

## **Friday Sermon: The Syrian Crisis**

**September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

The current global situation is fast moving towards devastation. In particular the Syrian crisis could plunge the Arab world in great devastation and if foreign powers join in, the terrible damage ensuing will not be limited to some countries in Asia, but will be worldwide. Neither the countries in Asia, nor the world powers appreciate that this conflict could be a pre-cursor to a World War.

Ahmadis accept the true and ardent devotee of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him), and in following their master, who came to connect man with God and to establish brotherhood, they need to pray a lot for the world to be protected from destruction. We have no other means. We can try and alert the world to the horrific consequences, as indeed we are. Hazrat Khalifatul Masih said as much as possible he has been alerting world leaders and politicians in this regard and members of the Community have also joined him in disseminating the message. Some of these leaders agree most forcefully with Hazrat Khalifatul Masih and tell him that his message is the need of the hour. However, when it is time for action, they change their stance. Ahmadis should try and pay a great deal of attention to pray for mankind in general and the Muslim Ummah in particular to be saved from destruction.

Some eighty eight years ago Hazrat Musleh Maud (may Allah be pleased with him) delivered a Friday sermon on the situation faced by Syria at the time. He mentioned the ancient history of Damascus and its pre-Islamic significance. Later it also became the capital city during Muslim reign. Hazrat Musleh Maud said that at the time the Druze tribe started an uprising for independence and were joined by other Muslims against the French rule. Hazrat Musleh Maud said that the administrative rule in Syria was French although the Mufti also wielded power. If the Mufti did not want anything published, the Governor was powerless. The Ahmadiyya Community had some publications printed which were banned by the Mufti and when the Governor was approached regarding this, he said he could not do anything. Any political dissent was swiftly dealt with by the French rule. In response to the revolt, the French air forces bombarded for 57 hours razing to the ground the historical buildings and killing thousands. The Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) was once given the revelation of: 'Calamity of Damascus'. This revelation was fulfilled by the 1925 situation for Damascus had never experienced destruction of that scale before. But, some revelations are fulfilled more than once. In that calamity, which lasted 57 hours or so according to a cautious estimate seven to eight thousand souls perished.

It is most regrettable that although that calamity was brought about by others, the current calamity that started in Syria two and a half years ago was brought about by Muslims themselves and it is ever-increasing. According to cautious estimate up to 100,000 souls have perished and millions are dispossessed. The entire area has been destroyed by bombs and nowhere is safe. The government forces are killing the citizens and the citizens are killing the government forces. Alawis are killing Sunnis and Sunnis are killing Alawis, and all of them claim to recite the one Kalima (Muslim declaration of faith). Extremists have joined the rebel Sunni forces, who are fighting in the name of 'freedom'. The damage wrought by these extremists to the country will only be gauged later on. Unfortunately this current calamity is acquiring a dangerous form. They do not realise that in the name of freedom the masses and in the name of maintaining peace the government have both fought each other so badly and are so weakened by it that now world powers are making great attempts for their

own invested interests in the name of maintaining peace and in the name of bringing about freedom. These attempts can engulf the world in destruction. Some world powers as well as some governments of the region are backing the Syrian government while other governments, including most world powers, are backing the rebel forces. This state of affairs has created a most dangerous situation.

What is regrettable is that the Muslim countries involved are those who follow the teaching about which God has stated that it has been perfected and God has called Muslims ‘the best of people’. Which good work are the Muslims doing? There is no honour in them anymore; they seek help from the others to kill their own. God states regarding such a situation: ‘**And if two parties of believers fight against each other, make peace between them; then if after that one of them transgresses against the other, fight the party that transgresses until it returns to the command of Allah. Then if it returns, make peace between them with equity, and act justly. Verily, Allah loves the just.**’ (49:10) The standard of justice has been set so high in this teaching that God states in the Qur’an: ‘... **and let not a people’s enmity incite you to act otherwise than with justice...**’ (5:9) and indeed has stated: ‘...**that is nearer to righteousness...**’ (5:9) Muslims are repeatedly enjoined to seek Taqwa (righteousness). It is quite embarrassing that the Israeli president should give the advice that should have been forthcoming from the Muslims. Even if they had not thought of what the Israeli president had said, once he made his suggestion to the Western countries, the council of Muslim countries should have announced that they would themselves handle the chaos in their region, because they follow One God and one Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) and follow the teaching of One Book and consider it their guidance. Even if there was conflict among them, they would resolve it in light of their perfect teaching. If rebellion had arisen among them they may have taken technical help from outside but the planning and the manpower should have been their own. If this was their stance no outsider would dare to challenge them.

