

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

ISLAM
HALL LOVE ALL MANKIND.



The Light

August
2019

International Organ of the Centre for the Worldwide Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat Islam

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We welcome all scholarly contributions to The Light.

The Call of the Messiah

by **Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad**



The Promised Messiah and Mahdi

(Editor's note: Any quotations from the Quran are translated from the author's explanations and are not literal translations of the verse quoted. This extract is from the book *Nuzul-ul-Masih*, taken from the Lahore Ahmadiyya publication 'Essence of Islam', p. 109 -112 where the Promised Messiah puts forward arguments and signs about his claim.)

The Divine word which has been revealed to me has shown the power of a miracle and contains its mighty magnetism. It has not withheld the unseen, rather revealing to me the deep secrets of the future thousands of times. With a secret tether, it drew me to itself, while it cast another tether on obedient and capable hearts and brought them to me. It gave them eyes with which they began to see, and it gave them ears with which they began to hear, and it gave them a fearless constancy and faithfulness with which they became ready to sacrifice their lives in this path. Can all these things be the result of a satanic suggestion or delusion? Is Satan equal to God in power and glory? Why is God silent, and why does he not assist you? Listen to me, for He who revealed the word to me, addressed me in the following words, "I shall reveal the light of my glory, and raise thee with the manifestation of My power. A warner came into the world, but the world did not accept him. God shall surely accept him and manifest his truth with mighty attacks." It is, therefore, necessary that the current age period should not pass away, nor I depart from this world until all these promises of God are fulfilled.

The person who walks in darkness and is not even aware that Almighty God reveals His sure and certain word to His servants is ignorant of the existence of God. He thinks that the whole world is involved in the darkness of doubt like himself. He adheres to the doctrine that inspired words are no more than temptations of the devil, confused dreams or delusions,

or at the most, words of a doubtful and uncertain Divine origin. But, as I have already stated, when the sun of Divine revelation shines upon a heart, the darkness of doubt and distrust is expelled from it. It is impossible for the darkness of doubt shall remain in the heart illuminated with the effulgent light of the word of God.

In religious history, there are ample examples of the reception of certain Divine revelation even by others than prophets. It was on the strength of Divine revelation that the mother of Moses trusted her infant son to the waves of the river, yet she was not guilty of infanticide in the eyes of God, which she ought to have been if she looked upon the words revealed to her as having a doubtful origin. Mary, the mother of Jesus, was also inspired with certain Divine revelation, in obedience to which she did not care a bit for her people. Alas, for the unfortunate Muslim nation, that it does not enjoy similar favour in the sight of God, which the women of earlier nations did. If this is true, it cannot be called "the best nation" (referring to the title in the Holy Quran), but the worst and the most ignorant nation. Khizr was not a messenger of God, and yet the word of God revealed to him was not doubtful, for he could not have proceeded to take the life of a child on its strength if the contrary is supposed. The revelation of God to the companions of the Holy Prophet to wash his holy body was also certain, for had it been doubtful they could not have proceeded to act upon it.

Though a person may deny my revelation on account of his blindness, yet if he is a Muslim and not secretly an atheist, he must adhere to the belief that the doors of certain divine revelation are open to Muslims. He must believe that many men and women in former nations enjoyed the favour of being the receptacle of the pure word of God, though they were not prophets. Thus, the presence of a similar Divine revelation is necessary among the Muslims so that instead of being the most excellent nation, they are not proven to be the most despised of all. Almighty God has therefore brought into view this most mighty dispensation at the end of times, that it may be a perfect example of the Divine dealings with His servants in the previous ages.

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I Shall Love All Mankind.

Jesus and Islam

By Declan Henry



Before writing my book on Islam, I knew very little about the religion other than a few basics. As a Catholic, I was eager to discover more about its core beliefs. Writing *Voices of Modern Islam* was a voyage of discovery during which I interviewed ordinary Muslims — men and women — as well as imams and Islamic scholars. These interviews enabled me to quickly dispel common misconceptions about Islam. It is not a violent religion, although some misguided people who know little about their faith, are brain-washed by hate preachers into believing the incorrect sectarian interpretations of the Quran. In addition to the Quran, Muslims consult the Hadith; a religious text outlining the words and actions of the Prophet Muhammad.

