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CANADA

"AND COMPLETE THE HAJJ AND THE 'UMRAH FOR THE SAKE OF ALLĀH, BUT IF YOU ARE KEPT BACK, THEN MAKE WHATEVER OFFERING IS EASILY AVAILABLE . . . "

(THE HOLY QUR'ĀN, 22:38)

THE ESSENCE OF QURBĀNI (SACRIFICE) AT ʻĪDUL ADHĀ

Syednā Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ V (may Allāh be his Helper!) said:

> "God Almighty has stated that righteousness is the true essence that should underlay any sacrifice of animals we make. This is what is beloved to God. By making the physical sacrifice, the person making the sacrifice expresses his willingness to forego all his personal desires for God... The person making the sacrifice should take a lesson from this act of sacrificing an animal and realise that he too should be willing to make every sacrifice of his personal desires for the greater goal of achieving the nearness and pleasure of God Almighty."

(ʻĪdul Adhā Sermon 2019)

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ABBREVIATIONS OF SALUTATIONS

sa (Ṣallallāhu 'alaihī wa Sallam - May peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him!)
Usage: Salutation written after the name of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad[sa]

as (Alaīhis-Salām/ 'Alaihas-Salām - May peace be upon him/her!)
Usage: Salutation written after names of Prophets other than the Holy Prophet Muḥammad[sa], and pious women prior to the era of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad[sa]

ra (RaḍīAllāhū 'anhu / 'anhā/ 'anhum - May Allāh be pleased with him/her/them!)
Usage: Salutation written after names of Companions of the Holy Prophet[sa] and Companions of the Promised Messiah[as]

rh (Raḥimahullāh - May Allāh have mercy upon him!)
Usage: Salutation written after the names of deceased, pious Muslims who are not Companions

aa (Ayyadahullāhu Ta'ālā binaṣrihil-'Azīz - May Allāh be his Helper!
Usage: Salutation written after the name of Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad, Khalīfatul-Masīḥ V[aa]

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PEARLS OF WISDOM

بِسۡمِ اللّٰہِ الرَّحۡمٰنِ الرَّحِیۡمِ

THE HOLY QUR'ĀN

وَاَتِمُّوا الۡحَجَّ وَالۡعُمۡرَۃَ لِلّٰہِ ؕ فَاِنۡ اُحۡصِرۡتُمۡ فَمَا اسۡتَیۡسَرَ مِنَ الۡہَدۡیِ ۚ وَلَا تَحۡلِقُوۡا
رُءُوۡسَکُمۡ حَتّٰی یَبۡلُغَ الۡہَدۡیُ مَحِلَّہٗ ؕ فَمَنۡ کَانَ مِنۡکُمۡ مَّرِیۡضًا اَوۡ بِہٖۤ اَذًی مِّنۡ رَّاۡسِہٖ
فَفِدۡیَۃٌ مِّنۡ صِیَامٍ اَوۡ صَدَقَۃٍ اَوۡ نُسُکٍ ۚ فَاِذَاۤ اَمِنۡتُمۡ ۫ فَمَنۡ تَمَتَّعَ بِالۡعُمۡرَۃِ اِلَی
الۡحَجِّ فَمَا اسۡتَیۡسَرَ مِنَ الۡہَدۡیِ ۚ فَمَنۡ لَّمۡ یَجِدۡ فَصِیَامُ ثَلٰثَۃِ اَیَّامٍ فِی الۡحَجِّ وَسَبۡعَۃٍ
اِذَا رَجَعۡتُمۡ ؕ تِلۡکَ عَشَرَۃٌ کَامِلَۃٌ ؕ ذٰلِکَ لِمَنۡ لَّمۡ یَکُنۡ اَہۡلُہٗ حَاضِرِی الۡمَسۡجِدِ الۡحَرَامِ ؕ
وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰہَ وَاعۡلَمُوۡۤا اَنَّ اللّٰہَ شَدِیۡدُ الۡعِقَابِ ﴿۱۹۷﴾ اَلۡحَجُّ اَشۡہُرٌ مَّعۡلُوۡمٰتٌ ۚ فَمَنۡ فَرَضَ
فِیۡہِنَّ الۡحَجَّ فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا فُسُوۡقَ ۙ وَلَا جِدَالَ فِی الۡحَجِّ ؕ وَمَا تَفۡعَلُوۡا مِنۡ خَیۡرٍ یَّعۡلَمۡہُ
اللّٰہُ ؕ وَتَزَوَّدُوۡا فَاِنَّ خَیۡرَ الزَّادِ التَّقۡوٰی ۫ وَاتَّقُوۡنِ یٰۤاُولِی الۡاَلۡبَابِ ﴿۱۹۸﴾

(سورۃ البقرۃ،۱۹۷ تا ۱۹۸)

And complete the Ḥajj and the 'Umrah for the sake of Allāh, but if you are kept back, then *make* whatever offering is easily available; and do not shave your heads until the offering reaches its destination. And whoever among you is sick or has an ailment of the head, *should make* an expiation either by fasting or almsgiving or a sacrifice. But when you are safe, then he, who would avail himself of the 'Umrah together with the Ḥajj, *should make* whatever offering is easily obtainable. But such *of you* as cannot find *an offering* should fast three days during the Pilgrimage, and seven when you return home; these are ten complete. This is for him whose family does not reside near the Sacred Mosque. And fear Allāh and know that Allāh is severe in punishing.

(2:197-198)

اَللّٰھُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰی مُحَمَّدٍ وَّعَلٰی اٰلِ مُحَمَّدٍ وَّبَارِکْ وَسَلِّمْ اِنَّکَ حَمِیْدٌ مَّجِیْدٌ

ḤADĪTH

عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ رَضِیَ اللّٰہُ عَنْہُ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللّٰہِ صَلَّی اللّٰہُ عَلَیْہِ وَسَلَّمَ
فِیْ حَجَّۃِ الْوَدَاعِ، یَا اَیُّھَا النَّاسُ! اَیُّ یَوْمٍ ھٰذَا؟ قَالُوْا: ھٰذَا یَوْمٌ حَرَامٌ۔ قَالَ
اَیُّ بَلَدٍ ھٰذَا؟ قَالُوْا بَلَدٌ حَرَامٌ۔ قَالَ: فَاَیُّ شَھْرٍ ھٰذَا؟ قَالُوْا شَھْرًا حَرَامٌ۔
قَالَ: اِنَّ اَمْوَالَکُمْ وَدِمَائَکُمْ وَاَعْرَاضَکُمْ عَلَیْکُمْ حَرَامٌ کَحُرْمَۃِ
یَوْمِکُمْ ھٰذَا فِیْ بَلَدِکُمْ ھٰذَا فِیْ شَھْرِکُمْ ھٰذَا ثُمَّ أَعَادَھَا مِرَارًا ثُمَّ رَفَعَ رَاْسَہٗ
اِلَی السَّمَاءِ۔ فَقَالَ: اَللّٰھُمَّ ھَلْ بَلَّغْتُ مِرَارًا قَالَ: یَقُوْلُ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ: وَاللّٰہِ
اِنَّھَا لَوَصِیَّۃٌ اِلٰی رَبِّہٖ عَزَّوَجَلَّ، ثُمَّ قَالَ: اَلَا فَلْیُبَلِّغِ الشَّاھِدُ الْغَائِبَ، لَا تَرْ
جِعُوْا بَعْدِیْ کُفَّارًا یَضْرِبُ بَعْضُکُمْ رِقَابَ بَعْضٍ۔

(مسند احمد ۔ جلد اول، صفحہ ۲۳۰)

Hazrat Ibn 'Abbās[ra] relates that at the occasion of the Farewell Pilgrimage, the Holy Prophet[sa] said: "O you people! What day is thhis?" They replied: "It is a sacred day ['Arafa]. Then he asked, "What city is this?" They replied, "It is a sacred city [Makkah]." Then he asked, "What month is this?" They replied, "It is a sacred month [*Dhul Ḥijjah*]." Then the Holy Prophet[sa] said, "Your wealth, blood, and honour are sacred just like this sacred day, in this sacred month, in this sacred city." Then, he repeated this another time. Then, he raised his head towards the heavens and repeatedly said, "O Allāh! Have I conveyed Thy Message?" Hazrat Ibn Abbās[ra] says, "By God, this was a message to His Lord." Then the Holy Prophet[sa] said, "Aye! Those who are present here should convey my message to those who are absent." He continued, "Do not return to disbelief after me, causing bloodshed."

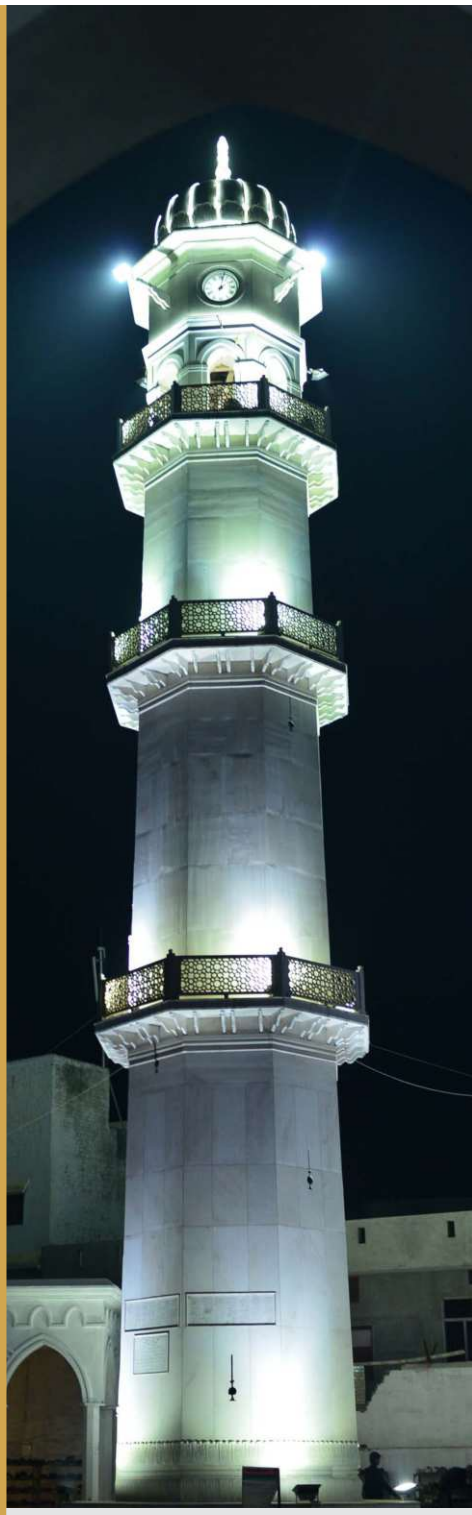
(*Masnad Aḥmad* Vol. 1, p. 230, qtd. in *Hadīqatus Sāliḥīn*, pp. 334-335)

SO SAID THE PROMISED MESSIAH[AS]

THE PHILOSOPHY OF ḤAJJ

Physical actions affect the soul, just as spiritual actions affect the body. Similarly, in the second type of worship—which is love and sacrifice— the same effects between body and soul are exchanged. In a state of love, the human soul always revolves around [the object of] its love and kisses its threshold. Similarly, the Ka'ba serves as a physical model for all true lovers. God has said, this is My House and this *Hajr Asfad* (Black Stone) is the stone of My Threshold. This command was given so that man may physically display the expressions of his deepest affection and love. So those who go for Ḥajj physically circle the House at the place of Ḥajj, showing they are mad and intoxicated in God's love; they cast aside their beauty, shave their heads and in a display of absolute obsession, perform circuit of the Ka'ba. This outward obsession [then] creates spiritual intensity and love. Just as the body circles the House, kissing the threshold of the stone, the soul [in effect] circles the True Beloved, kissing His spiritual Threshold. And this kissing is no *Shirk* [idolatry]; [it is like] when a person kisses a letter received from their dearest friend. Nor does any Muslim worship the Ka'ba or supplicatee to *Hajr Aswad* (Black Stone) for their needs. Rather, they take it as a symbol appointed by God. When we prostrate on the ground, we are not prostrating to the ground, so when we kiss the *Hajr Asfad* (Black Stone), it is not a kiss to the stone, itself. A stone is merely a stone that can neither benefit nor harm anyone. Rather it is a possession of the beloved, Who has made it symbolic of His Threshold."

