

Friday Sermon: Objectives of Jalsa Salana (Annual Convention)

June 28th, 2013

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih delivered his Friday sermon from Germany. He said that with the grace of God today the German Jalsa Salana starts which will continue for three days. Jalsa Salana is also starting in some other countries today, especially USA and Kababir and the Ameer of these countries wished their Jalsa to be mentioned. Due to the time difference the time for Friday Prayers in USA and Kababir were not the same as Germany, however the concluding address [by Huzoor] on the third day of Jalsa would correspond with the completion of Jalsa in USA and they will join in the concluding address and the silent prayer at the end.

Jalsa Salana of various countries falling on the same dates has the advantage that people gathered for Jalsa join in on the Live Friday sermon and in this way the message of the sermon reaches a large audience. Although a large part of the Jama'at listens to these Live broadcasts of Jalsa Salana but Hazrat Khalifatul Masih's estimation is that a large number does not tune in. Although people in other countries gathered for Jalsa Salana are in different time zones their attention would be drawn to the Friday sermon.

Today's Friday sermon was a reminder about the objectives of Jalsa Salana as set out by the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace). Reminding is necessary so that special focus during Jalsa days is maintained and the matters raised during the Jalsa are also followed afterwards. This is dependent on individual focus and concentration. These days people are drawn to worldly matters and obligatory and optional worship and other tasks are somewhat disregarded. Many people write in after Jalsa of the immense change they feel within themselves and say that they felt as if they were in a different world for the three days of Jalsa and were influenced by the spiritual ambience of the three days. They request prayers that may this condition be enduring.

Indeed, Jalsa days have such an effect and people are influenced in accordance with their individual state of faith. Some forget the promises they made to God during Jalsa soon after, some forget after a few days and others after a few weeks. Many maintain the effect for a few months. These are facts which cannot be denied. There are a few on whom the effect of the pious ambience of Jalsa stays for years. However, as the majority forgets it in a short while, God has enjoined reminding.

Initiation of Jalsa Salana is a great favour of the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) on us. It gives us a chance of collective reformation and an opportunity to attain spiritual nourishment as well as an opportunity to perform our obligations and responsibilities. Today's sermon was based on the objective of Jalsa Salana in light of the pronouncements of the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace).

The Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) said that hearts should be drawn to the Hereafter and fear of God should be inculcated. People should become models of Zohd (complete devotion), Taqwa, compassion, temperance, gentleness and mutual love. Humility and truthfulness should be instilled and keenness generated for religious ventures. Hazrat Khalifatul Masih said these few words of the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) in fact give a true Ahmadi the modus operandi to lead his life. If we were to only reflect on the word 'Zohd' it carries within itself such a great counsel that abiding by its roots out every evil. It stops wrong emotions from developing and as a result the doors of all wrongful desires simply close. Indeed, one cannot completely cut oneself off from the world, however, it is the wrongful and unwarranted desires of the world which one should avoid and safeguard from. Conversely, it is of course ungratefulness of God not to avail of His many bounties of the world.

Hadith relates that once the Companions said that they would continually fast, will not marry and not go near women. In response the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) told them that he fasted, offered Salat, slept, did household tasks and had married women and whoever did contrary to what he did was not from among him. He said he feared God more than the Companions and kept his wishes in accordance to the will of God.

True Zohd connotes that only worldly desires are not in one's view and one avails of worldly things in moderation. However, if one is drawn to all the razzmatazz the Western world has to offer then coming to Jalsa Salana is pointless and it is also pointless to come in the Bai'at of the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace). Zohd instils recognition of the true spirit of Taqwa. Indeed, Taqwa means that one is mindful not to do something that would incur God's displeasure just as one is careful not to displease a dear one or a friend. This happens when love of God is greater than all other loves and this in turn is possible when one has a personal connection with God and has spiritual knowledge of Him.

The Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) has given many counsels on attaining this standard of Taqwa. He said that advice was very important for the wellbeing of the Jama'at and God is not pleased with anything apart from Taqwa. God states: **'Verily, Allah is with those who are righteous and those who do good.'** [\(16:129\)](#)

Frequent and constant counsel is made to ensure that when after taking Bai'at we announce that we will try to attain God's pleasure and will try and follow His commandments we follow it through with practice because without practice, claims are mere words. The aforementioned verse elucidates Taqwa in that it states that those who do good have Taqwa. That is, those who are good to others and who have knowledge and their knowledge makes them abide by Taqwa. The Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) first drew our attention to Zohd and then to Taqwa and gave example from the Word of God which states that sacrifice your own emotions to benefit others.

The Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) said that it was particularly important for his Jama'at to inculcate Taqwa because they follow one who has claimed to have been appointed by God. Thus, he said that coming in his Bai'at is not an ordinary matter because he has claimed to be from God. He said reformation of people will come to pass through him as will recognition of God and connection with Him. This will in turn generate those high moral which the Holy Qur'an enjoins.

In order to pay the dues of mankind one has to abandon all manner of malice and rancour and make one's heart as clean and shiny as a mirror; free from all kind of shirk (associating partners with God). Inclination to worldliness takes one away from God, therefore unless one avoids it one will not be rightful claimant of Bai'at and this is not possible without Taqwa.

The Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) advised in very severe words that God is Ever Merciful but He is also Most Supreme. When He sees that a community makes great claims but does not follow them up with practice, it incurs His wrath. Hazrat Khalifatul Masih said may we never experience God's wrath, instead may we always try and seek God's mercy.

The Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) said that piety/virtue is two-fold. Obligatory matters and optional matters; obligatory matters include paying off debts and doing good in return of good. Each piety/virtue has an optional value, for example to do good in return of good and then do further good, to give alms in addition to giving Zakat. God becomes Friend of people who practice this and becomes their hand and feet, so much so that He becomes the tongue with which they speak.

This station is attained when one returns a favour with greater, enhanced favour. If everyone in society follows this practice there could be no selfishness in society instead such a society would be replete with love and peace. When this is practiced to gain God's pleasure, God grants limitless bounties in a manner which is beyond human imagination. There is need to inculcate this spirit. We should also offer optional Prayers along with obligatory Prayers to attain God's pleasure. All this should be without any other motive but to please God because God is not interested in ostensible worship and sacrifice.

God states: **'And I have not created the Jinn and the men but that they may worship Me.'** (51:57) However, sometimes these very Prayers become a source of destruction for people. It is indeed worth wondering why piety/virtue can be a source of destruction. The simple answer to this is that God has enjoined every good thing based on Taqwa. That is, Taqwa is the kernel, the real substance as opposed to the outer shell. If worship of God does not inculcate sympathy and compassion for mankind, then the outward action has not generated the intended spirit. This is akin to when at times fruit looks very attractive from outside but when cut open either the kernel is not formed or it is eaten up by bugs or when one cracks open an almond in anticipation only to find it bitter. We have to save this kernel, the essence, of worship of God and this will be when alongside Divine connection we also feel sincere compassion for humanity.

The German Jama'at is enabled to build four to five mosques each year and when Hazrat Khalifatul Masih has the opportunity to inaugurate them, he reminds the Jama'at that their responsibility increases after building a mosque. It is not sufficient to build a mosque and visit it for Prayers. The main point is for the worshippers to have mutual love and regard which is also evident to the people of the area.

The Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) wished for his Jama'at members to have gentleness and mutual love and accord which would become a model for others. Models of mutual love and accord would attract God's love and enhance Taqwa and also draw the attention of others. The Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) prayed that may God purify the hearts of his Jama'at and draw them towards Him and keep them far-removed from

mischief. In the extract of the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) quoted at the start he also drew attention to humility and humbleness. Indeed, humility promotes mutual accord and also draws the attention of others. God has stated it as a sign of His servants that they: **‘...walk on the earth in a dignified manner...’** (25:64). Such humility/dignity inculcates the spirit in man which takes him closer to God and enhances the beauty of society.

The Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) also drew attention to truthfulness and honesty. Indeed, a person who abides by Taqwa follows all virtues, for that is the very definition of Taqwa, but it is important to stress some elements as they enhance Taqwa. That is why God has especially enjoined truthfulness and saying qawl e sadeed (the right word): **‘O ye who believe! fear Allah, and say the right word.’** (33:71). Hazrat Khalifatul Masih said he recently gave a sermon on the subject of qawl e sadeed in light of this verse.

The Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) has especially enjoined those who come to Jalsa Salana for spiritual development to adopt truthfulness, honesty and openness. When each Ahmadi’s honesty will be of high standard their words will be effective and they will be able to take their mission onwards and upwards. Indeed, the Promised Messiah’s (on whom be peace) mission constitutes two important tasks: to make man recognise God and forge a connection with God and secondly to pay the dues of mankind. Both these tasks demand of us to make pure change in our practices.

We cannot connect the world to God unless we ourselves have a strong bond with Him and we cannot pay the dues of mankind unless we inculcate enthusiasm for humility, honesty, love, unity and sacrifice. We should reflect over this bond and this enthusiasm in these three days and enhance it so that we can fulfil the wishes of the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace). Every Ahmadi should try to enhance his Taqwa in the three days, may God enable us to do so.