The most fascinating revelation from my research was how much Islam and Christianity have in common. And it is here that my Catholic background came into the equation. I learned that Islam, Christianity and Judaism are all descendants of Abraham. We share the same lineage. And while Muslims deeply respect the Prophet Muhammad there is a special place in Islam, too, for Jesus. Did you know that Jesus is mentioned over forty times in the Quran or that there is a chapter devoted especially to him, his mother, Mary, and her parents? Nevertheless, different types of Muslims, Sunni and Ahmadiyya Muslims, for example, hold views and beliefs about Jesus that differ to Catholics. I was surprised by the views held by these Muslims which indicated that Jesus might not have died in the way Catholics and other Christians believe to be true. For example, Sunni Muslims do not believe Jesus died on the cross. They believe

that when he was about to be crucified, God decided to be kind to him and worked a miracle. Jesus was placed in a room by himself before the crucifixion, but God sent angels to the room and took him up, alive, to heaven. He then replaced Jesus with a lookalike, someone with similar facial features. Some Sunni Muslims believe that Jesus went straight to heaven and converted to Islam. They also believe he will descend from Heaven aged 33 and carry on with his life from

when he was last on earth. According to Sunni Muslims Jesus will arrive in Damascus and there will be a big bird at each side of him as he comes down from the sky. From Damascus he will travel on to Jerusalem. He will take on Dajal — the anti-Christ — who will be the greatest corruption the world has ever seen and will conquer this evil. Muslims believe that God has already written this fate. They believe that Jesus will stay for 40

years and during this time will get married and have children. He will ask the people to follow Islam and to believe in one God before leading Muslims in preparation for the Day of Judgement.

Ahmadiyya Muslims and the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement for the Propagation of Islam both hold a different perspective about the life and death of Jesus to that of Sunni Muslims. They say that to pacify the Jews and the Imperial Government in Rome, official records showed Jesus had died but they believe these records to be untrue. They base this argument on the reality of what crucifixion entailed. Because of blood loss from wounded hands and feet, physical exhaustion, pain, hunger and thirst, criminals generally took several days to die on the cross. The minimum time of death by crucifixion ranged from 24 to 28 hours, but the execution often lasted much longer. In such cases it was customary to break the bones (legs

11 AUGUST - EID UL ADHA

16 AUGUST - START OF UK CONVENTION.

17 AUGUST - CONFERENCE IN HG WELLS HALLS WOKING:
 "HOW DID THE LAHORE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT REFORM MUSLIM THOUGHT IN MY COUNTRY"

18 AUGUST - TRIP TO HISTORIC PLACES

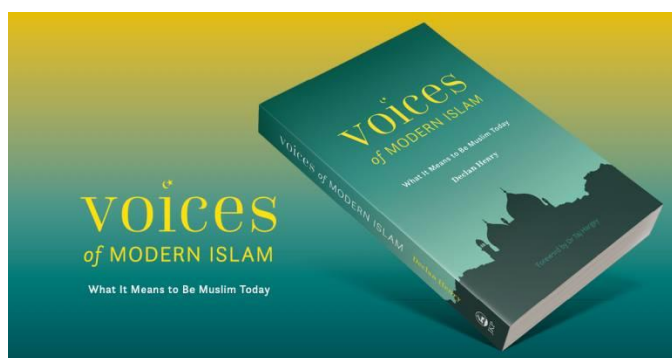
and arms) of the criminal so death would be hastened by internal bleeding. They believe that Jesus did not die on the cross and that God saved him from the Jews of Judea, his persecutors, with the help of Joseph of Arimathea.

Pontius Pilate was thoroughly convinced of the innocence of Jesus and devised a scheme to save him. He chose Friday afternoon as the time for the crucifixion, so he could not remain on the cross after sunset because of the Sabbath. The bones of the two thieves crucified on either side of Jesus were broken to ensure their deaths, but as Jesus appeared to be already dead, his bones were not broken. Joseph of Arimathea received permission from Pontius Pilate to have Jesus' body taken from the cross, and he placed it in a rock-hewn chamber of his family's sepulchre, where a Pharisee named Nicodemus treated Jesus with spices and ointment until he was restored to consciousness.