What interest do other powers have in regions thousands of miles away? They are either interested in the wealth of that country or in order to prove their superiority to opposing powers they are simply subjugating lesser countries. In any case, it is due to the weakness of the Muslim countries and their abandonment of their teaching that the others have the impudence to state, as one country did, that even if the UN did not allow, they would use force against Syria because it was their right. The reasoning given for this ‘right’ was most childish, in that UN cannot dictate their foreign policy! Where does the question of foreign policy enter the equation here? When enmity is so intense people are blinded and apparently educated people say ignorant things. And we look up to them for their wisdom! But they say ignorant things. Sitting thousands of miles away, what business do they have in this matter? If it is anyone’s business, it is the UN’s because the country in question is included in its charter. No individual country has either any pact or any [relevant] dealing or is in any direct danger from the country in chaos. Where is the relevance of foreign policy here? Hazrat Khalifatul Masih said he has not quite understood this logic. It is mere obstinacy and an effort to prove their superiority. World peace is not established in these ways. For world peace justice has to be done for which the beautiful teaching of Islam states: ‘... **and let not a people’s enmity incite you to act otherwise than with justice...**’ and Hazrat Khalifatul Masih has repeatedly drawn the attention of world leaders with reference to this verse. If the UN was to work on this principle, justice could be established. Here it is not a question of the foreign policy of any one country!

Another country has said that they will not send any ground troops to Syria to bring peace but they will use their air power! That is, they will turn the city and the country into ruins as they did before, killing

innocent women and children, just like in Iraq and Libya. What was gained there that could be gained here? Cities were turned into ruins and there is still no peace there. God has made their matches from among them. The Russian president wrote yesterday [in the New York Times] that it is not right to bypass the United Nations in such decisions. He clearly wrote that no one wants United Nations to have the fate of the League of Nations which collapsed. Certainly, he is right.

Government was overturned in Egypt for the rights of the masses. It was said that the government was not paying the rights of the public and was also persecuting them. It is correct that the stance of the previous Egyptian regime was wrong; however, after it was overturned the extremists came to power! The big world powers were concerned. A major USA newspaper reporter asked Hazrat Khalifatul Masih [during his recent visit there] about future peace in Egypt. Huzoor had replied that the regime had been changed to keep Western influence there, but that had proved to be a wrong assumption. The new people in power were neither of the liking of the West, nor the people of Egypt. Therefore, yet again they would be bloodshed after a few months. Hazrat Khalifatul Masih said that indeed the bloodshed began sooner than he had thought!

Restlessness in Muslim countries may be borne of any reason, even genuine grievances of the masses, when Western powers wrongly interfere, it ends in disorder. Hazrat Khalifatul Masih said that he had given a few sermon at the beginning of 2011 in this regard and had made it clear that due to the situations of Muslim countries, whatever the Western powers may do in the name of peace, whether overtly or covertly, the ultimate loss will be of the Muslims, because these powers will never harm their interests. When bloodshed took place during the regime of Hosni Mubarak, these powers supported the masses and helped get rid of Mubarak. When the next regime did not look after their [Western] interests and the army came in power and again bloodshed took place, no one sympathised with the masses and no attempt was made in this regard. This is duplicity!

Muslim countries should demonstrate sense of honour even now. However, this will only be when there is Taqwa in hearts of the rulers as well as the masses, when along with claim of love for the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) there will also be efforts to put his blessed model in practice, when rulers and their subjects will feel the pain of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) and try and follow his teachings. Following are some of the sayings of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) which draw attention of rulers as well as masses towards their responsibilities.

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said that the Day when there will be no shade other than the shade of God, He will grant shade to seven people on that Day and first among them will be a just and fair Imam. He also said that on the Day of Judgement the most beloved and the closest to God would be a just and fair ruler and the most disliked and most distant from God would be an unjust ruler. He said that when a person who is made in-charge and responsible over people by God is negligent in taking his charge and fulfilling his obligations dies, God will make Paradise forbidden to him. Hazrat 'Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said that she had heard the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings Allah be on him) say in her home: 'O Allah whoever among my Ummah is made a leader in any respect and he is harsh with the Ummah, You too treat him with harshness and whoever in my Ummah is made a leader in any respect and is gentle to the Ummah, You too treat him gently.' Hazrat Khalifatul Masih said these commandments of God are matters for rulers to ponder over. If they wish to be God's beloved they have to stop injustice, if they wish for Paradise, then they have to work for

the well-being of everyone without any discrimination and the last Hadith, which is a prayer is such that it would be make anyone with faith tremor. May God give sense to the Muslims and may they ponder and understand.

