

Friday Sermon: Essence of Spiritual Excellence

20th September 2013

The Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) said: 'Every person should fear God. Fear of God would make him do many virtues.' He also said: 'In reality only that person is good and pious who proves to be good when scrutinised by Allah the Exalted. Many people deceive themselves and consider themselves pious, however only he is righteous in the real sense who is deemed righteous in the office of Allah the Exalted.'

This is an important advice and if it is kept in view we would rightfully pay our dues to Allah the Exalted as well as our dues to mankind. However, if we presume that our worship of God is good and we pay the dues of God but there is some sort of pretence or ostentation in these matters or although we worship God but do not pay the dues of mankind, then this will not gain acceptance in God's sight and cannot attain His pleasure.

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih narrated a lengthy Hadith in which the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) counselled Hazrat Mu'adh (may Allah be pleased with him). He said: 'O Mu'adh I shall tell you something which will benefit you if you remember it and if you forget it, you will not attain God's grace and you will have no reasoning as assurance for salvation. Allah the Exalted created seven attendant angels before He created seven heavens and the Earth and placed one angel as attendant of each heaven. They were told to remain in position and only permit those actions to go through which were allowed by God. Angels who safeguard man's actions and write them down daily, took the actions of a man which he had done from morning till evening and rose to heaven. The angels thought very highly of the actions and considered them pure. However, when they reached the first heaven, they said to the attendant angel that they had brought a man's actions to present before God. They said the actions were very pure. The attendant angel said: 'Stop here, you are not allowed to go further, return and throw back these actions in the face of the person whose actions they are. God has instructed me not to let the actions of one who back-bites go through and this person is always back-biting.'

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said some angels rose to heaven with the actions of another man and they said to each other how pure those actions were and how the person did them abundantly. As those actions did not have even an iota of back-biting, the attendant angel of the first heaven let them through. When they reached the second heaven, the attendant angel there called out to them: 'Stop here, you are not allowed to go further, return and throw back these actions in the face of the person whose they are.' The angel said that he was the angel of pride and God had appointed him there so that he would not let the actions of any person through which had any pride in them; [like a person who] sits in gatherings and pompously mentions his virtues. The angel said: 'The person whose actions you have brought sits in assemblies of men and proudly talks about his actions.'

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said some angels rose to heaven with the actions of another man. These actions constituted of almsgiving, charity, fasting and Salat and the guardian angels were amazed at the diligence of the servant of God for the sake of attaining the pleasure of his Lord. As these actions had no element of back-biting and pride, the attendant angels of the first and second heaven let them through. However, when they reached the door of the third heaven, the attendant angel said: 'Stop. Take these actions back to the person whose they are and throw them in his face. I am the angel of arrogance. God has appointed me to the door of third heaven with the instruction that no action should be let through which has any element of arrogance and the man whose actions you have brought is very arrogant and thinks very highly of himself and looks down on others and treats them with arrogance and conceit. He sits conceitedly in assemblies. Although his actions are good in your eyes, they do not gain acceptance in God's sight.'

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said fourth group of angels rose to heaven with the actions of another man. Those actions seemed like bright stars to the angels. They included Salat, Tasbih (glorification of God), Hajj and Umrah. The angels traversed one heaven after another, one door after another door with those actions and reached the door of the fourth heaven. The attendant angel there said: 'Stop. Take these actions back to the person whose they are and throw them in his face. I am the angel of self-conceit and God has commanded me that the actions of a person who has self-conceit, as if he considers himself equal to God and has excessive good opinion of himself and has no devotion to God, should not be allowed to go through the door of the fourth heaven. This is the commandment of my Lord to me, whenever this person did anything he made self-conceit an element of it, his actions do not gain acceptance in God's sight.'

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said a fifth group of angels rose to heaven with the actions of a man. The angels considered those actions like a beautifully turned-out, adorned, fragrant bride who is presented to her groom. However, having passed the fourth heaven, when they reached the fifth heaven, the attendant angel there said: 'Stop. Take these actions back and throw them back in the face of the person whose they are and tell him that his God is not prepared to accept them. I am the angel of envy and my God has commanded me not let the actions of any person who envies pass through the door of the fifth heaven. This person envied everyone who attained knowledge and everyone who did good deeds. I will not let his deeds go through this door.'

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said a sixth group of angels rose to heaven with the actions of a man and having passed the first five doors, reached the sixth heaven. These actions included fasting, Salat, Zakat, Hajj and Umrah. The angels thought all these actions would gain acceptance with God. However, the attendant angel at the sixth heaven said: 'Stop, do not go any further. This person did not have compassion for any servant of God and God has appointed me here so that I do not let the actions which have any element of mercilessness in them go through this door. Go back and throw back these actions in the face of the person and tell him that his way in life is that rather be kind to servants of God, he is cruel to them. How could God have mercy on him and accept his actions?'

