

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

AHMADIYYAT: A MEANS OF SAFETY AND SALVATION

(With reference to World disasters)

The title of the speech I was asked to prepare and deliver to you today is one which makes a bold claim – Ahmadiyyat: a means of safety and salvation.

In light of the abominable and unprovoked attacks on two Ahmadi Mosques in Lahore earlier this year, where many innocent and defenceless Ahmadi Muslims were cruelly and senselessly murdered during prayers, any worldly person might indeed initially think - ‘How is it possible that Ahmadiyyat can claim to be a means of safety and salvation?’

The attacks on these Mosques were a direct consequence of the denial of God, His Messengers and His teachings, not only by the perpetrators of the attack but by all those who violently oppose and attempt to destroy any community founded by a Prophet raised by God only for the benefit of mankind.

The main purpose of the advent of Prophets and the objective of their teaching and preaching is that mankind should recognise God and be saved from a life of hell and ruin, which is known as a life of sin. The Prophets of Allah are chosen from among human beings. They set the best examples of moral and spiritual conduct. They lead mankind to Allah by conveying to man Divine revelation, and also by their own example of purity and righteousness. They are the most truthful of men. Their hearts are full of love of Allah and His creatures. All of them proclaim the Oneness of Allah and ask people to submit to Him completely.

History recalls that all Prophets of God are initially denied by most of the people they were sent to reform. They and their early followers encounter all manner of ostracism, persecution, ridicule and even death at the hands of some of the disbelieving people, especially from the chiefs of those people.

The Holy Qur’an refers to this and states:

“And there never came to them any Messenger but they mocked at him.” (15:12)

History also records that true prophets of God never fail in their Divine mission and that their bitter enemies who violently and wilfully oppose them eventually meet with disgrace in one form or another.

Commenting on this subject, Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi ^(as), has written:

'Mere simple rejection of a prophet does not entail punishment in this life. But when a disbeliever transgresses beyond the limits of humanity and good behaviour and has recourse to shamelessness and abuse and designs every kind of persecution and carries it to the limit, the jealousy of God Almighty is aroused and He destroys the wrongdoer out of regard for His Messenger as He destroyed the people of Noah and the people of Lot.

Such chastisement is inflicted only on account of the persecution and cruelties to which God's Messengers and their followers are subjected. Mere rejection is not punished in this life. God has reserved another world for such punishment. If a person confines himself to the position that he is unable to accept as he has not yet fully understood the matter, such denial does not attract punishment because it results from simple lack of understanding.

I affirm truly that if the objection of the people of Noah had been presented in a decent manner God Almighty would not have seized them'

[Essence of Islam Vol.2,p.374 – Malfoozat Vol.3, p 162-163]

Because of the short time allotted to this speech I can only briefly highlight instances regarding the fate of certain peoples throughout the ages who violently rejected their prophets, their message and their practice.

One of the first recorded instances of a nation incurring the wrath of God can be found in the Old Testament and in the Holy Qur'an and refers to the time of the advent of the Prophet Noah ^(as).

Like Christians and Jews, Muslims also believe in the Flood of Hadhrat Noah ^(as). Hadhrat Noah's people were corrupt and led sinful lives: they lied, they cheated, they worshipped idols and in so doing they disobeyed God. When he attempted to teach his people better ways of behaviour, they dismissed him, calling him a 'madman.'

The Holy Qur'an states:

The people of Noah rejected the truth before them: Aye, they rejected Our servant and said, ‘A madman and one who is spurned.’ (54:10)

Hadhrat Noah^(as) employed all means to make his people listen to the Divine message – but to no avail. The people of Hadhrat Noah^(as) did not like him preaching to them and told him that if he did not stop they would stone him. He told them that there was no other God but Allah and that they should worship only Him. He later also told them that if they continued to reject Allah and His message he feared an awful punishment would befall them.