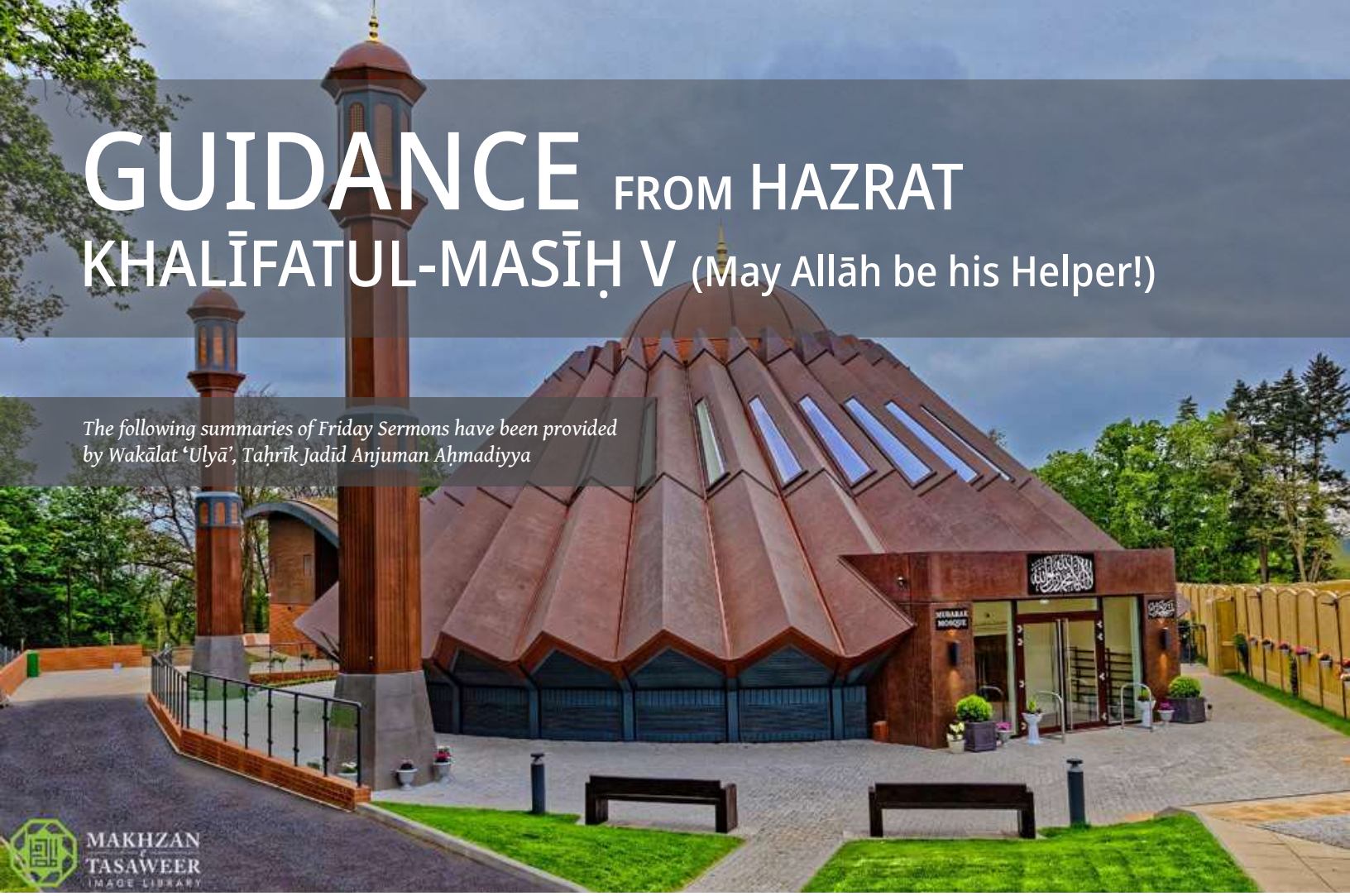
(*Chashmā' Ma'rifat*, *Ruḥānī Khazā'in* Vol. 23, pp. 100-101, translated from Urdu)



Mināratul-Masīḥ
Qadian, India

GUIDANCE FROM HAZRAT KHALĪFATUL-MASĪḤ V (May Allāh be his Helper!)

The following summaries of Friday Sermons have been provided by Wakālat 'Ulyā', Taḥrīk Jadīd Anjuman Aḥmadiyya



MEN OF EXCELLENCE

APRIL 3, 2020 AT MUBARAK MOSQUE ISLĀMABAD, TILFORD, UK.

Huzoor[aa] began the Friday sermon by stating according to the new regulations laid down by the government to curb the pandemic, it is not permissible to deliver the Khuṭba in front of a congregation. Therefore, arrangements have been made for today's Khuṭba within the confines of the law. There are hundreds of thousands of people listening to this Khuṭba all around the world, and it does not matter whether people are sitting in front of me or not. We should always strive for and pray to maintain this unity. May Allāh cause things to improve and may He do away with this pandemic from the world so that we can gather in our mosques as before.

Huzoor[aa] continued with the accounts of Hazrat Talha bin 'Ubaidullāh[ra], a Companion of the Holy Prophet[sa]. In that context, Huzoor[aa] answered some questions that tend to arise with regards to the Battle of Jamal. Huzoor[aa] said that prior to his demise, Hazrat 'Umar[ra] had set up a committee that would elect the next Khalīfa. Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī contains a detailed account of this. When Hazrat 'Umar's[ra] demise was close, people asked him to make a will and to appoint someone to be Khalīfa after him. Hazrat 'Umar[ra] said that he did not find anyone more deserving of Khilāfat than the following Companions with whom the Holy Prophet[sa] was pleased at the time of his demise. These were: Hazrat 'Alī[ra], 'Uthmān[ra], Zubair[ra], Talha[ra], Sa'ad[ra] and 'Abdur Rahmān bin 'Auf[ra]. Hazrat 'Umar[ra] then instructed that whoever becomes Khalīfa after him should take care of the Muhajirīn as well as of Anṣār. When Hazrat 'Umar[ra] passed away, the Companions[ra] he had named came together and Hazrat 'Abdur Rahmān bin 'Auf[ra] suggested that they all place their authority in three person's from among them. Hazrat Zubair[ra] then gave Hazrat 'Abdur Rahman bin 'Auf[ra] the authority to decide on his behalf. Hazrat 'Abdur Rahmān[ra] then said to Hazrat 'Uthmān and Hazrat 'Alī[ra], "Whoever of you withdraws his candidacy will be given the responsibility to elect whoever is most eligible in the eyes of Allāh." Hearing this, both Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra] and Hazrat 'Alī[ra] fell silent. Hazrat 'Abdur Rahmān[ra] then asked them whether they would consign the matter to him, and they both said that they would. He then led Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra] aside and asked him that if he were chosen as the Amīr, would he act with justice; and that if he were to choose 'Alī, would he obey him? He did the same with Hazrat 'Alī[ra], and when they had both pledged to this, he asked Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra] to raise his hand and take his pledge of Baī'at. Hazrat 'Alī[ra] then also pledged Baī'at and the other

Companions[ra] also followed him.

Hazrat Muṣleḥ Mau'ūd[ra] describes the election of Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra] as follows: After Hazrat 'Umar[ra] was injured and he realized that he was going to pass away, he instructed that the following six Companions would choose the new Khalīfa after him: Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra], Hazrat 'Alī[ra], Hazrat 'Abdur Rahmān bin 'Auf[ra], Hazrat Sa'ad bin Waqas[ra], Hazrat Zubair[ra] and Hazrat Talha[ra]. He also appointed Hazrat 'Abdullāh bin 'Umar[ra] to advise the six men but that he would himself not be eligible for Khilāfat. According to Hazrat 'Umar's[ra] instructions, these Companions[ra] would make their decision within three days, and during those three days Hazrat Suhaib[ra] would lead the prayers. He appointed Hazrat Miqdād bin Aswad[ra] to oversee the consultation process and to gather the participants in one place and oblige them to come to a decision. He said that people should pledge Bai'at to whoever had the majority, but if the verdict was divided with three on both sides then 'Abdullāh bin 'Umar[ra] would choose the one who would be the Khalīfa. If the members did not agree to his decision, then the one 'Abdur Rahmān bin 'Auf[ra] favoured would be the Khalīfa.

When Hazrat 'Umar[ra] passed away, the Companions[ra] met and had a long discussion. At the end of it Hazrat 'Abdur Rahmān bin 'Auf[ra] asked if anyone would want to withdraw his name. When all remained silent, Hazrat 'Abdur Rahmān bin 'Auf[ra] said that he was withdrawing his name. Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra] did the same, and so did the other two, but Hazrat 'Alī[ra] remained silent. Finally, after taking an oath from Hazrat 'Abdur Rahmān bin 'Auf[ra] that he would be completely fair, Hazrat 'Alī[ra] also withdrew his candidacy. Thus the decision now rested with Hazrat 'Abdur Rahmān bin 'Auf[ra]. For three days he went to every home in Madīnah asking people who they favoured as the Khalīfa. People overwhelmingly sided with Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra], and thus Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra] became the Khalīfa.

Later when Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra] was martyred, the people came rushing to Hazrat 'Alī's[ra] home and said he was now their Khalīfa and they wanted to pledge Bai'at at his hand. Hazrat 'Alī[ra] said, "This is not your task. It is the task of the Companions of Badr[ra]. Whoever they choose will be the Khalīfa." All the Companions of Badr then came together and said to Hazrat 'Alī[ra] that they considered no one more eligible for Khilāfat than him and that he should receive their Bai'at. Hazrat 'Alī[ra] then ascended the minbar (pulpit) and the first person who came up to pledge the Bai'at was Hazrat Talha[ra]. He was followed by Hazrat Zubair[ra] and then other Companions[ra]. Hazrat Talha[ra] and Hazrat Zubair[ra] were among the ten Companions[ra] whom the Holy Prophet[sa] gave the glad-tidings of paradise during their lives.

> May Allāh enable every Aḥmadi to focus on prayers during these days . . .May Allāh have mercy on everyone!