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) equally enjoined the masses as regards their responsibilities. He said that after him people would see that their rights were usurped and preferences were given to others, in addition people would see things which they would consider bad. He was asked what the instruction for such a time was. He replied that the rights of the rulers should be paid at such times and one's own rights should be sought from God. Hazrat Khalifatul Masih said indeed strikes and bloodshed is not allowed, one simply seeks one's rights from God. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) was once asked about his counsel if unjust rulers were imposed on people who demanded their rights but did not pay the right of the public. Huzoor said Arab Ahmadis also ask this question of him. The questioner asked this question three times before the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) answered and he simply said: 'In such circumstances listen to the rulers and obey them. They are accountable for whatever responsibility has been given to them and you are accountable for whatever responsibility has been given to you.' The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) also made people pledge after they took Bai'at that they would abide by Bai'at in every situation, in happiness and sadness, in adversity and during ease and even when their rights were being usurped. He also took a pledge that they would not dispute with one who was made a leader unless he openly committed an act of Kufr (unbelief) about which there was a clear commandment of God. In a Hadith Qudsi the Holy Prophet related that God states that He has made injustice forbidden over Himself and has also made it forbidden to His servants, therefore they should not be cruel to each other.

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih said if one is to be saved from Divine accountability then one should pay one's dues and obligations and leave the matter of the ruler with God and stay engaged in prayers. And only disobey a ruler if he clearly contravenes Shariah. Indeed, this instruction is not about the kind of edicts of Kufr that are given out in Pakistan against Ahmadis, who are told not to recite the Kalima, not to offer Salat, not to say salaam. We are Muslims and they ask us to disobey Shariah, this we will not follow. Otherwise every other law of the land must be obeyed.

The summary of the entire teaching is the last Hadith which states not to be cruel to each other. This is for the rulers as well as the masses to follow. If they do not follow this they will regress to the time of **'Corruption has appeared on land and sea...'** (30:42) and according to the prophecy of the Holy Qur'an and the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) such a time was to come for the Muslims during the era of the Promised Messiah. Muslim rulers and public need to ponder over this and they need to search for one sent by God. If the people of Syria in particular and other Muslims in general simply ponder over the Promised Messiah's (on whom be peace) revelation of 'Calamity of Damascus' they will realise that he was sent by God and they should pay heed to him. Otherwise, in this age there is no one other than him to guide people. Due to the attitude of governments the extremist organisations or the governments formed by extremist organisations will benefit from the situation and the communal murder and mayhem it will lead to is beyond thinking. May God give sense to Muslim rulers and public that they may understand the teaching of: **'...And help one another in righteousness and piety...'**(5:3) May they spread love, may they win over hearts. Governance cannot be done without winning hearts and without giving public their rights. Every Muslim leader needs to understand the essence of this. They should reflect over their own history that how Christian

subjects used to pray for Muslim rule to return, replacing Christian rule and here we have a situation where Muslim is killing Muslim rather than be a personification of ‘...**tender among themselves...**’ [\(48:30\)](#). Meanwhile Muslims are fleeing to Christian countries to seek refuge in peace, to find justice to and live with freedom.

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih said may God make it so that this message of ours reaches Muslim leaders and also reaches Western countries and other big powers. As mentioned earlier, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih has been giving this message through various sources that it is not implausible that action against Syria will engulf the entire world. Borne of the requisite of loyalty to one’s country every Ahmadi living in the every country of the world should alert the politicians of his country to these dangers. May God enable the world to accept the truthfulness of the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) and enable rulers and masses to pay their dues so that they may stop the civil war and be saved from destruction. May God also open the eyes of European and Western leaders so that they may work with justice and fairness and avoid injustice and give the rights of the smallest of country and do not help anyone for vested interests.

May God save members of our Jama’at from the evil of these circumstances! Many Ahmadis are being especially affected in Syria. God had sent a revelation with a warning regarding Syria in ‘Calamity of Damascus’, may He also soon fulfil the glad-tiding of another revelation of the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) regarding Syria: ‘ ‘The *abdal* [devotees] of Syria and the servants of Allah from among the Arabs are supplicating on your behalf.’ [Tadhkirah, p. 160, 2009 edition] May God make it so that soon the entire Arab world comes in the fold of the Muhammadan Messiah so that the restlessness of the Arab world which the world has termed as ‘The Arab Spring’ becomes a spring of spiritual beneficence rather than anything worldly! May these people become those who pray for the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) and be connected with him in spreading the peaceable teaching of Islam in the world.

May we also be enabled to understand as well as pay our responsibilities! May we absorb God’s mercy and always show the world the direction of truth and establish peace and spread this message. May God protect the world from the horrors and destruction of war!