patience. You have heard the divine answer only three times and have lost hope. My business is to pray. It is for God to accept or not to accept. He is doing His will as I am doing my duty. It so happened that on the fourth night the divine response came: All the prayers you have made so far are granted. Thus a man's duty is to continue to pray under all conditions and never give up. Not un-often, an act of external virtue initiates an inner process which gradually wipes a person clean.⁴

In his Friday Sermon of November 29, 2013, Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ V^{aa} stated:

Even if a person has a colossal amount of ills, it is not difficult to rid of them if he resolves to do so. A famous saying of Jesus, peace be upon him, is that even if you have an iota of faith in your heart, you can move mountains. This means that even if your sins are as

huge as mountains, if a person instils a little bit of faith, it can blow away the mountains. The day a believer resolves, no impediments shall remain in his way and the obstruction shall disappear.⁵

The Promised Messiah^{as} very beautifully encapsulates the power of resolve in his Farsi poetry:

خدا خود می شود ناصر اگر همت شود پیدا

God Himself becomes a Helper, if only one makes the resolve!

In short, the new year dawns upon us with the hope of a better tomorrow, but that tomorrow is contingent upon our resolve to overcome our shortcomings and bring about a positive change in our conditions. The key is to trust Allāh, seek His help, to remain hopeful and never give up. If a person adheres to these golden principles, there's a slim chance he would ever fail in life. On the contrary, such a positive attitude would lead him to great spiritual and worldly heights, with God's grace.

May Allāh the Almighty help us in achieving our goals and resolutions so that we too can produce a lasting, pious change within us! Āmīn!

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1. *Malfūzāt*, vol. 6, pp. 245-246; *The Review of Religions*, March 2003, pp. 20-22
2. *The Way of the Seekers*, pp. 89-90
3. *The Way of the Seekers*, pp. 91-92
4. *The Way of the Seekers*, pp. 92-93
5. *Al Hakam*, January 3, 2020, p. 10

اللَّهُمَّ أَنْتَ رَبِّي، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ، خَلَقْتَنِي وَأَنَا عَبْدُكَ، وَأَنَا عَلَى عَهْدِكَ وَوَعْدِكَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُ، أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا صَنَعْتُ، أَبُوءُ لَكَ بِنِعْمَتِكَ عَلَيَّ وَأَبُوءُ لَكَ بِذُنُوبِي، فَاعْفُ عَنِّي، فَإِنَّهُ لَا يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ

“O Allāh, You are my Lord; there is no god except You. You created me and I am Your servant. And I abide by Your oath and promise [that I may honour it] to the best of my ability. I seek refuge with You from every evil I have committed. I acknowledge Your favour upon me and I acknowledge my sin, so forgive me, for surely there is no one who can forgive sins except You.”

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Kitāb ad-Da'wāt)

4TH WORLD RELIGIONS CONFERENCE VERNON, BC

Rizwan Peerzada

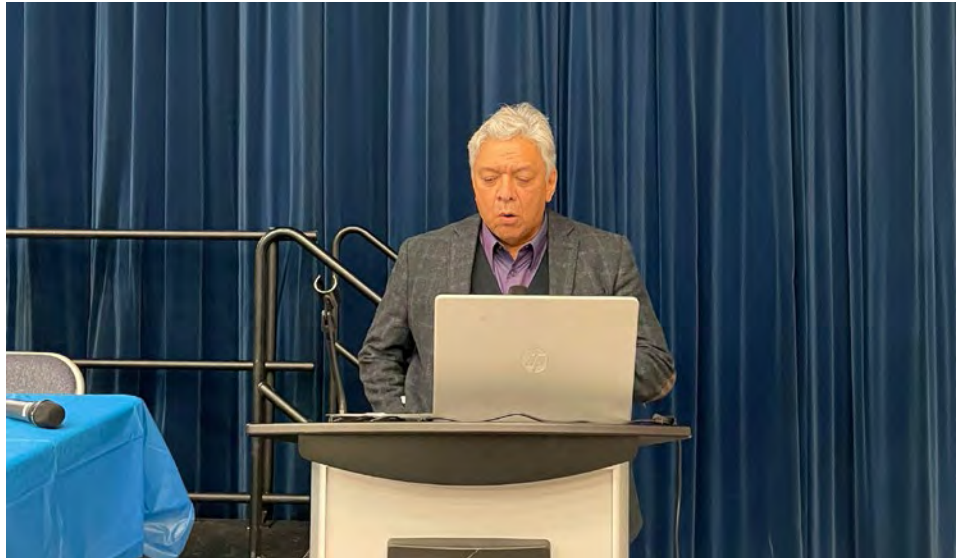
The 4th World Religions Conference, Vernon, BC was held on 15 November, 2021 at 6:30 pm. The conference was held virtually through Zoom and in person, observing COVID-19 protocols. The theme of the event was “Do We Need God to be Good?” It was livestreamed on *YouTube*. More information is also available at the program website: worldreligionsconference.ca