With regard to the Battle of the Jamal, Hazrat Muṣleḥ Mau'ūd[ra] writes: When Prophets come to the world, those who believe in them are considered more eminent. Every Muslim knows that the following Companions were considered the most esteemed after the demise of the Holy Prophet[sa]: Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra], Hazrat 'Umar[ra], Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra], Hazrat 'Alī[ra], Hazrat Talha[ra], Hazrat Zubair[ra], Hazrat 'Abdur Rahman bin 'Auf[ra], Hazrat Sa'ad[ra], and Hazrat Sa'īd[ra]. The reason why they were so revered was that they had suffered greater hardships for the faith than anyone else. After the martyrdom of Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra], there arose an altercation between the Muslims. One group demanded that they should at once avenge the martyrdom of Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra]. This group was led by Hazrat Talha[ra], Hazrat Zubair[ra] and Hazrat 'Ā'īshah[ra]. The other group was of the view that it was more important to bridge the divide among the Muslims and to unite them to establish the supremacy of Islām and that Hazrat 'Uthmān's[ra] martyrdom could be avenged afterwards. This group was led by Hazrat 'Alī[ra]. This altercation grew so tense that Hazrat Talha[ra] and Hazrat Zubair[ra] and Hazrat 'Ā'īshah[ra] accused Hazrat 'Alī[ra] of wanting to protect those who had assassinated Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra], while Hazrat 'Alī[ra] had accused them of prioritizing their self-interests over those of Islām. This led to the two sides to confront each other on the battlefield. One side was headed by Hazrat 'Alī[ra] and the other by Hazrat 'Ā'īshah[ra].

Hazrat Talha[ra] and Hazrat Zubair[ra] also took part in this battle. While the battle was going on, a Companion[ra] came to Hazrat Talha[ra] and said: Talha, do you remember that the Holy Prophet[sa] once said to you, "A time will come when there will be two warring factions, you will be on one side while 'Alī[ra] will be on the other, and he will be right and you will be wrong." Hazrat Talha[ra] at once remembered these words and left the battle. But as he was walking away, an unfortunate person from among Hazrat 'Alī's[ra] side attacked him from behind and martyred him. The assassin then went to Hazrat 'Alī[ra] to tell him of his great feat, expecting that he would be rewarded for it, but when Hazrat 'Alī[ra] heard of what he had done, he said: I convey to you the Holy Prophet's[sa] tiding of hellfire, because I heard him say to Talha[ra], "O Talha[ra], you will accept humiliation for the sake of the truth and justice, but one man will kill you, and Allāh will cast him in fire."

Muhammad Anṣāri quotes his father relating that on the day of the Battle of Jamal a man came to Hazrat 'Alī[ra] and asked that the man who had killed Talha be granted audience. Hazrat 'Alī[ra] said, "Give him the tiding of hell." When Hazrat 'Alī[ra] saw Hazrat Talha's[ra] body after he was martyred, he wiped off the dust from his face and said, "O Abu Muhammad, it is intolerable for me to see you covered with dust under the stars of heaven." He then prayed for Hazrat Talha[ra] and said that he wished that he had died twenty years earlier.

At the end of the sermon, Huzoor[aa] read some instructions of the Promised

Messiah[as] which he gave at the time of the plague. The Promised Messiah[as] said, "Keep your houses lighted. Clean your houses thoroughly and keep your clothes clean. These are terrible days and the winds are poisonous, and cleanliness is the way of the Holy Prophet[sa]." Again, he said, "People who live in towns and villages where the plague has spread should not go to other towns. They should keep their houses clean and warm and take all necessary precautions. But, most of all, they should show true penitence. People should undergo a holy transformation and make amends with God. Wake up at night for Tahajjud and pray and supplicate... Only true transformation can avert this chastisement from God."

Huzoor[aa] prayed that may Allāh enable every Aḥmadī to focus on prayers during these days. Follow government directives and keep houses clean. May Allāh have mercy on everyone! Let us focus on prayers during these days. May Allāh enable us to do so! Amīn!

THE CORONA PANDEMIC : OUR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

APRIL 10, 2020 AT MUBARAK MOSQUE ISLĀMABAD, TILFORD, UK.

Huzoor[aa] began the Friday sermon by speaking about the coronavirus pandemic which, has caused a great deal of anxiety and worry among people. People are worried about their loved ones who are ill, and some Aḥmadīs have also been affected by the virus. In short, the world is facing a lot of anxiety and uncertainty. One of our missionaries wrote and expressed wonder at what is happening. The truth is that no one really knows what is happening. However, Allāh had already foretold about the current age in the Holy Qur'ān as follows:

وَقَالَ الْإِنْسَانُ مَالَهَا

"And man says, 'What is the matter with her?" (99:4)

In 1920, a century ago, Hazrat Muṣleḥ Mau'ūd[ra] explained that the world has always been visited by epidemics and pestilences, but in this age the floodgates of calamities have opened up. Huzoor[aa] said that he has been saying for many years that ever since the Promised Messiah[as] came and warned the world about of heavenly calamities, the instances of storms, earthquakes and pestilences has increased manifold. These calamities are generally a warning that people need to fulfil their obligations to their Creator and to their fellow human beings. In these circumstances we, therefore, need to prostrate before Allāh and also warn the world.

Huzoor[aa] continued saying that whenever diseases or pestilences or storms visit the earth, they naturally affect everyone. It is wrong to say that Divine Jamā'ats are completely immune to them, for this is against Divine wisdom. However, a believer goes through such tribulations prostrating before Allāh and seeking His mercy and blessings. Some people say that this pandemic is a sign from Allāh and that they don't need to take any precautions. Huzoor[aa] said that we do not know whether or not this is specifically a sign, but to compare it to the plague that occurred in the time of the Promised Messiah[as] or to imply that Aḥmadīs who have succumbed to this virus were weak of faith is completely wrong and no one has the right to say such a thing. The Plague came as a sign for the Promised Messiah[as] and he had published specific announcements regarding it. Therefore, that Plague was a different thing altogether. The Promised Messiah[as] also announced through newspapers that he prayed for his followers to be saved from the Plague, but when a Divine chastisement visits the earth, the righteous are also impacted by it, and that in the end all will be judged according to their deeds. The wars that were fought in the time of the Holy Prophet[sa] and after him under the Khulafā' Rāshidīn were a sign for the truth of Islām, and yet some Muslims were killed in every war. And all those who were killed were called martyrs. The Promised Messiah[as] said: Similarly, the Plague is a sign of my truth and it is quite possible that some of us may be martyred in the course of it.

The Promised Messiah[as] has said:

> Fulfil your obligations to Allāh and keep your heart and mind pure, and then fulfil your obligations to Allāh's creatures. Have true faith in Allāh and pray to Him fervently. Not a day should pass when you have not prayed and supplicated before Allāh. Then do whatever physically needs to be done. That is to say, take all the necessary precautions. If one of you falls ill due to the plague, show compassion and sympathy to his family and help them in every way and leave no stone unturned in seeking a treatment. Remember, that to care for the patient does not mean exposing oneself to his noxious breath or clothes. It is always important to protect oneself.

"Fulfil your obligations to Allāh and keep your heart and mind pure, and then fulfill your obligations to Allāh's creatures.

Huzoor[aa] said that it is important to observe all the precautions such as wearing masks and avoiding visiting people's homes. Help people while taking all precautions and avoid unnecessary risks. Do not put yourself in harm's way.

The Promised Messiah[as] says that anyone who dies of this pestilence— God forbid— will be considered a *Shaheed* (martyr) and it is not necessary for his body to be washed. Such a person can be buried in his own clothes. Huzoor[aa] said that

these days the government permits the washing of the body and covering it with a shroud, but in the time of the Promised Messiah[as] the circumstances did not allow even for this. The Promised Messiah[as] also instructed that we keep our houses and our clothes clean, and also keep the drains clean. The Promised Messiah[as] said that, above all else, we need to cleanse our hearts and make amends with God.

Huzoor[aa] said that there are many people in the world, including Aḥmadīs, who do not have all the provisions necessary to protect themselves. Some do not have access to medical care or even to food. May Allāh have mercy on them and on all of us. As a Jamā'at we try to provide help to everyone, and even to non-Aḥmadīs, and we do so selflessly and without any ulterior motives. Huzoor[aa] stressed that we need to concentrate on prayers and more prayers. May Allāh protect every Aḥmadī and the Jamā'at as a whole. May Allāh also enable me to pray for you and enable all of you to offer prayers that find acceptance with Allāh.

Huzoor[aa] said that Aḥmadīs who run businesses should not try to make unnecessary profits at this time. They should try to sell essential commodities such as food with the minimum profit. This is the service to humanity that the Promised Messiah[as] teaches us. These are the days of fulfilling our obligations to Allāh's creatures and to find nearness to Allāh.

At the end of the sermon, Huzoor[aa] informed the Jamā'at about the sad demise of a devoted worker of the Jamā'at, Nasir Ahmad Saeed Ṣāḥib who passed away on April 5, 2020. In 1973 he was appointed in Nazārat Umūr 'Āma as a member of the Hifāzat Khās. After the migration of Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ IV[rh] to London, Nasir Saeed Ṣāḥib was also transferred to UK in 1985. He officially retired in October 2010 but continued to fulfil his duties.

Syednā Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ V[aa]

Huzoor[aa] said that Nasir Saeed Ṣāḥib had many excellent qualities. He was honest and upright in the performance of his duties. He was very kind towards his family and friends and tried to quietly help those in need. He was totally obedient to Khilāfat and his whole life revolved around Khilāfat. He always arrived on duty ahead of time. If a message was given through him that required secrecy, he would always keep it to himself and taught his colleagues to do the same. He was free from worldly interests and service of the faith was his only mission. He always desired to die while serving Khilāfat and his desire was fulfilled. Nasir Saeed Ṣāḥib was very caring towards his guests and was respectful towards old and young. He respected his seniors, never uttered a word of complaint and followed all directions given to him. He always won the hearts of those he met.

One of his outstanding qualities was respecting the guests, and this was most evident during the days of the Jalsa. He was very soft-spoken and was always alert on his duty. He would fulfil his responsibilities with total commitment and dedication. A colleague once asked what advice he could give him considering that he had served with three Khulafā' over a span of 48 years. Nasir Saeed Ṣāḥib said to him, "Keep your eyes and ears open, and your mouth closed, and always keep praying." Huzoor[aa] said that this advice applies to every life-devotee and every worker and office-bearer of the Jamā'at. Huzoor[aa] prayed that may Allāh have mercy on the deceased and raise his spiritual status. May Allāh grant health and patience to his wife, and may his son and future progeny forever remain connected with the Jamā'at and Khilāfat. Huzoor[aa] further said that knew Nasir Saeed Ṣāḥib from the time that he came to serve the Jamā'at and there is no doubt that he was selfless and devoted in his service. He has passed away in the current circumstances where not many people could participate in his funeral. He was suffering a heart condition for some time. He recently had a severe heart attack and was then also affected by the virus. He passed away after remaining in hospital for a few days. Since his body could not be brought here due to the current restrictions, he would lead his funeral prayer in absentia later some time. In this respect he can be counted among the martyrs as described by the Promised Messiah[as]. May Allāh have mercy on him and on other Aḥmadīs who have died because of this disease! Amīn!

"Aḥmadīs who run businesses should not try to make unneccesary profits at this time. They should try to sell essential commodities such as food with minimum profit.

APRIL 17, 2020 AT MUBARAK MOSQUE ISLĀMABAD, TILFORD, UK.

Huzoor[aa] began the Friday sermon by continuing with the accounts of the companions of the Holy Prophet[sa] who participated in the Battle of Badr.

Hazrat Mu'āz bin Hārith[ra]

He belonged to Banu Mālik bin Najjār clan of Anṣār's tribe Khazraj. His father's name was Hārith bin Rifa'ah and his mother was Afrā' bint 'Ubaid. Hazrat Mu'āwwiz and Hazrat 'Auf[ra] were his brothers. In addition to their father's name, the three brothers were also known by their mother's name and were also known as Banu Afrā'. All three brothers took part in the Battle of Badr. Hazrat Mu'āwwiz[ra] and Hazrat 'Auf[ra] were martyred in this battle while Hazrat Mu'āz[ra] accompanied the Holy Prophet[sa] in all the subsequent battles.