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said some other angels rose to heaven with the actions of a man and passed heaven after heaven and door after door and reached the seventh heaven. These actions included Salat, fasting, Fiqah (Jurisprudence) Ijtihad (Process of arriving at a legal decision for which there is no precedent in Islamic law) and temperance. These actions emitted bees-like sound, that is, the angels were humming that they were taking something fine to present before God. The actions were shining like sunlight and had three thousand angels with them, meaning the actions were so profuse and so weighty that three thousand angels carried their receptacle. When they reached the seventh heaven, the attendant angel appointed there said: 'Stop, you cannot go any further. Return and throw these actions back in the face of the person and lock his heart because God has commanded me not to present such actions before Him which are not done purely to seek His pleasure and which have any adulteration in them. This person did these actions for others besides God. He haughtily sits in assemblies of Fiqah and talks about matters of jurisprudence and Ijtihad so that he attains high status and glory among people. He did not do these actions for the pleasure of God but merely as boasting. His objective was to become famous in the world as a highly esteemed person who is spoken of in scholarly assemblies. Any action not done purely for God which is adulterated with hypocrisy does not gain acceptance with God. I have been commanded not let such action through. You should return and throw these actions in the face of the person.'

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said some other angels rose to the heaven with the actions of another person. The attendant angels of the seven heavens let them through. They had no objection to the actions and every attendant angel said the actions were fine. The actions included Zakat, fasting, Salat, Hajj, Umrah, high morals and remembrance of God. When the angels set off to present these actions before God, the angels of the heaven joined them and they traversed every door and reached the court of God and stood before

God and said: 'O our Lord, this servant of yours is always engaged in Your worship and we bear witness to his sincerity and every pious act. He carries out many virtuous acts and spends all his precious time in Your obedience. He is a very sincere person and there is no flaw in him.' In short, they highly praised him. God said: 'I have appointed you to safeguard actions and to record them down, you only see the apparent actions of man and record it down. I see what is in the heart of my servant. This person did not do these actions to seek my pleasure. Rather, his intent and objective was something else and he wanted to please someone else. My curse be on.' On this all the angels cried out, 'Your curse and our curse be on him.' The seven heavens and all creation living in them started cursing him.'

Hearing this counsel and advice of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) Hazrat Mu'adh's heart trembled and he asked: 'O Prophet of God, if this is how actions are, how salvation can be attained? How can I have salvation from the wrath of my God?' The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) replied: 'Follow my Sunnah and have belief that no matter how good the deeds of a servant of God, he has some flaws, therefore do not be gratified by your actions. Rather, have belief that our God and Lord is such that in spite of their drawbacks, He forgives His servants. And look, take care of your tongue/speech and do not hurt anyone with it and do not consider you have more righteousness and temperance than others and do not announce your temperance. Do not adulterate the actions that you do for the pleasure of God and to benefit you in the Hereafter with worldliness. Do not create chaos and disorder among people and do not tear them apart. If you do so, on the Day of Judgement the dogs of Hell will tear you apart. Do not present your actions hypocritically before the world.'

One is truly enabled to do virtues which gain acceptance by God when the blessed model of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) is kept in view. In spite of his successes and the glad-tidings he received, he used to pray with great pathos in view of his and his people's weaknesses, although his prayers had great acceptance and he was also given glad-tidings about the future, yet his prostrations would be filled with prayers made with great poignancy. When he was asked the reason for this he would always say that God is Self-Sufficient. Also, for one it is fear of God and secondly, why would he not be grateful for God's grace and blessings. How could he not be thankful for all the bounties of God and all the promises He had given regarding his Ummah.

Such was the blessed model of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him). He used to help everyone without any discrimination. Everyone availed of his compassion, love and affection. He taught us to worship God as he did and be servants of God Who is Most Appreciating and Who is Gracious in line with the model he demonstrated. He taught to pay the dues of mankind as selflessly as he did for that would draw God's grace and said if one merely relied on one's own piety and worship, then one would not be a recipient of Divine grace. In order to follow Sunnah, we have to analyse ourselves and turn to God seeking His beneficence for we do not know if our actions attain the standard that God expects of us. We should pray that may God make our actions according to His pleasure and then utterly out of His grace accepts them as well. May our actions never be those, which due to adulteration of worldliness are thrown in our faces! We should pray that may we attain God's paradise in this world and by moulding our every action in accordance with His pleasure, may we attain His beneficence in this world and also be recipient of God's Paradise in the Hereafter. May God accept our prayers merely out of His grace.