GEOGRAPHY OF VERNON

Vernon is a city in the Okanagan region of the Southern Interior of British Columbia, Canada. It is 440 km (270 mi) northeast of Vancouver. Named after Forbes George Vernon, former MLA of British Columbia, who helped establish the Coldstream Ranch, the City of Vernon was incorporated on December 30, 1892. Vernon has a population of 43,000 and is the largest city in the North Okanagan Regional District. A resident of Vernon is called a “Vernonite”.

HISTORY OF THE EVENT

The Aḥmadiyya Muslim Jamā‘at, BC Region, hosted the first conference in 2006 in Kelowna, which is 40 kilometers from Vernon. That conference was very successful due to its theme in perspective of the then recent tsunami that struck the coast of Java. A total of 270 seats were reserved much earlier than the scheduled date of the conference. *CBC Radio*, *Global TV*, local newspapers and *NL Radio* provided amazing coverage. After hosting eight conferences in Kelowna, Vernon was selected as the location of the next conference. Al-Ḥamdu lillāh, the first conference in Vernon in 2018 had over 400 guests. An example of coverage of the



Chief Byron Louis of Okanagan First Nation

event can be found at [Pathway to Peace](http://PathwaytoPeace.churchofjesuschrist.org) on churchofjesuschrist.org.

Global TV also provided coverage of the event on its news at 6 pm and 11 pm.

ABBOTSFORD JAMĀ‘AT’S CAMPAIGNING EFFORTS

The conference advertisement ran on *Facebook*, radio channels, and newspapers. Despite inclement weather, in-person attendance was 135 while 371 viewers attended the conference via *YouTube*. The media coverage was also very good. It generated 35,000 ad views and received 38,500 ad total views at *Vernon Morning Star* Newspaper digital ad and ads received 18 clicks with a click through rate of 0.05%. In this time frame, the *Vernon Morning Star* received 697,740 page views between October 29 - November 15. Radio coverage by 105.7 FM and 107.1 FM provided excellent publicity.

The theme of this year’s conference was, “Do We Need God to Be Good?” The event moderator was Chief Byron Louis of Okanagan First Nation. The speakers on the panel were as follows:

Chief Byron Louis, Moderator from Okanagan First Nation

Mr. Naeem Ahmad Lakhani, Regional Amīr Aḥmadiyya Community BC, Introductory Remarks

Senior Pastor Randy Hamm, Christian Perspective

Maulānā Umrān-ul-Haq, Bhatti, Missionary, Vancouver, Islām Perspective

Mr. Mike Brodreau, Buddhist Perspective

Rev. Dale Jukes, Living Spirituality

Mrs. Mohini Singh, Hindu Faith

Mr. Amarpreet Singh Hundal, Sikh Faith

MIRACLES & UNIQUENESS

On 15 November, 2021, a seven-member team, consisting of Regional Amīr Naeem Lakhan Ṣāhib, Murabbī Umran-ul-Haq Bhatti Ṣāhib, Regional Coordinator BC Rizwan Peerzada Ṣāhib, Mubarak Chaudhry Ṣāhib, Waqas Cheema Ṣāhib, Abdul Basit Ṣāhib, and Fahim Channa Ṣāhib left in the morning after prayers led by Regional Amīr, BC. Since Highway 5 was closed due to heavy rain and consequent flooding, we took Highway 7 to connect to Highway 1. However, the road was closed to traffic near Agassiz. On inquiring from various sources and checking government websites, we found that all major highways leading to Vernon were closed. At some locations, travellers, whose vehicles were stuck in mudslides or rendered inoperative due to water pooling, were being air-lifted by government agencies. This was a terrible disaster in the southern part of British Columbia as 225 millimeters of rain was recorded in two days. Many towns were destroyed due to the flooding.

