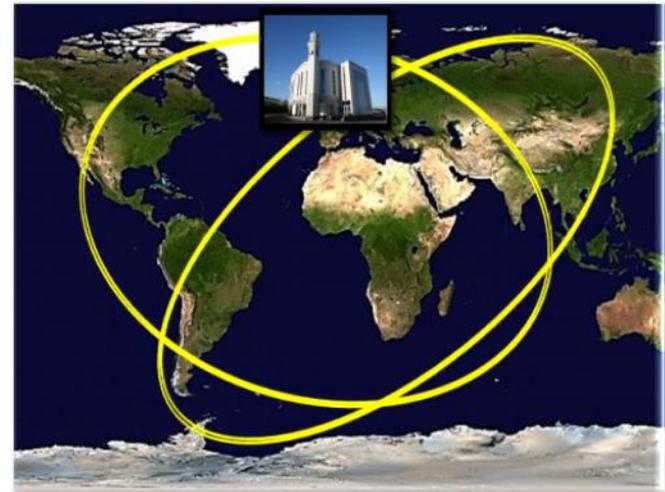


‘Taqwa – The True Essence of Fasting in Ramadan’



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relayed live all across the globe

April 22nd, 2022

Summary

'Taqwa – The True Essence of Fasting in Ramadan'

We can only truly benefit from Ramadan when we strive to increase in righteousness.

Thus, in order to inculcate the true spirit of Islam within ourselves, we must seek and obtain guidance from the Promised Messiah (as).

We must study the Holy Qur'an and note down those evils which God has forbidden.

True Taqwa is when a person becomes purified to the degree that angels embrace them.

The Promised Messiah (as) said that one who gives priority to God will be given priority by God.

April 22nd, 2022

Benefit from Ramadan

His Holiness (aba) said that these days we are passing through the month of Ramadan and about 20 days have elapsed.

His Holiness (aba) said that by the grace of Allah, believers do their best to take full advantage of this blessed month.

God has stated that the reason why fasting has been prescribed is so that we may become righteous.

Thus, we can only truly benefit from Ramadan when we strive to increase in righteousness

Fasting is a Shield

His Holiness (aba) said that fasting is a shield for us. Does this mean that it is enough for us to keep our fast in the morning and break it at night? No – instead we must reflect upon the true purpose of fasting, which is to establish righteousness.

Thus, if we wish for our fasting to attain the pleasure of Allah and His nearness, then we must bring ourselves to that standard desired and outlined by God.

His Holiness (aba) said that we claim to be Muslims and those who act upon the teachings of the Holy Prophet (sa)

and have thereby accepted the latter day Messiah whose advent he foretold who manifested in the personage of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as) of Qadian.

We have accepted that the victory of Islam will come through him. Thus, in order to inculcate the true spirit of Islam within ourselves, we must seek and obtain guidance from the Promised Messiah (as).

Attaining the Stages of Righteousness

The Promised Messiah (as) has explained to us the true essence of Taqwa, righteousness.

The Promised Messiah (as) said that the first stage of belief is establishing Taqwa.

In order to establish Taqwa, we must abstain from all forms of evil.

We must analyse ourselves to see whether we fulfil the rights of God and His creation.

These things can only be achieved when we have knowledge of them, thus we must attain knowledge of what God has commanded and what He has forbidden.

In order to attain knowledge, we must study the Holy Qur'an and note down those evils which God has forbidden.

Studying the Holy Qur'an

His Holiness (aba) said that during the month of Ramadan we increase our focus on reciting the Holy Qur'an.

Thus, we should read it while searching for those things which God has enjoined and the things which He has forbidden.

We must search for, study and implement these things.

**His Holiness (aba) said that until a person adopts righteousness, their prayers cannot achieve acceptance, as God states:
'Allah accepts only from the righteous.'
(The Holy Qur'an, 5:28)**

Blessings and Results of Prayer

His Holiness (aba) further explained in light of the Promised Messiah's (as) writings that when prayers are accepted, it refers to the blessings and results of prayer that have an impact upon the worshipper.

If a person remains engulfed in wrongdoing and even despite offering prayer, then such prayers are merely physical actions.

His Holiness (aba) said that if we do not remain mindful of these things, then our fasting cannot be considered a shield for us.

We may have begun the fast in the morning, broken it at sundown, remained hungry all day, but we will not have achieved the true essence of doing so.

Allah Fulfils the Needs of the Righteous

His Holiness (aba) said that true Taqwa is when a person becomes purified to the degree that angels embrace them.

A thief steals to fulfil their needs, but had they remained patient then it could have been that God fulfilled this need for them.

Hence, there is a saying of the Holy Prophet (sa) in which he stated that when a person steals it is when they are in a state of disbelief.

In other words, they forget that Allah is watching and become disbelievers in that moment. This is not only stealing things but even being dishonest in business dealings.

On the other hand, if a person establishes Taqwa then God removes all such things from their path which leads them towards disbelief and fulfils their needs.

Steadfastness

His Holiness (aba) said that there is a verse in the Holy Qur'an which states:

As for those who say, "Our Lord is Allah," and then remain steadfast, the angels descend on them, saying: "Fear ye not, nor grieve; and rejoice in the Garden that you were promised." (The Holy Qur'an, 41:31)

This means that once a person has believed in God, they should remain steadfast in this belief and not let their faith become weak over the smallest of matters. By remaining steadfast in faith, a person is given the glad tidings of Paradise and the help of God in this world and the hereafter.

Believer and Disbeliever

His Holiness (aba) said that there is a difference between the success of a believer and a disbeliever. The Promised Messiah (as) explained that upon receiving any success or blessings, a believer is humbled, because they realise that whatever they have attained is solely due to God.