They carried on worshipping idols and treated Hadhrat Noah^(as) with great contempt. Only a few people believed and followed him, even his wife and one of his sons did not believe him.

After so much preaching and numerous warnings Hadhrat Noah^(as) realised that there was nothing more he could do. So, in great distress, he prayed to Allah for help and guidance. Allah the Almighty gave Hadhrat Noah^(as) news of an imminent, devastating flood and told him to build an ark. Hadhrat Noah^(as) was faithful to God and began to build the ark – according to Divine guidance.

When the great flood came, Hadhrat Noah^(as), his closest companions, some family members as well as the animals and other provisions, entered the Ark. They were saved, whilst the wicked and arrogant people perished, including Hadhrat Noah’s wife and one of his sons.

The Holy Qur’an states:

“But they rejected him, so We saved him and those who were with him in the Ark. And We made them inheritors of the land, while we drowned those who rejected Our Signs. (10:74)

Other examples of God’s punishment for persistent sin and wrongdoing against His Messengers are the nations of Ad and Thamud. The nation of Ad populated vast areas of southern Arabia and the nation of Thamud populated the north west of Arabia. Because of their persistent denial and torment of their respective prophets and their followers, the people of Ad were destroyed by a sand storm which blew for 7 nights and 8 days. The people of Thamud for whom the prophet Salih^(as) was sent, were destroyed in an earthquake because of their arrogance and mischief.

Again, the people of the Prophet Lot^(as) who lived in Sodom are described notoriously in both the Holy Qur'an and the Bible. They performed acts of a lewd sexual nature that were not known before that time, but have since openly reappeared and are being practised in this modern age. According to the Holy Qur'an the people of Lot, who persecuted him and his followers, were destroyed by an earthquake. The Holy Qur'an states:

Then the punishment seized them at sunrise. We turned it upside down, and We rained upon them stones of clay. Surely, in this are Signs for those who can read signs. And it lies on a road that still exists.

(Ch.15: Vs.74-77)

This last reference may indeed even refer to the people of this age, as that self and same practice of the people of Lot^(as) is more prevalent throughout the world today. As a result of failure to heed this Divine warning, fatal diseases are taking their toll in all parts of the world, especially in Africa, where both innocent and guilty parties are being affected because of the sin of man and society in general.

Jews, Christians and Muslims alike are all aware of the fate of the Pharaoh who tried to destroy Moses and his people. He pursued Moses^(as) and the Israelites as they fled his tyrannical reign. His purpose was to destroy the Israelites and especially Hadhrat Moses^(as), but God had different designs and it was Pharaoh and his army that was destroyed when they were engulfed by the fast approaching sea water.

Jesus Christ^(as) was raised as the Messiah for the Jews - and as history records, he and his followers were severely persecuted. Jesus^(as) was a teacher and practitioner of the Laws of Moses, but the people he was sent to reform completely rejected him. He warned them of the consequences of their disobedience to God and denial of His Messenger, but to no avail.

He was crucified, but as Ahmadi Muslims, we are aware that he did not die on the cross. The Jews did not defeat or kill this Messenger of God.

Jesus^(as) had warned the Jews that they would be thoroughly banished from Jerusalem and that Jerusalem would be controlled by the Gentiles (that is Non Jews) for a set period of time. In 65 AD an epidemic of plague erupted and covered the areas where the message of Jesus had reached and had been denied. In 70 AD Jerusalem was destroyed and the Jews were scattered and exiled. Some 52 years later, the Jews tried to regain their freedom but were crushed by the Roman Emperor Hadrian. The Jews were put to the sword and scattered captive to all marauding nations. In 167 AD the plague struck again and covered a much wider area including Asia Minor and European countries.

Allah the Almighty never allows His Messengers to fail in their mission. He has power over all things and He can use His power whenever He pleases, either to reward or to chastise whenever the need arises. His Law applies to the spiritual and physical worlds.

