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Head of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community Delivers Historic Address at Centenary Event Marking 100 Years of London's First Mosque

"The consequences of our actions today will reverberate through time and shape the world our children inherit from us" – Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad

On 19 October 2024, the *World Head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, the Fifth Khalifa (Caliph)*, His Holiness, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad delivered the keynote address to commemorate the historic milestone of one hundred years since the foundation stone was laid by the second Caliph of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Deen Mahmood Ahmad (may Allah be pleased with him) of the Fazl Mosque in London.



900 people including 300 guests gathered at the mosque in Southfields to celebrate the centenary event of London's first Mosque, themed, *'Islamic Light in the West: A Century of Spiritual Revival'*.

His Holiness, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, delivered the keynote address via video link from Islamabad, UK, to attendees at the Fazl Mosque and viewers from all around the world.

His Holiness began by expressing gratitude to Allah the Almighty for this momentous milestone.

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad stated:

"Today, with profound gratitude to Allah the Almighty in our hearts, we are holding this reception to mark and celebrate the centenary of the foundation stone being laid at the Fazl Mosque in London."



His Holiness emphasised that these events are distinct from worldly functions as they are free from material pursuits and focused on spiritual growth.

Speaking about the core purpose of mosques, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad stated:

“The reception or events associated with our mosques are entirely unlike worldly functions, as they are free from all material objectives or pursuits. A mosque is a spiritual sanctuary where individuals congregate to worship Allah the Almighty five times a day to foster spiritual growth and moral development.”

In light of modern day challenges where people are increasingly turning away from God Almighty, His Holiness, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, emphasised the significance of staying connected to faith and spirituality.

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad said:

“Today, we live in an age of rampant materialism, where money and power reign supreme. Increasingly, people are turning away from God Almighty, rejecting His very existence and forsaking moral values. At such a time, the light and value of a Mosque shines even brighter for a religious person who believes in God, and who trembles at the mere thought of growing distant from Him. In our view, Islam stands distinct in its unshakeable conviction in the belief of the Oneness of God Almighty. Indeed, the Holy Quran proclaims that the very purpose of mankind’s creation is to worship God.”

His Holiness elaborated on the true essence of worship in Islam, highlighting both the requirement of a Muslim to fulfil the rights of God Almighty and the rights of mankind.

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad stated:

“The concept or meaning of ‘worship’ should not be misunderstood as being limited only to the formal worship of God. Certainly, it is a fundamental obligation upon Muslims to fulfil the rights of Allah by congregating in Mosques and offering the five daily prayers. However, the Holy Quran explicitly states that a person’s supplications shall be rendered meaningless and be rejected if they neglect their responsibilities towards their fellow human beings. Thus, the prayers and prostrations of every single Muslim are inextricably linked with their treatment of God’s Creation.”



His Holiness urged Ahmadi Muslims to reflect upon their responsibilities to both God Almighty and to humanity, and reiterated that one can only truly honour the purpose of the Fazl Mosque by doing justice to these objectives.

His Holiness related a beautiful Islamic principle taught by the Holy Founder of Islam, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), which is that a true believer loves for others what he loves for himself.

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad stated:

“Indeed, inspired by the noble teachings of the Holy Founder of Islam (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), whatever good things Muslims desire or value for themselves, they also wish for other people. Accordingly, if we value and draw benefit from our religious teachings, it is our duty to convey them to others.”

His Holiness stressed the importance Ahmadi Muslims acting upon these noble teachings before propagating the faith of Islam.

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad stated:

“Undoubtedly, it is our deep desire that people from all walks of life and backgrounds come to live in peace and security, bound together by mutual bonds of love and respect for one another. This is the message we strive to spread throughout the world so that humanity may break free from the shackles of division, disorder, and discord.”

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad continued:

“Instead of leaving behind a legacy of misery and destruction for those who follow us, we should recognise that we are all the Creation of God Almighty and work together to safeguard our future generations from all forms of warfare, conflict and hatred.”



His Holiness delved into the history of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community and spoke about its Founder, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (peace be upon him), the Promised Messiah and awaited Imam Mahdi (Guided One).

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad stated:

“He (Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad) founded our Community with the objective and mission of reviving the true spirit and teachings of Islam and to guide humanity towards peace, justice, equality and tolerance. We believe Islam to be a universal religion and that, as proclaimed in the Holy Quran, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was sent as a prophet for all mankind. Similarly, we believe the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) came to enlighten the people of all nations of how to fulfil the rights of God and of His Creation.”

His Holiness, reflecting on the profound spiritual crisis of our times, remarked on the sentiments of the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him), who expressed extreme anguish and fervent desperation upon witnessing the prevailing spiritual darkness and moral decay that had engulfed society.

Due to this profound anguish, Allah the Almighty bestowed His Grace through divinely inspired prophecies and signs, reassuring the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) of His unwavering support for his mission. His Holiness mentioned that the message of true Islam was awakened by this sorrow of heartfelt prayers which has now led to the establishment of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in over 210 nations across the world.