In view of this grave situation, we were left with no other option but to turn back. However, the conference was not cancelled and it was decided that Maulānā Umran-ul-Haq Bhatti Ṣāhib would deliver his speech virtually. The remaining 6 speakers attended in person. Support from various representatives was amazing. They provided volunteers to assist Ḥāfiẓ Abdul Mannan Ṣāhib, who was already in Vernon.

Since the food we were taking to the conference could not be delivered there, it was donated to the local First Nations through their community centers. Moreover, food for the participants of the conference was arranged locally in Vernon.

FEEDBACK FROM GUESTS

Susan Ghattas:

Thank you very much for your Conference, especially the Faith you showed us that the event could continue despite the storm. The speakers were very good.

I'm on the board of the Kelowna Atheists

Skeptics and Humanists Association. We are an affiliate of BC Humanists who could get you in touch with humanist representatives from all over BC.

Daniel Mallet:

For future events we'd love to have a seat at the table to represent a secular atheist humanist worldview. I really love the approach you took of letting all voices speak and not focus on debate.

Patrick Finnigan:

Thank you for organizing this very inspiring conference. I could only join you for 1 hour. . . However, this morning I was able to watch and listen and absorb many insights and perspectives from all the speakers. An event like this helps to restore my faith in Canadians and how we can come together for a greater good. I will be sharing the Youtube link with my friends, neighbours and family.



Speaker panel



Guests listening to a speaker



Maulānā Umran-ul-Haq Bhatti Ṣāhib delivering a speech virtually



Mrs. Mohini Singh representing the Hindu faith

ISLĀMIC HERITAGE MONTH CELEBRATIONS IN OTTAWA

This is a report of two events held in the month of October 2021 to commemorate Islāmic Heritage Month, in Ottawa and Carleton Place.

It is a truism that there is blessing in working together. In the Holy Qur’ān, Allāh says:

وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ ۖ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ

That is, “And help one another in righteousness and piety; but help not one another in sin and transgression. And fear Allāh” (5:3)

By the grace of Allāh, Ottawa East and Ottawa West Jamā’ats were witness to the truth of this verse when they worked together to hold two Islamic Heritage Month events in October 2021.

The main event was held at Ottawa City Hall on Tuesday, October 19, 2021. In the past years, this event was held at Baitun Naseer Mosque. However, this time Faheem Affan Šāhib Assistant National Secretary Umūr Khārijīyya helped book the John Pigott Hall at City Hall. This gave us a large and frequently visited space to hold our exhibition.

The exhibition opened at 12:30 pm with a ceremony that began with a recitation of the Holy Qur’ān followed by its English and French translations. Murrabi Farhan Iqbal Šāhib delivered the welcome address followed by a video message from Respected Amīr Šāhib Jamā’at at Aḥmadiyya Canada. After that, dignitaries were invited for remarks by Faheem Affan Šāhib. All the attendees were very excited and grateful that a beautiful exhibition had been laid out. They were also appreciating the fact that this was an opportunity for them to come together in-person for the first time during the pandemic. The Deputy Mayor of Ottawa, Laura Dudas, who co-

sponsored this event said, “It’s great that you were able to organize an exhibit in person and liven up the City Hall”. She also expressed a desire for the Jamā’at to hold this event on an annual basis.

For the exhibition itself, the team contacted the National Tablīgh Department and obtained all the necessary materials. These included banners, Qur’ān translations, books, special table covers, and television sets. Khuddām from Ottawa East and West helped in the setup and windup of the event. Qā’id Šāhib Ottawa East arranged a large team for this purpose.

In order to publicize the event, various strategies were used. An *Eventbrite* page was also setup and a total of 76 guests registered for the event. Ads were placed on *Facebook*, *Twitter* and *Kijiji*. 1000 flyers were also printed and distributed in the area by Khuddām from Ottawa East and Ottawa West on the night before the event.

11 National Capital Region MPs, 40 PFA (Parliamentary Friends of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Jamā’at) members and party leaders were invited to join the event. Out of these, the following 5 MPs attended the event in person and gave remarks:

- MP Marie-France Lalonde (Lib)
- MP Anita Vanderbald (Lib)
- MP Jenna Suds (Lib)
- MP Pierre Poliviere (PC)
- MP Tim Uppal (PC) attended the event on behalf of opposition leader Erin O’Toole

Similarly, 8 National Capital region MPPs were invited to attend and give remarks. MPP Joel Harden (NDP) attended the event and gave remarks. 22 Ottawa city councilors and the mayor were invited to attend this event in person. Two councilors and the mayor were invited to speak as

well. Deputy Mayor Laura Dudas welcomed the dignitaries and presented the proclamation of Islāmic Heritage Month to Ottawa Jamā’at. Mayor Jim Watson also gave remarks. 3 councilors—Matthew Luloff (Ward 1), Rawlson King (Ward 13), and Riley Brockington (Ward 16)—came to see the exhibition after the opening event.

