

The National Amīr/ President
Jamā‘at Aḥmadīyya,

Dear Brother,

السلام علیکم ورحمة اللہ وبرکاتہ

Summary of the Friday Sermon delivered by Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ V (May Allāh be his Helper) on 06th October 2023 at Mubārak Mosque Islāmabād, Tilford, UK.

Huzoor (May Allāh be his Helper) said: In my last sermon, I mentioned the account regarding the execution of ‘Aṣmā’. There is a similar fabricated incident about the execution of *Abu ‘Afak*. *Abu ‘Afak* was a 120-year-old man who was infamous for encouraging people against Islām through derogatory poetry against the Holy Prophet (May Allāh's blessings be upon him).

The details of this alleged incident are as follows: One day, the Holy Prophet (May Allāh's blessings be upon him) said to his companions, “Who will take care of this troublesome individual for me?” Hearing this, Ḥaḍrat Sālim bin ‘Umair (May Allāh be pleased with him) stood up and vowed that he would either kill this man or be killed. One night, when *Abu ‘Afak* was sleeping in the courtyard of his house, Ḥaḍrat Sālim bin ‘Umair (May Allāh be pleased with him) entered his courtyard and killed him. It is important to note that this incident is not cited by any reliable sources and contains many inner contradictions.

According to *Ibn Sa‘ad* and *Wāqḍī*, Ḥaḍrat Sālim bin ‘Umair (May Allāh be pleased with him) executed *Abu ‘Afak*, but other accounts claim he was slain by Ḥaḍrat Sālim bin ‘Amr (May Allāh be pleased with him) or Ḥaḍrat Sālim bin ‘Abdullah bin Thābit Anṣārī (May Allāh be pleased with him). Similarly, varying causes for the assassination are suggested. Furthermore, *Ibn Hishām* and *Wāqḍī* indicate that Sālim acted on his own initiative, while other historians claim that the execution was carried out on the Holy Prophet's (May Allāh's blessings be upon him) orders. *Abu ‘Afak* was Jewish, according to *Ibn Sa‘ad*, but not according to *Wāqḍī*. There is also a discrepancy in the timing of the incident. According to *Wāqḍī* and *Ibn Sa‘ad*, the incident took place after the killing of ‘Aṣmā’ bint Marwān, while according to *Ibn Ishāq* and *Ibn Hishām*, it occurred prior to that. These clear discrepancies suggest that this is a fabricated and constructed narrative. Similarly, there is no historical Jewish reaction to these occurrences, lending credence to the idea that it is entirely imaginary.

It is worth noting that the time of these events is described as either before or immediately after the Battle of *Badr*. Historians unanimously agree that the first significant conflict between Muslims and Jews was the Battle of *Banu Qainuqa*. If these events had occurred before the Battle of *Badr*, they would certainly have been mentioned in connection with it, and Jews could have claimed that the Muslims had initiated hostilities. However, nowhere do we find that the Jews of Medina raised such criticism.

According to Ḥaḍrat *Mirza Bashīr Aḥmad* (May Allāh be pleased with him), historians have documented two occurrences following the Battle of *Badr* that are not contained in *Ḥadīth* collections or reliable historical documents. They don't even hold up under rational scrutiny. However, because these episodes give a chance to defame the Holy Prophet (May Allāh's blessings be upon him), some Christian orientalis have tended to portray them negatively. Nevertheless, the truth remains that these events fail to withstand scrutiny and inquiry. Firstly, they find no mention in the books of *Ḥadīth*; secondly, anyone with even a rudimentary understanding of *Ḥadīth* and history would be well aware that Muslim scholars and historians have never refrained from documenting any incident only because it appeared to raise objections against Islām or its founder. Incidents similar to those involving ‘Aṣmā’ and *Abu ‘Afak*, such as those involving *Ka‘b bin Ashraf* and *Abu Raf‘ay*, have been described in all books of *Ḥadīth* and

history in full detail. No Muslim scholar or historian has omitted these accounts. The fact that there is almost no mention of the killing of 'Aṣmā' and Abu 'Aḥak in any Ḥadīth or by authentic historians strongly suggests that these are fabricated stories that have somehow found their way into historical annals.

Even if these events were accurate, they cannot be deemed objective considering the circumstances in which Muslims found themselves at the time. Muslims were in a very vulnerable position, surrounded by enemies on all sides as well as from within. In such perilous circumstances, if a malicious individual repeatedly incited people against their leader by reciting inflammatory poetry, then, considering the circumstances, there may have been no option but to have him executed.

