

# **Friday Sermon: Jalsa Salana UK 2013**

**August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

After tashhud, ta'awwuz and recitation of Sura Al-Fatiha, Huzur Aqdas (may Allah strengthen him with His Mighty Help) said that:

In the previous Khutba Jumu'ah [Friday Sermon] I had said some things with reference to the responsibilities of the hosts that they have to discharge regarding their guests - that this is our obligation that we serve the guests of the Promised Messiah (as) with zeal and passion. Today, briefly, I will draw the attention of the guests, the participants of this Jalsa [Annual Convention] to their responsibilities so that they may also have due regard for the sanctity of the environment that this Jalsa is meant to take place in, so that they may also know what are the obligations of the people who take part in the Jalsa. And similarly draw their attention to the need for them to cooperate with the organizers.

So there are two responsibilities. First, with regard to the objectives for which they have come here, they have to act in ways that will cause those objectives to be fulfilled so they may better themselves spiritually, and knowledge-wise and educate and train themselves. Secondly, they have to cooperate with the administration involved in organizing and running this Jalsa.

When we ascribe ourselves to the Promised Messiah (as) we must always keep in mind the fact that we are not just going to have the desire to get what is due to us, to be focused always and solely, only in insuring that we have our rights granted to us, but rather we need to be concerned with making sure that we give to others what they are entitled to. And the obligations or duties that fall upon us, we have to make sure to discharge and fulfill those.

The responsibilities that pertain to the guests have to be fulfilled. The greatest of these is to render thanks to God Almighty that He made all these facilities and arrangements in a place where no such facilities normally exist. And then after this thanks and gratitude and prayers are due for all those workers who toiled day and night to make these arrangements and facilities for you. And with their tireless efforts they put in place all these arrangements to make things easy for you and make your stay here comfortable.

In my previous Khutba, I had, with reference to a hadith [saying of the Holy Prophet (sa)] said to the workers that the Holy Prophet (sa) has directed us to deal with each other with happiness and a smiling countenance and he laid great stress on this and said that this is a great virtue that one should interact with each other with a smiling and happy countenance. So this direction of the Holy Prophet (sa) is for every Ahmadi to act upon. It is the duty of every guest who comes and all who participate in this Jalsa that they take firm hold of this direction of the Holy Prophet (sa) and try his or her best to act on it.

It is also your duty that if the workers make some error that you try to overlook such shortcomings and try to understand the nature of these temporary arrangements and try to make the ambiance, the environment of the Jalsa pleasant because your coming here is for the purpose of increasing in virtue and this indeed should be your purpose. You should be coming here to win the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted.

Similarly the guests who have come and all the participants of this Jalsa should respect each other. Sometimes when people see each other at these large gatherings, such occasions arise when old, previous conflicts and complaints that people have, flare up suddenly. And sometimes it happens, as it ought not to happen in an Ahmadi environment, that two parties get into an argument and such altercations sometimes even escalate into fisticuffs. This is so very unfortunate for such people that they should come to such a righteous environment

and behave in such a bad way. Such people are the cause of sullyng the holy environment of the Jalsa. It is better that such people whose hearts are full of malice and rancour for each other, it is better if such people were to not come to the Jalsa. And from among those who have come, if they hold such feelings of hurt or resentment then such perons must pledge today that they will remove such feelings from their hearts.

The atmosphere of this Jalsa is one of spreading virtue and one of reforming ourselves - in this holy environment if we are going to keep our hearts filled with malice and rancour then the purpose of coming here is lost and loses its meaning totally. The purpose of coming here is so one can do virtuous things. Those who come here must keep in front of them the purpose that the Promised Messiah (as) has desired for us to have for coming to such a Jalsa. Always keep in view the objective of being the beneficiaries of the prayers of the Promised Messiah (as). Make the listening of divine verities your sole goal. And each of you should have the goal of demonstrating the highest of morals during these days.

