

HAZRAT MIRZA BASHIR-UD-DIN MAHMUD AHMAD

The Holy Month of Ramadan and the Significance of Lailatul Qadr

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Khalifatul-Masih II

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This short translation of a Friday sermon delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad^{ra}, the Promised Reformer and Second Successor of the Promised Messiah^{as}, on 11 May 1923, was first published in the weekly Al Hakam newspaper to mark the start of the blessed month of Ramadan. An amended version of it is being reproduced here.

The Holy Month of Ramadan and the Significance of Lailatul Qadr

After reciting *Surah Al-Fatihah*, Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih II^{ra} said:

Ramadan holds a special position amongst the Islamic months, and of the days of the week, Friday possesses great significance as does the Friday sermon, and the Friday prayer, and the time thereafter. Our community is also marked by distinction. Whereas other religious groups have rejected the [fresh] message of God and His messenger, we have accepted His latest vice-regent.

Thus, today is a distinguished day, a distinguished time of day and a distinguished month. Indeed, this moment is so significant, we ought to make every effort to benefit from

the rain of God's blessings that currently descends on us.

One of the many reasons edicts of apostasy were issued against the Promised Messiah^{as} was because of the manner in which he interpreted the meaning of *Lailatul Qadr* (the Night of the Decree). The Promised Messiah^{as} said that while *Lailatul Qadr* refers to the [Night of the Decree] that appears in Ramadan, it also denotes the time of the advent of a chosen one of God from which the rise and fall of nations can be determined, and those which are of a higher and lesser rank are made more clearly distinguishable. Such a time is one of [spiritual] darkness, and the destiny of nations is decided by the coming of God's chosen one.

If we cast a glance at the *Lailatul Qadr* that occurred at the time of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, it is easy to identify those nations whose fortunes were decided during this period.

Both the Byzantium Empire which ruled over half the [known] world, and the Persian Empire which ruled over the other half had their fates determined in this age, and these supreme and powerful empires were reduced to ruin. In their stead, the bare-skinned and malnourished people of Arabia, who possessed meagre resources, were frequently given over to intoxication and were immersed in every type of vile behaviour, were elevated in the world. Their immoral and corrupt practices were so transformed that they became teachers for the world and these same destitute people assumed the mantle of leadership. This was how *Lailatul Qadr* unfolded in the time of the Holy Prophet^{sa}.

Such nights have settled many times before and in the umma of Muhammad^{sa} they appeared during the periods of the *mujadideen* (spiritual reformers) in which the lowly were elevated and those of high rank saw their

status diminish. But in these respective periods, *Lailatul Qadr* did not reveal itself in its highest manifestation as it has now in the time of the Promised Messiah^{as}. The *Lailatul Qadr* of the Promised Messiah^{as} is set to decide the fate of the entire world and the same decree will hold true now. That is, some nations will be vanquished and others will be raised high.

Hence this era is loaded with significance and Allah the Exalted has enabled us to join the community of the Promised Messiah^{as} even though we had no special claim or right to this. In this way we have already received the highest benefit of the judgement to be passed in this *Lailatul Qadr*. And what of the other rewards that [have been decreed] and when will they be given? The bestowal of these bounties is dependent on our actions. It is our responsibility to present before the world, the blessings of the advent of the Promised

Messiah^{as}. We ought to transform our inner selves and spread news of those truths which have been revealed to us by him. Indeed, pray that God makes us heirs to those certainties which He has promised from Himself.

This is a blessed moment and Ramadan is a blessed month and Friday has been marked out as a special day, therefore, our community ought to try and avail this time. The [Night of Decree] comes but once a year and it represents the hour for the acceptance of prayer, therefore, as much benefit should be drawn from it as possible.

This year is also one of great significance for our community because it marks the beginning of a fatal conflict. Although we have faced such struggles in the past, they have not been of this magnitude. At a cursory level it would seem as though the time has come for our eradication, but those communities which exist for the sake of God are never

destroyed.

Thus this is a critical moment. The Muslim leadership has abandoned us and the ulema seethe with hostility, though everyday Muslims stand with us and their eyes are opening up to the truth about who is and who is not serving the cause of Islam. And this is a source of happiness because it is usually this segment of society which turns to the right path. Therefore, because Muslims now perceive this matter more clearly, they should be appreciated for this, as it is a cause of joy for us.

Owing to a sore throat, I cannot speak for too long even though this is an important subject. In any case, the members of our community do not require lengthy addresses to remind them of the value of prayer. But keeping in view the significance of the moment, I still wanted to draw attention to the matter. Pray with great fervour, both

today, and for the remaining final ten days of Ramadan. May Allah the Exalted remove our failings. Also pray that we witness with our own eyes the fulfilment of the promises of God and that through us Islam is able to rise to victory.

(Alfazl, 17 May 1923)

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