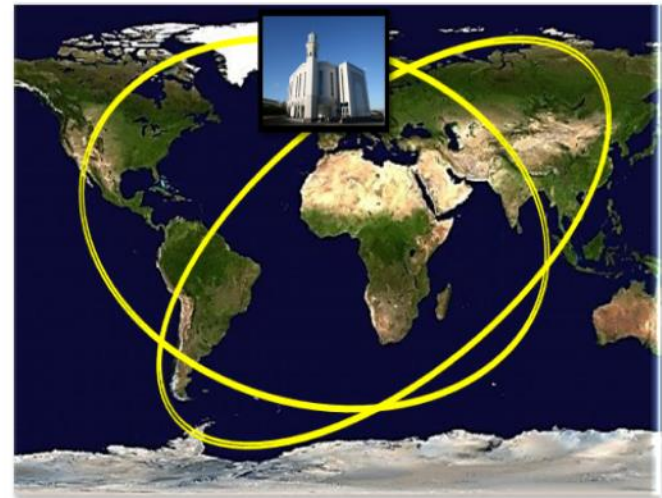


“The True Meaning of Taubah and Istighfar”



**Sermon Delivered by Hadhrat
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Muslim Community**



**relayed live all across the
globe**

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Summary

“The True Meaning of Taubah and Istighfar”

The Holy Prophet (sa) once said that for one who truly repents, it is as if they never erred in the first place.

Without efforts towards true repentance, our oath of self-reformation would be rendered hollow.

The Promised Messiah (as) said that rejecting the reality of repentance hinders progress and success.

True repentance and seeking forgiveness can only be fruitful when the basic commandments of worship are adhered to.

His Holiness (aba) prayed that may we understand the true spirit of repentance and seeking forgiveness and be those who truly repent and seek forgiveness.

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True Repentance

His Holiness Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad (aba) said that Allah the Almighty accepts the repentance of His servants, on the condition that it is true repentance and not just the mere utterance of words.

His Holiness (aba) said that in the Holy Qur'an, it is stated that Allah grants those who truly repent with wealth and progeny, and it becomes a means of being saved from the displeasure of Allah the Almighty.

At one instance in the Holy Qur'an, Allah the Almighty states:

**'They would have surely found Allah Oft-Returning with compassion and Merciful.'
(The Holy Qur'an, 4:65)**

His Holiness (aba) said that, however, the condition of this is that one truly seeks forgiveness and repents.

It is recorded that the Holy Prophet (sa) once said that for one who truly repents, it is as if they never erred in the first place. One becomes safe from the ill effects of wrongdoing.

True Repentance

Then the Holy Prophet (sa) cited the following verse:

‘Allah loves those who turn to Him and loves those who keep themselves clean’ (The Holy Qur’an, 2:223)

His Holiness (aba) said that the Holy Prophet (sa) was asked what connotes true repentance.



The Holy Prophet (sa) replied by saying regret and sorrow. It is in doing so that one can have their sins forgiven and benefit from the mercy of Allah.

His Holiness (aba) said that the Promised Messiah (as) has outlined the conditions for true repentance.

The first condition that he stipulated was to abandon ill and evil thoughts. This is a great struggle which one must undertake in order to achieve true repentance.

True Repentance

The second condition for true repentance stipulated by the Promised Messiah (as) was that one must exhibit true regret and sorrow. They must understand that the enjoyments and allures of this world are temporary, and remaining attached to them renders no benefit.

The third condition stipulated by the Promised Messiah (as) for true repentance is to firmly resolve never to go near such evil again. This should not be limited to mere resolve, rather a concerted effort must be made to replace the evil deeds with good and virtuous deeds.

His Holiness (aba) said that falling into one evil leads to another, and then another. Hence it is of great importance to achieve true repentance.

We must try to purify our hearts and do our utmost to ensure that we never fall short in fulfilling the rights owed to Allah the Almighty and those owed to His creation.

True Repentance

It is imperative for us to always implement the teachings of Allah, His Messenger (sa) and the Promised Messiah (as) in order to fulfil the purpose of our pledge of allegiance.

Without efforts towards true repentance, our oath of self-reformation would be rendered hollow.

His Holiness (aba) said that the Promised Messiah (as) has drawn the attention of his Community towards true repentance on countless occasions and, in fact, has taken every opportunity to highlight this subject.

His Holiness (aba) said that he would present some excerpts of the Promised Messiah (as) on this subject.

The Benefits of Seeking Forgiveness

His Holiness (aba) quoted the Promised Messiah (as), who spoke about the benefit of seeking forgiveness. He said that the Muslim ummah has been granted two abilities;

One is the ability to gain strength, and the second is the ability to practically exhibit that strength. Strength can be attained through seeking forgiveness and seeking help.

Just as people exercise by lifting weights and other means, seeking forgiveness strengthens the soul and develops perseverance of heart.

Ghafar also refers to covering; thus, by doing istighfar, one strives to subdue and cover those emotions and passions that take one further away from God.