Then, listening with attention and seriousness to all the discourses presented at the Jalsa is another very great purpose to keep in view. Let me draw everyone's attention to this in the words of the Promised Messiah (as) himself. He says: *"Everyone must listen attentively."* He means the proceedings of the Jalsa. *"Listen with full attention and ponder over what you are listening carefully because this has to do with our faith in which laziness, lack of full attention or carelessness leads to very bad results and consequences. Those who are careless with matters that relate to their faith, who, when they are addressed and told some such things, do not listen attentively to them, they derive no benefit at all from such addresses no matter how great and worthy and effective the person giving such guidance may be. Such are the people about whom it is said that they have ears but they do not hear and they have hearts but they do not understand. So remember that whatever is said must be listened to with great attention and care, because the one who does not listen with attention will derive no benefit at all even if he spends a long time in the company of a greatly beneficent personage."*

So the people who come to the Jalsa should only remain focused and attentive to trying to gain the benefits intended for the attendees of the Jalsa and listen attentively to the proceedings of the Jalsa and leave off all personal concerns and preoccupations and listen to the Jalsa programs in order to make progress in your spirituality. And try and make these gains a part of your daily lives and purify your hearts from every kind of spiritual malaise and impurity.

The Promised Messiah (as) has very clearly stated that the weaknesses and decline among the Muslims came into being and took hold because wherever religious gatherings take place, although they do go there and participate but they do not go with sincerity - meaning neither is there sincerity in those who make the speeches nor in those who go to listen.

But our Jalsas are free of such things and indeed this is how they must be. By the Grace of Allah the speakers come very well prepared and deliver very nice discourses and the majority of the listeners also, by the Grace of Allah, are composed of those who are full of sincerity and they come with the intention of benefiting from the blessings of the Jalsas.

But there are some whose purpose is just to get together and talk and sit around. If there are such people they need to pay attention to these things so that our Jalsa environment and atmosphere become 100 percent composed of those who have come for the sake of Allah alone.

So let me also say this one thing that while the Jalsa proceedings are going on there are some who have a great desire to raise *na'raas* [loud shout outs proclaiming God's greatness etc.] during the speeches. Listen to the speeches with attention and ponder over the words being said. Some speeches are of such seriousness and discuss such topics that there is no need of anyone raising a *na'raa* at that time - except that an occasion should

arise where truly our passions require that a na'raa be raised. But there are some here who become excited at every small and great thing that is said, they should take care.

The guests should also remember that all these workers, all these people committed to serving them, have come here to serve them and assist them with great pleasure and having given up their livelihoods and works and other responsibilities. So please give them your fullest cooperation and work with them at all occasions. This is especially needed at the security checkpoints. It may happen that the repeated checking and this taking a lot of time may cause you some pain and suffering but please keep in mind that these arrangements have been made to insure your own safety and security. So please bear these inconveniences patiently and extend your fullest cooperation to the workers.

Sometimes a lot of time is taken up during scannings, there also when you yourself or your belongings are being scanned please bear all the process with patience.

Similar is the situation regarding the traffic control system. Although we try to improve this every year and I am confident that much improvement will have been achieved this year too, but still some shortcomings remain. Sometimes those who arrive, because they do not know where they are supposed to go, or because they do not have the correct parking permit, and some time simply because of a big rush, a lot of time is taken up and difficulties arise and sometime it can even take a few hours.

So just as the workers are trying to serve you in a calm and cool manner and with confidence, so too the guests should extend their full co-operation with the same calmness, coolness and confidence. Even if we are faced with one person losing his cool huge, long queues result as a consequence. Even if one car owner creates a fuss a long line forms behind him so everyone should realize that they should not become the source of difficulties for anyone.

I talked about security earlier. Every participant in the Jalsa must realize that he or she has to keep an eye on his or her surroundings. Do not be content that now there is so much checking going on and such an extensive system has been put in place and so there is no need to be concerned about anything and consequently we need not keep an eye on our surroundings. A momin, a true believer, has always to be aware, alert and ready, so there is always a need to keep an eye on our surroundings. The arrangements of security made by the Ahmadiyya Jama'at are effective because every person understands his or her responsibility and indeed needs to understand it.

Another important thing is that we must be sure to offer all our prayers and come well in time to offer the prayers or at the least arrive a few minutes before the prayer starts. Arriving when the prayer starts disturbs those who are already offering their prayers. There is a non-stop level of noise involved.

Then, although I think the administration will have made some announcements about this, I will say something about it also, when the Lawaa-e-Ahmadiyyat [the Flag of Ahmadiyyat] is hoisted up, a very large part of the audience leaves the marquee to witness this ceremony and joins in the prayer that is offered at that time and then these people come back into the marquee.