Hadhrat Mirza Bashir-ud-din Mahmood Ahmad^{ra} Khalifatul Masih 2nd writes:

‘Laws of God are laws through which God helps His chosen ones, those whom He loves; through them He disgraces and destroys the enemies of His friends. If there were no such laws, could weak and friendless Moses^(as) have triumphed over a cruel and mighty Pharaoh? Could Moses^(as) succeed and Pharaoh fail, whilst Moses^(as) was weak and Pharaoh strong?

If there are no laws other than the laws of nature, how could the Holy Prophet Muhammad^(sa) have triumphed against an Arabia determined to put an end to him and his mission? In every encounter God helped the Holy Prophet^(sa) and made him triumph over his enemies. Every attack the enemies made ended in failure, and at last, with ten thousand saints, he re-entered the valley out of which ten years before he had to flee for his life in the company of only one self-sacrificing friend. Can laws of nature account for such events? Can they permit such things? Laws of nature only guarantee the success of the strong against the weak; conversely, the failure of the weak against the strong.’

Dawat-ul-Amir, English translation: Invitation to Ahmadiyyat, First Edition, pg. 4-10, By Hadhrat Mirza Bashir-ud-din Mahmood Ahmad, Khalifa-tul-Masih II)

The Holy Prophet of Islam ^(sa) was initially, the most persecuted of all of God's Messengers. He was sent by Allah the Almighty as Rahmatul lil A'lameen, a 'Mercy for all of Mankind' and as such he was able to overcome his most bitter opponents. He was able to soften the hardest of hearts. He and his followers suffered all manner of torment from the unbelievers. All basic rights were denied them and they were eventually driven in to exile.

Vast armies came time and again to destroy him and his followers but they all met with ultimate defeat in one form or another and the religion of Islam, the religion of Peace spread rapidly. Increasing numbers of tribes and nations, hearing of the word and practice of this most noble Messenger became Muslim and became obedient to the Will of God.

Hadhrat Jesus ^(as) and especially Hadhrat Muhammad Mustafa ^(sa) gave prophecies that in the Latter days a Messiah/Mahdi would be raised by Allah the Almighty for the benefit of the whole of mankind and that great signs would appear in the heavens and the earth in support of his claim.

Ahmadi Muslims have accepted this claim of Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad ^(as), the Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at. He was born in 1835 in Qadian, India. From an early age he received revelation from God, as well as visions and true dreams. It was in a state of relative seclusion and anonymity that he received the revelation, *'Thy God is well pleased with what thou hast done. He will bless thee greatly, so much so that Kings shall seek blessing from your garments.'* (Braheen e Ahmadiyya, Vol. IV, page 520)

The flow of revelations and visions continued when in 1882 he received the revelation which made manifest God's design that he was to be the appointed one, the one commissioned by Allah the Almighty to serve His cause as a Divine Reformer.

In obedience to Divine command he declared that he was the Mujaddid (Reviver) of the 14th century of the Islamic era. In 1891 he claimed, on the basis of Divine revelation to be the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, whose advent had been foretold by the Holy Prophet Muhammad ^(sa).

His contemporary theologians rejected his claims and as in the case of all Divine reformers, he met a storm of violent opposition.

In light of Divine revelation given to him of the approaching chastisement for mankind, and out of a deeply moved and disturbed heart, he, like his predecessors and especially the Holy Prophet^(sa), admonished humanity to discard the worship of false gods. In modern days idols had been replaced by the modern idols of acquisition of wealth and money. He advised man to turn in sincere repentance to the One True God. For example, in one of his famous writings, he states:

“Those who repent shall find security and those who fear before calamity overtakes them shall be shown mercy. Do you think you will be immune from these calamities? Or can you save yourselves through artifice or design? Indeed not. That day all human schemes shall fail. Think not that earthquakes visited America and other continents but that your own country shall remain secure. Indeed, you may experience a greater hardship. O Europe, you are not safe and O Asia, you too, are not immune. And O dwellers of Islands, no false gods shall come to your rescue. I see cities fall and settlements laid waste. The One and the Only God kept silent for long. Heinous deeds were done before His eyes and He said nothing. But now He shall reveal His face in majesty and awe. Let him who has ears hear that the time is not far. I have done my best to bring all under the protection of God, but it was destined that what was written should come to pass. Truly do I say that the turn of this land, too is approaching fast.