Jesus had previously said his mission on earth wasn't complete and that he had to convey his message to the lost sheep of the House of Israel. Indeed, it was his mission to preach to all the 12 tribes of Israel — only 2 of which were in Palestine. So, after recovering from his wounds, he travelled to the east through Syria and then to Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan, visiting all the lost tribes before completing his travels in India. Here he was known as Yuz Aasif — The Prince — Prophet. The latter part of his life was spent in Kashmir, where he lived to the ripe old age of 120 before being buried in the city.

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'Voices of Modern Islam' by Declan Henry can be purchased on Amazon.



Unique Features of the Holy Ka'bah as The House of God

By Nasir Ahmad, B.A., LL.B.



“Certainly, the first house Divinely appointed for men is the one at Bakkah. Blessed and a guidance for all nations!

“In it are clear signs: It is the Place of Abraham; and whoever enters it is safe; and pilgrimage to the House is a duty which men owe to Allah – whoever can find a way to it” (3:96-97).

Prophecies about the Ka'bah

The clear signs in Makkah as enumerated here are three. In fact, these are three prophecies with regard to the future of Makkah. The first is that it is the Place of Abraham which has already been declared to be the Muslim centre (2:125). Hence the first prophecy is that the doctrine of the Unity of the Divine Being will be proclaimed to the whole world from this centre.

The second sign is that Makkah will always be secure; that is, it shall not fall into the hands of an enemy who would destroy it. Thus its security is assured both physically and spiritually.

The third prophecy is that pilgrimage to the Sacred House shall continue to be made for ever, and no power in the world shall ever be able to put a stop to it.

The most striking fact about these prophecies is that they were all announced at a time when the Holy Prophet (saw) and his followers had apparently been driven away from the Sacred Place, and the Place was in the exclusive possession of an enemy who did not allow the Muslims to visit the place even during the sacred months; and at a time when the small Muslim community was in danger of being utterly destroyed by that powerful enemy on any

flimsy excuse.

The name Bakkah is the same as Makkah (Imam Raghīb). It is from *ta-baak-kah*, meaning crowding together of men (Imam Rāzī). Others say that it is from the root word *bakkah*, meaning 'the breaking of the neck'. And the name is given to it because whenever a tyrant forced his way to it, his neck was broken (Imam Rāzī).

Bakaa also means weeping. It refers to the time when there was no water around the Ka'bah and then miraculously the Zam Zam spring appeared under the feet of the infant Ishmael, and it changed the situation and since then tribe after tribe started settling in Makkah.

The Bible also mentions about the valley of Baca in connection with the pilgrimage. Below is the quote from Psalms:

"How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord Almighty! My soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God... Blessed are those who dwell in Your house; they are ever praising You. Blessed are those whose strength is in You, who have set their hearts on pilgrimage. As they pass through the Valley of Baca, they make it a place of springs; the autumn rains also cover it with pools" (Psalms 84:1-7).

The translation of the Arabic word *Baka'a* as 'lack of stream' in the Jewish Encyclopaedia seems to throw some light on the nature of the valley before the appearance of the stream of Zam-Zam near the Ka'bah, which was 'a dry place with no vegetation whatsoever', as rightly described by the Qur'anic words *bi-waa-din-ghay-ri zee zar-'in*: "a valley unproductive of fruit" (14:37).

Here I would like to mention some interesting features of the Ka'bah which to me are unique:

1. It is the only and the oldest house of worship which still exists and is the centre of worship of Divine unity. Edward Gibbon, a well-known British historian, writes in his book *Decline and Fall of Roman Empire*: "The genuine

antiquity of Caaba ascends beyond the Christian era ... a famous temple, whose superior sanctity was revered by all the Arabians; the linen or silken veil, which is annually renewed by the Turkish emperor, was first offered by the Homerites, who reigned seven hundred years before the time of Mohammad" (vol. v, pp. 223-224).

2. No house of worship compares to it in simplicity, structure and worldwide veneration.

3. No house of worship retained its originality since it was first rebuilt by Prophet Abraham and Prophet Ishmael.

4. It is the only house of worship which commemorates till today the dedication and sacrifice of Prophet Abraham and Prophet Ishmael, who are venerated by followers of the three great religions of the world.

