

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

The Amīr/National President
Jamā‘at Ahmadīyya,

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Dear Brother,

السلام علیکم ورحمة اللہ وبرکاتہ

Summary of the Friday Sermon delivered by *Ḥaḍrat Khalīfa-tul-Masīh V* (May Allāh be his Helper) on 8th April 2022 at Mubarak Mosque Islāmabad, Tilford, UK

Huzoor (May Allāh be his Helper) recited verse 187 of Surah Al-Baqarah, which is as follows:

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ ۖ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ ۚ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِلِعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ

And when My servants ask thee about Me, say: ‘I am near. I answer the prayer of the supplicant when he prays to Me. So they should hearken to Me and believe in Me, that they may follow the right way.’

Huzoor (May Allāh be his Helper) said: By the grace of Allāh, we are going through the month of Ramaḍān. This month is the month of acceptance of prayers. Allāh causes the fountain of His special grace to flow during this month, and every deed is done for the sake of gaining His pleasure. Allāh says that the gates of heaven are opened and the gates of hell are closed in this month and Satan is put in chains. While under normal circumstances, Satan reins freely, but in the month of Ramaḍān he is put in chains and God takes under His protection all those who observe fasting for His sake. Allāh says, “I myself become the reward of the one who observes fasting.”

The verse that I have recited comes in the context of the obligation and importance of Ramaḍān and the injunctions related to this blessed month. In this verse, Allāh has explained the means for the acceptance of prayers. He says to those who wish to become His true servants, ‘Don't worry, I am close to you. Have full faith and certainty in all My attributes and you will experience the fulfilment of your prayers.’

The Promised Messiah (Peace be upon him) says that there is a door that Allāh has opened for the good of His servants, and that it is the door of prayer. Whoever enters this door praying and supplicating is clothed in the mantle of purity and piety.

What are the conditions necessary for prayers to be accepted? In this regard, the Promised Messiah (Peace be upon him) says that a person who only prays but does not employ the normal means for attaining his objectives does not in fact pray, instead, he tests God. Therefore, before praying, it is necessary to expend all energies towards achieving one's goal. This is also mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān where Allāh says:

وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِيْنَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا

And as for those who strive in Our path — We will surely guide them in Our ways. (29:70)

The month of Ramaḍān is particularly meant for this striving.

The Promised Messiah (Peace be upon him) says: It is not possible for a person who is lazy and neglectful to enjoy the grace of God like the one who seeks Him with all his faculties and with full sincerity.

Therefore, in order for prayers to be accepted, it is necessary, first of all, to reform ourselves and to take steps towards God. According to the Holy Prophet (May Allāh's blessings be upon him), Allāh says, "If a person walks towards me a single step, I come running towards him." God is very compassionate towards us but sincerity and loyalty is the condition. It should not be that in Ramaḍān we pledge to offer prayers and pay obeisance to God and fulfil our obligations, but after Ramaḍān, we forget God and His commands and the world dominates us. In that case, we should not complain to God as to why our prayers are not heard even though He says that He hears the prayers of His servants. Allāh always wants to embrace His servant with love. His joy at seeing His servant coming towards him is greater than that of a mother who finds her lost child, or a traveller who finds back his lost camel loaded with provisions, in the wilderness.

We should try to be the recipients of this grace and never become lax in our striving for His pleasure. This is a point that needs to be heard and understood again and again. I will now cite some sayings of the Promised Messiah (Peace be upon him) in this regard.

The Promised Messiah (Peace be upon him) says: Just as there is a consequence for every action in our worldly life, so does this principle apply to religion. God makes it clear that in the case of those who do their best to seek God, He responds to them by showing them His way. However, for those who are crooked and do not wish to follow the right path, He causes their hearts to become twisted.

The Promised Messiah (Peace be upon him) says: The heart of man goes through many states, but God ultimately removes the weakness of the soul and bestows the power of purity and goodness as a gift. Allāh says that He will show His way to those who strive towards Him. This is His promise. He also teaches us to pray, "Guide us on the right path." We should always keep this in mind and offer this supplication during our prayers so that we too may be among those who are blessed with spiritual progress and insight.

The Promised Messiah (Peace be upon him) says: In all the endeavours of this world, we have to take some action first. When we take action, Allāh blesses our efforts. In the same way, only those who strive in the path of God are able to attain perfection. One has to toil to attain nearness to God. Just as a seed remains unblessed if it is not watered and irrigated and ultimately perishes, in the same way, if you do not remember your purpose every day and do not ask God for help, you will not receive His grace.

The Promised Messiah (Peace be upon him) says: The verse وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا points to the fact that a person should make all the necessary efforts. He should not, for instance, when digging a well, give up at two feet when the water is to be found at a depth of twenty feet. People endure sufferings and hardships for the world, some even die in such endeavours, but they don't want to suffer even the prick of a thorn for the sake of Allāh.

Allāh says that those who strive in His path will find the way. This means that on this path one has to struggle alongside the Messenger. It does not behove a *Mujahid* to run away after a while.

The Promised Messiah (Peace be upon him) says: *Tauba* and *Istighfār* (repentance and seeking God's forgiveness) are the means for attaining God. Look at the Companions of the Holy Prophet (May Allāh's blessings be upon him), did they attain their status only by praying? No. They strove in His path and persisted even when they were slaughtered like sheep, and only then did they attain this status.

The Promised Messiah (Peace be upon him) says: Remember, prayer is a kind of death, and just as there is great anguish and restlessness at the time of death, the same kind of anguish and restlessness is necessary for prayer. The foremost veils that cover man's heart must first be removed. Once they are removed, it does not require the same effort to remove the rest of them. Prayer requires great striving. When someone neglects prayer and stays away from it, God also does not care about such a person and stays away from him. Haste is of no avail in this realm.

May Allāh Almighty grant us the strength to do these things and enable us to establish a strong relationship with Allāh during this month of Ramaḍān.

We should also pray for the state of the world. May Allāh save the world from destruction and give people wisdom so that they may know their Creator.

After Friday Prayers, I will launch a website and mobile application developed by MTA. It contains my Friday sermons regarding the 313 *Badri* Companions. Readers can read each Companion's profile. There is a question and answer quiz about each Companion, as well as useful maps and Arabic pronunciations of difficult words and names. May Allāh make this website useful for the people. *Amīn*.

Jazākumullāh
Wassalām,

Abdul Majid Tahir
Additional Wakīlut Tabshīr
ISLĀMABAD (UK)
Dated: 14 April 2022