On the other hand, disbelievers take sole credit for anything they attain which leads them down a path of darkness.

The Promised Messiah (as) said that one who gives priority to God will be given priority by God.

Thus, a person who adopts Taqwa begins reaping its rewards in this very life.

Hence, if our efforts are drawing us towards a closer connection with God and are encouraging us to do more good deeds, then this is the best way of knowing whether our efforts are finding acceptance in the court of God.

Proper Use of Our Faculties

His Holiness (aba) continued quoting the Promised Messiah (as) who explained that adopting Taqwa includes the proper use of that which we have been bestowed by God Almighty.

We must use our eyes in the proper manner and abstain from seeing bad things. We must use our ears in the right manner and abstain from listening to foul things. We must use our heart in the right manner and root our evil thoughts by reciting Istighfar.

Furthermore, adopting Taqwa entails fulfilling the rights of God's creation and serving them even in the minutest of ways, whilst also keeping in mind to continue fulfilling the rights of God.

Hence, Taqwa has been likened to a garment, which indicates that true spiritual beauty can only be achieved when one strives to tread upon the finest paths of Taqwa.

Ahmadi Muslims' Faith

His Holiness (aba) further quoted the Promised Messiah (as) who said that Taqwa entails staying away from all kinds of innovations. The Promised Messiah (as) said that true piety has left the earth.

His Holiness (aba) narrated an incident from his time in Ghana when a minister mentioned that most of the people in jail were Muslim. He was told however that if he investigated, he would find that none of them were Ahmadi Muslims.



Upon investigation this proved to be true. Thus, true believers are those who tread with the fear of God at every step and adopt purity and piety in everything they do.

His Holiness (aba) said that while our society continues to fall to new depths, Ahmadis must remain resolute in their faith because Ahmadiyyat has the true answer of bringing society back from this state.

Form of Ungratefulness

In the end, the promises made to the Promised Messiah (as) will be fulfilled; it would be our misfortune if our actions render us outside the pale of his teachings. His Holiness (aba) said that the Promised Messiah (as) explained that there are those who are bestowed bounties by

God but try to hide them, however this is also a form of ungratefulness. Thus, if God has bestowed blessings upon someone then they should benefit from those bounties in thanks to God.

At the same time, it is necessary to treat one's family at home in a virtuous manner, rather than committing injustices at home with one's wife and children. As the Holy Qur'an states, one must consort with them in kindness.

Thus, it is necessary to adopt Taqwa in society and within one's home. When a person establishes Taqwa, they become enlightened; their actions, words and thoughts become naturally inclined towards virtue.

God Requires a Sacrifice

His Holiness (aba) explained that all of these things require true recognition of God. True fear of God can only be established when a person truly recognises God.

It is then that Taqwa is achieved. Similarly, one cannot truly love God until they are ready to offer sacrifices for His sake.

In fact, the very word 'Islam' means to sacrifice one's self. Similarly, one cannot love God until one truly recognises God.

His Holiness (aba) said that these are the standards of Taqwa expected of us by God, the Holy Prophet (sa) and the Promised Messiah (as). It is in order to attain Taqwa that God has instituted fasting.

His Holiness (aba) said that we should pray for the ability to complete the rest of our fasts with the intention of attaining Taqwa and may the fasts already kept have been towards achieving the same purpose.

God Looks Righteousness

His Holiness (aba) said that once a person went to the Promised Messiah (as) and asked how he could pledge allegiance to him when he was not from the Syed caste.

These days, some Arabs also raise the same allegation that the Messiah should have been from among the Arabs.

However, the Promised Messiah (as) replied to the man saying that God is not merely pleased with one's status or the people he belongs to, rather God looks to a person's righteousness and bestows ranks accordingly.

Even the Holy Prophet (sa) told Hazrat Fatimah (ra) that she should not be proud merely on account of being a prophet's daughter, as God does not look to a person's rank. In fact, God is the one Who bestows rank, which He does by looking to a person's Taqwa.

**The Promised Messiah (as) said that God Almighty states in the Holy Qur'an: 'And he who fears Allah — He will make for him a way out. And will provide for him from where he expects not.'
(The Holy Qur'an, 65:3-4)**

Righteous People

The Promised Messiah (as) asked whether this promise was made to those who are Syed or those who have adopted Taqwa? Thus it is of paramount importance to inculcate and establish Taqwa.



His Holiness (aba) said that righteous people are not merely those who others consider to be righteous, rather they are those who are righteous in the sight of God. Such who may lose everything but remain true to their faith and belief in God.

Thus, simply having some good qualities are not enough to encompass Taqwa, rather one must adhere to all aspects of Taqwa, which entails fulfilling both the rights of God and His creation to the highest degree. Thus, the people referred to by God as having adopted Taqwa are those who did their best and strove their hardest to achieve Taqwa in all its aspects.

Taqwa cannot be in contradiction to the Holy Qur'an

The Promised Messiah (as) responded to those who labelled him as a disbeliever by saying that the signs foretold for the advent of the latter day Messiah have all been fulfilled, so how can those who reject the Messiah be considered to have Taqwa?

The Holy Qur'an states that Jesus (as) passed away yet they consider him to be alive; how then can this be considered Taqwa?

True Taqwa cannot be in contradiction to the Holy Qur'an, rather true Taqwa can be understood through the Holy Qur'an which teaches the finer paths of righteousness.

His Holiness (aba) said that he presented various quotations so that we may understand the true meaning and essence of Taqwa so that we may implement them as well.

His Holiness (aba) said that we should spend the rest of Ramadan understanding the true essence of Ramadan and strive to become those who fulfil the rights of God and His creation. His Holiness (aba) prayed that may Allah grant us the ability to do so.