God Has Given The Hope

His Holiness (aba) quoted the Promised Messiah (as), who said that no doubt humans have been created weak, owing to which they will certainly fall short in the fulfilment of certain commandments.

This makes it certain that God would definitely accept the repentance of those who truly repent.

One should repent in a manner that even if they were thrown in a fire, they would not revert to committing the same evil deed.

It is one of the greatest attributes of Allah the Almighty that he accepts the true repentance of people.

By stating that He is the Oft-Returning with mercy and that He accepts repentance, God has given hope. Had this hope not existed, then how could people have repented? Thus, true repentance leads to the acceptance of repentance.

Lip-Service is Insufficient

The Promised Messiah (as) said that seeking forgiveness cannot be limited to the utterance of mere words in prostration, rather they must be accompanied by true efforts and actions to the end of avoiding and eliminating the evil from one's life.

The Promised Messiah (as) said that disasters that strike the world are a means of drawing people's attention towards the increased seeking of forgiveness. His Holiness (aba) said that in light of the conditions

of the world today and war being on the brink, we should all increase in truly seeking forgiveness. Thus, one should always seek repentance with a true heart, and in the same manner, seek the ability to do good deeds in the future.

Otherwise, merely uttering the words of seeking forgiveness can have no true effect. Rather, what is uttered by the tongue should be a reflection of what truly resides in the heart. It is then that God can avert affliction and calamity before it strikes.

True Repentance Brings About a Complete Change in a Person

The Promised Messiah (as) said that after pledging allegiance to him, if one's treatment of their wife remains the same, or the manner in which they treat their children remains the same, then their oath of allegiance holds no value.

Instead, after pleading allegiance, one should exhibit such an example which leads others to attest that a true change has come about in this person. This is exactly what the result of true repentance should be.

The Promised Messiah (as), who cited a narration in which the Holy Prophet (sa) cried and then addressed the people saying that calamities are attached to every person like ants, and the only way to be saved from them is through true repentance.

The Promised Messiah (as) continued that some Christian priests have levelled the baseless allegation that since the Holy Prophet (sa) also used to seek forgiveness, thus showing that he was sinful, God forbid.

The Seeking Forgiveness of the Prophets

The Promised Messiah (as) responded by saying that such people do not realise that seeking forgiveness or istighfar is a lofty quality.

Humans have been made with natural shortcomings, and prophets seek forgiveness to not succumb to the same natural weaknesses. Ghafar means to cover.

No prophet even has the same powers as God, and so no one can safeguard and protect themselves, and so they too require the protection of God, which is why all prophets have done istighfar.

The Promised Messiah (as) explained that istighfar is an Arabic word that means to seek forgiveness;

to ask God to safeguard one against the ill effects of previous faults that have been committed, and to be safeguard against committing faults or evil deeds in the future. If one turns to God, God turns even more towards them.

Rejecting Repentance Hinders Progress

The Promised Messiah (as) said that God is described as the Living (Al-Hayy) and Self-Subsisting and All-Sustaining (Al-Qayyum).

Al-Hayy refers to the fact that God also grants life, but then, He did not abandon the life that he created, like a mason who builds a building and leaves it.

Thus, in order to continue living, one also needs istighfar for the strength to keep living and to do so without the stain of sin.

The Promised Messiah (as) said that rejecting the reality of repentance hinders progress and success. It is no secret that a person in their own being is not complete, just as one is not born a scholar but must work towards it.

Similarly, one's moral standard requires development. Had God not accepted repentance, then this would mean that He did not have any intention of granting salvation to anyone.

Developing Pleasure in Prayer

His Holiness (aba) said that once, someone asked the Promised Messiah (as) how to develop pleasure in prayer – this is something that people ask even today.



The Promised Messiah (as) said that it comes about through virtuous deeds, and to pray to God to develop this pleasure as it cannot be developed without His help.



Similarly, one must persist and persevere. However, if one does not strive in this regard, then they cannot attain what they seek.

Without the grace of God, one cannot attain anything, and so one should always seek His grace and help. One who becomes distant from God becomes like satan. Thus, one should always seek forgiveness, so that they may be saved from ruin. The Promised Messiah (as) said that the doors of God's grace are never closed.

Seeking Forgiveness

If one truly repents, then they should know that God is the Oft-Returning with Mercy.

One should not think that God will forgive some and not others is a form of disrespect to Him, because God's mercy is vast, and the door of His mercy is not closed to anyone.

The Promised Messiah (as) said that in order to bring about a change in one's self, they must seek forgiveness. Those who make the excuse that they are too busy with their worldly work to pay attention to turning towards God and praying should be fearful. They must pay attention to this.

True repentance and seeking forgiveness can only be fruitful when the basic commandments of worship are adhered to.

His Holiness (aba) prayed that may we understand the true spirit of repentance and seeking forgiveness and be those who truly repent and seek forgiveness.