

Speech by

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*2018 Laureate
King Faisal Prize
Islamic Studies
40th Award Ceremony
Monday 26 March 2018*

In the name of Allah the Merciful

Praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds, the heavens and the earth. May prayers and peace be upon his slave and messenger, the custodian of His revelation! May Allah's satisfaction be showered on his family and companions, the shining stars of guidance, the downing seas of dew, and the meteors of consolation and guidance!

Peace from Allah and mercy on the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques and bountiful blessings of Allah on their Highnesses the Princes and their Excellencies the Ministers and the clement scholars from the city of peace which I no longer see but in dreams; my beloved city where I was born, raised, educated, grew up to become a young man, then a middle-aged man, and now an old man. It is in the city of peace that my parents and my teachers were born and lived and died. My city used to be peerless for its majesty and magnanimity, and the abundance of its scientists. It was the millennial capital of the Arab and Muslim world. Then the speckled city, where I emigrated, Amman, which become, thanks to Allah, the land of our settlement and residence after we were plagued by trial and tribulations.

On this auspicious and felicitous day, we mention the grace which Allah has bestowed upon us and the many bounties he has granted us. We also gratefully and prayerfully mention the producer of this beautiful work, King Faisal bin Abdulaziz -May Allah be pleased with him- and his loyal and devout offspring who have fondly glorified his memory by following his suit. They have indeed built on his achievements by their generosity towards scholars and scholarship. Genuine credit goes to them for their loyalty and their dedicated endeavors for this noble institution which has gained wide acclaim and fame. This institution has turned in fact, thanks Allah, into an iconic landmark of the age to which the brightest scholars turn and crave to join.

Then we remember history, the mirror of the nation, and the repository of its grandiose experiences and lessons, as well as the values that the wise mind can learn from history's events, developments, and the facts which many unfair people have striven to unjustly and ignorantly claim that Muslim scholars are mostly non-Arabs. Truth is, many of the scholars of the Ummah [*i.e. community*] are Arab noblemen who settled in the land of non-Arabs. As such, they were associated with them. We have spent more than half a century perusing their news, their countries, and their genealogies, just as we have verified their biographies, after which facts come through clearly and incontestably.

Our history and our religion testify that Allah has chosen the Arab people to be the lever of the eternal Islamic message thanks to their mind, tongue, ethics, and their work. As such, they have enjoyed both the perfection arising from their human power and the perfection which Allah revealed to them. Allah picked His Messenger from among them, and made their language the best among other languages. The *Quran* was revealed in Arabic and stated that

their religion is the best religion, and their Arab Prophet is the best of all prophets, and his loyal and pious companions are the best of all righteous people and the greatest holy knights and the ultimate martyrs.

In accordance with the correct and verified *Hadith* emanating from He who does not speak lightly and narrated by the eminent Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal in his Musnad [*i.e. collection of Hadiths*]: "He who does not thank people does not thank Allah!". I extend my sincere thanks to His Royal Highness Prince Khalid Al-Faisal, Chairman of the King Faisal Prize Board -May Allah preserve him and guide him to the path of goodness and sustain his support and bounty. I also wish to pay tribute to His Excellency Dr. Abdulaziz Alsebil, the Secretary-General, and all his staff for their tireless efforts and for their warm welcome and hospitality. We pray to Almighty Allah that He may add this to his record of deeds and the virtue pan of his deed-scale. Our closing prayer is "Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds". May Allah's mercy and blessings be upon you all.