His Holiness stated that the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community’s efforts to convey the teachings of Islam in the UK and Europe were also a direct result of the fervent desire of the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) to seek the salvation of mankind.



In this regard, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad related the following dream of the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him):

“I saw that I was standing on a pulpit in the city of London and was pronouncing upon the truth of Islam in the English language, in a very logical and well-reasoned manner. Thereafter, I caught several birds sitting upon small trees. They were white, and their bodies resembled those of partridges.”

He further said:

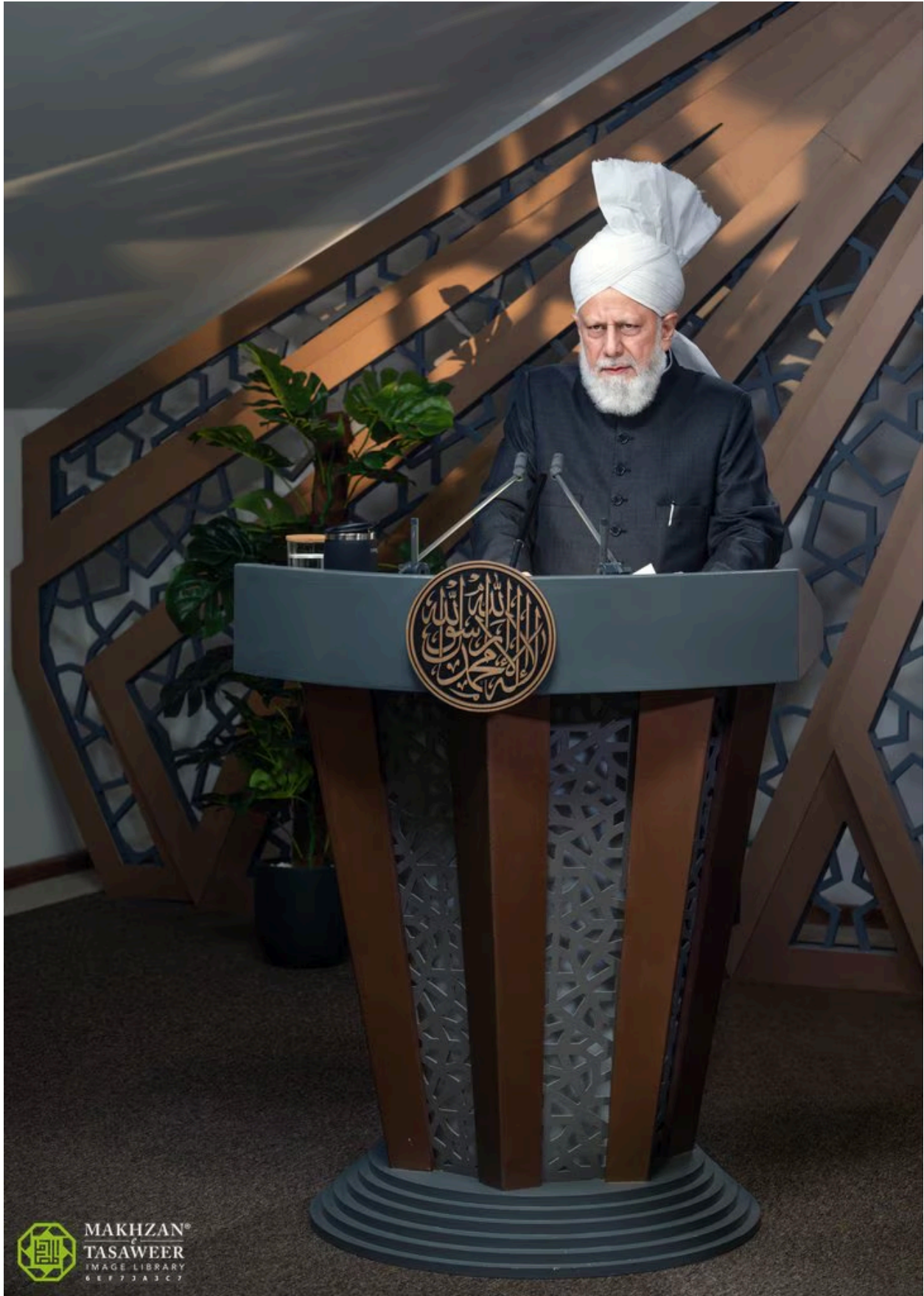
“I interpreted this to mean that though I would not be able to travel to England, my writings would be published there, and its truth would attract many righteous English people.”

His Holiness went on to narrate how this dream inspired all the spiritual successors (Caliphs) of the Promised Messiah of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community to strive to ensure that the message of Islam Ahmadiyyat reaches the people of Britain.

His Holiness mentioned that the vision for a mosque began during the First Caliph's era when the Community sent a Missionary to England to spread Islam's teachings in the early 20th Century. Despite limited resources, this Missionary attracted local individuals to the Ahmadiyya Community.