Huzoor[aa] cited the incident of the killing of Abu Jahl as recorded in Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhāri. Hazrat Anas[ra] relates that the Holy Prophet[sa] said on the day of the battle of Badr, "Who will go and see what has become of Abu Jahl?" Hazrat Ibn Mas'ūd went and found that the two sons of Afrā', Mu'āz and Mu'āwwiz, had attacked Abu Jahl fiercely with their swords and he was dying. Hazrat Abdullah bin Mas'ūd[ra] said, "Are you Abu Jahl?" Abu Jahl replied, "Have you ever killed anyone greater than myself?"

Hazrat Mirza Bashīr Aḥmad Ṣāḥib[ra] relates the incident of Abu Jahl's killing as follows:

> The enemy that the Muslims were facing was three times larger in number, far better equipped, and had come with the intent of wiping Islam off the face of the earth. And yet the Muslims, despite being weak and ill-equipped, were showing feats of unparalleled bravery. Each one of them tried to surpass the other and seemed eager to sacrifice his life in the way of Allāh. Hamza[ra], Ali[ra] and Zubair[ra] had cut through enemy lines.

Hazrat 'Abdur Rahmān bin 'Auf[ra] relates:

> When the battle began, I looked to my right and left and saw that I was flanked by two boys from Anṣār. I felt a little bit perturbed at this because a person's safety in battle depends on those fighting alongside him. But then one of the boys spoke in a whisper and asked me who and where Abu Jahl was. He had hardly finished speaking when the boy on the other side asked me the same question. I was astonished at their courage because Abu Jahl was leader of his army and was surrounded by seasoned fighters. I pointed out to them where Abu Jahl was and at once the two boys went cutting through the enemy lines. They reached Abu Jahl and, before his men could see what was going on, had him on the ground. 'Ikrimah, Abu Jahl's son, was with his father at the time. Though he could not save his father, he attacked Mu'āz with his sword, almost severing his arm. Hazrat Mu'āz[ra] went after 'Ikrimah but he managed to escape. Mu'āz then pulled his arm off his shoulder and continued to fight.

Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II[ra] said: "When Abu Jahl was born, scores of camels were slaughtered and drums were beaten in celebration, and yet his death was brought about by two fifteen-year-old boys, and even his last wish of being beheaded with his neck extended was not fulfilled."

Hazrat Mu'āz bin Hārith[ra] had four wives. From his first wife Habiba bint Qais he had a son named 'Ubaidullah. From his second wife Umm-e-Hārith bint Sabrah he had Hārith, 'Auf, Salma and Ramlah. From his third wife Umm-e-Abdullah bint Numair he had Ibrahīm and 'Ā'īshah. And from his fourth wife Umm-e-Thabit he had Sarah.

Usud ul-Ghābah cites various accounts with regard to the demise of Hazrat Mu'āz[ra]. According to one account, he was wounded in Badr and brought back to Madīnah where he succumbed to his injuries. According to another account, he lived until the era of Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra]. According to yet another account, he died during the war between Hazrat 'Alī[ra] and Amīr Mu'āwiyah while fighting on the side of Hazrat 'Alī[ra].

At the end of the sermon, Huzoor[aa] spoke about the sad demise of Rana Naeemuddin Ṣāḥib, son of Feroz Din Munshi Ṣāḥib, who passed away on April 9, 2020. His family embraced Aḥmadīyyat through his father Feroz Din Ṣāḥib who pledged Bai'at to the Promised Messiah[as] by letter in 1906. After the partition of India, the family moved to Lahore and then to Rabwah. He then volunteered to serve in the Furqan Battalion after which Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II[ra] sent him to look after the farms in Mirpur Khas and he worked there for a few years. He joined the institution of Wasiyyat in 1951. His wife Sarah Parween was the granddaughter of Daulat Khan Ṣāḥib, a Companion of the Promised Messiah[as].

According to the records, he was appointed in Amla Hifāzat Khās as a reserve in August 1954. Then, from November 1955 to May 1959, he served as a guard in Amla Hifāzat Khās. In those days Hazrat Muṣleḥ Mau'ūd[ra] was writing his commentary of the Holy Qur'ān and for this purpose he would often move to Nakhla and stay there for a few months. Naeemuddin Ṣāḥib would accompany him for the purpose of security and tending to the electricity generator.

After retiring from Amla Hifāzat in 1978, he moved to Harappa, District Sahiwal. He later became the mosque keeper in Sahiwal. In 1984, opponents of Aḥmadīyyat attacked the mosque where Rana Ṣāḥib was on duty and he responded in defence. Consequently, a case was registered against 11 Aḥmadīs, including Rana Ṣāḥib. He remained a prisoner of conscience from April 1984 to March 1994. A special military court passed death sentence against Rana Ṣāḥib and Ilyas Munir Ṣāḥib, who was the missionary. However, they were

acquitted by Lahore High Court in 1994. After his release he moved to London and continued to serve despite his old age. In 2010, his eldest daughter died, and a few days later his wife died as well.

Huzoor[aa] said that Rana Ṣāḥib left behind a son and four daughters. His son, Rana Wasim Ahmad is a life devotee working in the Private Secretary Office in UK. He writes that his father always taught his children to hold fast to Khilāfat and told them that every good was linked to Khilāfat. He said that whenever he came for duty and saw Khalīfatul-Masīḥ, he would regain his youth. Huzoor[aa] further said that he was very punctual and would be ready for duty a couple of hours in advance. He said that he was healthy and active because of being on duty close to Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ[aa]. He always showed great courage and perseverance, even when he was tortured during his confinement in Pakistani prisons. He never told anyone even if he was ill and would only say, "I am fine, Alhamdulillāh." He was a very kind and compassionate father and true friend. His son writes that when his Waqf was accepted, his father said to him: This is a great responsibility. Always try to fulfil your pledge with Istighfār. Keep quiet if someone hurts you. Leave the matter to Allāh and never lose your patience. Rana Ṣāḥib was very punctual in his payment of Chanda. He also silently helped needy people.

One of his daughters writes that his love for Khilāfat was enviable. Whenever Khalīfatul-Masīḥ was mentioned, tears would well up in his eyes. All his life he told us that if we want to benefit from life we should become attached to Khilāfat like a magnet. His daughter-in-law says that Rana Ṣāḥib was very kind to her and treated her like a father. She says that whenever she woke up at night she always found him engaged in prayer. Rana Ṣāḥib used to say that it was only on account of the Khalīfa's prayers that he was released from jail. His daughter writes that he would always urge her children to recite the Holy Qur'ān. He was regular in offering tahajjud prayer. He was very hospitable and looked after his relatives.

One of his daughters writes that he spent his days of imprisonment with great fortitude and submission to the will of Allāh and love for Khilāfat. She never heard him utter a word of complaint. His nephew writes that whenever they visited him in prison, they would all be very worried, but he would be calm and urge them to pray and to be patient.

Ilyas Munir Ṣāḥib, who suffered imprisonment along with Rana Ṣāḥib, writes that during the imprisonment he never saw Rana Ṣāḥib loose heart, not even when the military dictator passed a death sentence against them.

Huzoor[aa] recounted that he always saw in his face great tranquility and love for Khilāfat. May Allāh engulf him in His love in the hereafter and grant him a place among his loved ones. Huzoor[aa] also said that he had known him right from childhood. He was very kind towards Huzoor[aa] when he would visit Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II[ra] at Nakhla. After Huzoor[aa] became Khalīfa, his love grew manifold. May Allāh enable his children to follow in his footsteps. Huzoor[a] could not lead his funeral prayer due to the restrictions, but he would lead his funeral prayer in absentia later on.

Huzoor[aa] concluded by saying that some Aḥmadīs are ill due to the virus. Let us pray that Allāh may heal them. May Allāh enable us to walk on His right path and to worship Him in the best manner! May Allah rid us of this calamity soon! May Allāh enable the whole world to understand and recognize the One God! Amīn.

RAMAḌĀN AND ACHIEVING TAQWA

APRIL 24, 2020 AT MUBARAK MOSQUE

Huzoor[aa] began the Friday sermon by reciting verses 184-186 of Sūrah al-Baqarah, which are as follows:

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيۡنَ اٰمَنُوۡا كُتِبَ عَلَيۡكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِيۡنَ مِنۡ
قَبۡلِكُمۡ لَعَلَّكُمۡ تَتَّقُوۡنَ ۙ﴿۱۸۴﴾ اَيَّامًا مَّعۡدُوۡدٰتٍ ؕ فَمَنۡ كَانَ مِنۡكُمۡ مَّرِيۡضًا
اَوۡ عَلٰى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنۡ اَيَّامٍ اُخَرَ ؕ وَعَلَى الَّذِيۡنَ يُطِيۡقُوۡنَهٗ فِدۡيَةٌ
طَعَامُ مِسۡكِيۡنٍ ؕ فَمَنۡ تَطَوَّعَ خَيۡرًا فَهُوَ خَيۡرٌ لَّهٗ ؕ وَاَنۡ تَصُوۡمُوۡا خَيۡرٌ لَّكُمۡ
اِنۡ كُنۡتُمۡ تَعۡلَمُوۡنَ ﴿۱۸۵﴾ شَهۡرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِىۡۤ اُنۡزِلَ فِيۡهِ الۡقُرۡاٰنُ هُدًى
لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنٰتٍ مِّنَ الۡهُدٰى وَالۡفُرۡقَانِ ۚ فَمَنۡ شَهِدَ مِنۡكُمُ الشَّهۡرَ
فَلۡيَصُمۡهُ ؕ وَمَنۡ كَانَ مَرِيۡضًا اَوۡ عَلٰى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنۡ اَيَّامٍ اُخَرَ ؕ يُرِيۡدُ
اللّٰهُ بِكُمُ الۡيُسۡرَ وَلَا يُرِيۡدُ بِكُمُ الۡعُسۡرَ ۫ وَلِتُكۡمِلُوا الۡعِدَّةَ وَلِتُكَبِّرُوا اللّٰهَ
عَلٰى مَا هَدٰىكُمۡ وَلَعَلَّكُمۡ تَشۡكُرُوۡنَ ﴿۱۸۶﴾

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. The month of Ramaḍān is that in which the Qur'ān was sent down as a guidance for mankind with clear proofs of guidance and discrimination. Therefore, whosoever of you is present at home in this month, let him fast therein. But whoso is sick or is on a journey, shall fast the same number of other days. Allāh desires to give you facility and He desires not hardship for you, and that you may complete the number, and that you may exalt Allāh for His having guided you and that you may be grateful (2:184-186).

Huzoor[aa] began the Friday sermon by the grace of Allāh, tomorrow is the start of Ramaḍān, the month of fasting that Allāh has prescribed for our spiritual growth. In the first verse Huzoor[aa] recited, Allāh says that fasting has been prescribed for

you so that you may attain Taqwa.

The Promised Messiah[as] said Taqwa means to fulfil one's all obligations to God and to abide by one's pledge of faith. It also means to fulfil one's all obligations to people and to live up to our commitments. We should fulfil these obligations in their minute details to the best of our ability and be grateful to God for His bounties. Allāh says that the purpose of the month of fasting is to enable you to make up for the shortcomings of the other eleven months by turning wholly towards God, forgoing even the lawful things of the world, enduring hunger and thirst, performing more worship, and fulfilling your obligations to your fellow human beings. This is the meaning of Taqwa and this is the purpose of fasting in Ramaḍān. This transformation should not be temporary, rather it should be of a permanent nature and thus you will always remember to fulfil your obligations to God and His creatures.