Fifteen ambassadors and high commissioners were also invited. The High Commissioner of India, Ajay Basaria, attended the opening ceremony and gave remarks. The High Commissioner of Sri Lanka and a representative from the German embassy came later to see the exhibition. 10 Muslim faith leaders, leaders of other faith groups and academia were also invited. A representative from NCCM (Ahmed) attended the event and presented a message from NCCM. A representative from the Christian Embassy (David Imbrock), a representative of the Archbishop of Ottawa, and a representative of the Agha Khan Council (Azad Lalany) were all in attendance. The Imām of the Ottawa Muslim Association Dr. Muhammad Suliman visited the exhibition after the opening ceremony. The president of Carleton University was also invited. He could not attend but sent a video message which was played at the opening ceremony.

CRIC (Capital Region Interfaith Council) members were also invited. Three of its members were able to attend in person. An invitation was also sent to University of Ottawa chaplains. The police chief of Ottawa along with five leads of different police teams were invited. The Chief himself, Peter Sloley, gave remarks. Three Ottawa police constables from the diversity unit along with Lisa Beaucage (a constable with Diversity and Race Relations)

attended. Jamā'at members were requested to send invitations to personal contacts as well. It is estimated that more than 75 non-Aḥmadi or non-Muslim guests were in attendance.

A media advisory was sent to more than 250 local area journalists on Monday, October 18, 2021. A CBC Ottawa cameraman recorded the opening event. This was later covered in the 7 pm and 11 pm local news. An Ottawa Citizen representative was present for the opening event. On the same day, a one-minute video report was published by Ottawa Citizen and Ottawa Sun. Moreover, a journalist from Capital Current (Carleton University) was also present to make a report of the event. This was published on their website the following day. *The Review of Religions* team was also invited to the event and asked to make a documentary. By the grace of Allāh, a detailed documentary of the event was prepared by Nasr Tahir Ṣāḥib and Farrukh Tahir Ṣāḥib.

We are very grateful that all the team leads and volunteers worked diligently as a well-knitted team and they are very excited and hope to have an even larger event next year that becomes a landmark, *Inshā'Allāh*.

Ten days after the event at Ottawa City Hall, a smaller team arranged an exhibition at Carleton Place City Hall on 28 October, 2021. The hall was also booked by Faheem Affan Ṣāḥib and more than 35 guests were in attendance, including the mayor and entire city council of Carleton Place as well as the Mayor of the town Almonte. The unique feature of this event was that this was the first time a large Islāmic exhibition was set up in the city hall of a city where there was almost no Muslim presence. Both mayors and the local-area MP Scott Reid gave remarks at the opening ceremony and they all appreciated the efforts made by the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community. A local reporter was present and published a detailed report in a local, online publication.

May Allāh reward all the volunteers, presenters and the organizers! Amīn! The readers of Aḥmadiyya Gazette are requested to remember them in their prayers.

MEDIA COVERAGE

[Capital Current](https://capitalcurrent.ca/city-hall-exhibit-showcases-muslim-culture-as-ottawa-declares-islamic-heritage-month/)

capitalcurrent.ca/city-hall-exhibit-showcases-muslim-culture-as-ottawa-declares-islamic-heritage-month/

[Ottawa Citizen](https://ottawacitizen.com/youtu.be/Nx8UMPgtEBE)

[youtu.be/Nx8UMPgtEBE](https://ottawacitizen.com/youtu.be/Nx8UMPgtEBE)

[Inside Ottawa Valley](https://insideottawavalley.com/news-story/10509337-carleton-place-exhibition-showcases-celebrates-muslim-culture/)

insideottawavalley.com/news-story/10509337-carleton-place-exhibition-showcases-celebrates-muslim-culture/

[The Review of Religions](https://thereviewofreligions.com/youtube.com/c/TheReviewofReligions/videos)

[youtube.com/c/TheReviewofReligions/videos](https://thereviewofreligions.com/youtube.com/c/TheReviewofReligions/videos)



