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Heather Templeton Dill Announces the 2018 Templeton Prize

It is a distinct honor, and a great joy, to announce the winner of the 2018 Templeton Prize: His Majesty King Abdullah the Second, of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

Abdullah the Second ibn Al Hussein ascended to the throne as King of Jordan in 1999, after the death of his father, King Hussein, who had reigned since 1952.

Since then, he has done more to seek religious harmony within Islam, and between Islam and other religions, than any other living political leader, often at significant risk and cost, and always with modesty and grace.

Since 1972, the Templeton Prize has been given annually to a person who has made an exceptional contribution to affirming life's spiritual dimension.

The Prize was designed to help the laureates and their work become more well known, not so much for their own benefit, but for the benefit of people who might be inspired by them.

His Majesty King Abdullah's work is indeed inspiring. He has underscored the importance of Islam's diversity rather than seeking to invent or enforce uniformity where none exists. He has built upon the power of principled pluralism to extend religious harmony among the 1.8 billion followers of Islam, so that each can recognize one another as Muslims.

Sir John Templeton often used the phrase 'spiritual entrepreneur' to describe Templeton Prize Laureates. King Abdullah offers the world the true definition of a spiritual entrepreneur, a person shaped by temporal and political responsibilities, yet who holds both the belief and free expression of religion as among humankind's most important callings.

King Abdullah's many contributions to spiritual progress include the release of The Amman Message in 2004, which defines the true nature of Islam through a clear declaration of what Islam is and what it is not.

In 2006, he launched an initiative known as "A Common Word Between Us and You," an open letter from Islamic religious leaders to Christian leaders calling for peace and harmony based on the twin commandments shared by both faiths, "love of God," and "love of the neighbor."

King Abdullah is also being recognized with the Templeton Prize for his unwavering commitment to protect the Islamic and Christian holy sites in Jerusalem including Al-Aqsa Mosque/Al Haram Al Sharif, one of Islam's three holiest sites, and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the presumed site of the crucifixion and tomb of Jesus.

And finally, the 2018 Templeton Prize recognizes the King's leadership which guarantees safe haven for Jordan's ethnic and religious groups who are free to worship as they choose, and for the millions of refugees that Jordan has hosted over the past five decades.

We at the Foundation are delighted that the Prize judges have acknowledged the outstanding work of King Abdullah the Second. He embodies the values that inspired my grandfather, Sir John Templeton, to establish the Templeton Prize and to create the John Templeton Foundation.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees of the Foundation, I congratulate the 2018 Templeton Prize Laureate, His Majesty King Abdullah the Second.

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