The Holy Prophet[sa] has said:

> Whoever fasts for the sake of Allāh, seeking His grace, Allāh creates a distance of 70 years between him and the fire of hell. These are the blessings of the Taqwa that result from fasting. Fasting does not only bring about Taqwa for thirty days, rather its effect spans over 70 years. Therefore, when an adult Muslim fasts with its true spirit, he reaps its benefits throughout his life. Imagine how beautiful the whole society would become if people observed their fast in its true spirit and fulfilled their obligations towards God and towards His creation. Such is the beautiful and harmonious society that every believer, indeed every human being, wishes to bring about.

Huzoor[aa] said that the current pandemic and the government's directives for most people to stay at home have motivated volunteers of Khuddāmul Aḥmadiyya to provide essential supplies and medicines to people who cannot access them. This is a wonderful activity as it not only benefits Aḥmadīs but also helps non-Aḥmadīs and brings a good name to the Jamā'at.

Mobarak Mosque, Islamabad, Tilford UK.

> Try to be of service to humankind and show sympathhy to your brothers. Be kind to your neighbours and treat your wives in the best manner. ..

Huzoor[aa] said that there are also spiritual benefits to the situation. Many people write that their homes have a new spiritual atmosphere where they pray together with congregation and listen to dars. Together they listen to the Friday Sermon and watch MTA. If the lockdown is extended throughout Ramaḍān, we should continue to offer prayers with congregation and learn with greater zeal. Teach the children basic religious knowledge and increase your own knowledge as well. Pay special attention to prayers and seek God's mercy for yourselves and for the world. Let us make full benefit of these days that Allāh has gifted us.

Huzoor[aa] said that the Promised Messiah[as] has explained the meaning of Taqwa in various ways and on different occasions. We need to listen to his teachings and act upon them and fulfil the pledge we have made to him. On one occasion, the Promised Messiah[as] said that Taqwa means to avoid impurity even its most minute forms. To achieve this, it is necessary that a person should employ means whereby he does not even come near sin. And he should not rest content with that, rather he should also offer heartfelt prayers. Whether sitting, prostrating, bowing or standing, he should always pray that he may be saved from the filth of sin and transgression. There is no doubt that man can benefit by employing the physical means, but it is total ignorance to put complete faith in them. Unless such means are accompanied by prayer, they are of no avail. This is why Allāh says, "Those who strive towards Us, We guide them in Our ways." Here Allāh stresses the need for striving. In another verse Allāh says, "Call me, and I will answer you." Thus, if man desires Taqwa, he must strive for it as well as pray for it, then will Allāh have mercy on him. But if he does only one of these, he will remain deprived.

The Promised Messiah[as] said that the fear of God is the root of every deed. Taqwa embellishes all actions, and through Taqwa one finds nearness to God. The Promised Messiah[as] has said:

> I see that sometimes there are disputes among the members of my

Jamā'at, and minor differences reach a point where people start attacking each other's honour and brother starts fighting against brother. Such behaviour is extremely undesirable and should be avoided. Some people will not let go of a dispute without demeaning the other person. One of Allāh's attributes is *Al-Sattār* (the One who overlooks people's faults), so why does one brother not have mercy on the other and overlook his errors? It is important to cover your brother's sins and not attack his dignity. Even in minor quarrels, people want to find ways to demean the other person and overcome him. However, in order to protect the self from egotistic passion, it is necessary that one should show humility in order to avoid conflict. To seek out a brother's fault and to publicize it is the root of arrogance. Avoiding such things constitutes Taqwa. When a person adheres to Taqwa in all personal and social affairs, he is counted among the angels. Acquire Taqwa, for it is only through Taqwa that God's blessings are received. The one who fears God is saved from the tribulations of the world and God overlooks his faults.

The Promised Messiah[as] has also said:

The Holy Prophet[sa] was the epitome of all the high morals and God has made his morals the ultimate criteria. Do not malign others, for often in maligning others one becomes guilty of the same vices. If the sin you accuse him of is indeed present in him, then the matter is between him and God, and if it is not present in him then you yourself might become engrossed in it. Many people are in the habit of instantly accusing their brother of unholy deeds. You must avoid this. Try to be of service to humankind and show sympathy to your brothers. Be kind to your neighbours and treat your wives in the best manner. But, first and foremost, avoid shirk (idolatry), for this is the first step.

The Promised Messiah[as] further said:

It is not enough for a person to say that he is righteous because he has never deprived anyone of his property, never robbed or committed theft, or leered or committed adultery. In the eyes of the men of God, this is laughable, for a person who commits such crimes would be punished. Avoiding these things does not constitute righteousness in the eyes of the men of God. True righteousness means to serve mankind and show such sincerity and devotion in the path of God as to be ready to give up one's life. Remember, the mere avoiding of sin is not a virtue unless it is accompanied by good deeds. Huzoor[aa] said: These are the standards of Taqwa that the Promised Messiah[as] has taught us and that we should strive to achieve.

Huzoor[aa] said that the next verse is about those who are granted exemption from the obligation to fast. Those who find it impossible to keep fast or have been advised by the doctor not to fast can pay expiation (fidya) instead. But one should not find excuses to not fast and only give expiation (fidya). Allāh goes on to explain that we should not fast if we are on a journey or are ill, for He does not want hardship for us, but when we become well or come back from the journey, we need to complete the days of fasting that we have missed, even if we have paid expiation (fidya) for them.

Huzoor[aa] said that these days, because of the pandemic, some people are asking him whether or not they should fast, because fasting causes the throat to dry up and this increases the chances of infection. Huzoor[aa] said that he does not give any general verdict in this regard, but he tells them to seek the answer from their own selves. Everyone can seek advice from his own conscience. Ask Allāh to give us the ability to fast. And pray a lot in these days so that Allāh may have mercy on the world and end this tribulation.

Huzoor[aa] said that as a result of the pandemic, the economic situation is also worsening. In such situations, the risk of wars increases as governments try to solve problems through all kinds of machinations. Sometimes they take certain actions only to divert the attention of the public and thus cause even greater difficulties for their people. May Allāh grant the big powers the sense not to take any such step that can lead to more upheaval in the world. May Allāh enable us to pray and to reform ourselves! May Allāh enable the governments of the world to make better policies for the future! Amīn!

My Ode to Aḥmadīyyat

With our faiths strong and our hearts pure

We need nothing less, nothing more.

As the world descends into chaos and war,

There is no defense as strong as ours.

With the guidance of Khilāfat, Allāh's gift,

We remain sturdy, as the rest shift.

The message we spread of hope and peace,

vanquishes the grasp of hate and greed.

We have sought the answer, which is to move as one.

We stand for one phrase, which is

Love for All Hatred for None.

(*Faiqa Omer, Grade 8, St John's, NL*)

THE ESSENCE OF SACRIFICE

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allāh be his Helper!)

The following is a summary of the 'Īdul Adhā sermon delivered by Sydenā Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ V[aa] on August 12, 2019. It was originally published in The Weekly Al Hakam.

After *Tashahud*, *Ta'awuz* and the recitation of Surah Al-Fātiḥah, Hazrat Amīrul Mū'minīn[aa] recited verse 38 of Sūrah Al-Ḥajj (chapter 22 of the Holy Qur'ān), the translation of which is:

"Their flesh reaches not Allāh, nor does their blood, but it is your righteousness that reaches Him. Thus has He subjected them to you, that you may glorify Allāh for His guiding you. And give glad tidings to those who do good."

Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ[aa] then said that we had gathered to celebrate 'Īdul Adhā, or the 'Īd of sacrifice. Not only in Makkah, but all over the world, Muslims would be sacrificing animals. However, Allāh has explained that although this is a part of 'Īd and it is a righteous deed, if the essence of sacrifice is not borne in mind during this practice, then these sacrifices are worthless. God is not desirous of the blood of animals, nor is He in need of this sacrifice. If anyone is bereft of Taqwa [righteousness], even if hundreds of thousands of animals are sacrificed, God's pleasure cannot be won.

Allāh thus explains that Taqwa is the actual essence of this sacrifice. One should be ready to sacrifice everything for the sake of Allāh. One should be ready to sacrifice a small thing to attain a much more exalted goal; one should be ready to follow God's commands always. Through this sacrifice, one should realise that faith must be given precedence above worldly affairs.

Huzoor[aa] explained that if this 'Īd of sacrifice does not draw our attention towards our responsibilities and obligations, then it is no more than a festival and is not a means of attaining the higher ranks of Taqwa. This 'Īd should take us to our actual purpose and we should not just be happy in consuming meat and feeding it to others.

We can only benefit from this day if we are ready to present our necks before God, worship Him as is required, become grateful servants of our Lord for turning us towards Islām and Aḥmadīyyat and for becoming such servants who are ready to sacrifice our life, wealth, time and honour for the sake of the Jamā'at [Aḥmadīyya Muslim Community].

We should pledge to seek Allāh's pleasure in fulfilling the rights of our Baī'at. Once we attain these objectives, only then can Allāh count us among His loved ones.

Huzoor[aa] narrated a quote of the Promised Messiah, Hazrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad[as], in which he said that *Namāz* [Salāt] and *Roza* [fasts], if observed without sincerity, are completely worthless.

Yogis and Sannyasis also have many spiritual exercises and due to the extent of their exercises, their hands become sore due to constant use. However, the Promised Messiah[as] explained that these exercises and struggles were such that could not bring nur (spiritual light) to them. Yes, it may appear to be a physical struggle in the way of their faith, but in fact, as it is an extreme physical exercise, it takes away from the soul and becomes an entirely physical ritual. That is why in the Qur'ān, Allāh states:

"Their flesh reaches not Allāh, nor does their blood, but it is your righteousness that reaches Him."

Allāh does not desire for our physical endeavours to reach him, rather the betterment of our spiritual conditions. The Promised Messiah[as] then says that a question arises that if only the spiritual conditions reach Him, why then must we practice such physical exercises? From dawn to dusk, why should we fast and torment ourselves if only the spiritual conditions are what matter?

The answer is that if there is nothing occurring physically, then the spirit cannot be improved. The various movements in Salāt impel various levels in our spirituality. If we practice rituals without knowing what purpose they are serving, then it is futile.

When humility is practiced physically, the spirit also humbles. With the various actions in Salāt, our soul is taught true humility before Allāh. The hallmark of a true believer is to follow the commands of Allāh, and to do so, be able to sacrifice their body and soul in His way and excel in Taqwa.

Referring to attaining Taqwa and excelling in spirituality, the Promised Messiah[as] said that we should love Him as if we have died in His way. Just as we slaughter animals, we should consider ourselves slaughtered in the way of Allāh. When anyone's Taqwa is less than this, then it is not a sufficient level of Taqwa.

Prophet Abraham[as], Prophet Ishmael[as]

> "Through this sacrifice, one should realise that faith must be given precedence above worldly affairs.

and Hazrat Hajira[as] (Hagar) attained this rank and made huge sacrifices in the way of Allāh. In their remembrance, today, Muslims commemorate the noble examples of sacrifice in an attempt to attain those levels of sacrifice.

This family did not permit any believer of any age group or of any gender to make excuses that they should be exempted. Young and old, man and woman, all presented the highest standards of sacrifice and this is an example for us all.

Hazrat Hajira's[as] response to Prophet Abraham[as] was that if God had instructed him to leave his family in the desert, then he should not fret over leaving them and should follow the command verbatim. Thus, sacrifices made in the way of Allāh are never wasted, something which this family witnessed, and something that many would later witness.

