

Climate Change and Responsibility

By Bareya Khan, Thornton Heath

Climate change is an ever-growing threat with its effects more visible than ever in the current world. 2018 was ranked the fourth warmest year on record, and the past five years have been the five warmest years since scientists started keeping record in the late-1880s. We don't even have to look at icebergs, sea levels and corals, because we can see the effects of climate change where we are right now. The seasons don't stay in their lanes anymore, the air is getting thicker day by day, and the stars barely make an appearance in the city skies at night.

Climate change isn't just a threat to ourselves, but is a threat to the other creations of God that we live with. Plants and animals suffer too, and whilst these have direct effects on us, the damage done to plants and the pain endured by animals is in itself simply unacceptable. In Islam, animals must be treated with respect and compassion. Allah tells us in the Holy Qur'an [6:39] that "There is not an animal that crawls in the earth, nor a bird that flies on its two wings, but they are communities like you." As illustrated by this, we are most certainly required to work towards their betterment. We must treat them as our fellow communities since it is solely because of human activity that they are suffering.

The 5th Caliph of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, His Holiness Mirza Masroor Ahmad, has also raised his concerns about climate change, specifically the effect climate change has on food and water security in the world. The damage being done by humans to

Allah's creations (including ourselves) is one which will soon become near irreversible if we do not do something quickly. Something meaning every step we can take to limit carbon emissions; recycling, reusing, and purchasing environmentally friendly products. And us meaning every single person in this world who has the means to cut down and turn to more sustainable alternatives. That includes you, the person reading this – you, as well as everyone else; we all have a moral responsibility to take care of the world that we live in, and tackle climate change together.

But the question that poses is, why? There are many people who are choosing to ignore climate change, who are neither doing anything to alleviate it or prepare for its effects. And this could be anyone. However, as a Muslim my religion demands otherwise.

Allah makes it very clear in the Holy Qur'an [33:73] that He has made us stewards on this earth to care and protect it. "Verily we offered the Trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, but they refused to bear it and were afraid of it. But the man bore it." So far, as we can see through the devastating effects of climate change, humans have not been very successful at adhering to this Quranic verse, and we have not honoured the "Trust" that Allah has bestowed upon us to the best of our ability.

Allah foretells in the Holy Qur'an [30.42], "Corruption has appeared on land and sea because of what men's hands have wrought,

that He may make them taste the fruit of some of their doings, so that they may turn back from evil." Through this verse we can see that, unless we find a balance once again, and undo the "corruption" we have caused, we will have to bear the consequences. In this case, those consequences are the devastatingly dangerous effects of climate change. Allah has warned us and we can see the

consequences, so now we must change, for the preservation of future generations.

The effects of climate change are getting worse every day, and the responsibility that we have, as people who live on this earth, will get tougher. We have been bestowed with a great duty and it is our job to carry it out the best we can. May Allah enable us to do so. Ameen.

REFERENCES

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