

Friday Sermon: Be a man of God

Novemberth, 2013

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih delivered today's sermon from Nagoya, Japan.

Huzoor said with the grace of God he is enabled to directly address the Japanese Jama'at after approximately seven years. With the grace of God like some other Jama'ats in the world, the Japanese Jama'at is also a progressive Jama'at. It is advancing in sincerity and loyalty and in financial giving. However, its members should always remember never to assume that they are advancing, growing in numbers, are enhancing in financial giving and have now purchased this new place which will be sufficient for their needs for many years to come. Huzoor said he would later give details of the new place but said that it is large and adequate for offering Salat in terms of the current numbers of the Jama'at and would also be adequate to hold Jalsa Salana for some time, there will also be space for offices. It also houses a guest house and a mission house. For this the Japanese Jama'at has made great financial sacrifices, but it should always be remembered that its rightful due will be paid when whatever the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) imparted to us, which is essential for a true Muslim, will be acted upon.

No doubt sacrifices and actions owing to short-term enthusiasm at times incline one towards piety. If these are for the sake of God, one is bestowed with Divine grace. However, the objectives of those of us who have taken the Bai'at of the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) will be fulfilled in the real sense when we will endeavour to make each act of ours consistent in seeking the pleasure of God and will keep the objective of the Ahmadiyya Jama'at in our view.

The Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) said: 'These excellences are found in Prophets (peace be on them) and it is stated in: **'The path of those on whom Thou hast bestowed Thy blessings...'** (1:7) Attainment of this is the real purpose of every person. Our Jama'at in particular should be drawn to this because Allah the Exalted willed by establishing this Community to prepare a community like the community which was prepared by the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) so that this community may stand witness to the truth and greatness of the Holy Qur'an and the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him).'

The Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) has put a huge responsibility on us to attain those objectives which the Companions of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) tried to attain. They constantly gave sacrifice of life, property and time and paid the dues of God while fearing Him. They supplicated God and were never proud of any of their sacrifices, rather they prayed for their efforts to gain acceptance and so heightened were their levels of worship of God that they awakened at night and did not ever neglect remembering God during the day in spite of their trade and commerce. This is the objective all of us have to attain about which the Qur'an states that once this is attained the objective of one's creation is attained. This indeed should be our aim when we build mosques or purchase places to worship God. Worldly objectives have limits and after arriving at a certain height/point, one is happy with a sense of achievement and to see the results of one's endeavours. However, devotion of God is such that newer and newer doors open to nearness of God and then there is reward after death in the Hereafter where one progresses by virtue of God's limitless grace and the blessings received are beyond imagination. This is the view with which the Companions progressed and thus attain the title of 'may Allah be pleased with them'.

This is the kind of spiritual progress the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) wanted to see in his Jama'at where their station would elevate and they would continue to receive blessings. He said he wanted people of his Jama'at to bear witness to the greatness of the Holy Qur'an and the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him). Can the greatness of the Qur'an be proven through our testimony? Is greatness of the Holy Prophet

(peace and blessings of Allah be on him), the last Prophet, the most beloved of God, subject to our practices? No, it is not. What the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) meant was that a revolutionary change should come in our practices and by acting on the teaching of the Qur'an and the blessed model of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) we should make it evident to the world that we are the people among whom a revolutionary change has taken place due to the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah. This is possible by paying the dues of God and high standards of His worship and paying the dues of mankind.

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih said he has received reports that our non-Muslim Japanese lawyer friend has given selfless support and help in the various stages of completion as well as through the impediments in acquiring Baitul Ahad mosque. He did so because of the Jama'at's observance of paying the dues of mankind in rendering help during earthquakes and the [Japanese] tsunami. He felt the help had significance and he said it was a favour of the Jama'at on Japan so he offered his services free of charge. Whatever the Jama'at did was not a favour but their obligation, but in any case the lawyer has shown great civility. We will carry on paying the dues of mankind whether anyone is helpful to us or not and we should let others know that paying the dues of mankind is what the Holy Qur'an enjoins and what the blessed model of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) teaches. Serving mankind opens new avenues of introduction and there will be more people like the Japanese lawyer on whom the true teaching of Islam will be unfolded and thus further avenues of Tabligh will open.