This noble sacrifice was such that it remains to this day an example for us all. Not only this, but in this line, a noble prophet would appear who would revive the highest examples of sacrifice and sincerity – Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him.

Huzoor[aa] said that the narration of Badri Companions[ra] he is giving sermons on nowadays shows that not only men, but women and children presented the most noble sacrifices in the way of Islam. In this age, in the Baiʻat of the Promised Messiah[as], we should assess whether we have attained the same levels of piety, or if not the same, then at least close to their examples.

By the grace of God, there is a group from among us who follow Allāh's commands to the letter and sincerely tries to improve their moral and spiritual conditions.

However, there is another group, unfortunately, that has been engulfed in worldly pursuits and materialistic gains. They lack the true essence of Taqwa.

Regarding the ranks that we should endeavour to attain, the Promised Messiah[as] once said that we should ponder over the finest ways of attaining Allāh's pleasure.

Huzoor[aa] further explained that if we do not try to improve ourselves and better even the smallest of sins, they gradually take us away from Allāh. For example, if we miss even one Namaz, it gradually draws us away from higher ranks of spirituality.

At another place, the Promised Messiah[as] says that the Qur'ān has explicitly mentioned the dos and don'ts. God Almighty does not desire for disorder to spread in the earth, rather He desires for unity to lead in the world. Whoever has an iota of enmity or spite for their brethren does not allow for this to happen. Only one who is an enemy of unity can have hatred for his fellow beings or wish to cause them hurt.

Huzoor[aa] prayed towards the end that Allāh may enable us to tread along the paths of Taqwa, that this day of sacrifice draws us towards the true meanings of sacrifice and we are able to cleanse our soul, attain Allāh's pleasure and become of those who Allāh has given glad tidings to.

Huzoor[aa] instructed the Jamāʻat to pray for those who have offered their souls in the way of Allāh. May their progenies always partake of the blessings of Allāh! May Allāh accept the sacrifices of their progenies also!

We should also pray for the early and pioneering missionaries who were sent to Western and worldly countries for their lofty statuses. We should also pray that their progenies always remember their forefathers' noble examples and try to live up to their examples. Those who offer their time and services for the Jamāʻat and its propagation should also be remembered in prayers; may Allāh accept their sacrifices! *Asīrān Rāh-e-Maulā* should also be prayed for that Allāh swiftly removes all difficulties from their way.

Huzoor[aa] then prayed: Allāh may also have mercy upon us all and cover our flaws and shortcomings! May each and everyone of us increase in our level of faith! May we witness the victories of Islam more than ever before so that we may witness the true ʻĪd!

After *Khutba Thāniya*, Huzoor[aa] led everyone in Duʻā, after which he extended a hearty "ʻĪd Mubarak" to all those present and those celebrating ʻĪd around the world.

(*The Weekly Al Hakam,* August 16, 2019)

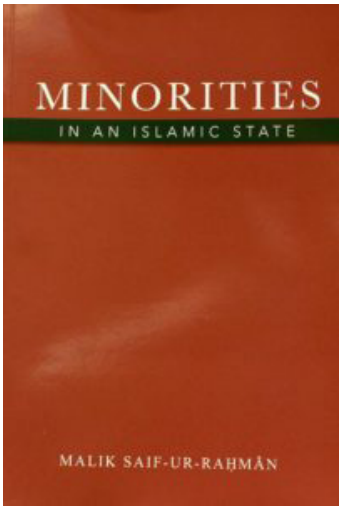
SACRIFICE ON THE OCCASION OF ʻĪDUL AḌHĀ 2020

Assalammo alaikum wa Rahmatullah!
Members who wish to make a sacrifice outside of Canada on the occasion of ʻĪdul Adhā through the Nizam Jamāʻat should make online payments at amjinc.ca before July 20, 2020 under the Qurbani-Eid head. Those members who pay using manual receipts should provide their information by clicking HERE so that the information can be sent to UK Markaz in a timely mannner. The Qurbānī (Sacrifice) rates for the year 2020 are as follows:

Goat Sacrifice: $200 CAD
Cow Sacrifice: $840 CAD (A cow can have 7 portions: $120 x 7 = $840)

Wassalam!
Khalid Naeem, National Secretary Mal

MINORITIES IN AN ISLĀMIC STATE



Malik Saifur Rahman

The following article is part of a translation of the book titled Islam aur Ghair Muslim Ri'āyā by late Malik Saifur Rahman Sahib. The translation was first published in the September and October 1963 issue of the Review of Religions and later published as a small booklet titled Minorities in an Islamic State. It is available on alislam.org.

TREATMENT OF *DHIMMIS* BY THE MUSLIMS

Before the advent of Islām, the Persian and the Roman empires exercised great influence over the Arabian Peninsula. With the establishment of a strong Muslim government in the country their influence was bound to decrease. Fearing this, they decided to attack the Muslims and began preparations for the invasion. In these circumstances the Muslims were compelled to take up arms to defend themselves against aggression and advanced against the territories held by the Persians and the Romans.

Those were the dark days of religious and ideological persecution. The poor people of these areas were treated by the Emperors and their officers in an unthinkably cruel and ugly manner. The Jews, the Christians and the man in the street were subjected to all sorts of cruelties by the Persian monarchs. They were robbed of their properties and honour. Protests were quelled by death, torture and extortion. The same was the case with the subjects of the Caesar, the Unorthodox there, were similarly victimised. The lower classes were being bled to death. It was an all roundall-around atmosphere of repression. Under the circumstances the freedom of belief, the freedom of consciences and the tolerance shown by the Muslims was bound to create, in the minds of these people, a sense of relief and freedom.

How much these poor people were overwhelmed by the kind treatment of Muslims can be seen by an incident that took place in Hims.

Once, under pressure of the Roman army, the Muslims had to retire from Hims. The Muslims had already collected taxes from the inhabitants of the territory. Before leaving the place, they returned all the taxes which they had realized and declared:

These taxes were realized on the condition that we would be responsible for your security and for the maintenance of law and order in this area. As we are forced to leave this place, we are no longer in a position to fulfil this condition.

History has recorded the reply of the people of Hims in the following glorious words:

We were the victims of cruelty and repression at the hands of our co-religionists. Then you people came. Your justice and the way you governed us had won our hearts. Now we will fight shoulder to shoulder with you against the armies of Hercules and he can advance only over our dead bodies.

The Jews went so far as to swear in the name of Torah that they won't let the enemy enter the city. Thus the whole of the population of the area rose against the Romans with the consequence that they were forced to retreat. On their victorious return in the city, the Muslims were accorded a rousing reception by the citizens. They took out processions and sang and danced to express their joy on the triumphant return of the Muslims.

Again we see that when Hazrat Umar[ra], the second caliph passed from Azrat on his way to Jerusalem, the Christian inhabitants of the area welcomed him by the blowing of bugles and the beating of drums and by showering flowers on him.

Hazrat Umar[ra] took great care in respecting the sentiments of the Christians and the Jews. Once he enquired of a Christian deputation, if the Muslim officers of their province behaved properly and was just. They replied: "We have seen nothing of Muslims except good treatment and morals".

The buildings of the Government house and the treasury in Koofa were designed and built by a famous non-Muslim architect named Rosba. The governor of Koofa was pleased at his performance and sent him to Hazrat Umar[ra] in Madīnah. Hazrat Umar[ra] received him graciously and ordered that he should be given a generous annuity for the rest of his life.

Islām's concern about the protection of the rights of minorities can be judged by the fact that the wills of the Prophet[sa], of Abu Bakr[ra] and of Umar[ra] contained the following injunction.

"Be good to the *Dhimmis*, be generous and tolerant towards them, and don't let them come to any harm".

THE BASIC NECESSITIES OF DHIMMIS—A GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITY

The agreements concluded between the Muslims and the non-Muslim inhabitants of the conquered territories always contained the provision that the Muslim government would be responsible for the basic necessities of the *Dhimmi* citizens. This, for instance, is an extract from the agreement with the citizens of Hira:

> The *Dhimmi* who is old or is disabled in some accident or is otherwise unable

Muslims & Dhimmis had equal status before the

> to work or one who is rich but falls destitute, he and his dependents, will not only be exempted from all taxes, but will also be paid subsistence allowance from the government treasury.

Similarly, it was laid down that if a *Dhimmi* fell into the hands of an enemy and his release depended on ransom, the money would be paid by the Muslim government.

History bears out how this principle was followed by the Muslim governments. To quote only one instance:

Hazrat Umar[ra] once came across an aged *Dhimmi* in rather a sad plight. On seeing the poor condition of the old *Dhimmi*, Hazrat Umar[ra] exclaimed: "By God! it is not just that in his youth we may benefit from him and leave him to suffer in his old age".

He ordered that the old *Dhimmi* be given a pension till his death. Moreover, he directed the governors that the poor and deserving among the *Dhimmis*, in their provinces, be regularly paid stipends from the *Baitul Mal*.

NON-MUSLIMS PARTICIPATION IN ADMINISTRATION

Hazrat Umar[ra] always used to consult *Dhimmis* in the affairs of state. When the question of land settlement in Iraq arose, he called a meeting in Madīnah to decide the matter. In this meeting the non-Muslim Chiefs of Iran and Iraq also participated.

Again, we see that in settling the affairs of Egypt, Hazrat Umar[ra] always consulted Maquqas — the religious leader of the Egyptians before taking any decision.

Similarly, a Nestorian priest, a contemporary of Umar[ra], writing about the political conditions of his area, says in a letter to a friend of his: "The Muslims protect our religion, respect our priests and pharisees and have bestowed lands and *Jagirs* on our churches".

It is also worth noting that the Muslim caliphs used to invest the religious leaders of the *Dhimmis* with certain civil and administrative powers.

The Muslims continued to treat the non-Muslims throughout the centuries in a similar manner. The door of every office of the government was open to them and they were given a fair deal in these matters. Thus we see that under the Ommayyads and Abbassides the *Dhimmis* were not only always consulted by the rulers, but they were also appointed to the highest civil and military offices under the caliph. Thus, Hazrat Amir Moavia's personal physician and court interpreter, Ibni Assal, who was a Christian, was appointed the governor of Hims by the Amir.

Even as late as the days of Aurangzeb in India it is recorded that once a Muslim officer of state objected to the appointment of two non-Muslims in his department on the basis of the Quranic verse:

يَآ اَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَتَّخِذُوْا عَدُوِّيْ وَعَدُوَّكُمْ اَوْلِيَآءَ

"O ye who believe! take not My enemy and your enemy for friends" (60:1).

On this application the Emperor remarked:

> Noted the contents of your application. Let it be clear once and for all that no Parsi or Hindu government servant can be dismissed simply because he is non-Muslim. The verse that you have quoted in your report does not at all prove that Muslims should have nothing to do with the non-Muslims. In fact, you haven't quoted the verse in full, the complete verse is as follows:
>
> يَآ اَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَتَّخِذُوْا عَدُوِّيْ وَعَدُوَّكُمْ اَوْلِيَآءَ تُلْقُوْنَ اِلَيْهِمْ بِالْمَوَدَّةِ وَقَدْ كَفَرُوْا بِمَا جَآءَكُمْ مِّنَ الْحَقِّ ۚ يُخْرِجُوْنَ الرَّسُوْلَ وَاِيَّاكُمْ اَنْ تُؤْمِنُوْا بِاللّٰهِ رَبِّكُمْ ؕ
>
> O ye who believe! take not My enemy and your enemy for friends, offering them love, while they disbelieve in the truth which has come to you and drive out the Messenger and yourselves *from your homes merely* because you believe in Allah (60:1).