The times of Noah shall reappear before your eyes, and your own eyes will be witnesses to the calamity that overtook the cities of Lot. But God is slow in His wrath. Repent that you may be shown mercy! He who does not fear Him is dead, not alive.” [Haqiqat-ul-Wahi, Ruhani

Khaza'in, vol. 22, pp. 268-269]

In February 1898, the Promised Messiah^(as) received revelations about an impending plague. He immediately published this critical warning through newspapers and pamphlets to the world at large. The Promised Messiah^(as) was clearly informed that this plague would devastate large areas in the Punjab, and that village after village would be emptied of life.

Qadian, the town where he himself dwelled, would be no exception; it would strike all around his house, but would not be permitted to step within its four walls.

For those who sought and cared for his shelter, he made it clear that this promise of security would not be confined only to such as occupy his house physically but would also cover those who dwell in his spiritual home—the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community. He, his wife and children, and all his followers living in Qadian and elsewhere in the country did not have any inoculation against plague. Indeed God Almighty saved His Messenger, his family and all of his faithful followers as foretold in the prophecy: *“I will protect all those who are within the periphery of your house”*. (Kishti Nuh, p. 4, October 5th, 1902)

During the period of seven years, or thereabouts, that the plague remained active in the Punjab, many of his adversaries died. However, the plague touched neither him nor his wife, nor his sons or daughters. Nothing happened to him and to those who lived within the boundaries of his physical and spiritual abodes of peace and security. As for the members of the Community outside Qadian, they were spared by the plague to an exceptional degree. The death rate among the non-Ahmadis who died of the plague stood far higher by comparison to the very rare cases of Ahmadi deaths in the same villages.

By the end of September 1903 the number of plague victims reported in the Punjab amounted to nearly 400,000. By the year 1904, the Ahmadi population had grown to two hundred thousand. By 1906, the year when the plague finally subsided, the number of Ahmadis had risen to near four hundred thousand. From 1898 to 1918, 10.25 million deaths from plague were officially recorded in India. Considering this statistic it is truly remarkable how few Ahmadis were amongst these casualties. (*Plague: conquest and eradication*. By SEAL S.C., 1987, Published by Indian Council of Medical Research)

When a Prophet is raised by God, it has been the case that both he and his early followers are mercilessly persecuted in one form or another. In the year 1903, Hadhrat Sahibzada Abdul Latif^{ra} who held high rank in the court of the Amir of Afghanistan, was stoned to death as a result of his recognition and acceptance of the Promised Messiah^(as).

His death was demanded by the fanatical religious leaders of that country and the Amir decided in their favour; hence he was stoned to death. The day after the stoning, a severe epidemic of cholera broke out in Kabul that killed thousands of citizens including close relatives of the Amir. The Amir himself and his brother Nasrullah Khan were both assassinated and later on his family was forced to go into exile. The Promised Messiah ^(as) was very distraught at the news of the death of Hadhrat Sahibzada Abdul Latif^{ra} and later proclaimed:

'O Land of Kabul (Afghanistan)! You are witness to the heinous crime committed on your soil. O miserable land! You have, in the sight of Allah, been condemned as you are the scene of this most atrocious crime.' (Tadhkiratush Shahadatain [English translation] by Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad ^(as) the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, p.70)

Afghanistan has been in turmoil ever since Hadhrat Sahibzada sahib was martyred and the subsequent prophecy of the Promised Messiah ^(as) has been fulfilled. The whole world is witness to the fate of the land of Afghanistan and its people. Even today, armed forces from around the world are stationed in that troubled land to try and establish peace.

