

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

The Amīr/National President
Jamā‘at Ahmadiyya,

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Dear Brother,

السلام علیکم ورحمة اللہ وبرکاتہ

Extracts from the Friday Sermon delivered by *Hadrat Khalīfa-tul-Masīh V* (May Allah be his Helper) on 18 May 2018 at Baitul Futūh Mosque, London.

The objective of Ramaḍān is to inculcate righteousness and to grow in righteousness.

Our Imam, *Hadrat Khalīfa-tul-Masīh V* (May Allah be his Helper) in the beginning of his sermon recited the following verse:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

“O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you, as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may become righteous.” (2:184)

It is the responsibility of an Aḥmadī to understand the significance of fasting and fulfil the purpose of Ramaḍān, which is to adopt righteousness and further progress in it. When we strive to attain righteousness in the month of Ramaḍān, we will be even more vigilant about our prayers. When we observe the fast while trying to tread the path of *Taqwa*, we shall also be conscious of avoiding evil. We will strive to learn Allah’s commandments and act upon them. It is only by avoiding evil, whether it affects our selves or causes hurt to others, that we fulfil the purpose of fasting. If we do not do this and do not shun evil then we are not fulfilling the purpose of fasting, which is *Taqwa*. If, despite observing the fast, we are still arrogant and egotistic and desire to be praised by others and find pleasure in this, then this is not righteousness. If we are not shunning quarrels, falsehood and mischief during fasting, then this is not righteousness. If during fasting we are not spending time in worship and prayers and good deeds, then this is not righteousness. It is only by shunning evil and adopting good deeds that we fulfil the purpose of Ramaḍān. The Holy Prophet (May Allah's Blessings be upon him) says that Allāh does not care if you simply starve yourself.

Become pious and walk the narrow paths of *Taqwa* (righteousness):

While teaching us to tread the path of righteousness in order to please Allāh, the Promised Messiah (May peace be upon him) says that righteousness is the essence of all the holy scriptures. The Promised Messiah (May peace be upon him) says: Many times I have received the revelation from Allāh, “If you become pious and walk the narrow paths of righteousness, Allāh will be with you.” This causes me much anguish and I wonder what I should do so that my Jamā‘at should adopt true righteousness and purity. I pray so fervently that at times I reach a state verging on unconsciousness or even death. Until and unless one becomes pious in the sight of Allāh, he cannot receive Allāh’s help. The Promised Messiah (May peace be upon him) says: I desire to separate those from among my Jamā‘at who are righteous, who give preference to faith over the world, and are inclined towards Allāh, and assign them some religious tasks. And then I would not care the least for those who are engrossed in the worries of the world and who strive day and night for material gains.

Taqwa (righteousness) is an inseparable condition for the acceptance of prayers:

Allāh says:

إِنَّمَا يَتَقَبَّلُ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْمُتَّقِينَ

“Allāh accepts only from the righteous.” (5:28)

This is a promise, and He never turns back on His promise, as He says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَخْلِفُ الْمِيعَادَ

“Surely, Allāh breaks not His promise.” (3:10)

Since righteousness is an inseparable condition for the acceptance of prayers and it cannot be set aside, thus righteousness is essential for one’s prayers to be accepted. The Promised Messiah (May peace be upon him) says: If one were to seek the acceptance of his prayers while being heedless and deviant, would he not be foolish and naïve? It is therefore incumbent upon my Jamā‘at that each one, to the best of his ability, should tread the path of righteousness so as to taste the sweetness and joy of the acceptance of prayer and strengthening of his faith....Many people say that they have prayed much and fervently but their prayers are not accepted. They should first look within themselves and ask whether their faith prevails in their hearts? Do they tread the path of *Taqwa*? Or is there a greater inclination towards the world? This too is a condition for the acceptance of prayers.