This shows that this verse prohibits the Muslims to have relations only with those non-Muslims who compelled the Holy Prophet[sa] to migrate from his city by inflicting all kinds of cruelties on him and with those who did their most to persecute the Muslims. But there are others who are not like them and God does not forbid the Muslims to maintain good relations with, and to be generous to, them. Thus, in another verse in the same chapter as the one quoted above God says:

لَا يَنْهٰكُمُ اللّٰهُ عَنِ الَّذِيْنَ لَمْ يُقَاتِلُوْكُمْ فِي الدِّيْنِ وَلَمْ يُخْرِجُوْكُمْ مِّنْ دِيَارِكُمْ اَنْ تَبَرُّوْهُمْ وَتُقْسِطُوْٓا اِلَيْهِمْ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِيْنَ

> Allah forbids you not, respecting those who have not fought against you on account of your religion, and who have not driven you from your homes, that you be kind to them and act equitably towards them; surely Allah loves those who are equitable. (60:9)

Therefore, if your interpretation of the verse quoted by you were true, it would have been obligatory upon us to kill all the *Rajas* and non-Muslim subjects of India. The fact, however, is that the verse absolutely does not mean what you say. The offices of state are open to all, on the basis of ability and competence, irrespective of cast or creed. As far as religion is concerned, we should follow the Divine word:

لَكُمْ دِيْنُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِيْنِ

"For you your religion and for me mine" (109:7).

EQUALITY BEFORE LAW

The status of Muslims and *Dhimmis* was equal in the eyes of law. No distinction was ever made between a *Dhimmi* citizen or a Muslim in a judicial inquiry. No one can show a single instance of favouring a Muslim against a *Dhimmi.* They were treated alike and were given equal opportunities to defend themselves in case of a trial. It is a matter of record that a Muslim guilty of any offense against a *Dhimmi* never went unpunished. In short, we see that the example of the Holy Prophet[sa] and his Pious Successors shows clearly that under the law, civil and criminal, all are equal and must be treated alike, irrespective of their religious or social status.

Once during the days of the Holy Prophet[sa], a Muslim murdered a *Dhimmi*. The case was brought before the Holy Prophet[sa] for trial. The Holy Prophet[sa] decided that the Muslim being guilty of murdering another human being must be put to death. He[sa] further declared:

اَنَا اَحَقُّ مَنْ اَوْفٰی بِذِمَّتِہٖ

"To protect the rights of *Dhimmis* is my most important duty".

Similarly, once a Muslim who had murdered a *Dhimmi*, was brought before Hazrat Ali[ra]. It was found that the accused was guilty. Accordingly, Ali[ra] sentenced him to death. The relations of the culprit persuaded the heirs of the victim to pardon the crime on payment of blood money. When Hazrat Ali[ra] came to know of this he sent for the brother of the deceased and said: "Perhaps these people have tried to secure your consent under duress".

He replied:

> No I did it out of my own free will without any pressure. As putting the murderer to death cannot bring my brother back to life, the blood money they are giving me, will, to some extent, sustain the survivors and therefore, I have decided to pardon him.

Hazrat Ali[ra] replied:

> It is all right if you really mean it, you know better. However, the policy of our government most emphatically is, that the blood of a *Dhimmi* citizen is as valuable as our own blood and his blood money is equal to ours.

Once a son of Amar bin al-As, the governor of Egypt, gave a beating to a *Dhimmi* citizen without any justification. The incident was reported to Hazrat Umar[ra]. Under his orders the governor's son was publicly beaten by the Egyptian *Dhimmi*. Umar[ra] also declared in his order to the governor:

مُنْذُ کَمْ تَعَبَّدْتُمُ النَّاسَ وَقَدْ وَلَدَتْهُمْ اُمَّهَاتُهُمْ اَحْرَاراً

"Since when have you taken people as slaves although they are born free".
The occasion on which the Quranic verse:

وَلَا تَکُنْ لِّلْخَآئِنِیْنَ خَصِیْماً

"And be not thou a disputer for the faithless" (4:106) was revealed is the following:

Once a Muslim stole something from someone's house. Fearing exposure, he threw away the stolen property in a Jew's house, which was recovered on investigation. The Jew pleaded not guilty, but the culprit insisted that the Jew was the thief. Some other people seem to have supported the Muslim on the available evidence and denounced the Jew as being guilty. The Holy Prophet[sa], too, thought maybe the Jew was responsible for the theft. It was on this occasion that God revealed the above given verse and informed the Prophet[sa] of the true facts. The Muslim was accordingly punished because of the theft and for misstatement. The Holy Prophet[sa], further, forbade the Muslim from quarreling with the Jew.

JIZYA

Jizya was a tax realized from the non-Muslim citizens of a Muslim state. The one condition basic to its realization was that it was to be imposed only on those males who were able to earn and did actually earn. Those below 20 and above 50, as also women, the insane, the slaves, the disabled, the paralytic, the deaf, destitute, monks and priests, and the members of fighting forces were exempt from this tax. Even a rich man could claim relief from this tax in case of a year long unemployment.

Three different categories of assessee males were defined to determine their financial status. Normal rate of *Jizya* was three rupees per annum. It was six rupees yearly from the middle class people and 12 rupees from the rich. Almost the whole of the tax so realized was spent on education, development, uplift and welfare of the *Dhimmis*.

Actually, in those days, the Muslims were under conscription and under the law had to do compulsory military service. The *Dhimmi* citizens, however, were under no such obligation and were given the option, either to enlist in the army like the Muslims or to pay a token tax, on payment of which they were guaranteed protection and security against external as well as internal aggression. Therefore, it was that those who paid the tax were automatically exempted from service in the army. Thus, one clause of the pact signed at the time of the fall of Jarjan is as follows:

> We agree to guarantee protection and security to you on the condition that you continue to pay tax, which will be remitted in case you choose to join the army or civil service.

JIZYA—NOT A RELIGIOUS TAX

It must be pointed out that *Jizya* was not a religious tax. Even before the Muslims this tax was there and people used to pay it. As a matter of fact, there is historical evidence to prove that the tax under the Muslims was exactly the same as the tax levied by Nosherwan's government in Iran. The famous Christian historian Jurjy Zaidan writes thus:

> In the 5th century B.C. *Jizya* was imposed on the inhabitants of Asia Minor by the Greeks who took them under protection and saved them from the attacks of Phoenicians.

> These people used to pay it gladly enough in lieu of the security of life they enjoyed under the Greeks. Similarly they imposed an annual tax of 9 to 15 guineas on the residents of France when they conquered Gaul. From Greeks the tax was adopted by the Persians who called it *Gazeet*, which means, money the government realizes from the citizens every year. *Jizya* is the Arabic form of *Gazeet*. Hence it was not a religious tax by any means and was in fact an age-old tax, on payment of which the government guaranteed the security of citizens.

On the other hand, the Muslims were not exempt from taxes. They had to serve in the army in lieu of *Jizya* and apart from voluntary contributions and emergency collections they had to pay an annual tax called *Zakāt* which was calculated on the basis of the value of their total holdings. The Muslim citizens, therefore, were under a much greater burden, for, in addition to service in the army, they had to pay more than *Dhimmi* citizens.

CHARTERS OF HUMAN EQUALITY

In the 4th year of Hijra, the Holy Prophet[sa] gave a signed guarantee of protection to the monks, priests, and Christians of St. Catherine's Church near Mount Sinai. In this guarantee the Prophet[sa] laid down:

> It is the duty of Muslims to safeguard the Christian churches, monasteries and their holy places against trespass by the enemy and to protect the Christians fully from all harm and injury. They should not be unduly taxed, nor should they be forced to quit. No Christian should be compelled to forsake his religion. No Monk should be expelled from his monastery, nor should any pilgrim be stopped from visiting any holy place. No Christian church should be razed to the ground or occupied to provide accommodation for Muslims or their mosques.
>
> It is the duty of the Muslims to give unqualified and unconditional help to the Christians in the construction of their churches and shrines, and in any other religious matter in which they need help.

It is the duty of Muslims to safeguard the Christian churches, monasteries and their holy places against trespass by the enemy.

Then addressing the Muslims, the Prophet[sa] said:

> Do not think that by doing the things mentioned in the guarantee, you participate in promoting their religion, because the real intent of this order is to remove any difficulty which they feel, and submission to these orders is in reality the submission to the orders of the Prophet[sa] of God which he has issued under Divine Command.

He[sa] further advised the Muslims:

> Even in time of war, in fact when the Muslims are actually engaged in fighting against the Christians, do not harbour feelings of hatred and enmity against a Christian who lives among you. If any Muslim shows such behaviour towards a Christian, he will be considered an aggressor and a rebel.

The Holy Prophet[sa] further declared:

> If any Muslim is guilty of violating any of the above given orders, he will be denounced as one who has broken the Divine Covenant, has violated His express injunctions and who has humiliated and shamed the religion of Islām.

Quoting this guarantee, a famous European historian and orientalist declares it to be a great Charter of 'Human Equality and Freedom' and a document of Human brotherhood which establishes the greatness of the guarantor.

The sermon which the Prophet[sa] gave at the time of last Pilgrimage to Makkah is a Masterpiece of Human Equality and Brotherhood, he[sa] said:

> O Men! Your Maker is One; you are the sons and daughters of one father, therefore no attempt at dividing you into high and low is acceptable; No Arab has any superiority to a non-Arab nor has a non-Arab any superiority to an Arab; neither the Whites are superior to the Blacks nor are the Blacks superior to the Whites. The only mark of excellence is the fear of God and an individual's personal virtue and piety. Under an Islāmic state race and color have no distinction.

Continuing the Prophet[sa] said:

> As you respect this day; this month and this land of pilgrimage, so shall you respect the life, property and honour of every human being, which, under the law, are as sacred and inviolable.

It is not surprising that after such a declaration of human equality and brotherhood the Muslims were welcomed with open arms wherever they went and conquered more than half of the known world in a span of a few years. Needless to say, that it was not a triumph of superior Muslim arms, but a victory of a superior law which appealed to the heart and won it.

To read more on this subject at alislam.org, please click HERE.

Q & A ON THE MATCHMAKING PROCESS IN ISLĀM

The National Department of Tarbiyat, Lajna Ima'illah Canada, is presenting a series of questions and answers related to the Rishta Nata (matchmaking process) based on the teachings of the Holy Qur'ān, Hadīth and guidance of Syedna Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ V (may Allāh be his Helper!). Our intention is to dispel common misconceptions and promote the importance of adopting taqwa (righteousness) in matchmaking, Inshā'Allāh!

WHY DOES ISLĀM NOT ENCOURAGE WOMEN TO HAVE A CAREER?

During his address at National Waqifāt Nau (Girls) Ijtimā' UK 2017, Syednā Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ V[aa] explained:

"Foremost amongst the rights owed to one another, is the duty of a mother to raise and educate her children, be they boys or girls, in a pious fashion, so that they grow to excel and prove to be great assets to their nations. However, nowhere does Islam say that women should be confined to the home as is sometimes alleged.

For example, there are some girls and ladies who excel in studies and achieve extraordinary results and Islam does not instruct that they should waste their talents or skills and only stay at home. Islam does not restrict them from fulfilling their potential, rather they can pursue those professions through which they can benefit humanity and serve mankind. Thus, women who have the capacity to become doctors or teachers or to pursue other professions which are of benefit to humanity can do so. However, at the same time, they should not ignore their duties to their children and to their families. Such women should manage their time effectively and ensure that their children are not neglected in any way. Certainly, the first priority of an Aḥmadī mother must always be the moral training of her own children.