5. It is the only house of worship around which circuits are made in an anti-clockwise direction. Anti-clockwise circuits mean that circuits around the Ka'bah are intended that a pilgrim should progress spiritually like the working of a spiral which takes one upwards to the top or the ultimate objective, that is, love of Allah. This is what a pilgrim seeks by reciting the *Talbiyya*:

Allahumma Labbaika (O Allah, I am in Thy August presence!)

6. It is the only house of worship towards which devotees from all directions and from all over the world turn their faces; and when they come to the house itself, they make rows in a circle around it, which in formation appear like rings, putting their foreheads before Almighty Allah, glorifying Him, witnessing His Oneness, acknowledging His bounties and His Lordship. A unique manifestation of unity, submission and discipline.

7. Making seven circuits around this house means to gain perfection in righteousness, as the number seven stands for perfection. That is why there are seven heavens which show perfect manifestation of Divine Glory.

8. The only house of worship around which circuits are made glorifying the One and Only God, even to the exclusion of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw). The final scripture of Islam, the Holy Quran, categorically enjoins the pilgrims “to serve the Lord of this House only” (106:3).

9. Islamic celebrations are marked by emphasis on spiritual elevation as well as social discipline.

The first ten days of the month of Zil Hajj are not only reserved for the annual pilgrimage and its rituals, but the pilgrims are also exhorted to observe perfect decency and to continue remembering Allah in order to stay conscious of the commandments enjoined by God. In the Quran and the sayings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw) we find the number of fasts and charitable acts to be done during the days of Hajj.

10. The Quran says: “So whoever determines to perform pilgrimage, therein shall be no immodest speech, nor abusing, nor altercation in the pilgrimage. And whatever good you do, Allah knows it. And make provision for yourselves, the best provision being to keep one’s duty” (2:197).

In the last ten days, the 9th carries a special importance, as on this day the Holy Prophet (saw) received the last revelation: “This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed My favour to you; and chosen for you Islam as a religion” (5:3). It is also the day when the Prophet delivered his well-known Farewell Sermon.

On the day of Hajj, from dawn until sunset, Muslim pilgrims stand in earnest supplication and devotion, praying for God’s abundant forgiveness. Tears are shed readily as those who gather make repentance and seek God’s mercy, recite words of prayer and remembrance, and gather together as equals before their Lord. Muslims around the world who are not participating in the pilgrimage often spend this day in fasting, devotion and glorifying Allah.

At this point I would like to quote an observation of a well-known Muslim scholar, Prof. Tariq Ramadan, Professor of Contemporary Islamic Studies at Oxford University (Oriental Institute, St Antony’s College). Prof. Ramadan, in his book, *Islam: The Essentials*, published by Pelican Books, writes the following about the significance of Pilgrimage:

“The pilgrimage is intimately linked to the story and the memory of Abraham, the father of monotheism, from which the Muslim tradition has directly sprung. ... Women and men from around the world, of all national origins, colours and social levels, converge upon Mecca to remember the trial of Abraham, ‘the friend of God’, and to raise themselves up spiritually. Once more, we can see in the rites of pilgrimage the vertical (return to God) and horizontal axis (of spiritual community of men and women equal before God) that remind us how complementary the two dimensions are. To return, alone, to God through pilgrimage means implicitly never to detach oneself from the community of destiny, that binds humans together, in equality, fraternity, solidarity and love” (p. 106).

Act of supreme sacrifice

Why is this festival so important? It is a festival celebrated to commemorate the great sacrifice intended by the Prophet Abraham of his only son Ishmael in obedience to what the former saw him doing in a dream. This symbolises an act of supreme submission to the command of Allah. Supreme and undeterred sacrifice indeed!

Unlike other religions, its cardinal acts of worship and sacrifice must be performed by each Muslim man and woman. No one can pray on your behalf; you must pray yourself. No one can fast on your behalf while you are alive; you must fast yourself. No one can perform Hajj for you, if you are capable of performing it. Similarly, no one can perform qurbani (sacrifice) for you, if you are capable and have the means to do it.

It must be remembered that the intended sacrifice by Prophet Abraham (as) and his son

The Holy Kaabah

Circa 1887 C.E.



Ishmael, to my mind, are the heroes in this festival of Eid al-Adha.

