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**Why is Muĥammad also ‘Aĥmad’? śallAllāhu álayhi wa sallam**

Published on Monday, 16 April 2012 16:09 in [Sirah](https://www.thesunniway.com/) - Read 3158 times

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Our dear Prophet, intercessor on the Day of Reckoning, the coolness of the hearts of the believers śallAllāhu álayhi wa sallam, along with his most popular name of Muĥammad, has 98 other names. One of these names is Aĥmad, which has 2 meanings. One meaning of the word Aĥmad is, ‘The one who is praised the most’ and the other meaning of the name Aĥmad is, ‘The one who has praised Allah the most’, and it is this meaning which led me to my first thought.

Allah is the being that is praised the most. He is the creator, thus, he is most deserved of our praise. As the Qur’an bears witness, ALL things perform the praises of Allah. The Qur’an says,

His are all good names; all that is in the heavens and the earth glorifies Him (59:24)

…and then the Almighty declares,

The seven heavens declare His glory and the earth (too), and those who are in them; and there is not a single thing but glorifies Him with His praise, but you do not understand their glorification; surely He is Forbearing, Forgiving (17:44)

Many verses of the Qur’ân repeat this message that ALL things that Allah has created (i.e. everything), glorifies and sings the praises of The Creator, Allah. The Earth, the skies, the Heavens, the Sun, the Moon, the oceans, the trees, the stones, the animate, the inanimate, the planets, the galaxies and all that lies within the universe praises Allah and has done so since its creation.

Now that this point has been understood, it is deduced that whatever came first or was created first, has praised Allah more than those things that were created after it. The angels (mala’ikah) were created before man; hence, they have praised Allah more than man. When Allah informed the angels that He was to create man, the angels, using Ijtihād and Qiyās, told Allah that man will roam the Earth causing strife, as the Qur’ân says,

And recall when your Lord said to the Angels, I am about to place a vice-generate in the earth, they said, “will You place such who will spread disorder and shed blood?” And We praise You commending You and sanctify You; He told, ‘I know what you know not’ (2:30)

This verse tells us that Allah created the Angels before creating the body of Adam álayhis salâm. Also known to us is that the job of the angels is to glorify and praise Allah and they have done this since their creation. So, if any being has the right to be called ‘Aĥmad’, it would be the angels. But, as Allah named His dear Prophet ‘Aĥmad’ śallAllāhu álayhi wa sallam, we must continue to ponder as to why this is so.

The Universe was created 12 billion years ago and the galaxies and stars were created 11 billion years ago, therefore, the Universe has praised Allah more than the galaxies and stars. The Sun was created before the Earth, thus, it has praised Allah more than the Earth has, which is 4.6 billion years old. Those things that came first or were created first have glorified Allah more than those things that came after them.

Therefore, the name Aĥmad can only be given to that thing or being that has praised Allah the most, that is, it had to have been created before anything. Otherwise, there would be a contradiction in terms. Aĥmad is that which has glorified and praised Allah more than anything else, therefore it is the first creation. Allah addresses the Prophet Muĥammad śallAllāhu álayhi wa sallam in the Qur’an as ‘Aĥmad’:

And remember when Îsā son of Maryam, said, ‘O children of Israel, I am Allah’s Messenger to you, confirming the previous Book Tourat before me and conveying the glad news of the Messenger who will come after me, his name is Aĥmad!’ (61:6)

Prophet Muĥammad śallAllāhu álayhi wa sallam has been called ‘Aĥmad’ by Allah, the All-Wise. Why? It is because the light our dear Prophet Muĥammad śallAllāhu álayhi wa sallam is the first creation of Allah and this is the reason why he is referred to as Ahmad by the All-Wise creator. Also, very appropriately, this verse of the Glorious Qur’an says, “…his name is Aĥmad” not “…his name will be Aĥmad”, therefore, clearly informing the reader of the verse that even at the time of Prophet Îsā which was 600 years before the birth of Prophet Muĥammad śallAllāhu álayhi wa sallam, Prophet Muĥammad was Aĥmad and was already created because the verse uses the present tense.

To continue, if the light of the Prophet Muĥammad śallAllāhu álayhi wa sallam was NOT the first creation of Allah, then calling him ‘Aĥmad’ would contain a contradiction because as has been discussed, the thing or being that has praised Allah the most alone has the right to be called Aĥmad, meaning the one who has praised Allah the most. As has been mentioned, at the time of the creation of Adam, the angels were already busy in their worship of Allah. Hence, we must correctly conclude that even before the angels, there was a being that was busy in praising and glorifying Allah and this being was the light (nūr) of the dear Prophet Muĥammad śallAllāhu álayhi wa sallam.

Therefore, we have found that the fundamental belief of Muslims from the time of Prophet Adam to the present day that Prophet Muĥammad śallAllāhu álayhi wa sallam is the first creation of Allah is upheld, advertantly or inadvertantly, by ALL those who accept that one of his 99 beautiful names is AĤMAD. The fact that he śallAllāhu álayhi wa sallam is the first creation of Allah is proven in numerous verses of the Qur’ân, various aĥadīth and in scores of books of the Muhaddithīn, Mufassirīn, Mutakallimīn and the Muhaqqiqīn scholars.

Allah knows best.

Muĥammad Aqdas

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