

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 29<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at *Mubārak Mosque Islāmabād, Tilford, UK***

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

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ ۖ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ ۗ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ ﴿١٨٧﴾

*‘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.’ (2-187)*

Huzoor (May Allāh be his Helper) said: Allāh has placed this verse alongside His commandments about fasting in the month of Ramadān; in fact, it can be said that He has positioned it amidst those commandments, indicating the special connection between Ramadān and prayers. During Ramadān, Allāh regards His servants with greater love than on other days. The Holy Prophet (May Allāh's blessings be upon him) said that Allāh declares, "I treat My servant according to his expectations of Me. I am with him when he remembers Me. If he remembers Me in his heart, I remember him in My heart. If he speaks of Me in a gathering, I speak of him in a better gathering. If he comes near Me by a hand's span, I go near him by an arm's length. If he comes near Me by an arm's length, I go near him by a fathom's length. And if he comes to Me walking, I go to him running." When Allāh treats His servants with such kindness in ordinary situations, how much more Gracious will He be in Ramadān? The condition, however, is that all this should be done with the sincerity of one's heart. The Holy Prophet (May Allāh's blessings be upon him) says that Allāh is very Gracious, Kind, and Generous. When a person raises his hands in prayer, He feels shy about returning him empty-handed.

Huzoor (May Allāh be his Helper) said: We are sometimes too hasty in claiming that our prayers are not accepted. In such situations, we fail to introspect and ask ourselves how much sincerity we have in our hearts or how steadfastly we are growing in our love for Allāh. Allāh cannot be deceived; He knows what is in our hearts. In order to enter Allāh's doors that are ever open, we must first fulfil the preconditions.

In this verse, when Allāh says, 'My servants', He refers to those who genuinely aspire to become His servants. Ramadān provides a unique environment for this pursuit. When one takes advantage of this environment and attains such a state, it is then that Allāh declares, "Tell My servants and those who love Me that I listen to their prayers and respond to them." Allāh explicitly says that mere verbal expressions of love are inadequate; we must adhere to His commandments. We must fulfil our obligations to Allāh and to His creation, and we must strengthen our faith.

The Promised Messiah (Peace be upon him) has extensively elucidated the reality, wisdom, acceptance, and philosophical aspects of prayer. He says that sometimes people inquire, 'What is the proof of the existence of Allāh?' The answer is, 'I am very close.' This implies that there is no need for any great evidence. The evidence of His existence is readily inferred, and it is that when someone calls upon Him, He listens to their call.

The Promised Messiah (Peace be upon him) says: If someone asks how we can know about Allāh, the answer is that Allāh is near. If someone sincerely calls upon Him, He responds. The gods of other religions are distant; they are so far away that there is no response from them. If you claim to implore Allāh but receive no response, consider this analogy: If you stand in one

place and call out to someone who is very distant, but there is a flaw in your own ears, will you hear their reply? As long as there is a barrier between Allāh and the seeker, His response cannot be heard. Prayer serves as the greatest evidence of Allāh's existence. It is a significant asset and a formidable power.

Regarding the understanding of prayer, the Promised Messiah (Peace be upon him) says that Spiritual knowledge, in short, can only be attained through Divine grace, and through it alone can it survive. Divine grace purifies and illuminates knowledge, removes the intervening veils and cleanses the Nafs-e-Ammārah of all its impurities. It bestows strength and life upon the soul and releases the baser self from the prison of sin and purges it of its evil passions. Also, this grace salvages one from the flood of carnal passions and a kind of transformation takes place in man and he develops a natural aversion for sin. Thereafter, the very first urge felt by the soul, through Allāh's grace, is called Du'ā [supplication]. Do not think that we already pray everyday, and that the Ṣalāt we offer is also prayer; for the prayer which follows true knowledge and is born of Divine grace is of an altogether different colour and complexion. Such prayer is a thing that consumes, it is a fire that melts, it is a magnetic force that draws Divine mercy, it is a death but ultimately gives life, it is a raging flood but finally turns into a boat. Through it every wrong is redressed and every poison finally becomes an antidote.

The Promised Messiah (Peace be upon him) says: The closest means to attract Divine grace is through prayer. The essentials of a perfect prayer are that it be imbued with humility, fervour, and sincerity. Such a prayer attracts Divine grace. However, even this cannot be attained without His grace. Hence, the only remedy is to persist in praying, no matter how disheartened or unmotivated one may feel. Whoever wakes up during the night to pray, regardless of how distracted or restless he is, and then supplicates, 'O Allāh! You hold control over the heart; I beseech you to purify it,' such a person will experience eagerness in place of restlessness, and he will feel his soul flowing like water towards the Divine realm. Prayer is a remedy for every hardship. Many fail to grasp the significance of prayer and quickly become disillusioned and abandon it. Prayer demands perseverance. Genuine sincerity and striving are prerequisites, which, in turn, come about through prayer.

Explaining the philosophy of prayer, the Promised Messiah (Peace be upon him) says: When someone does everything in their power and sincerely resorts to prayer, Allāh frees them from the bonds of sin. Prayer is not something trivial; it signifies a kind of death, but when one embraces it, Allāh liberates them from the destructive path of sin that leads to death and grants them a life of purity.

The Promised Messiah (Peace be upon him) says: You should wake up at night and, with utmost humility, supplication, and anguish, present your difficulties before Allāh, dwelling in this prayer until it becomes like a death. It is at this point that the prayer reaches a state of acceptance. Remember, the most crucial prayer for a person is to beseech purification from sin.

The Promised Messiah (Peace be upon him) says: Prayer finds acceptance when it reaches the utmost level of anguish. Prayer is not a trivial matter; it is a profound truth. Whoever desires to witness the divine manifestation should pray. While praying, one should not yield to indifference or haste. One should persist in prayer until it has demonstrated its full effect. Those who grow weary and restless are in error, and it is a sign of being deprived.

Huzoor (May Allāh be his Helper) said: Now that Allāh has blessed us with this month of Ramaḍān, we should focus on prayers to bring about a pure transformation within ourselves. This is the means through which we can reform our lives in this world and in the hereafter. The last ten days of Ramaḍān are about to begin, and during this time, we should strive to strengthen our faith by waking up at night, bowing down before Allāh, and seeking His closeness.

At the end of the Friday sermon, Huzoor (May Allāh be his Helper) appealed for prayers for the progress of the Jamā'at, for the Aḥmadī prisoners of conscience in Yemen, and for the oppressed people of Palestine.

*Wassalām,*

Abdul Majid Tahir  
Additional Wakīlut Tabshīr  
ISLĀMABAD (UK)  
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