

ADDRESS AT THE RECEPTION BY CITY OF GLASGOW

Address by Khalifatul Masih V, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{aba} to the City of Glasgow Reception on 7th March, 2009, reproduced from April 2009 *Review of Religions*:

As you know that this function is being held to extend the kind gesture on the commemoration of the centenary celebrations of the Ahmadiyya Community, centenary Khilafat celebrations of the Ahmadiyya Community.

In this respect, I would like to briefly explain the purpose of the Ahmadiyya Khilafat since the actions of certain Muslim groups have led some people to become fearful whenever they hear the word 'Khilafat.'

The institution of Khilafat has been established with the help of God Almighty in order to perpetuate and try and achieve the objective for which the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at (or community) was sent to this world. We believe our Founder to be the Promised Messiah and Promised Reformer awaited by the world.

What was the purpose of his advent? The answer to this can be found in many of his speeches and writings.

The first purpose was to help man recognize his Creator; to invite him to bow before God Almighty; to cleanse mankind of the association of partners with God; and, finally, to teach mankind to consider God to be All-Powerful and Omnipotent.

And the second purpose of his advent was to remind man to fulfill the rights owed to other human beings, who are the best of God's Creation. Human beings are the most conscious of all beings and have been granted intelligence, as a result of which they are superior to all other forms of life.

If we analyze the situation today, it becomes very clear that mankind is very far away from achieving these two objectives. Such has been the pace of progress that today's inventions could not have been envisaged a few centuries or even decades ago, yet they have now become an integral part of everyday life in the developed world. Ever-new modes of transportation and means of communication have brought people together to make the world a 'global village.' The mass media too has brought rich and poor countries together.

However, although it appears that these things have given man great advantage, they have in fact distanced man from his Creator. If we leave to one side those

who do not profess any faith and those who do not believe in God, even those who follow any given faith have also forgotten the fundamental teachings of their faith with regard to the recognition of their God and the rights owed to man.

The fertile mind that God has endowed to man and which he has used to develop all of the latest inventions should have made man grateful to God Almighty and caused him to be particularly eager to bow down before Him. On the contrary, those people who are ungrateful are on the increase. Both in the East and the West, even those who worship according to their faiths and who attend their places of worship and believe in God, their children and future generations consider God to be a figment of imagination and religion has become a subject of ridicule.

Those who do not believe in God deem the inventions and development of today to be the result of man's evolutionary progress and effort. Consequently, it is thought that man himself is the architect of new avenues of progress.

But as an Ahmadi Muslim and a believer in a God Who is the Knower of the unseen, I will say that this development was in fact destined for this age.

God Almighty foretold us in the Holy Qur'an which is the book of law revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw), that this progress was pre-destined for man. To illustrate, I shall now quote a few examples from this Book.

The Holy Qur'an says in Chapter 81, Verse 4:

And when the mountains are made to move ...

This verse has several meanings. For example, one meaning is cutting ways through mountains, as can be seen in this part of the world also. The ease with which mountains are being blown apart today was unknown 1400 years ago.

Another meaning of this verse is that large ocean liners, which are comparable to mountains, will travel from one place to another carrying cargo and passengers. A few centuries ago, the shipping industry was strikingly less developed.

Another example is that it was foretold in an age when she camels were considered a measure of wealth and the best means of transportation, that this means of transportation would be abandoned. It is stated in the Qur'an:

And when the she-camels ... are abandoned ...
(Ch.81 :V5)

In other words, this verse predicts that camels will be replaced by better and faster means of transportation, rendering the camel redundant. Today the trains,

buses, cars and aero planes that we use prove this to be true.

Then there is another prophecy:

And when people are brought together ...
(Ch.81:V 8)

This is a prophecy that tells us that the means of contact and communication will become so easy that the world will become a 'global village.' It is obvious that this has again proven to be true.

I have given a few examples that show that there is a God and that He gives knowledge to His chosen people, which after hundreds of years are proven to be true and point to that God Who is the Master of All Powers.

So, this is a matter of reflection for those who dismiss the existence of God, writing voluminous books in an attempt to distance the world from God and religion. And it is matter of consideration particularly for those who follow them. Most certainly, the foremost duty of man is to recognize His Creator.

The second purpose to which the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community has drawn our attention is to discharge the rights we owe to one another.

On the surface, we say that mutual rights should be discharged - and indeed in this age there are many NGOs established to help attain this purpose - but they have limited financial resources at their disposal. Secondly, they can only work to the extent that governments permit them. Thus, to discharge due rights in fairness, it is imperative that national governments fulfill the obligations of justice towards their citizens in reality. Furthermore, superpowers should fulfill the rights of poor nations and act with integrity.

On an individual basis, every person should sacrifice his own ego and discharge rights by acting fairly. In this regard, the Holy Qur'an has given a commandment that should serve as a guiding principle for every section of society and every government.