Even a man like Mr Margoliouth, who generally takes an adversarial stance, does not hold Muslims accountable for these incidents. He writes that since 'Aṣmā' deliberately provoked people against Muḥammad in her poetry, there was no other way to deal with her except through the death penalty. Hence, her execution cannot be considered a baseless and unjust act by any worldly standard.

It should also be recognised that the style of provocation utilised in the guise of sarcastic poetry has the potential to be far more destructive in Arab culture than in others. This is because, in Arab civilization, provocation through poetry had the potential to spark a disastrous battle between tribes rather than just individuals. The correct principle was established by Islām which said that the punishment for a crime should only be given to the culprit and not to their family and clan.

Mr Margoliouth's only objection is that the culprits should have been prosecuted and punished publicly. The answer is that even if these events are considered accurate, they were carried out by individual Muslims under extreme circumstances, and the Holy Prophet (May Allāh's blessings be upon him) did not give any such order. Furthermore, even if we assume that the command was given by the Holy Prophet (May Allāh's blessings be upon him), if he had followed the formal procedure to bring 'Aṣmā' and Abu 'Aḥak to justice and the perpetrators had known about it beforehand, the outcome would have been disastrous, potentially sparking a large-scale conflict in Madinah between Muslims and Jews or Muslims and polytheists. It is surprising that while Mr Margoliouth deemed the act of killing permissible in accordance with Arab custom, when it came to the way it was carried out, he failed to consider the specific circumstances of that time. If he had done so, he would have seen that this was the proper and required manner of execution for the community's peace and well-being.

In short, the events of the killing of 'Aṣmā' and Abu 'Aḥak are not established as authentic. And even if, hypothetically, they are considered accurate, they cannot be deemed objectionable under the circumstances. Furthermore, whatever the case may be, these executions were carried out by individual Muslims who acted under extreme emotions, and the Holy Prophet (May Allāh's blessings be upon him) did not order them. As a result, accusing the Holy Prophet (May Allāh's blessings be upon him) of these activities is incorrect and any tales to the contrary are fabrications.

Huzoor (May Allāh's blessings be upon him) said: It is Allāh's great favour upon us that He has granted us the ability to recognise the *Imām* of our time so that we try to examine and evaluate all accounts and ward off any objections levelled against the Holy Prophet (May Allāh's blessings be upon him). May Allāh provide understanding to Muslim clerics who propagate such myths to further their personal goals while bringing a negative reputation to Islām.

At the end of the sermon, Huzoor (May Allāh be his Helper) spoke about the following recently deceased members of the Jamā'at and announced to lead their funeral prayer after the Friday prayer. Huzoor (May Allāh be his Helper) also prayed for their lofty station in *Jannah*.

- Professor Dr *Nāṣir Aḥmad Khan Ṣāḥib* who was also known as *Pervāiz Perwāzī*. He recently passed away in Canada. He was born in Qādiān and was the son of a missionary, *Maulānā Aḥmad Khan Nasīm Ṣāḥib*. He obtained his PhD from the Punjab

University. He started teaching in various government schools. He later dedicated his life and began teaching at the *Ta'limul Islām* College in Rabwah, where he would also serve as the head of the Urdu department. He also served as a teacher in Japan and Sweden. He is survived by his wife, two sons and three daughters.

- *Sharīf Aḥmad Bhattī Ṣāhib* son of *Amīr Khan Bhatti Ṣāhib* of Rabwah. He is survived by his wife, two sons and two daughters. One of his sons, *Tahir Bhatti Ṣāhib*, is a missionary in Sierra Leone. He would hearken to any directive of the Khalīfa.
- Professor *'Abdul Qādir Dahrī Ṣāhib* former President of Nawab Shah. He was a very courageous and sincere person. He obtained a degree in the Sindhi language and also had the honour of translating the Holy Qur'ān into Sindhi upon the guidance of the Ḥadrat *Khalīfatul Masīh Rabi'* (May Allāh shower His mercy upon him). He was also a member of the *Fazle Umar* foundation.
- Professor Dr *Muḥammad Sharīf Khan Ṣāhib* who passed away recently in the USA. He obtained his PhD in zoology. He then served as a professor at the *Ta'limul Islām* College. He had about 250 research papers published throughout the world. Huzoor (May Allāh be his Helper) said that he was one of his students and he would take the class out to teach them about various insects, reptiles and the like. He was regular in offering prayers, keeping fasts and reciting the Holy Qur'ān. He encouraged his children and grandchildren to focus on studies. He had special love for the Khilāfat.

Wassalām,

Abdul Majid Tahir
Additional Wakīlut Tabshīr
ISLĀMABAD (UK)
Dated: 12 October 2023