The Promised Messiah ^(as) of this age wrote in 1907:

"Remember, God has informed me of many earthquakes. Rest assured, therefore, that as earth-quakes have shaken America and Europe, so will they shake Asia. Some of them will resemble the Day of Doom. So many people shall die that rivulets of blood shall flow. Even the birds and the beasts will not be immune against this death. Havoc shall sweep the surface of the earth which shall be the greatest since the birth of man. Habitations shall be demolished as if no one had ever lived in them. This will be accompanied by many other terrible calamities which the earth and the heavens will send forth, till their extraordinary nature will become evident to every reasonable man. All the literature of science and philosophy shall fail to show their like.

Then mankind shall be sorely distressed and wonder what is going to happen. Many shall escape and many shall perish. The days are near, in fact. I can see them close at hand, when the world shall witness a terrible sight: not only earthquakes but also many fearsome calamities shall overtake man, some from the skies and some from the earth.

This will happen because mankind has stopped worshipping their true God and have become lost in the affairs of the world with all their heart and their effort and intent. If I had not come, these afflictions would perhaps have been delayed a little. But with my coming the secret purposes of an affronted God which were hidden so far, became manifest. Says God: 'We never punish unless We send a Messenger.' [Haqiqat-ul-Wahi, Ruhani Khaza'in, vol. 22, pp. 268-269]

The prophecies not only refer to literal earthquakes that destroy life and property within a matter of minutes but also earthquakes of titanic proportions in the way of world catastrophes.

On April 15th, 1905 the Promised Messiah ^(as) announced that it had been revealed to him that the world would soon be overtaken by a terrible calamity. This was a most emphatic warning delivered by him to the world about the First World War.

He declared that it would overtake the world suddenly. The world would be shocked. Empires would be overthrown and cities would turn into graveyards. He indicated that the Tsar of Russia would also lose his power and meet his demise. In 1905 the Tsar was the most powerful and affluent monarch on earth. The prophecy was spectacularly fulfilled when the First World War broke out and in 1918 the Tsar was wiped out along with his family by the Bolshevik revolution. (Al Badr, vol. 1 no.3 April 20th 1905 – Tadhkira [English translation] p.706)

This holocaust was to be followed by another World War of even greater scale and deadlier consequences. Millions more people were killed and many millions more were left destitute and homeless as a result of the Second World War.

The Promised Messiah ^(as) had also prophesied that a Third World War of even greater proportions would follow the second. It will come with such suddenness that everyone will be caught unawares. Death and destruction will rain from the sky and fierce flames will engulf the earth. In other words it refers to atomic warfare. The colossus of modern civilization will tumble to the ground—a bloodbath— that will leave mankind shaken and chastened.

This prophecy, like all prophecies, is a warning and its fulfilment can be delayed or even averted provided man turns to his Lord, repents and mends his ways.

In the whole history of religion no people are known to have benefited so much by the warning of impending Divine punishment as did the people of the Prophet Jonah ^{as}. When they were warned that they would be visited with punishment if they did not behave and believe in Jonah and did not mend their ways, they at once repented and believed in him with the result that the threatened punishment was averted. This repentance of the people of Jonah so pleased God that they were not only forgiven, but their case is held up in the Qur'an as an example for disbelievers of all Prophets of God. (10:99)