A few small legal matters remain in giving Baitul Ahad the status of a mosque. Through it the Jama'at's introduction will grow. It was also the wish of the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) that since inclination towards Islam is growing in these people because they appear pious-natured, Islam should be presented to them. This is why he had said for a book to be written in Japanese language. Work is being done on this book. All this should lead the Japanese Jama'at, most of whom are of Pakistani ethnicity to review their lifestyle because people will now be watching them more than before. When they will do Tabligh, people will observe their lifestyles rather than observe how much they sacrificed to build the mosque. They will observe the Jama'at's living relationship with God and will appraise if they would experience revolutionary change by joining the Jama'at! In worldly terms these people are far ahead of the Jama'at and their outward courtesy is also very high.

If we can offer them anything new it is connecting them to God and can tell them that now only Islam is the living religion, we can tell them how to honour the dues of worship of God, how God listens to prayers and how He talks to people. For this we need to self-reflect and strengthen our connection with God, and pay the dues of His worship. We will have to live with mutual love and instil higher civility than that of the Japanese. They have great apparent civility as well as human sympathy and abide by the Islamic teaching of doing good in return of good. The Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) remarked about these people owing to their compliant nature. It is very important to inform them of the real teachings of Islam. Full advantage should be derived from their compliance and civility and they should be shown the beauty of Islam, they should be shown a practical model of connection between God and man. And for this, each Ahmadi in Japan will have to keep the Qur'an and the blessed model of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) in view at all times. For this the guidance given by the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) should always be practiced.

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih said he would say a few words in this regard. The first matter about which God will hold us accountable is upholding pledges. As regards our pledge of allegiance with the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) it is not sufficient for us to say that we have taken the Bai'at of the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) and are now Ahmadis or that the long-term Ahmadis re-new their Bai'at at the hand of Khilafat and think it sufficient. Indeed, pledge of allegiance that Bai'at is, has its requisites which the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) presented to us in the form of ten conditions. The gist of which is that faith is given precedence over worldly matters under all conditions and efforts should always be made in this regard.

The Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) said: 'You see that I ask for a declaration in Bai'at to give precedence to faith over worldly matters. This is so that I may observe how much the person taking Bai'at

practices this.’ The Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) said that people have to work very hard for worldly tasks to achieve success, but they do not take pains for faith and do not make efforts to keep God in view at all times. He said: ‘I am impassioned for the Jama’at to instil pure change. The picture of change in my Jama’at that I have in my heart has not yet been generated. Seeing this my condition is like that of: **‘Haply thou wilt grieve thyself to death because they believe not.’** (26:4) I do not wish that a few words be repeated in parrot-like fashion at the time of Bai’at. There is no benefit in this. Attain knowledge of self-purification, for that is what is needed.’

Explaining the real purpose of Bai’at, he said: ‘Instil a pure change within yourself and become like a completely new person. It is essential for each one of you to understand this secret and to bring about such a change that he can say that he is a different person.’

This is the pain which needs to be appreciated. Indeed, these words were said by the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) to those who kept his company. If their standard did not quite come up to the mark, these deficiencies have grown manifold in our time and how much more do we have to make effort in this regard! When the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) spoke about his distressed condition in terms of outsiders it meant why did they not believe but here his concern for his own is why did they not attain the station which was essential for a real believer. Of course we accept the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) as the Seal of all the Prophets and believe that the Messiah about whom he foretold has come and we have taken his Bai’at. Yet, our faith is not perfect. Faith has its conditions, for example a true believer loves God most of all and this signifies not to lay importance to anything in the world and every relation when compared to God. In many places in the Holy Qur’an God has mentioned faith as conditional to amaal e saleh (good works). True believers have been given commandments to pay the dues of worship of God, which is very important and it is stated that true believers are those who try and reconcile with each other in order to please God and their mutual consultations are for the good of the world.

True believers are defined as those who enjoin good and forbid evil, true believers are those who honour their trusts, who abide by their pledges, who stay firm on truth and abide by qawl e sadeed (the right word) to such an extent that they do not say anything ambiguous and shifty. If they have to bear witness against their own they do so and they are brim-full of sense of sacrifice for each other. The Companions of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) indeed attained these standards. True believers always make positive assumption about others. They do not harbour grudges with each other based on hearsay. If just this single aspect is practised by every single member of the Jama’at one hundred per cent, progress would be enhanced. True believers are kind and civil to their wives. If this is practised by those who have married Japanese women, it would be a positive Tabligh for the in-laws. True believers forgive the faults of each other and true believers display humility. The Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) expressed in one of his Urdu poetic couplets:

Assume that you are worse than all the rest

For this may admit you in the abode of union with God!

