

The National Amīr/ President
Jamā‘at Aḥmadīyya,

Dear Brother,

السلام علیکم ورحمة اللہ وبرکاتہ

Summary of the Friday Sermon delivered by *Hadrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V* (May Allāh be his Helper) on 15th March 2024 at *Mubārak Mosque Islāmabād, Tilford, UK*

Huzoor (May Allāh be his Helper) recited the following versus of Sūrah Al Baqarah:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٨٤﴾ أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَاتٍ ۗ فَمَن كَانَ مِنكُم مَّرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ ۗ وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ ۗ فَمَن تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّهُ ۗ وَأَن تَصُومُوا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٨٥﴾

‘O ye who believe! fasting is prescribed for you, as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may become righteous. The prescribed fasting is for a fixed number of days, but whoso among you is sick or is on a journey shall fast the same number of other days; and for those who are able to fast only with great difficulty is an expiation — the feeding of a poor man. And whoso performs a good work with willing obedience, it is better for him. And fasting is good for you, if you only knew.’ (2-184,185)

Huzoor (May Allāh be his Helper) said: By the grace of Allāh, the month of Ramaḍān has commenced. The Holy Prophet (May Allāh's blessings be upon him) has greatly emphasised the significance and blessings of this sacred month. Throughout Ramaḍān, Allāh extends His boundless mercy to His servants, showering them with blessings. While Allāh bestows His abundant blessings upon His servants at all times, during this month, He specifically curbs the influence of Satan, making it exceedingly easier for His servants to resist temptation.

In this month, Allāh has granted us the ability to make up for any previous shortcomings in our worship. Dars of the Holy Qur’ān is arranged in mosques as well as on MTA. We should utilise these resources and endeavour to draw closer to Allāh. The Holy Prophet (May Allāh's blessings be upon him) has said that when a lost servant comes to Allāh, He feels even greater happiness than a mother who finds her lost child. When Allāh is pleased with His servants, He blesses them beyond measure. Thus, we are truly fortunate to make use of the spiritual atmosphere of Ramaḍān.

In these verses of Surah Al-Baqarah, while Allāh teaches us to follow His commandments while adhering to Taqwa, He also gives some specific commandments. By stating that fasting has been ordained for you as it was for those before you, Allāh reminds us to maintain humility and not to consider fasting as something exceptional that we are doing. The objective of fasting is to cultivate piety. Particularly during Ramaḍān, the affluent should attend to the needs of those around them. They should not only arrange Iftar for themselves but also for the less fortunate. Personally, I do not like extravagant Iftar gatherings, as they often become displays of excess and religious innovations. In fact, our emphasis in Ramaḍān should be on the recitation and study of the Holy Qur’ān, as well as on the worship and remembrance of Allāh. Fasting serves as a shield against sins, but it is imperative to wield this shield effectively; otherwise, Satan persistently seeks to lead humanity astray. The bastion of worship and remembrance of Allāh will safeguard us from Satan's assaults.

The Promised Messiah (Peace be upon him) says that many individuals are unaware of the true essence of fasting. It transcends mere abstinence from food and drink; rather, it has an impact and significance that can only be realized through experience. It is ingrained in human nature that reducing physical nourishment leads to the purification of the soul and the enhancement of spiritual faculties. Thus, the true essence of Ramaḍān is to lessen one form of sustenance that satiates the physical body

and increase another form of sustenance which satiates the soul. Thus, man should immerse himself in the remembrance of Allāh to attain purification and spiritual elevation.

The Promised Messiah (Peace be upon him) has taught us the following prayer which holds great significance:

سبحان الله وبحمده سبحان الله العظيم اللهم صل على محمد و على آل محمد

The intercession of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (May Allāh's blessings be upon him) is vital for the acceptance of prayers. The Holy Qur'ān consistently urges us to tread the paths of Taqwa. The Promised Messiah (Peace be upon him) also emphasised this principle on numerous occasions.

Once, the Promised Messiah (Peace be upon him) wrote the first verse of a couplet:

ہر اک نیکی کی جڑ یہ اتقا ہے

"The root of all virtues is fearing God,"

Allāh instantly responded by revealing the second verse of the couplet as:

اگر یہ جڑ ہی سب کچھ رہا ہے

"If this root is preserved, everything is saved."

Thus, it is Taqwa that earns Allāh's pleasure and fosters righteousness. Taqwa purifies individuals from worldly impurities, making it the foremost responsibility of every believer to attain Taqwa.

The Promised Messiah (Peace be upon him) says that, right at the outset, the Holy Qur'ān declares itself as a guidance for the righteous. This means that Taqwa is essential for comprehending the Holy Qur'ān and deriving guidance from it. If an individual with a corrupted heart, devoid of Taqwa, asserts that religious knowledge and truths emanate from his tongue, he speaks falsely. Being pious is a fundamental requirement for grasping the nuances and subtleties of faith. Taqwa serves as the gateway to all spiritual knowledge; devoid of Taqwa, one cannot attain it. Therefore, success awaits those who adhere to the guidance of the Holy Qur'ān.