In an address delivered in Zurich in 1982, Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih 4th (ra) cautioned against the dark, social tendencies of so-called modern man, and warned of the severe calamity which might await him if, in his delusions of grandeur, he continues to violate the limits prescribed by his Maker. He went on to beautifully summarise the main purpose of life of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, and our determination to fulfil our purpose: *“We affirm that we have been brought into being to set the time right and rescue humanity from ruin and destruction. We claim that if the world will listen to us and will sincerely accept that to which we invite it, the dangers that threaten it would be averted. We have been raised for the purpose of pointing out the way by treading along by which humanity can safeguard itself against the terrifying end that threatens it and this world can become a region of peace, security, comfort, joys and delights. We desire intensely that we may be blessed with success in this effort and we are determined that we shall be ready and prepared to sacrifice our all in this struggle, and even if we are put an end to in the course of it we would deem it a great good fortune for ourselves.”* (A Message of Hope, Part 1, The Review of Religions, January 2005 Edition, pp.25-26)

The present Head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad ^{atba}, commenting on consolidating love and mutual tolerance within society remarked that the Promised Messiah ^(as) had taught that to achieve these goals two principles had to be followed.

The first was that people should grow closer to God Almighty and the second was that people should care for their fellow man and acted justly at all times. These teachings are the basis of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'ats oft repeated motto of - '**Love for All, Hatred for None**'.

He further commented that if Qur'anic teachings were followed then all hatred would be removed from the world. People would live together side by side in harmony rather than in fear. He said that the world was moving towards another world war and that to prevent such an atrocity action had to be taken:

He said: *"The current situation of the world indicates that despite understanding the fact that if there is another world war the entire world will be affected by its fall out, we are slowly moving towards it. My prayer is that may God Almighty enable man to discharge the rights owed to Him and His Creation so that the world can be saved from this horrific destruction."*

(Inauguration of 'Bait-ul-Afiyat' Mosque, Sheffield, UK, 8th November 2008)

There have been many earthquakes since the time of Hadhrat Promised Messiah^(as), as well as devastating floods. In the first four months of this year (2010) there have been 4 disastrous earthquakes in the world (Haiti, Chile, Mexico and China) where hundreds of thousands of people perished. The frequency of earthquakes throughout the world may not have changed but what has changed is that they are striking more populated areas and consequently leading to more death and destruction.

Alas, as I mentioned at the beginning of this speech, a most heinous and dastardly crime was committed this year (2010) against the followers of the Promised Messiah^(as). In two mosques in Lahore, about 2000 defenceless Ahmadi Muslims were attacked. Eighty six were slaughtered and one hundred and fifty wounded - many seriously. They were martyred simply because they believed in and accepted a Prophet of God.

Unfortunately, successive Governments of Pakistan have disregarded the human rights of minority groups, especially Ahmadi Muslims, and have supported, both covertly and overtly, the malicious intentions of those who seek to destroy violently the community of the Promised Messiah^(as).

The Promised Messiah ^(as) states:-

'The manifestation of signs has been going on from the very beginning. Anyone who stays in my company can witness some of them upon the condition that he remains truthful and steadfast. In future, too, God will not leave this Jama'at [Ahmadiyya Muslim Community] without His signs, nor will He withdraw His support. On the contrary, He will continue to show fresh signs at their proper time and in accordance with His holy promises. This He will do till He has made manifest beyond doubt the differences between good and evil. He Himself said of me:

'A Warner came to the world but the world did not accept him, but God will accept him and will make manifest his truth through powerful onslaughts.'

(The Heavenly Decree [Asmani Faislah 1891] p.41-42 by Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad ^(as) the Promised Messiah and Mahdi) (*Nozul-ul-Masih*—Ruhani Khaza'en (1984) Vol.18 pp.466-467)

World disasters can be prevented if we repent and accept the Way of God - as God is Most Merciful. A morally stronger society living in a most peaceful environment can be achieved by re-establishing this connection with God and His Messengers. My prayer is for all of mankind to turn in obedience to their Creator and to enter the Ark of the Promised Messiah ^(as) that they may be saved from any impending torment. Amen

All quotations and translations of the Holy Qur'an have been taken from The Holy Qur'an, translated by Maulawi Sher Ali with alternative translation and footnotes to some of the verses by Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, 4th Successor of the Promised Messiah ^(as). Islam International Publications Ltd. 2004

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