Ideal family life

Careful consideration of the words of chapter 37, verses 100 to 102 epitomises true family life. I think the lessons of Eid al-Adha are the crowning glory of true family life. Here is a father, Abraham, childless in his old age, praying for a child not for his own pleasure and gratification, but rather a child who would be like him, as an inheritor of “good deeds”. His prayer for a child was in fact a prayer to Allah for good deeds to continue through his child And Allah so graciously answered his prayer with a “forbearing son” — a patient and charitable one.

The values which we gain from the relationship between Abraham and his son Ishmael are set out in the Quran for us to emulate. We should cease thinking that this is just a story that must be narrated in our mosques every year. These values should be reflected upon when we perform our qurbani, making the entire family share in the experience of slaughtering the animal as a replica of the great sacrifice by Abraham and Ishmael.

It is an appropriate time for bonding with our children, explaining to them the values epitomised in this act of qurbani, and trying to instil in them the patience and obedience of Ishmael.

It is significant to note that there are only

And Now



two occasions when we are asked by Allah to make an animal sacrifice. The first is on the occasion of the birth of a child, when we observe its *'aqiqah*, and sacrifice a goat for a daughter or two goats for a son, and the second is on the occasion of Eid al-Adha.

The act of sacrificing an animal is a testimony thanking Allah for the gift of a child and acknowledging that it is through His grace and mercy that such a blessing has been bestowed on the parents. And in a prayer on this occasion, we pray that His mercy and protection will keep the child safe from sin, ill-health and going astray from the right path.

When we fast in the month of Ramadan, we sacrifice our hunger for food and our time and other comforts for the sake of Allah and to seek His blessings. And at the end of the month we celebrate Eid al-Fitr. In the month of Hajj we make a solemn covenant to sacrifice everything — food, time, comforts of life, and even our children — in submission to the command of Allah; and to make a formal pledge prescribed by Allah to undertake a journey to His House, and announce in the presence of the Ka'bah the *Tal-biyya* (O Allah! Here I am in Your August presence). This final pledge of servitude is much more significant and important as compared to the act of fasting. Thus, this celebration of Eid-al-Adha is considered the bigger Eid. Above all, Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful, has graciously allowed us to substitute the sacrifice of an animal instead of our children, and we show

I Shall Love All Mankind.

this gratitude in performing qurbani on this day, in remembrance of the values shared and the faith that Abraham and Ishmael displayed.

A world-wide reminder about the Divine Message

The world is fast becoming a technological jungle where communication is devoid of emotion, human values and good human behaviour. It is a jungle from which our children cannot escape because of the times in which we live.

This is why Eid al-Adha is a recurring festival; a festival when we commemorate the intended sacrifice by Abraham. More importantly, however, it is the human interaction between father and son which ultimately sets the platform for the values which constitute family relationships. Today we salute the obedience and faith of Ishmael in his elders and we commend our young people to reflect upon the nobility of his actions and his obedience to those in authority.¹
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They call me al-Quran *By Iain Dixon*



They call me Al-Quran, a book sent from heaven.
I am read by many, but seldom understood.
They put me in the highest place and wrap me in a cloth.
But who has learnt from me? Does anyone try?
I am the compassionate one, not just filled with wrath.
I am Al-Quran ... a book of guidance, not just a poem.
People try to burn me, but I know not why.
I have a heartbeat, something to share,
but few seem to listen, less seem to care.
A book full of mystery, but simple to understand.
I don't belong to the clever, the scholar, the expert.

I belong to those that hear. To them I draw near.
They call me Al-Quran, but don't seem to grasp,
I speak to the humble, those considered last.
I am not just a book, but a voice.
I call to your heart ... you have a choice.
To wrap me up, or seek my face.
I am Al-Quran, a book said to be from heaven.
I am read by many ... and I want to be understood.
I search for a listener, somewhere to dwell, to bring my peace, and make all things well.
I am Al-Quran, they say I'm from heaven. I am read by many, but seldom understood.
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The Meaning of Pakistan **Message of *The Light* on the 'Independence of Pakistan'**

From *The Light*, 15th August 1947

(Mr Arshad Alvi has brought this to notice.)