. . . Generally speaking, Islamic teachings have ascribed a division of labour between the sexes and it is a great favour of our religion that it has made our respective roles and responsibilities so clear. Nonetheless, Islam has catered for all possible circumstances and so, even apart from professionals, there may be special conditions where women need to work. For example, during the time of the Holy Prophet[sa], women worked as nurses to aid those who had been injured during the battles and wars that took place. Indeed, a few Muslim women even fought on the front lines and showed magnificent courage and bravery."

To read the entire address from alislam.org, please click HERE.

NAMĀZ

Many people who offer prayer are cursed by their own prayer, as Allah the Exalted says:

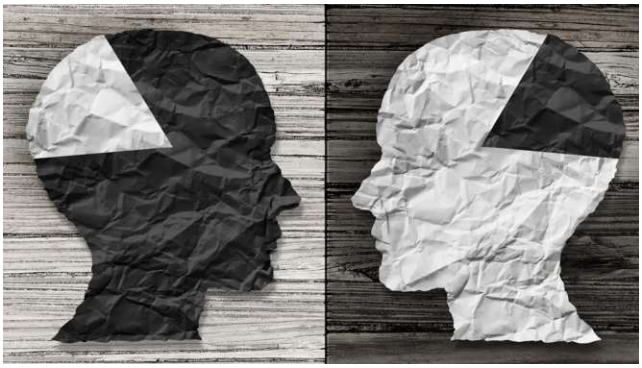
فَوَيْلٌ لِّلْمُصَلِّيْنَ الَّذِيْنَ هُمْ عَنْ صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُوْنَ

Meaning, cursed are the supplicants who are oblivious to the reality of prayer. By offering prayer, one is saved from every misconduct and indecency. However, as I have stated before, to offer such prayer is not in the control of man, it cannot be attained without the help of God. Until one does not persist in prayer, such humility and supplication cannot come about. Thus your day and night, in fact your every moment should never be devoid of prayer. (*Malfūzat* Volume 5 Page 403)

What is prayer? It is supplication before the Almighty Lord, without which man cannot remain alive, nor can he attain peace and happiness. Man will attain true happiness and comfort only when God bestows His favor upon him. Then he will begin to experience enjoyment and pleasure in his prayers, just as one enjoys eating delicious food. Then he will enjoy weeping and crying; thus, the state of prayer will be established. But before this, just as one eats bitter medicine to restore health, it is necessary to offer prayers and supplications bereft of enjoyment.

(*Malfūzat* Volume 2, pp. 615-616, translated from Urdu)

HOW FAR HAVE WE COME IN THE WAR AGAINST RACISM?



Ahsan Khan, Vaughan

> O mankind, We have created you from a male and a female, and We have made you into tribes and sub-tribes that you may recognize one another. Verily, the most honourable among you, in the sight of Allāh, is he who is the most righteous among you. Surely, Allāh is All-knowing, All-Aware. (The Holy Qur'ān, 49:14)

Just like you, I have been following the outrage concerning the needless and tragic death of George Floyd. The image of the police officer's knee on Mr. Floyd's neck will never be forgotten.

What happens next in terms of the worldwide acknowledgment of racism and protest against it remains to be seen.

I have witnessed racism having grown up in Toronto during the 70s and 80s. I have been called "Paki" and told "to go home". I have also been looked at with disdain. The ideals of being equal may be preached by society at large but not wholly followed and may well never be, unless we move decisively towards a solution.

I am not sure what the overall solution should look like. However, I have a good story to share that may point the way.

In 1990, I visited Los Angeles to see my cousin. During that visit, I met Mr. Rahmat Jamal, the Vice-President of the Los Angeles Aḥmadiyya Muslim Jamā'at. He was a 75-year-old black gentleman.

I mention his age to establish the context of the environment he grew up in. He lived through the 1920s as a child, the 1940s as a young adult and the 1960s as a middle-aged "black man in America."

In other words, Mr. Jamal lived through all the atrocities of segregation, whites-only restaurants and water fountains, unquestioned discrimination, sit at the back of the bus because you are "black" rule and the Civil Rights movement. When Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks, Malcolm X and Muhammad Ali were making their mark, he was there.

My cousin and I met him on a beautiful sunny day for lunch. As we parked the car and were adding some coins to the parking meter, I asked him: "How many black brothers do we have in L.A.? He immediately answered, "none."

I was confused for a moment and then realized I must have said something wrong. "None?" I replied. He then told me, pointing to the tire of the car. Have you ever seen anyone who's skin colour looks like that tire? That tire is black. For that matter, have you ever seen anyone who's skin is the colour of snow? That is white.

Mr. Jamal went on to say: "people need to stop referring to colour and labels like black history, black pride and being black or white."

In his opinion, this only further divides people and makes the problem of racism permanent.

According to Mr. Jamal, the best way to address a person is by his name. If you don't know a person's name, you might refer to historical origins, for example, Greek or Pakistani or African. There is no need to use the label of colour.

I, for one, agreed then and do now.

We will need a multi-faceted solution to racism, and we must continue to make this a global initiative. Hopefully, the death of George Floyd will not go in vain and will begin the same enthusiasm as the rush to find a vaccine against the current worldwide pandemic.

All men and women are humans first and created in tribes and sub-tribes, so that we may know each other. The only "best" people among us are those who excel each other in goodness, especially as it relates to helping other human beings.

Would you agree? You don't need to be religious to appreciate this wisdom.

We have a long way to go to eliminate racism. It is not an ideal that we must strive for. It is an absolute imperative, shame on anyone who harbours superior feelings based on their race.

We also need to be respectful of all human beings; not be racially tolerant. Tolerating someone based on their race is still a form of saying, "I will put up with you." How does that make sense or solve racism?

We must personally become the best version of humanity that we can and want for our fellow beings what we want for ourselves.

Above all, society at large and governments, in particular, must uphold justice in their mutual dealings. Or else, they will lose this war.

So, how many black people live in your city?

Humanity First
Serving Mankind

COVID-19 Fact Sheet

stay home • stay safe • help others
#HFCares

As COVID-19 continues to spread, there are things we can all do to keep each other and ourselves safe. Stay informed and take all necessary precautions to ensure we are doing our part to help the government and frontline workers combat the virus.

SOME ARE AT HIGH RISK

Anyone with pre-existing medical conditions and/ or a weakened immune system is at a higher risk.

This includes seniors and those with the following conditions:

- Heart disease
- Hypertension
- Lung disease
- Diabetes
- Cancer

HOW TO REDUCE YOUR RISK

STAY HOME

Stay home if possible and limit the number of visitors at your home

- Clean and disinfect high touch surfaces in your home regularly

If you must step outside, please take the following measures:

- Avoid touching high touch surfaces
- Change your routine to avoid crowded places, such as going to the grocery store at off peak hours.
- Keep at least a 2 arms length (or 2m) distance from others
- Avoid all nonessential travel

HYGIENE MEASURES

- Wash your hands frequently according to the World Health Organization's guidelines and use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer when not available.
- Avoid touching your face and food with your hands

BE PREPARED

PLAN AHEAD

- Stock up on necessary supplies in case you need to stay at home for a few weeks.
- Identify services that can deliver food and medications

COMMUNICATE

- Communicate with your healthcare provider. They will help ensure you have enough prescribed medication and medical supplies.
- put a system in place to regularly check on family and friends via phone or email.

STAY INFORMED

- Learn about the symptoms of Covid-19, how it spreads and preventative measures you can take
- Ensure your information is coming from reputable sources, such as Public Health Agency of Canada and the World Heath Organization.
- Monitor yourself for symptoms
- Give yourself a break from the news and find time to relax

Visit canada.ca/coronavirus for more info

Contact Humanity First: +1 416 440-0346 humanityfirst.ca info@humanityfirst.ca Twitter: @humanityfirst

PRAYERS FOR THE CURRENT PANDEMIC

In these days, we should pay special attention to the study of Kashti-e-Nooh (Noah's Arc) and arrange regular Dars of this book in our homes.

In the current situation, whereas Syedna Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masiḥ V (May Allah be his Helper!) has advised us to take other precautionary measures, Huzoor[aa] has also urged us to turn to Allah in repentance and pray.

Therefore, some prayers from the Holy Qur'an, Ahadith and prayers of the Promised Messiah[as] are given below:

Prayer of Hazrat Ayub[as]

Hazrat Ayub[as] supplicated to seek cure from his illness and presented his weak state for attracting Allah's mercy. This prayer was accepted and, miraculously, the affliction was removed.

اَنِّیْ مَسَّنِیَ الضُّرُّ وَاَنْتَ اَرْحَمُ الرّٰحِمِیْنَ

Affliction has touched me, and Thou art the Most Merciful of all who show mercy. (21:84)

Prayer of Hazrat Moses[as]

When an earthquake overtook Hazrat Moses[as] and the chiefs of his people , Hazrat Moses[as] considered it indication of Allah's displeasure and he supplicated as:

اَنْتَ وَلِیُّنَا فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا وَارْحَمْنَا وَاَنْتَ خَیْرُ الْغٰفِرِیْنَ

Thou art our Protector; forgive us then and have mercy on us, for Thou art the Best of those who forgive. (7:156)

Prayer for Protection against All Harms

Uthman ibn Affan[ra] says: I heard the Holy Prophet[sa] say: "He who recites this prayer thrice in the morning and again in the evening every day, God will protect him from anything which is harmful."

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الَّذِیْ لَا یَضُرُّ مَعَ اسْمِهٖ شَیْءٌ
فِی الْاَرْضِ وَلَا فِی السَّمَاءِ وَهُوَ السَّمِیْعُ الْعَلِیْمُ

In the name of Allah, with Whose name nothing can harm in the earth and in Heaven, and He is All-Hearing, All-Knowing. (Sunan Abi Dawood: 5088)

Prayer for Protection from Pandemics

During a pandemic, God Almighty conveyed it the Promised Messiah[as] that, as a remedy against it, Allah should be remembered through His following attributes:

یَا حَفِیْظُ۔ یَا عَزِیْزُ۔ یَا رَفِیْقُ

O Protector, O Almighty, O Companion (Tadhkirah, p,660)

یَا حَیُّ یَا قَیُّوْمُ بِرَحْمَتِکَ أَسْتَغِیْثُ

O Ever-Living and Self-Subsisting One, I supplicate for Your mercy. (Tadhkirah, p,439)

The Promised Messiah[as] has stated that it was conveyed to him that this is the Great Name (اسم اعظم) of God and that whoever supplicates with these words would be delivered from every affliction.

رَبِّ کُلُّ شَیْءٍ خَادِمُکَ رَبِّ فَاحْفَظْنِیْ وَانْصُرْنِیْ وَارْحَمْنِیْ

O my Lord everything serves You. So O my Lord, protect me and help me and have mercy on me. (Tadhkirah, p,601)

Prayer for Deliverance from Sufferings and Illness

سُبْحَانَ اللّٰهِ وَبِحَمْدِهٖ سُبْحَانَ اللّٰهِ الْعَظِیْمِ
اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰی مُحَمَّدٍ وَّاٰلِ مُحَمَّدٍ

Holy is Allah and worthy of all Praise; Holy is Allah, the Great. Allah, bestow Your blessings on Muhammad and the people of Muhammad. (Tiryaqul-Qulub, pp. 36–37, Ruhani Khaza'in, vol. 15, pp. 208–209)