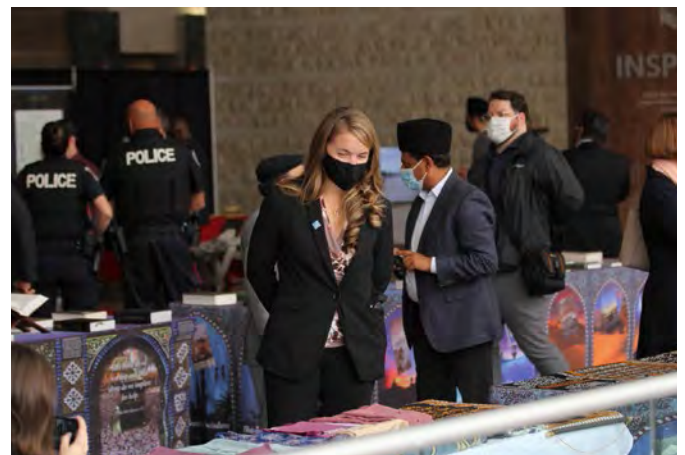
Exhibition at Carleton Place City Hall



Group picture with guests and volunteers, Carleton Place City Hall



Ottawa Police representatives at Ottawa City Hall



Guests at the Ottawa City Hall exhibition



AHMADIYYA MUSLIM JAMAAT
INTERNATIONAL

Aḥmadiyya Muslim Jamā‘at Press Releases

The following press releases have been provided by
[Press & Media Office](#), Aḥmadiyya Muslim Jamā‘at

Mubarak Mosque, UK

STUDENT MEMBERS OF MAJLIS KHUDDĀMUL AḤMADIYYA FROM WESTERN CANADA HAVE HONOUR OF A VIRTUAL MEETING WITH THE HEAD OF THE AḤMADIYYA MUSLIM COMMUNITY

His Holiness^{aa} gives guidance on a range of contemporary issues affecting young people in society

On 23 October 2021, the World Head of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community, the Fifth Khalifa (Caliph), His Holiness^{aa}, Ḥazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad held a virtual online meeting with student members of Majlis Khuddāmul Aḥmadiyya from Western Canada.

His Holiness^{aa} presided the meeting from his office in Islāmabad, Tilford, whilst 115 students joined from the Baitun Nur Mosque in Calgary, Canada.

Following a formal session starting with the recitation of the Holy Qur’ān, the members of Majlis Khuddāmul Aḥmadiyya had the opportunity to ask His Holiness^{aa} a series of questions regarding their faith and contemporary issues.

One of the attendees asked His Holiness^{aa} if some sins such as intentionally missing

one’s obligatory prayers were comparable to grave sins and crimes, such as committing murder or theft.

In response, Hazrat Masroor Aḥmad^{aa} said:

“Killing someone or stealing is a sin and it is a matter of usurping the rights of others or committing brutality against other human beings. As far as missing prayers is concerned, or not fasting when there is no genuine reason not to, these are examples of not practicing the commandments of Allāh the Almighty that are compulsory for a true Muslim. But Allāh the Almighty says that, ‘I can forgive some of your sins which concern Me or with regards to Me, or which are not affecting other people, but I will not forgive your sins which you are committing against your fellow beings, concerning the rights of the people. I will not forgive you if you are usurping the rights of the people.’ So, killing or stealing wealth is an even greater sin than not

praying.”

Ḥazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad^{aa} further stated:

“Nonetheless, prayer is also an obligatory commandment for people. This is why we always say that we have to fulfil both the rights of Allāh and the rights of human beings... Sometimes when you are offering your prayer and you see that somebody is doing something wrong with some person and the person is crying for help, you should break your prayer and go and help the person. That is the first preference. This is also in one of the traditions of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him). So, to fulfil the rights of each other is very important and at the same time Allāh’s rights are also very important and if you are praying or fasting, it is not only that you are performing one of the obligations; you are actually reforming yourself. With these things you are enhancing your

spiritual level, your righteousness, your piety level.”

Another Khādim asked His Holiness^{aa} about how to convey the message of Islām to his fellow students in an environment where religion is considered a ‘sensitive subject’.

Ḥazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad^{aa} said:

“If it is a sensitive topic and your friends and your fellow students do not want to hear you or they do not want to talk to you on this topic then you can just pray for them that Allāh the Almighty changes their hearts. So, out of sympathy and out of love for human beings, you should pray for them and Allāh the Almighty will accept your prayers... If your own behaviour, your own attitude is pro-religion and they see something different in you which is not present in them, then they will be attracted. So, your personal behaviour, your personal portrayal is also very much useful and is the main thing for spreading the message of Islām and bringing the people towards Allāh the Almighty. So, the first thing is that you pray, and secondly there should be a clear difference between you and the other people.”