"We have not sent thee, O Prophet, but as a mercy to the whole of mankind." (The Holy Quran, 21:107)

The history of early Islam is ablaze with the light and glow of the most humanitarian principles which Islam stood for and which the rule of Islam was meant to implement. Umar the Great, whose very name was a terror to a corrupt official of the State or an official given to an indolent and luxurious ways of life, personally carried bags of foodstuffs to destitute homes on his own back — and at the dead of night when nobody was about to see it. Rulership meant service of the people; it meant relieving suffering, distress and poverty. In Pakistan there must be no man who does not get two square meals a day. Pakistan must mean a struggle against poverty, against ignorance and against disease.

It is sad to reflect how badly out of shape

¹ Sources: (1) English translation of the Holy Qur'an, Maulana Muhammad Ali, ed. 2002.

(2) Khutbahs on the Qur'an, Imam Iqbal Hydal, ed. 2015

this out and out humanistic system has been distorted with the result that the non-Muslim dread the very name of Islamic rule. And the blame is ours. We have so enmeshed ourselves in petty unimportant details that we have lost sight of the high mission, the great destiny that Islam stands for. It is like losing the woods in the trees. Did not the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, sum up Islam as “Glorification of God and kindness towards the creatures of God?” Did he not say: “A Muslim is one from whose tongue and hand fellow-men are safe”?

Islam meant primarily to promote and foster fellow-feeling between man and man, to solve the big problems, social, economic and spiritual that confront mankind, to combat evil, injustice and oppression and to elevate and uplift the down-trodden masses. A message which in the words of the Holy Quran is meant first and foremost, to bring mercy to mankind at large has been reduced to a cult exciting nothing but horror in the minds of others.

Our rejoicing over the fact that the chains which bound us for a century and a half have been shattered, that the nightmare of slavery which weighed us down with its dead weight has all of a sudden been lifted and once more we are free as the sea-breeze of Karachi where the sweet breeze of freedom will be officially set in motion in a few days, is perfectly natural and legitimate. But in the midst of these celebrations, let us not forget that Pakistan is more of a call to duty, a heavy responsibility, a trust and a commission than a mere matter for jubilation. It is said of Umar bin Abdul Aziz, another God-fearing typically Islamic caliph, that when he was elected to this exalted position, he had to be supported to mount the pulpit to address the audience. Rulership was a heavy load, he said, and its crushing weight suddenly transferred to his shoulders had hardly left him strength to rise on his legs.

It is in this spirit, a spirit of humble thanksgiving to God Almighty coupled with a sense of very grave responsibility, that we must hail the dawn of this great event in our lives. Over a

thousand years ago, the sands of Sindh witnessed one such phenomenon when Muhammad bin Qasim for the first time unfurled the flag of Islam here. Today, after many a fluctuation of fortune, after many an up and down of history, that same Crescent once more proudly looks towards India across these very sands. This is a historic event. We may justly feel proud that this time it has fallen to our lot to raise the flag of Islam at this historic spot. But we must not forget that the responsibility it devolves on us is equally great.

This Flag of Islam which is to replace the Union Jack throughout Pakistan on August 15th is a Flag with mighty traditions. Viewed back in retrospect through the dim centuries, quite a host of great men and great deeds will be found clustering around it. A whole cavalcade of illustrious figures of history — saints, heroes, warriors, generals, statesmen, monarchs, emperors, philosophers, scientists — crowd upon the eye of imagination as one looks at this Crescent and star bespangled green Flag. Wherever this Flag has gone, peace, prosperity, humanity, civilisation have flowed in its wake. From Cordova to Baghdad it shed light and lustre wherever it went. It is these great traditions that we inherit along with this historic flag.

Pakistan means this high historic heritage — heritage of the great and glorious traditions of Hazrat Abu Bakr and Hazrat Umar Farooq, of Khalid and Tariq on the one hand and of Averrhoes and Avicenna on the other. It is these long-faded traditions that the builders of Pakistan have to rediscover and revive. In the midst of rejoicings let us not forget this only real aspect of Pakistan that matters. Heavy is the task that awaits us, if we are to be true to these traditions. Pakistan is a call to every one of us whether a politician or a minister, a soldier or a sailor, a scholar or a businessman — a call to rise above all petty considerations, personal and doctrinal, to catch a correct glimpse of this high, broad, humanitarian and chivalrous conception of Islam and glimpse of this high, broad, humanitarian and chivalrous conception of Islam and strain every nerve to build up Pakistan into a State worthy of these great traditions.