Humility is the proviso to gain nearness to God for He does not like arrogance. Jama’at office-holders should show humility as well as members of the Jama’at and they should suppress anger, which is a sign of true believers. As mentioned earlier, pledges should be honoured because God will hold us accountable as regards our pledges and the pledge of allegiance we have taken in the form of Bai’at needs to be understood, acted upon and honoured. Every commandment cannot be explained in the sermon today as there are many but everyone should be mindful if they are following what the Qur’an states. If we all adopted the condition explained in the aforementioned poetic couplet we would learn to forgive and will become useful individuals of the Jama’at. We should understand the pain the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) felt in this regard, it will be source of purification of self for us. We should instil a spirit of brotherhood and rather than find fault in others we should find good points.

The Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) said: 'Each one of you should remove mutual conflicts, anger and enmity. Now is the time to abandon lowly matters and be engaged in significant and magnificent work. Remember, if you will be inclined to what Allah the Exalted commands and will endeavour in promoting His faith, God will remove all your impediments and you will be successful.'

Endeavour should be made to attain excellent deeds towards which attention is drawn. The purpose of the advent of the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) was to bring man closer to God and instil a living connection with Him as well as serve mankind. This can come to pass when we aspire and try to become true believers so that we can take the beautiful teaching of Islam to others. Hazrat Khalifatul Masih said he would reiterate that everyone should self-reflect. The Japanese Jama'at is small and if only a few have contradiction in their word and deed, it can affect everyone; especially it can make youngsters distant. Those Japanese men and women who have married Ahmadi and come closer to the Jama'at will also become distant. This is a great cause for concern. The first and foremost duty falls on the Sadr Jama'at and the missionary-in-charge that he should be a fatherly figure. In terms of his office and his knowledge, his is the greatest responsibility for which he will be accountable. One who has no knowledge is not held accountable as one with knowledge is. And every member of the Jama'at should self-reflect as well as the office-holders, whether they are honouring the rights of the office they hold or are they creating restlessness by not honouring the rights! The office-holders of the auxiliary organisations should also self-reflect. Each one will be accountable for the trust given to them and their pledge. Meetings should be conducted in Japanese language. Hazrat Khalifatul Masih has received some complaints in this regard that meetings are conducted in Urdu and the Japanese members do not understand the proceedings. Urdu translation should be provided for those who do not know Japanese rather than the other way around and Japanese Ahmadi should be fully involved in all programmes and should be asked to make speeches and asked to serve in other ways.

As mentioned earlier, when the mosque is functional new avenues of Tabligh will open up. Each Ahmadi will have to rise and oversee these avenues so that if anyone comes by, an old-term Ahmadi is there to guide. This task cannot be undertaken unless everyone has a connection with God, that Ahad (One) God in Whose names this mosque is being made! Each Ahmadi should be mindful that this responsibility does not only lie with the office-holders. It is the responsibility of every man and woman young and old to not just find faults of the office-holders but connect with the Rahman (Most Gracious) God and become ebdur Rahman (servant of the Gracious God) and make preparations to honour this mosque which InshaAllah the Jama'at will soon have. Hazrat Khalifatul Masih gave some facts and figures about the mosque that he had at hand. The mosque is called Baitul Ahad and its Salat hall has a capacity of 500 worshippers, it also has residential quarters and its total cost was \$800,000. When attention of Japanese Jama'at was drawn to this build, with the grace of God they made sacrifices by donating great amounts and jewellery and children gave their pocket money. Some people sold their homes in Pakistan to make contributions, some sold their old ancestral jewellery and made contributions. In short everyone excelled each other in giving. May God accept their sacrifices and bless them immensely personally as well as their wealth. The possession/jurisdiction of the mosque is in its last stages, had it gone through the Friday Prayer would have taken place there. Also, had the Japanese lawyer mentioned earlier charged for his services, his fee would have been at least \$20,000. His gesture was very kind, may God reward him.