Further elaborating, Ḥazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad^{aa} said:

“You see, people are very much curious. It is the nature of human beings, they are curious. So, when they see that this boy is different from them, they will try to find out what it is. Apart from that, when you are sitting with them, just in your passing remarks, you can talk about your religion, about Allāh the Almighty, and some small story related to this... This is one of the ways. Then they will realise that yes, this person believes in Allāh the Almighty. He believes in religion and he is telling us some of his stories or some good narration. Then they will (more likely) listen to you. It should be an indirect approach; not a direct approach nowadays. Once they come closer to you then there will be an opportunity to directly talk about religion. It is a long process. We have to work hard for that.”

Another attendee asked His Holiness^{aa} for his guidance about those who are not



Syednā Hazrat Khalifatul-Masiḥ V^{aa}

“Whatever the government is doing, it is for our betterment and we should acknowledge it by getting vaccines... My advice is that they should get vaccination.

getting vaccinated from amongst Aḥmadi Muslims.

Ḥazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad^{aa} said:

“Whatever the government is doing, it is for our betterment and we should acknowledge it by getting vaccines... My advice is that they should get vaccination. As far as the masks are concerned, they should wear masks and they should cover their mouth and nose.”

One of the students asked His Holiness^{aa} about the prophecy of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa} which states that the sun shall rise from the West at the time of the coming of the Promised Messiah^{as}, connoting that spiritual rejuvenation at the time would emanate from the West. The student enquired about when the prophecy is expected to be fulfilled and what is the responsibility of Aḥmadi Muslims in this regard.

Ḥazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad^{aa} said:

“We cannot precisely give a time frame. It is a prophecy and it will be fulfilled, God-willing, when the time comes. But our duty is that with our prayers, with our own actions and deeds, with our knowledge we should try to achieve this target as early as possible, even during our age. It is quite possible that we shall see this prophecy fulfilled during our time. So, if you are bowing before Allāh, offering your five daily prayers fervently, praying to Allāh the Almighty, that Allāh the Almighty gives you the chance to see this prophecy being fulfilled, and then your each and every action and deed is according to the teaching of Islām and the Holy Qur’ān, then if majority of our Aḥmadi Muslims are practicing accordingly then you will see this prophecy being fulfilled during our time even. But if not, then some time later, Allāh the Almighty will take His time for it to be fulfilled. We should try to reform ourselves.”

NATIONAL MAJLIS 'ĀMILA IN IRELAND HAVE HONOUR OF VIRTUAL MEETING WITH WORLD HEAD OF AḤMADIYYA MUSLIM COMMUNITY

His Holiness^{aa} gives guidance on a wide array of administrative and religious matters

On 24 October 2021, the National Majlis 'Āmila (Executive) of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community Ireland were granted a virtual official meeting and audience with the World Head of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community, the Fifth Khalifa (Caliph), His Holiness^{aa} Ḥazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad.

His Holiness^{aa} presided the meeting from his office in Islāmabad, Tilford, whilst the 'Āmila members joined the meeting virtually from the Maryam Mosque in Galway, Ireland.

During the meeting, all present had the opportunity to speak to His Holiness^{aa} and to receive the guidance and instructions of His Holiness^{aa} on a range of issues.

Speaking on the issue of carrying out effective outreach work (Tablīgh) in the country, Ḥazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad^{aa} said:

“You should increase your personal relations with people and have 1-1 meetings and contacts to increase the Tablīgh work. Invite people and establish personal contacts. It is only when you establish personal contacts with people that you can effectively carry out Tablīgh. Otherwise, simply distributing leaflets is not enough, as you will not know who has read them and what they did with it. The leaflets are only one of many ways. You should explore every avenue to see how you can carry out Tablīgh in the most effective manner in your circumstances.”

One of the missionaries in attendance mentioned that he had joined a cycling club to better integrate with the locals and establish contacts with the surrounding community in order to open up avenues of Tablīgh.

His Holiness^{aa} advised that other youth

should also be encouraged to join such clubs where they can integrate with the locals whilst also maintaining their own strength of faith and thus they will be able to establish contacts to make people aware of the peaceful message of Islām.