Next Hazrat Khalifatul Masih announced that he would lead three funeral Prayers in absentia after Friday Prayers.

Ajaz Ahmad Kiyani Sahib was martyred in Orangi Town, Karachi on 18 September. As he left for work in the morning on his motor bike two unknown assailants fired and martyred him. Eye-witnesses have said that he had only gone a short distance from his home and had slowed down due to a speed-breaker in the road when he was shot several times. The shooting continued as he fell and struggled to get up. He was 29 years old and was

married in 2009. He was employed at the Pakistan Military Ordinance. Last month his brother-in-law Zahoor Ahmad Kiyani Sahib was martyred in the same area of Karachi. His martyrdom had deeply affected Ajaz Sahib who had said that he wished he had been in his brother-in-law's place. Ajaz Sahib's mother says that he was born after many prayers following four sisters and was very kind and considerate to his mother and all family members. His wife has also said that he was a very good son, brother and husband. She said he was very supportive and comforting whenever she had any worry and drew her attention to God. He leaves behind his widow, a four and a half years old daughter and one and a half years old son. The situation in Karachi is very bad. It appears that a posse has been allocated target-killing of Ahmadis. May God soon bring about their chastisement! In reality all this is taking place on the behest of the Maulwis and seconded by the government. May God also soon bring about chastisement of this cruel group! There is a great need for prayers; situation is especially terrible in Karachi but is generally bad in the whole country, including Lahore.

Abdul Momin Sahib Dervish was a dervish of Qadian who passed away on 11 September. He was 97 years old. He was a very devout person who was keen on Tabligh. He also served as a missionary in rural areas. In spite of his weak health in later years he used to offer Salat in congregation. He was a Moosi.

Sheikh Rehmatullah Sahib passed away on 12 September after brief illness at the age of 94. He had accepted Ahmadiyyat in 1943 at the age of 24. He worked in Delhi and later Lahore. He then relocated to Karachi and worked with Chaudhry Shah Nawaz Sahib in pharmaceutical import. In 1950 with the help of Chaudhry Shah Nawaz Sahib he started his own business which was greatly blessed by God. Although he was educated to matriculation level everyone thought he was very highly educated.

Sheikh Rehmatullah Sahib became Naib Ameer Karachi Jamaat under Chaudhary Abdullah Khan Sahib in 1950. During the riots of 1953 Khalifatul Masih II (May Allah be pleased with him) appointed him temporarily as the Ameer because Chaudhry Abdullah Khan Sahib was a government employee and there was a concern that he may lose his job. Thereafter he continued as the acting Ameer during the illness of Chaudhry Abdullah Khan Sahib. After the demise of Chaudhry Abdullah Khan Sahib he became the Ameer of Karachi and continued as Ameer till 1964. It is written in the history of our Karachi Jamaat that during the riots of 1953 since there was a concern that Rabwah may be shut down, Khalifatul Masih II formed a separate Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya in Karachi. Sheikh Rehmatullah Sahib was appointed as the Nazir-e-Ala of this. He was also a member of the Nigran Board that was formed during the long illness of Khalifatul Masih II (May Allah be pleased with him).

He had a great attachment to Khilafat and had developed a distinct connection with Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V during his Khilafat and was very sensitive and thoughtful about any trouble Huzoor may experience. He was a very forthright and honest person who was prayerful and keen in giving. He had a wide circle of friends and acquaintances and helped anyone who was in need. Owing to his wide social standing he used to also do a lot of Tabligh. One of his sons Nasim Rehmatullah Sahib has been Sadr of Cleveland Jama'at as well as Naib Ameer USA for a long time. He also serves as the Chairman of Jama'at website alislam.org. His other son Sheikh Rehmatullah Sahib is Naib Ameer of Faisalabad and also Sadr of the Mashawerti Board. One of his daughters Jameela Rehmani Sahiba has served Lajna in the UK. Ghulam Rehmani Sahib served as secretary Wasaya for a long period here in the UK. His younger daughter Nudrat Malik Sahiba served as Sadr of Columbus and regional Sadr of East Midwest in the USA.

May God elevate the status of all the deceased and grant steadfastness to all the bereaved, especially the parents of the martyr whose young son has been martyred and God be the Protector of his young children and keep them in His refuge!

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih said InshaAllah he is leaving for a tour for a few weeks and asked for prayers that may God bless this tour in every way and may God fulfil its objectives with His grace.