Work on the mosque has been carried out within a few months. The extraordinary sacrifices made for this mosque aside, God helped with His grace in obtaining the site and swiftly the arrangements fell in place. This has come to fruition owing more to God's grace than the efforts of the Jama'at. In Huzoor's view a few months ago it could not even be imagined to obtain such a place. This aspect should make the Jama'at further turn to God. The grace of God on the Jama'at worldwide is also an answer to the vociferous claims of our enemies and is a demonstrative response to what our enemies had claimed in the era of the second Khilafat e Ahmadiyya when they said they would raze Qadian to the ground and God forbid, eliminate Ahmadiyyat. Hazrat Musleh Maud (may Allah be pleased with him) initiated Tehrik e Jadid at the time and said that the answer to whatever was going on was Tabligh and to spread Ahmadiyyat in the world. Members of the Jama'at made financial

sacrifices then and indeed Ahmadiyyat, true Islam spread in the world! Missionaries were sent overseas, mosques were built, hospitals and schools were built. May be any sign of those who had presumed to raze Qadian to the ground remains or not but the Jama'at is established in over 200 countries of the world and hundreds and thousands are coming in its fold. This year Japanese Jama'at has also been blessed in a most unexpected way. This should lead them to turn to God and the true spirit to pay its dues would be to bring those pure changes which would gain acceptance of God.

God's grace is also evident in Tehrik e Jadid and Huzoor wished to mention it by way of relating God's bounties. By chance this year its new year falls during Huzoor's overseas tour. Certain experiences during this tour were certainly not borne of our efforts. When the last Tehrik e Jadid year closed Huzoor decided to announce the new years from Japan. According to the reports received thus far, some reports come late, last year the Tehrik e Jadid contributions stood at £7, 869,100.00 which is an increase of £ 650,000 from the year before. Pakistan maintains its first position worldwide and outside Pakistan are the following countries in descending order: Germany, USA, UK, Canada, India, Indonesia, Australia, two Arab states, Ghana and Switzerland. With the grace of God Germany has made a huge leap and has made an increase of more than €350,000. Germany donated £182,000 more than USA while the UK collected £400,000 more than Canada. Every time there has been an increase of contributions from Germany their Ameer Sahib and amila have shown concern that as Huzoor prohibited taking chanda from those whose earnings involve work handling alcohol or pig meat it would affect their chanda. However, when they first expressed concern there was in fact an increase in their contributions as it is this year.

USA came first in per capita contributions followed by Switzerland, Australia, Japan, UK, Germany, Norway, France, Belgium and Canada. In terms of increase based on local currency, the prominent countries were: Ghana, Germany, Australia, Pakistan, UK, Canada, India and USA. Hazrat Khalifatul Masih had advised to increase the number of contributors worldwide, in line of this, this year 225,000 new contributors joined Tehrike Jadid.

Among African countries these Jama'at were prominent: Ghana, Nigeria, Mauritius, Burkina Faso, Tanzania, Gambia, Benin, Kenya, Sierra Leone and Uganda. Sierra Leone made the biggest effort to increase contributors to Tehrik e Jadid in Africa and was followed by Mali, Burkina Faso, Gambia, Benin, Senegal, Liberia, Uganda and Tanzania.

In Pakistan the first three major Jama'ats were: Lahore, Rabwah and Karachi. In USA, Los Angeles, Inland Empire, Silicon Valley, Detroit, Harrisburg, Los Angeles East, Columbus, Seattle, Los Angeles West, Silver Spring and Pheonix were the prominent Jama'ats. In the UK the following Jama'ats were prominent: Fazl Mosque, West Hill, New Malden, Worcester Park, Raynes Park, Birmingham Central, Mosque West, Baitul Futuh, Thornton Heath and Cheam. Region-wise it was: London, North East, Midlands, South, Middlesex. In Canada the leading Jama'ats were: Peace Village, Calgary, Vaughan, Vancouver, Edmonton, Durham, Ottawa, Saskatoon and Lloydminster. The prominent Jama'ats of India were: A Jama'at in Kerala, Calicut Kerala, Hyderabad Andhra Pradesh, Kananook Town Kerala, Bangadi Kerala, Qadian Punjab, Calcutta Bengal, Yadgir Karnataka, Chennai Tamil Nadu and Matha Town Kerala. Kababir has increased their donations this year and by their own standard they have doubled it.

May God increase all those who are making any kind of sacrifice and have also contributed to Tehrik e Jadid in faith and may these sacrifices be purely for the sake of God.