

KNOWLEDGE AND WILL POWER FOR PRACTICAL REFORMATION



SERMON DELIVERED BY HADHRAT
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RELAYED LIVE ALL ACROSS THE
GLOBE

10th January, 2014

NOTE: Al Islam Team takes full responsibility for any errors or miscommunication in this Synopsis of the Friday Sermon

Summary

If we wish to be a part of the mission of the Promised Messiah (as) then we need to reform ourselves.

What we need to do is to ponder, contemplate and plan those means and practices that will give us strength to persevere in good and overcome evil.

In order to reform our practices, we need to work on three aspects of our behaviour; willpower or aspiration, strong and correct knowledge, and commitment with determination to act.

Some people can attain the goal of personal reformation by commitment, hard work and dedication. Others find the burden of personal reformation too much and need external help to make them attain this goal.

Constant hard work is needed for reformation of practice so that all Ahmadis are able to fulfil the objectives of being Ahmadis.

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A couple of Fridays ago some sermons were given in light of Friday sermons of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II (may Allah be pleased with him) regarding reformation of practices.



It was explained that regarding some sins as trivial, emboldens one to commit these and stands in the way of one's reformation.



It is vital to remove all obstructions to self-reformation.



Our beliefs are strong and in accordance with the true Islamic teachings, we need to endeavour to bring our deeds and actions in line with Islamic teachings.

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- It should be remembered that the purpose of the advent of the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) was not just reformation of beliefs.

- He said that he had come to connect man to God and for man to pay the dues of mankind. These matters are dependent on practices.

The Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) said: 'Remember mere verbosity and phraseology cannot avail unless it is followed by practise.'

He also said: 'Make your faith weighty. Practise is the ornament of faith. If man's lifestyle is not right then there is also no faith.'

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If we wish to be a part of the mission of the Promised Messiah (as) then we need to reform ourselves.

We can find the capacity to reform others from the strength of personal reformation.

If there is no difference between us and others, why should the world listen to us?

Rather than be overwhelmed by others, we should impress them.

We must free ourselves from any worldly influence.

This is not easy; we need to cultivate an inner strength that would help us overcome obstacles to our practical reformation.

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There are many obstacles to our practical reformation

We need to devise and follow proposals and plans to overcome those influences of society which negatively impact on our practice of reformation.

This will require sacrifice of nafs (the self) and creating an atmosphere to support reformation.

Without this, we can not be successful.

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The world today is like a global village.

- Good and bad practices of any culture and country can be shared via electronic media almost instantaneously.
- Unfortunately, the speed at which the practice of evil spread tends to be faster than the spread of good practices.

An additional challenge is that the standards of what is good and what is bad has also changed.

Some practices that Islam deems sinful are considered trivial, acceptable or even good in a nonreligious society.

For example, dance is part of Western culture; these days the practice of dance in inappropriate and scant clothing is made accessible to all on the electronic media.

Even on Pakistani television, a Muslim country, such vulgarity is seen in the name of entertainment.

Thus, an immoral act has gained wide spread acceptance because those promoting this, remained persistent.

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Thus, tremendous planning and sacrifice is required to resist evil.

What we need to do is to ponder, contemplate and plan those means and practices that will give us strength to persevere in good and overcome evil.

The resolve to stamp out evil has to be supported by a determination and commitment to action.

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In order to reform our practices, we need to work on three aspects of our behaviour.



Willpower or aspiration



Strong and correct knowledge



Commitment and determination to act

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The main and fundamental strengths required for self-reformation are only willpower or aspiration and the commitment and determination to act.

Indeed, correct and proper knowledge influences them both

For the purpose of reformation of practice, strength of resolve needs to be enhanced and any shortfall in commitment to action should be addressed.

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There is little wrong with our strength of resolve. Majority of the Jama'at aspire to attain Taqwa (righteousness), purity, love of God and to disseminate the message of Islam.

Our aspirations and willpower are sufficient to enhance us in our faith, but ...

.. are not strong enough to help us attain reformation of character and deeds.

We must acknowledge that this inability to reform our character and actions is in fact a reflection of flaws in our devoutness to God

Also, when we are unable to achieve our intended strength of character, this means that we need more support and help to accomplish our goal.

We have no option, but to rectify this weakness, otherwise all will be lost.

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An example of this would be when a student wishes to learn something but cannot..

To teach such a student, we will need to increase his capacity to understand by addressing the causes that stop him learning.

We will also need to address other causes accordingly that are making it difficult for the student to learn.

In order to attain success in our practical reformation, we have to work out reasons for our inability to transform strength of our actions in line with strength of our beliefs.

• **We will have to seriously reflect if any of these reasons is applicable to us;**

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- Are we truly devoted to God?
- Are all our deeds based on true-intention and sincerity?
- Do we have weak aspirations?
- Is our knowledge inadequate?
- Do we lack resolves and commitment to act?

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One's ability to have resolve, aspirations and commitment is determined by depth and extent of one's knowledge.

