

## Powerful thought-provoking insights of King Charles on Islam and its civilisation

Dr Daud Batchelor, *Australasian Muslim Times*, 18 May, 2023



*Prince Charles and Camilla visit Al-Azhar Mosque, accompanied by Grand Imam Sheikh Ahmed Al-Tayeb, during their Middle Eastern tour; Cairo, 18 November 2021*

**Charles III has been crowned King of the UK and Australia. Although a Christian, he's deeply interested in other religions.**

Pointedly, when he gave his coronation affirmation as Defender of the Faith, rather than meaning exclusively the Church, he pledged to “seek to foster an environment in which people of all faiths may live freely.”

Are you also aware of his very positive views about Islam?

Professor Kamal Hassan's 2016 article shines light on this side of Charles:

“As an internationally renowned member of the British elite, Charles' objective views about Islam and its civilization are of great importance ... As an environmentalist and propagator of international humanitarianism, Charles delivered two very important addresses at Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies in 1993 and 2010.”

“What he said about Islam and Islamic civilization, and their relevance to our troubled world, deserves to be known worldwide as it’s extremely rare for prominent Western leaders to have such knowledge and positive opinions about the West’s debt to the scientific contributions of Islamic civilization.”

“Muslim Spain, according to Charles (1993), wasn’t just preserver of Greek learning and contributor to emergence of the Renaissance, it offered its own original contributions in many fields of scientific knowledge, which benefited Europeans. Charles described how the intellectual and scientific prominence of Muslim Spain made Islamic culture ‘part of Europe for so long’ and concluded ... ‘it helped create modern Europe.’”

“He admitted that ‘Islam can teach us a way of understanding and living in the world’ because it preserves ‘an integral view of the universe,’ which unites religion and science, man and nature and mind and matter. Not many Western leaders would be so humble and honest to make such statement [as]:

‘Islam can teach us today a way of understanding and living, which Christianity itself is poorer for having lost. Islam ... refuses to separate man and nature, religion and science, mind and matter, and preserved a metaphysical and unified view of ourselves and the world around us.’”

“The Prince expressed a critical view of the materialistic spirit and disintegrative tendency of Western natural sciences: ‘we study our world in order to manipulate and dominate it, turning harmony and beauty into disequilibrium and chaos.’”

“He reiterated the need for contemporary Western civilization, which has lost a balanced perspective and spiritual vision of the world and become more exploitative, to ‘relearn from Islam’ and to benefit from ‘the ways of thought in Islam’ in searching for the lost metaphysical dimension of life in Western societies.”

“His 2010 speech, ‘Islam and the Environment ... is a profound critique of the secular and materialistic worldview of the modern West which caused severe global environmental crises. Negative consequences of the comprehensive industrialization of life ... result from the secular worldviews and mechanistic thinking, which are contrary to Islamic teachings.”

Questioning the sustainability of collusion between the sciences and economic materialism, Charles argued that, in light of the environmental crisis, a different model must be found.

Locating the roots of the problem in a ‘deep, inner crisis of the soul,’ he emphasized the way in which religious communities can offer long-term solutions by returning to spiritual and practical values.

Charles remarked that the whole Judeo-Christian concept of man dominating in this world is different from the Islamic concept, which sees man as earth’s steward.

Moshe Terdiman, observed, “That is why Charles, who has been well-known for his Islamic tendencies, called people worldwide to follow Islam’s green way to save the environment.”

Last year as Ramadan began, Charles shared this greeting on Instagram:

“The generosity of spirit and kind-hearted hospitality of Muslims does not cease to astound me and I’m sure as we enter more uncertain times, with many now struggling to cope with increasing challenges, the Muslim community will again be a source of immense charitable giving this Ramadan. There is much we can all learn from the spirit of Ramadan.”