Speaking to the Ta'lim Secretary, responsible for improving the education standards within the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community, His Holiness^{aa} mentioned that there should be a students' advisory committee that guides young people on the best ways to excel in their education and advises of the most appropriate careers to pursue and excel in.

As the meeting concluded, one of the 'Āmila members asked if His Holiness^{aa} felt that people had learnt any lesson from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ḥazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad^{aa} said:

“People are continuing their worldliness and materialism like before and they have not turned towards God and neither do they wish to do so. The recent floods that have occurred – including those in Germany – have they learnt any lesson from them? For a short while, their

the people and only then will they learn some lesson, otherwise being afflicted with one or two hardships will not be sufficient for this.”

One of the 'Āmila members mentioned to His Holiness^{aa} that there are non-Muslims who are attracted towards the spiritual teachings of Islām but are not inclined towards following its moral code of conduct. He asked if such people should be encouraged to still join Islām with the intention that later on, with time, they will work on following the moral code of conduct of Islām too.

Ḥazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad^{aa} said:

“We do not do Tablīgh just for the sake of increasing our numbers. What is the benefit of asking somebody to join the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community and Islām, without his determination of reforming himself? What is Islām and what is religion? Religion requires you to reform yourself, to bow before Allāh, to discharge your duties you owe to Allāh the Almighty... So, you tell them what are the Islāmic teachings and that they should not only consider that this life is the only life; you will have to face another life which is an eternal

“It is only when you establish personal contacts with people that you can effectively carry out Tablīgh.”

attention turned towards Allāh when they were forced to line up in queues to get food and had to suffer. However, after that, they forgot everything when their situation improved. It is just as Allāh the Almighty states in the Holy Qur'ān that, ‘when there is a difficulty, people turn towards Me, but when they are alleviated of the hardship, they forget about Allāh.’ So, it seems that much bigger hardships are going to befall

life and there you will be answerable to Allāh the Almighty for all your deeds. If you have done something good, you will be rewarded, if you have done something wrong, you will be punished. So, you will have to realise this fact, that this life is not the permanent life and you should always think of the life that is to come where you will be answerable for all your deeds.”

MEMBERS OF NĀSHIRĀTUL AḤMADIYYA FROM NORTHERN ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND HAVE HONOUR OF A VIRTUAL MEETING WITH HEAD OF THE AḤMADIYYA MUSLIM COMMUNITY

“Islām protects all the religions and has nothing to do with extremism, terrorism or destroying other religions or spreading the message of Islām with the sword.” – Ḥazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad^{aa}

On 30 October 2021, the *World Head of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community, the Fifth Khalīfa (Caliph)*, His Holiness^{aa}, Ḥazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad held a virtual online meeting with members of Nāshirātul Aḥmadiyya aged between 13 and 15 from Northern England and Scotland.

His Holiness^{aa} presided the meeting from his office in Islāmabad, Tilford, whilst members of Nāshirātul Aḥmadiyya gathered at the *Darul Amaan Mosque* in Manchester.

Following a formal session starting with recitation of the Holy Qur’ān, members of Nāshirātul Aḥmadiyya had the opportunity to ask His Holiness^{aa} a series of questions regarding their faith and contemporary issues.

One of the attendees asked His Holiness^{aa}’ views about issues related to mental health and depression amongst people in society.

Ḥazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad^{aa} said:

“Often (mental health issues) are caused because we are involved too much in materialistic things. The preference order of our desires and our wishes has changed – instead of seeking Allāh’s love and Allāh’s closeness, we are running after worldly things. This is the main cause of it. And when the material desires are not fulfilled and you cannot get whatever you want, then you get frustrated and that frustration leads to anxiety. This is why Allāh has said in the Holy Qur’ān that remembrance of Allāh is the best way to attain satisfaction of your heart and peace of mind. So, if you remember Allāh whenever you have any problem – you bow before Him, you offer your five daily prayers fervently, sincerely – then Allāh will give comfort and satisfy your heart and resultantly you will feel comfortable and better.”



Syednā Hazrat Khalifatul-Masīḥ V^{aa}

Ḥazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad^{aa} further said:

“Most of the patients nowadays who are having an anxiety problem, it is because they are too much inclined towards worldly things. So, if you try to get closer to Allāh the Almighty, then at least 80% of your anxiety will finish and go. So, you are lucky that Allāh the Almighty has given you the chance to be a member of that community that is following the Reformer of the Age, the Promised Messiah^{as} whose advent was foretold by the Holy Prophet^{sa}. He asked us that instead of running after worldly things, strive to get closer to your Creator and that will give you satisfaction and comfort.”