Strong knowledge is required to increase the strength of resolve and action.

For example; if one is not fully aware of the heaviness of an object one intends to lift, one might make an average effort and fail.

However, knowledge from the first failed attempt will help one's next attempt when one will employ techniques and tools to lift the weight successfully.

In this instance one has combined knowledge with correct use of power to attain one's goal

The very same principle needs to be adapted to attain practical reformation i.e. to use knowledge to enhance one's motivation, aspirations and practical capacity.

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God has given every individual the capacity to assess the effort required to undertake a given task.

This capacity to assess comes from knowledge; both internal and external knowledge.

Internal knowledge is based on observation and experience whereas external knowledge comes from outside sources, for example the sound of an approaching crowd.

Taking the example of lifting weight successfully, the success of the effort depends upon the ability to assess;

.. when the person assessed the weight of the object, incorrectly, he could not lift the object.

However, later, after assessing and appraising the correct weight he lifted it successfully.

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The same principle works when man prepares to reform himself; it is his capacity to assess/compare which decides how much effort is required for his personal endeavour.

Sometimes, due to incorrect knowledge, man is not able to reform himself as lack of correct knowledge impairs the effort required for reformation.

Sin is committed due to lack of knowledge. When a child is brought up in a sinful environment he grows up with a distorted sense of right and wrong;

... for example some families think that one cannot get by without telling lies.

Children brought up in such an environment will find it very difficult to give up telling lies.

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It was mentioned in previous sermons that a great obstruction in reformation of practices is the belief that some sins are trivial and there was no harm in committing these.

Once embroiled in sins, it is difficult to leave them.

If one gets used to sinful practices, one loses one's capacity to overcome sin.

This is because the brain perceives that there is no harm in committing such a sin, and does not furnish strength to overcome this.

In order to reform practices aspiration, knowledge and commitment to action is required.

Abundance of knowledge enhances one's resolve, motivation and commitment.

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In summary, reformation of practice requires three things:

A strong will power or motivation to attain great objectives.

An abundance of knowledge to appreciate the difference between right and wrong and recognise what is right and endeavours to follow it and not lose out due to ignorance.

Thirdly, we need commitment to act, so that our limbs follow our good intentions and do not reject what the good intentions order them to do.

These are the fundamental techniques to overcome sin and attain reformation of practices.

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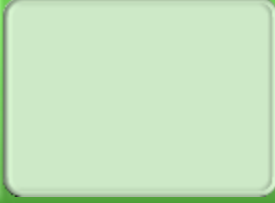
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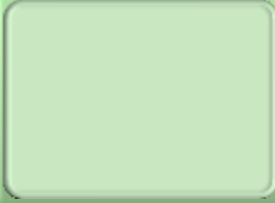
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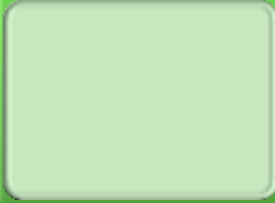
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 A weakness in commitment to act is of two kinds: tangible and intangible.

 Intangible weakness is when one has the ability to achieve a certain goal but due to lack of practice is somewhat rusty;

 ... e.g. a person who has the ability to lift a 40 kilo object on his own, who after some initial struggle ultimately manages to lift the weight on his own after some effort and commitment .

 Whereas tangible weakness is when ones loses one's ability to act to achieve a certain goal without the help of others.

 Example of tangible weakness is a person who is unable to lift a certain weight without help and support of others.

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The state of reformation of practice is the same. Some people can attain the goal of personal reformation by commitment, hard work and dedication.

Others find the burden of personal reformation too much and need external help to make them attain their goal of reformation.

Therefore, for the reformation of these people, the society, Jama'at and the auxiliaries have to play their role.

We need pay attention to these matters for reformation of practices so that we can fulfil the objective of the advent of the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) and so that our God-given capacities do not get rusty and eventually corrode away.



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The Promised Messiah
(on whom be peace)
said: 'The way of
belief is to want to be
given reformation
from Allah the
Exalted and to
expend one's strengths
[for it].'

He also said: 'You should
simply show your example
by practise and it should
have brilliance in it so that
others may accept it. No
one will accept it unless it
has brilliance. Similarly, if
your internal state does
not have cleanliness and
brilliance no one will buy
it. If you do not have high
morals you cannot attain
any station.'

Constant hard work is needed for reformation of practice so that all Ahmadis are able to fulfil the objectives of being Ahmadis and are able make themselves true Muslims in accordance with the wishes of the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace).

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Next Huzoor announced that he would lead funeral Prayer in absentia of Master Mashriq Ali Sahib who passed away on 3 January in Qadian after being ill for a year. He was nearly 80 years old.

He was a brave preacher and had several attempts at his life during his Tabligh missions.

He had taken Bai'at in 1965 and had remained ardent about Tabligh till his last breath. He was a Moosi.

He leaves behind three daughters and two sons one of whom is perhaps known by the entire Jama'at. He is IsmatUllah Sahib who recites poems on MTA.