Under the Second Caliph, His Holiness said, more Missionaries arrived, highlighting the need for a dedicated place of worship. From 1920, Ahmadi Muslims raised funds to purchase land in Southfields for the first Mosque in London, named the 'Fazl Mosque' (Mosque of Divine Grace).

Thereafter, in 1924, during the British Empire Exhibition, the Second Caliph traveled to the UK to address a conference of major religions and laid the foundation stone for the Fazl Mosque, marking a pivotal moment in Islam's history in the UK.



His Holiness quoted the historic words of the Second Caliph of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community that he spoke upon laying the foundation stone of the Mosque in 1924:

“Those who enter it [the Fazl Mosque], shall, regardless of their nationality, the government they live under, or the language they speak, unite and come together as one. As they turn in the direction of that Divine Being, all differences, be they of status, race or whether they hail from the East or the West, shall be rendered futile. This is because when one draws ever closer to God, all differences vanish, whilst the bonds of unity flourish.”

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad further quoted the Second Caliph, who said:

“Nothing has damaged unity as much as the fact that some people adopt coercive methods in the name of establishing unity that are completely contrary to their stated objective. Paradoxically, the pursuit of unity and societal cohesion has suffered far greater injury from its misguided allies than from its adversaries. Therefore, a person must always exhibit tolerance and respect.”

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad went on to outline how those words are as true today as they were in 1924.

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad said:

“On that occasion, the Second Caliph’s address laid out a glorious vision for the Fazl Mosque – that it would serve as a means of worshipping God, serving humanity and spreading Islam’s teachings of peace and unity. Today, a century later, all Ahmadi Muslims remain steadfast in their commitment to fulfilling those same objectives and ensuring that our Mosques are forever beacons of peace, unity and devotion to Allah the Almighty.”

Turning to the dangers of the present circumstances of the world His Holiness said that there is ***“a storm of unrest and global conflict”*** due to the ***“ruthless pursuit of vested interests”*** that threatens millions of lives and casts a ***“very long and bleak shadow over the future of humanity.”***



His Holiness urged for urgent efforts to ***“extinguish the flames of war”*** and reminded that ***“the consequences of our actions today will reverberate through time and shape the world our children inherit from us.”***

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad said:

“As Muslims, we believe that this worldly life is just a fleeting passage on the way to the eternal life that awaits us in the Hereafter. We believe that our deeds in this world will echo into eternity, where our actions will be weighed on the scales of divine justice, and we will be held accountable for our choices. And so, if, God forbid, humanity ever again witnesses the horrors of nuclear warfare, the harrowing consequences will be felt for generations to come.”

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad continued and stated:

“Innocent children will be born with physical or mental disabilities. Generations will be consumed by trauma, rage and hopelessness – all because of our selfishness and failure to uphold peace and justice. So, as I conclude, it is my heartfelt prayer that may the love of God Almighty and His Creation enter the hearts of all mankind.”

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad concluded his address and stated:

“May Allah the Almighty enable all of us, irrespective of our faith or beliefs, to play our respective roles in the creation of a society where people of all religions, ethnicities and backgrounds live harmoniously and manifest grace and love to one another.”



Prior to the commencement of His Holiness' keynote address, formal proceedings were held where guest speakers took to the podium.

Chris Cotton DL, His Majesty's Deputy Lord Lieutenant for Greater London, touched on the importance of the second Caliph's (may Allah be pleased with him) travel to London in 1924 and shared a passage from the second Caliph's (may Allah be pleased with him) message to the English press.

Mr. Cotton ended his remarks by reading out the inscription on the foundation stone outside the Fazl Mosque which entailed a number of prayers including for the establishment of the mosque as a '*sun of spiritual light*'. He concluded with the words "***it can be said that this prayer has been answered and the Ahmadiyya Community thrives today***".

Reverend Jonathan Sedgwick, the Archdeacon of Southwark congratulated the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, noting that it is fitting for London—the most diverse city in the world—to host its first mosque. He concluded by expressing his profound respect and appreciation for the contributions of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community.

Fleur Anderson, the MP for Putney, Southfields, and Roehampton, and Minister for Northern Ireland, expressed that her relationship with both young and old members of the community have had a profound impact on her. Anderson highlighted one of the aspects of the mosque's history which has always resonated with her, stating that she was particularly impressed by the remarkable contributions of *Lajna Imaillah*, the ladies' auxiliary organisation of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, in 1924, noting their incredible sacrifices for their faith. She referenced the inspiring act of women in India selling their jewelry and gold to raise funds for the construction of Fazl Mosque, which serves as an inspiration for everyone today.

Sir Ed Davey, Leader of the Liberal Democrats, commended the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community for its continued charitable work across the country and its members' contribution to British society at large. Sir Ed Davey reflected on the persecution Ahmadi Muslims face in Pakistan, stating that ***"it was maybe somewhat misfortunate that you had to be here but it's our fortune that you are here"***. He concluded his remarks by saying that His Holiness, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad's ***"leadership on the debate and campaign for peace in our world has been outstanding over many years and has never been needed more."***

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