Almost a third of the audience does this, and then when they return this takes time due to which a ten to fifteen minute delay takes place in the beginning of the proceedings. So it has now been decided that everyone will remain seated in the marquees except those whom the administration has asked to come outside and watch the ceremony of hoisting of the Lawaa-e-Ahmadiyyat on the big screens and join in the prayers offered at that occasion so that time is saved and the proceedings can commence on time.

The state of cleanliness of the Jalsa site during the holding of the Jalsa has a great impact on those outsiders who come and many of them talk about this and make mention of it. So everyone must pay due attention to this also. It is not just the duty only of those workers who have been assigned to this work. Every one of you must pay attention to this important need. If everyone does this and whenever they see any item of rubbish, a plate, napkin, spoon, paper, plastic etc. they should pick it up and place it in the bins. In this way, while you will be helping to keep the Jalsa site clean, you will also be earning merit in the sight of Allah and in any case the Holy Prophet (sa) has said that cleanliness is half of faith.

If someone sees a big bag that seems suspicious, then instead of touching it you should point it out to the nearest official, then it is their duty to take care of removing it from that place.

In my previous Khutba I had mentioned that now, by the Grace of Allah, a permanent Langar of the Promised Messiah (as) has been set up here in Hadeeqatul Mahdi for the purpose of serving the Jalsa needs. A roti [bread] plant has already been set up and till now, by the Grace of Allah, the Exalted, good roti is being made. It is true that sometime the quality of the roti is a little less than what it ought to be ideally. So the first thing in this regard that needs to be said is that we should bear this with patience. But if it cannot be eaten then you may, by all means, inform the administration and they should not mind being so told.

Normally the roti that is being made here reaches the guests about five to six hours after it comes off the machine because it is very difficult in such a sizeable operation to make available absolutely freshly made roti to everyone. Nevertheless, the reports received till now show that everyone has liked the roti given to them to eat. May Allah bless this roti plant to continue to function properly and the guests suffer no difficulty nor should the administration have any cause to worry.

Let me mention here, by the way, that in the last Khutba I had mentioned the roti served in Germany during their Jalsa and I had said that they usually respond immediately to such questions and as expected their answer was ready by that same evening. They said that their roti is always fresh and is made available in only five or six hours. However, simultaneously, I had been sent a fax by a lady stating that, "you have said it quite correctly that their roti was stale and was not worthy of being eaten." I think there is some exaggeration on both sides. The roti is not so stale and is quite worthy of being consumed by the Grace of Allah, so the guests also should learn to bear such things. I have mentioned this thing so that the administration should know, and I suspect they all do know this already, that every small or tiny thing that occurs is noted by the members and is communicated to me by them.

Another common thing that is said to all guests every year almost, but now certain specific things have started to happen and come to the fore, so I want to say this especially this year, that the visas that the British Government grants for the Jalsa are usually given for six months and they have double or multiple entry stamped on them. And the Jalsa visa is given with this in mind or with this condition, that this visa shall not be used for asylum purposes. When we get visas for our Jama'at representatives this is the understanding that these officials will not use this visa for such purposes.

This year, some officials of the Jama'at were denied visas and when we contacted the Government officials, and although they accepted our requests and granted them visas, yet they complained that there were one or two such who did this and that there are many others who come on Jalsa visas and then use them for asylum purposes contrary to the understanding. They make use of the double entry and although they leave once but then they come back making use of the double entry and then seek asylum.

We have tried to allay the concerns of the officials and by the Grace of Allah, the Exalted, visas have in fact been granted also, but we had to face some difficulties and worries and we had to suffer these things because there are many who get these visas with the intention of using them for asylum purposes. Although such people

are dealt with by the Jama'at, and punishments handed out, but still the reputation of the Jama'at suffers and every Ahmadi must take care about this. And those people who genuinely and purely want to come just to participate in the Jalsa and have only such intentions, the behavior of these others becomes an obstacle for such pure intentioned people.

There is no doubt that the circumstances of Pakistan are such that Ahmadis are living their lives under great difficulties. They are mistreated at their places of work. The owners, despite being satisfied with the work of an Ahmadi employee, fire them sometimes simply due to the fear of other workers or of the local mullahs. And if they are not fired they are tortured on an ongoing basis and they are made to suffer a variety of abuses by their co-workers. They use indecent and inappropriate words regarding the Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at, the Promised Messiah (as) and it becomes very difficult to tolerate and bear such abuse and some have to leave their jobs because of such things.