This, in plain language, is the one and only meaning of Pakistan. And in our rejoicings on August 15th over the establishment of Pakistan, we must not forget to catch hold of this inner spirit and basic urge of rulership in Islam. It is in the light and glow of this spirit that we must set about building Pakistan. Modern conditions have brought problems of their own along with them which builders of Pakistan will soon be called upon to face and solve. We may tackle these problems according to modern methods by all means. But for the spirit we must look back to that golden era of Islam when rulership meant service and uplift of the people, when peace and prosperity reigned and light and learning flourished wherever the flag of Islam went. [\(Return to contents\)](#)

Have the peaceful verses of the Qur'ān been abrogated?

By Justin Parrott (Abu Amina Elias)

<https://www.whyislam.org/misconceptions/peacefulverses/>

In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful

Advocating violent conquest or terrorism is one of the most common accusations against Islam, but it is also deeply uninformed of Islamic teachings, history, and theology. Muslims can point to many, many verses in the Quran to debunk the myth, like the verse, "If they incline to peace, then incline to it as well and put your trust in God." The early Muslims fought a defensive war of survival against an enemy determined to exterminate the new religion, but even then, God commanded them to make peace if possible.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) himself said, "Verily, after me, there will be conflicts or affairs, so if you are able to end them in peace, then do so."

If Islam is a religion of peace, how is it misrepresented?

A key concept in Quranic exegesis is called

"abrogation". It refers to the phenomena of a later verse altering or replacing the rule of a previous verse. The clearest example is the gradual prohibition of alcohol, which was permissible at first, then it was discouraged (2:219), then it was prohibited to come to prayer intoxicated (4:43), and finally it was completely prohibited (5:90).

The wisdom in this sequence is that, since most people cannot quit "cold turkey," alcohol needs to be tapered off. Hence, the final ruling of alcohol prohibition "abrogated" the previous rules. Have the rules of war in the Quran been abrogated in the same way?

Anti-Muslim writers, and some extremist Muslims, make the far-fetched claim that all verses in the Quran encouraging peace, mercy, and fairness with non-Muslims have been abrogated by the so-called "verse of the sword". The verse reads, "When the sacred months have passed, kill the idolaters wherever you find them," (9:5) but rarely do they finish the verse, "If they repent, perform prayer, and give charity, let them go their way, for God is forgiving and merciful."

The entire passage discusses the hostile Arab tribes who "broke their treaty" and "attacked you first" (9:13). It also offers immunity to any enemy who "seeks your protection" and, regardless of whether they accept Islam or not, to "deliver him to his place of safety" (9:6). To think one sentence from a verse cancels hundreds of verses before it, as well as around it, is quite a stretch. Quranic scholar M.A.S. Abdul Haleem states: "The whole of this context to verse 9:5, with all its restrictions, is ignored by those who simply isolate one part of a sentence to build on it their theory of violence in Islam."

Some scholars of the classical period did say the verse of the sword abrogates many verses before it, but what did they mean by that? Abrogation itself is a very nuanced topic, as the word has been used to mean everything from a complete repeal to a narrowly limited exception. Types of partial abrogation came to be known as 'specification' (*takhsis*), 'restriction' (*taqyid*),

‘explanation’ (*tafsir*), ‘clarification’ (*tabyin*), ‘exceptional’ (*istithna*), and ‘conditional’ (*shart*).

The previous rule was changed or “abrogated” to account for a new situation, but it was not nullified, invalidated, or cancelled entirely. Scholars who said a verse was abrogated did not mean it was cancelled. Even then, many classical scholars such as Abu Ja’far al-Nahhas (d. 949), Ibn al-Jawzi (d. 1201), and Al-Suyuti (d. 1505) only accepted about twenty cases of genuine abrogation in the Qur’an, none of which involved the verse or verses of the sword.

The primary verse laying down the rules of war states: “Fight in the way of God against those who fight you, but do not transgress. Verily, God does not love transgressors.”