Various branches of *Taqwa* (righteousness):

Having learnt that there can be true Comfort and happiness only with true *Taqwa*, we should then learn about the various branches of *Taqwa* which are spread out like the web of a spider. *Taqwa* relates to all human limbs viz. beliefs, speech, morals, etc. There should be *Taqwa* in our beliefs, in our speech, and in our morals. The Holy Prophet (May Allah's Blessings be upon him) says: The one who is fasting should keep his tongue pure, and if someone argues with him, he should say I am fasting and so I cannot argue with you. The Promised Messiah (May peace be upon him) says: Speech is a very delicate matter. Sometimes a person utters words that are contrary to righteousness while he is pleased with what he has said, even though what he said is evil. Evil talk is not necessarily abuse and querulousness but even ostentatiousness and other ills that are perpetrated through speech, all are contrary to *Taqwa*. It is said that a rich man invited a godly person to a banquet. When the godly person was seated, the rich and arrogant man called to his servant, “Bring the platter that I brought from my first Hajj.” After a while he said, “Bring the platter that I brought from my second Hajj.” And then he said, “Bring the platter that I brought from my third Hajj.” The godly person said to the rich man, “You are indeed pitiable, for in these three sentences you have ruined all your three pilgrimages.” These pilgrimages were for ostentation and not for seeking the pleasure of Allāh, and they were not in keeping with *Taqwa*. The godly person said, “Your only purpose was to show off that you had performed three pilgrimages to Mecca.” This is why Allāh has taught us to think before we speak and to avoid frivolous and meaningless speech. Thus the command is not only to hold back one’s tongue from hurting others, rather the tongue has to be protected from ostentation which leads away from righteousness. We should reflect on this.

The two branches of Virtue: obligatory and optional:

The Promised Messiah (May peace be upon him) says: All the good deeds that man performs can be divided into two categories: the obligatory and the optional. The obligatory ones are those that must be done, such as paying one’s debt. Doing good in response to good is also obligatory. It is not a favour when you respond to good with

good, rather it is an obligation to do good to someone who had done good to you. Along with these obligations, there are optional virtues that are in addition to the obligatory. To do good to someone in the same measure as he has done to you is obligatory, to do someone a favour above and beyond what he has done is optional, and in doing so one does good beyond what is obligatory. The men of Allāh complete their obligations through the optional duties. For instance, they give Zakāt in addition to what is incumbent upon them. Allāh befriends such people. Allāh says that He becomes their friend to such an extent that He becomes their hands and feet and even their tongues with which they speak.

The meaning of إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ مُحْسِنُونَ

The Promised Messiah (May peace be upon him) says the following Quranic verse has been revealed to me so many times that I cannot count them. It might perhaps be two thousand times:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ مُحْسِنُونَ

“Verily, Allāh is with those who are righteous and those who do good”. (16:129)

The purpose seems to be that the Jamā‘at should become aware that they should not be merely content with being part of the Jamā‘at and think that Allāh is pleased with them. Rather, they will only receive Allāh’s help when they have true *Taqwa* along with true righteousness.... If a person believes in Allāh and has firm faith in Him, he is never ruined, rather millions are saved for his sake. It is said that a man of Allāh was sailing on a ship when it was overcome by a great tempest, and the ship would certainly have capsized had it not been for his prayers. It was then revealed to him, “We saved them all for your sake.”

The Promised Messiah (May peace be upon him) says that these things do not come about through verbal professions, rather they require great effort. Allāh has also promised me:

"إِنِّي أَحَافِظُ كُلَّ مَنْ فِي الدَّارِ"

“I shall safeguard all those who dwell in ad-dar [the House].”

But for this to come about, all of you will also have to abide by *Taqwa*. He said: My prayers will also be accepted in your favour if you are worthy, and for this *Taqwa* is the precondition.

May Allāh enable us to observe fasting and perform worship and other duties during this month of Ramaḍān. *Amin*.

Please convey these guidelines given by Huzoor (May Allah be his Helper) to members of your Jama‘at.

Jazākumullāh.

Wassalām,

(Ch. Hameedullah)

Wakīl A‘lā,

Tahrīk Jadīd Anjuman Ahmadiyya Pakistan.

Dated: 23 May 2018