There are many Ahmadis who own their own businesses or they have their own shops. Such Ahmadis are publicly ridiculed and their reputations are maligned and the people are told falsely that they are those who want to bring down the lofty station of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (sa) and that they do not accept him as the Khataman Nabeeyeen [the Seal of the Prophets]. The reality, of course, is that it is the Ahmadis who have the greatest knowledge and awareness of the true and lofty meanings of Khataman Nabeeyeen and consider every such person who does not accept the Holy Prophet as Khataman Nabeeyeen to be a disbeliever - a kafir. Without this belief there, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at has no foundation.

Then, in the schools, the Ahmadi children are made to face all kinds of difficulties and mental abuse.

So despite all these difficulties, every Ahmadi must take due care of the reputation of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at under all circumstances and conditions. If someone has to seek asylum because of their circumstances then there are many other avenues to pursue this. When and if you come here for this, do so, but I will repeat and I have said this on many occasion before, and I will say it again, that when you do come and apply for asylum there is no need for any false and lengthy and wide ranging statement. A simple matter of fact, brief statement based wholly on the truth is best. The majority of the officers here and the judges also, have a very soft corner in their heart for human sympathy - they have a great deal of human sympathy and accept the applications for asylum.

There are some who are obstinate and if they once decide to not budge then it becomes difficult to make them move or change their mind. But these are those who will not reconsider even if any kind of story is made up and presented to them. They remain unmoved. But an Ahmadi becomes guilty of sin having made wrong and false statements. So we should try our level best to say the truth and say it as briefly as possible. And make mention of all this torture that Ahmadis have to suffer. It is not essential that there be a direct threat for you to be granted asylum. You may be granted asylum even without there being a direct threat. So if you will base your asylum application on the basis of truth, then by the Grace of Allah, the Exalted, these cases shall continue to be won.

So in any case it is our responsibility, of all of us and especially those of us who are living outside of Pakistan that we pray for these Ahmadis who are living their lives under very straitened and difficult conditions, that Allah, the Exalted, may remove their difficulties and make every facility available to them.

May Allah, the Exalted, bestow the blessings of Jalsa upon all those who have come to attend the Jalsa. May Allah accept the prayers of all those who have come from far off places to join in this Jalsa. Those who were waiting to come and hoping to come but were not granted visas, may Allah accept their righteous intentions and accept their prayers and the prayers of the Promised Messiah be accepted in their favor.

In the end I present a statement of the Promised Messiah (as). The Promised Messiah (as) said that:

*Virtue must be practiced solely for the reason that Allah, the Exalted, may be pleased thereby and we may win His favor and so that His commandments may be fulfilled. One should not be concerned at all as to whether such practicing of virtue attracts any reward from God or not. Our faith becomes perfected only in such a case when this doubt, this illusion is removed from our mind.*

The Promised Messiah (as) is saying that our faith will become perfected when we will do good deeds solely for the sake of winning the pleasure of Allah and forgetting, and not being at all concerned with whether our good deeds draw any reward from God or not.

The Promised Messiah (as) goes on to say that:

*Although it is true that God does not let go to waste the good deed of any one, as is said: **Surely, Allah suffers not the reward of those who do good to be lost. [9:120]**; but the one doing the good deed must not keep in view the reward that the good deed may attract from God. Look, if a guest comes solely for the reason that he will be afforded comfort and cold sweet drinks, so he in fact comes for these things; whereas it is the duty of the host that, in so far as possible and within his means, he should leave no effort undone to serve every need of his guests and do all he can to provide his guests every comfort he can - and this is done but for the guest to think thus is to cause himself loss.*

So the guests and the hosts need to pay attention as to what are their motives and intentions.

May Allah, the Exalted, make it so that the hosts also are enabled to discharge their responsibilities and they do so for the sole purpose of winning the pleasure of Allah, and may Allah also make it so that the guests be such as come to participate in this Jalsa purely for the sake of Allah alone and they have no personal purposes or motives mixed up with this pure intention of coming for the sake of Allah alone.