Was this verse abrogated? Ibn Abbas (d. 687), the cousin of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), did not think so. He stated that the verse outlaws killing “women, children, old men, or whoever comes to you with peace and he restrains his hand [from fighting],” or in other words, it means it is unlawful to harm civilians and non-combatants. In fact, most Muslim scholars throughout history agreed with him. The classical scholar Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 1328) wrote at length to rebut the claim that this verse had been nullified: “This opinion [that the verse 2:190 is not abrogated] is the opinion of the majority of scholars... Indeed, to claim abrogation requires proof and there is nothing in the Quran to contradict this verse. Rather, what is in the Quran is consistent with it, so where is the abrogating verse?”



Ibn Taymiyyah’s view is supported by the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him): “Verily, the most tyrannical of people to God Almighty is one who kills those who did not fight him.” There has never been any justification in Islam, from its inception until today, to kill or harm people because of their religion. Islam only allows violence as a self-defensive response to aggression or to put an end to the persecution of innocent people, Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

Wahbah al-Zuhayli (d. 2015), a leading modern scholar on Islamic international law, summarizes the majority view in his commentary on the Quran.

The lesson derived from this verse 2:190 and others related to the legislated conditions of warfare and the permissible rulings in jihad are as follows:

1) Warfare is legislated in the cause of Allah to repel aggression, protect preaching Islam, and freedom of divine religion.

2) This legislation is characterized by justice and truth, in which there is no transgression against anyone, nor overlooking what is necessary in war. The aim is not to demolish and tear down, nor merely to terrorize. Thus, non-combatants are not killed, nor are women, children, and those like them among monks, the disabled, the sick, and the elderly. Crops and fruits are not razed, nor are animals slaughtered except for food, as has come in the prophetic instructions and those of the righteous Caliphs.

3) Warfare is not for compelling people to embrace Islam, as that would defeat the principal ruling of the Qur’an in many verses.

The claim that the Quran commands Muslims to murder non-believers is simply false.

Warfare, or jihad, can only be conducted under strict circumstances and for a just cause, as has been detailed by scholars. Rather, Islam teaches us to be kind, fair, and compassionate to all people, as God said in the Qur'an, "We have not sent you, O Muhammad, but as mercy for the worlds." (21:107)

(Comment by *The Light*: This article, which accepts the doctrine of abrogation, in fact shows the complications caused by this doctrine. "Nuanced" types of abrogation have had to be introduced to, in effect, annul abrogation! The article also shows what Maulana Muhammad Ali called the "hopeless disagreement" among the upholders of this doctrine. It is far simpler and more reasonable to reject this whole doctrine.)

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Muslim cleric who hid Christians during attacks honoured in the US

By *Bukola Adebayo, CNN*



Imam Abubakar Abdullahi saved Christians who ran to his home in central Nigeria

Lagos, Nigeria (CNN) The US government is honoring an 83-year-old Muslim cleric who hid 262 Christians in his home and mosque during an attack in central Nigeria.

Imam Abubakar Abdullahi, along with four religious leaders from Sudan, Iraq, Brazil and Cyprus, were awarded the 2019 the International Religious Freedom Award, which is given

to advocates of religious freedom.

Abdullahi was recognized for providing shelter for hundreds of Christians fleeing attacks from Muslim herdsmen who had launched coordinated attacks on Christian farmers in 10 villages in the Barkin Ladi area of Plateau State on June 23, 2018, the award organizers said in a statement.

The cleric refused to give them up when their attackers asked about their whereabouts, International Religious Freedom Ambassador Sam Brownback said at the awards ceremony in Washington on Wednesday.

"The imam gave refuge to his Christian neighbors, sheltering 262 Christians in his mosque and his home.... then stood outside the doors confronting the Muslim attackers, pleading with them to spare the lives of the Christians inside, even offering to exchange his own life for theirs," Brownback said.

"His actions bear witness to true courage, true selflessness, and true brotherly love," he said.

More than 80 people were killed in the attacks by suspected herders who also set fire on many homes in the villages. Violence between the nomadic Fulani herdsmen, who are mostly Muslims, and farmers, who are predominantly Christians, in Nigeria's middle belt dates back to 2013.

The State Department, organizers of the award, given to advocates of religious freedom, said the Muslim cleric selflessly risked his own life to save members of another religious community who without his intervention would have been killed.

Armed herders have unleashed mayhem on communities in central states to evict farmers in a conflict said to be deadlier than the Boko Haram insurgency. [\(Return to contents\)](#)

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