The Promised Messiah (Peace be upon him) says that these spiritual ranks are not for mere narrations rather; they are a treasure that should be attained. This treasure lies within your own home, and with a little effort, you can acquire it. Therefore, it is incumbent upon us to endeavour to uncover this treasure while taking advantage of the atmosphere of Ramadān. Remember! Prayers will not be accepted without the attainment of piety. Until piety is achieved, prayers, fasting, and other acts of worship remain incomplete. Allāh's commandments boil down to two principles: firstly, avoid associating partners with Him, and secondly, fulfil the rights of fellow human beings. Piety is indeed a state that, once attained, renders one self-sufficient. It is such a state that, upon achieving it, one needs little else. The Promised Messiah (Peace be upon him) advises our Jamā'at to follow the path of piety and not to rejoice unnecessarily over the death of an opponent. Therefore, strive to become righteous. Piety is a remedy that, when embraced fully, safeguards one from all harm, but it must be embraced entirely.

The Promised Messiah (Peace be upon him) says that our Jamā'at must always bear in mind that under no circumstances should Allāh be neglected. His help should always be sought, for without Him, mortal man is nothing. It should be well understood that He possesses the power to obliterate in an instant. Various forms of sorrow and disaster abound; hence, this world is not a place for recklessness and arrogance. Even here, hellish situations and diverse calamities can arise. If one seeks Allāh's mercy repeatedly, one must embrace piety. True piety cannot be attained until one reaches the state of Taqwa. Therefore, endeavour to lead a righteous life. When those who disregard piety face destruction, the righteous are spared. Maintaining a bond with Allāh is imperative, and true wisdom lies in nurturing this relationship.

The second verse outlines certain regulations pertaining to fasting. It emphasises that despite fasting being obligatory for a specific number of days, Allāh provides ease to His servants. Therefore, individuals who are unwell or on a journey should not unnecessarily burden themselves and may make up for missed fasts upon recovery or completion of the journey. While fulfilling the obligation of fasting is mandatory, unnecessary hardships should be avoided. In this regards, the

affluents may pay Fidyah (expiation) as well for their missed fasts, this is not obligatory for everyone, rather only the affluents are enjoined to do so. This will earn them an additional divine reward.

Additionally, provisions are made for nursing mothers or those with chronic illnesses. They are advised to offer Fidyah (expiation) according to their ability, Fidyah (expiation) becomes an alternative to their fasting. Fidyah (expiation) serves to assist the less fortunate, thus making the fulfilment of the rights of the fellow human beings a form of worship. This underscores the essence of Islām, which is characterised by nothing but mercy.

The Promised Messiah (Peace be upon him) says: I once pondered the reason behind the commandment of Fidyah (expiation), and it dawned on me that it serves as a means of facilitation, enabling individuals to fast through the grace of Allāh. Allāh possesses absolute power; if He so desires, He can empower even a weak individual to fast. Therefore, the essence of Fidyah (expiation) is to acquire strength, and this comes through the benevolence of Allāh.

The Promised Messiah (Peace be upon him) says: The fact is that it is an aspect of piety to avail oneself of the allowances granted in the Holy Qur'ān. Allāh has permitted travellers and the sick to make up for missed fasts on other days, and this directive should be duly followed. Fasting while ill or during travel contravenes Allāh's explicit decree. Salvation is bestowed through the grace of Allāh, not by showing the vigour of one's deeds. Therefore, if a sick individual or a traveller observes fasting, they undoubtedly transgress the bounds of obedience. True piety lies in adhering to the commands of Allāh.

Huzoor (May Allāh be his Helper) said: May Allāh bestow upon us the capability to traverse the paths of His pleasure during Ramadān and elevate the level of our piety. May we refrain from seeking excuses to abstain from fasting or needlessly burdening ourselves. May we consistently adhere to the beautiful teachings of Islām, and may this Ramadān be filled with abundant blessings from Allāh. May each passing day bring us blessings and mercy.

Let us also supplicate for the advancement of the Aḥmadiyya Jamā'at worldwide and for the resolution of various challenges. Let us pray for deliverance from the injustices of governments and from every malicious individual. Let us pray for the liberation of Aḥmadi prisoners of conscience and beseech Allāh to safeguard us in such a manner that our protection is never compromised by any shortcomings on our part. Let us pray for Muslims globally, asking Allāh to grant them wisdom to recognise the Promised Messiah (Peace be upon him).

Let us pray for protection from the repercussions of war and for the conflicts driven by power struggles in Muslim nations. Let us pray for the overall state of the world, asking Allāh to spare everyone from the ravages of war and its aftermath. It is evident that if a conflict arises, Aḥmadi will also be impacted. May Allāh shield us all from its harm. To secure ourselves, every Aḥmadi must also elevate his level of piety. In the UK, efforts are underway to constrain Muslims. May Allāh safeguard us and all other Muslims in this land from their effects. Āmīn

Wassalām,

Abdul Majid Tahir
Additional Wakīlut Tabshīr
ISLĀMABAD (UK)
Dated: 19 March 2024