God says in the Holy Qur'an:

Indeed, Allah enjoins justice and the doing of good to others; and giving like kindred ... (Ch.16:V.91)

This is the shining principle of how to discharge the rights of one another. The Arabic word '*Adl*' means 'absolute justice.'

What does absolute justice entail? In answer to this question, the Holy Qur'an states:

O ye who believe! Be steadfast in the cause of Allah, bearing witness in equity; and let not a people's enmity incite you to act otherwise than with justice. Be always just; that is nearer to righteousness. And fear Allah. Surely! Allah is aware of what you do. (Ch.5:V.9)

This is the highest standard of justice: that neither on an individual basis, nor on a national basis, should the enmity of others prevent you from acting otherwise than with justice.

Is this not a beautiful principle to destroy all walls of hatred?

The second thing that has been mentioned is that apart from justice, if you wish to promote love and affection and wish to remove enmity from the world, kindness must be shown.

What is an act of kindness?

It is that having overpowered another, when you see that the vanquished admits his error and seeks forgiveness, you must forgive out of kindness and compassion. The real purpose is to reform. If reformation can be effected without punishment, then you should always forgive. This is what justice requires. Justice requires that punishment should be proportionate to a crime and should not be excessive. However, kindness requires that you either reduce the punishment or forgive.

And further guidance is given, namely, that having displayed kindness, do not count the favors you confer upon others in fact, forgive as you would forgive your dearest relatives.

The best illustration of this is the way that parents forgive their children, because parents do not remind their children of their past favors. Neither do they expect anything from the children in return.

Today, if we analyze the situation, it becomes very clear that, let alone the requirement to act with kindness, even the requirements of justice are not being fulfilled. This is why unrest is growing. And this is why the weak react against the superior. It is a basic principle that these reactions do not follow logic and equity.

During the last century two wars were fought. After the First World War, the League of Nations was established but the requirements of justice were not

fulfilled and consequently this led to the Second World War culminating in the use of atomic bombs. Then, for the protection of human rights, the UNO, United Nations, was established. Means for avoiding wars were considered, but today we see that many small as well as large countries possess atom bombs. And there are some amongst them who are irresponsible and ignorant about the devastating consequences of these weapons.

It is not inconceivable that if they are used, at the very outset the horrific fallout will become immediately manifest, and that day will be like doomsday.

Hence for establishing world peace, it is vital that the standards of equity and justice be fulfilled. On a smaller scale, wars are occurring in several countries. Superpowers are involved on the pretext of helping to maintain peace; and a huge sum is being spent on this. If one analyses this deeply one would realize that apart from creating animosities, these military activities are also a major cause of today's financial crisis. This crisis has engulfed the rich Western countries to the degree that they are now proclaiming a state of economic depression.

So, today man needs to seriously think about how true peace can be established; and how everyone's rights can be discharged; and how the requirements of justice can be fulfilled. Otherwise the unrest prevailing in many countries, the looming financial crisis and the increase of selfishness at every stage may lead us to a third world war.

And I do not say this to cause fear, but having recently entered a new century, if we assess the past eight years, eight or so years, then we see that the world is becoming evermore restless.

Bloodshed and mayhem are ever increasing. Scant attention is being paid towards discharging the rights of others.

According to the newspaper reports, fear and respect of the law which existed some decades ago seems to be diminishing in Western countries as well. Knife crime on the streets is rising.

Such problems are sometimes attributed to immigrants in the Western world; but let it be very clear that this rise is due to being far removed from God and the greed and non-fulfillment of one's desires. If we ponder over this we will realize that this is the real cause of this restlessness. On the other hand, in the less developed and developing Asian and African countries, we can see a reaction against the developed countries. And all that is happening in their countries is attributed to the policies of superpowers. Though I do not agree with this, and consider it to be their own follies, yet we cannot rule out the grievances of the

Third World countries.

Despite the facilities of communication which should have brought people together, walls of hatred have been erected and hearts are being distanced from each other.

In the Western countries as well there is growing anxiety amongst the public that the amount being spent in the name of establishing peace has destroyed their economy. The effects of the depression are unfolding day by day and unemployment and the cost of living are increasing.

Animosity and feelings of hatred are growing against other nations. For example, here in the West, in some places slogans are being raised, saying: Why should Africans and Asians be given work and why should they be given benefits? Why should they be assisted when they are not doing any productive work?

In summary, what I wish to say is that peace depends on justice, and economic progress depends on peace.

This will only happen when man recognizes his Creator and only then will the rights of God's creation be discharged.

If the current situation prevails, then strife will multiply. Selfishness will increase and consequently the whole world will be engulfed by severe disaster and the future generation will blame us for this cruelty. So in this difficult time we should all join hands together in enjoining true peace in the world. I hope and pray that you, the people of this area, which is known as a very rich area of politicians, and which has made quite a number of leaders at the national level also, will take a lead in this.

Finally I would like to say once again that I am grateful to all of you who have listened to me. Your coming here is a great step towards promoting love and affection.

May Allah reward you all. Thank you.