Another member of Nāshirātul Aḥmadiyya asked about what the need of religion is when without following a religion you can still do good deeds.

Ḥazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad^{aa} said:

“As far as morals are concerned, an atheist can have good morals. He can have the quality of speaking truth all the time,

whereas some believers or followers of the religion do not speak truth. They sometimes are liars and so, in that way, that atheist is better than those believers. But at the same time, even atheists admit that all the good morals came to this world, or were introduced to humanity, through messengers of God, through the prophets. So, that shows that it is religion that has brought good morals in this world for human beings.”

Ḥazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad^{aa} further stated:

“Allāh the Almighty says that this worldly life is not the only life. There is life after death and that is what all the prophets told us, that after this life there is an eternal life. Allāh the Almighty says that when you do good deeds in this world and when you are discharging your duties you owe to your Creator and when you discharge your duties you owe to your fellow beings, then Allāh the Almighty will reward you in the Hereafter. So, this is why we say that not only manifest good morals, but a true believer – a follower of religion – should also discharge his duties towards

Allāh the Almighty and do according to what Allāh the Almighty has taught us and perform our obligations towards Allāh the Almighty... Allāh the Almighty says that it is not going to benefit Him if you worship Allāh - it is going to benefit you because Allāh the Almighty will reward you in this world and the Hereafter. And secondly, Allāh the Almighty says that you should perform your duties towards your fellow beings and that will also be rewarded in the Hereafter. An atheist, a non-believer only gets his reward in this world, but a believer gets his reward here and in the Hereafter. That is the benefit of following the religion."

Another attendee mentioned that in her school lessons, they cover the topic of 'terrorism'. She asked how she can help people understand that terrorism has no link or association with Islām.

In response, Ḥazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad^{aa} said:

"Islāmic teachings have nothing to do with terrorism. Allāh the Almighty says very clearly in the Qur'ān that killing of a person is akin to the killing of the whole of mankind and saving the life of one person is as if you have saved the life of the whole of mankind. And the Holy Qur'ān says that killing a person without reason will take you to hell. The Holy Qur'ān says that killing a believer will lead you to hell. But what are Muslims doing? Muslims are killing each other. So all those who are killing each other, according to the teachings of the Holy Qur'ān and the narrations of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, they will go to hell."

Ḥazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad^{aa} further stated:

"Islām says that to spread Islām you must not use sword. Even when the first commandment of fighting back the enemies of Islām was given in chapter Al-Hajj of the Holy Qur'ān, that clearly says that you have been granted permission to fight back - to retaliate against the enemies of Islām - because if now you leave them to do whatever they like then you will not see any religion on the face of the earth. You will not see any synagogue, any



Syednā Hazrat Khalifatul-Masiḥ V^{aa}

“Whatever the present-day people (extremists/terrorists) are doing in the name of Islām, they are actually defaming the name of Islām.

church, any temple or any mosque intact. So here where the permission is given to fight back, it is not to save Islām or to spread Islām! But, rather to save religion itself... So that shows Islām is not a militant religion. Rather, it protects religion. Islām is against all forms of terrorism and it is against all forms of extremism."

Ḥazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad^{aa} continued:

"Whatever the present-day people (extremists/terrorists) are doing in the name of Islām, they are actually defaming the name of Islām. They try to misinterpret the verses of the Holy Qur'ān in their favour, to falsely assert that (violent) Jihād is permitted and very much part of Islām... As I have already said, Islām protects all the religions and has nothing to do with extremism, terrorism or destroying other religions or spreading the message of Islām with the sword."

Another attendee asked His Holiness^{aa} how can one be like Syed Taalay Ahmed,

who was martyred whilst serving the cause of Islām and the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community.

Ḥazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad^{aa} said:

"Work hard for the cause of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community. Spread the message of Allāh the Almighty. Show your example as a good believer and a good Aḥmadi Muslim girl so that people will see you and say that these are the girls who manifest the true portrayal of Islāmic teachings. As far as martyrdom is concerned, Allāh knows better whom he is going to give this status. But at least we should perform our duty by practicing Islāmic teachings and portraying ourselves as the good believer and a good Muslim."