

# Friday Sermon: Unqualified Obedience to Khilafat

06<sup>th</sup> June 2014

'Do they then not look at the camel, how it is created/

And at the heaven, how it is raised high?

And at the mountains, how they are firmly rooted?

And at the earth, how it is spread out?' (88:18-21)

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih recited the above verses and gave a discourse on obedience in the today's Friday sermon. The Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) has elucidated obedience of Prophethood and Imamat (spiritual leadership) of the time with reference to these verses. He has made, what may appear an odd connection between the camel and obedience of Prophethood and Imamat. However, the deep and profound spiritual significance of the Promised Messiah's (on whom be peace) words tells us that there are several words for the camel in Arabic but the specific word stated in the verse above is a plural noun and this signifies that God intends to explain cultural and communal traits of the camel here. The camel has a great sense of obedience. Camels walk/travel in a long line and are led by an experienced camel in the front. The rest follow him at the same speed and none has any designs or aspiration to walk abreast with the one leading them, like other animals do, for example horses. Therefore in the first verse God has used the specific Arabic word for the camel to draw attention to its communal bearing of travelling in one long line and has thus laid emphasis on the need for an Imam to maintain unity. The significance of camels travelling in a line is that an Imam is needed to negotiate the journey of life and to avoid going astray. The camel is not negligent about making long journeys in the sense that it stores water. Similarly true believers should be mindful and ready for their journey of life and keep provisions and the best provision of life is righteousness.

We have been enabled to accept the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) in this age and after him the system of Khilafat has been granted to us, which we should value and try to understand its essence. The Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) had said that persons who will take Bai'at in his name will continue to come, thus is the direct link of Khilafat with him. The Promised Messiah's (on whom be peace) explanation of the verse above clearly shows that spiritual development and permanence of those who take his Bai'at is in staying connected to Khilafat. Progress of the Jama'at is also in staying connected to Khilafat, it facilitates facing satanic attacks.

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said that an Imam is like a shield. Indeed, safety is behind the shield alone. And being behind the shield means perfect obedience. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) also said that whoever obeyed his amir obeyed

him and whoever disobeyed his amir, disobeyed him. The Holy Qur'an also commands obedience in several places and it is indeed the secret for communal success and is a point that members of the Jama'at need to understand a great deal.

Some question why do we have certain limits and do not have freedom in certain matters. Ahmadis should remember that Islam allows everything that is justifiable. The limits maintained are for moral correction, moral development and unity. Huzoor address Jama'at office-holders and said that if they wish to assist in the progress of the Jama'at then they need to understand the concept of obedience more than anyone else! If all office-holders on all levels understood the concept of obedience, the members of the Jama'at would inevitably understand it. Everyone would appear as the straight line of travelling camels. Amirs, Sadrs and other office-holders should self-reflect over their standards of obedience and ponder how they respond to any instruction of the Khalifa of the time. Do they obey instantly or do they construe their own meanings of what is instructed? Some office-holders act upon instructions received from the Khalifa of the time but with some hesitation. This does not signify obedience. Obedience is when something is followed instantly. Indeed, it is fine to have your own opinion; however when the Khalifa of the time decides upon something, then one must overlook one's opinion.

Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad Sahib used to say that he held many opinions and also shared them with the Khalifa of the time. However, if his opinion was not accepted, then he did not even think about it and demonstrated perfect obedience. Perfect obedience alone will help us attain the level enjoined by God and His Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be on him). One who takes Bai'at should instil this thinking and should prove it through practice. More than anyone else, this standard of obedience should be exhibited by office-holders from the top level to the bottom.

If the information that reaches Huzoor is correct and some people do say that complete obedience is perhaps harmful, it is probably borne of the German historical background of Adolf Hitler insisting on obedience of everything he said resulting in German defeat and loss in WWII. Huzoor said he wished to make it very clear to every Ahmadi, every new Ahmadi and every youth that there is great difference between Khilafat and dictatorship. Khilafat is established after accepting the Imam of the age and everyone takes a pledge to work for the perpetuation of Khilafat. Islam teaches that there is no compulsion in religion, therefore when one accepts faith of one's own volition it is important to fulfil the pledge one takes.

Obedience of Khilafat is important because mutual efforts have to be made to establish God's kingdom on the earth in the leadership of one Imam. The other Muslims are without an Imam and the successful outcomes of the efforts of those who are associated with Ahmadiyya Khilafat tell us that they are borne of the strong sense of oneness as a community. Khilafat also draws attention to paying the dues of mankind, it exhorts to accept them and practice them. It instils the spirit of giving precedence to faith over worldly matters. Khilafat makes tremendous efforts to establish Unity of God

whereas aims of worldly leaders are to extend their borders! They trample over justice for the sake of false pride and which dictator in the world has a personal connection with the people he rules?

Khalifa of the time has a personal connection with people of all backgrounds and all races. The content of the daily post of Khalifa of the time is an unbelievable matter for worldly people. People write personal letters to him, discussing their personal affairs. It is Khilafat that focuses on the pain of every Ahmadi of the world and Khalifa of the time prays for them. Which worldly leader prays for the ailing? Which worldly leader is anxious for young women to get married and prays for them? Which worldly leader is concerned about education of children? Indeed, governments provide education and also provide health service but it is only the Khalifa of the time who is anxious for Ahmadi children to seek education and is anxious for them to have good health. There is no problem, be it of the Jama'at or of someone's private life of which the Khalifa of the time is not aware, for which he does not make practical efforts and does not turn to God to pray!

Huzoor said this is what he and all the Khulafa before him had been doing. Huzoor illustrated this outline of numerous tasks of the Khalifa of the time that God has entrusted to him and which he has to perform. Huzoor said: 'There is no country in the world that I do not go to in my imagination before falling asleep and for whom I do not pray while sleeping and while waking. I am not saying this to count favours, no, this is my duty and may Allah the Exalted make me perform my duty more than ever.' Huzoor said that his only purpose here was to make it clear that there can be no comparison between Khilafat and worldly leaders.

Another misunderstanding that Huzoor wished to remove, although he has previously explained it in his sermons on conditions of Bai'at, is about the pledge each Ahmadi makes with the Khalifa of the time to obey him in every ma'roof (good) decision. Some people assume that it is for them to define/interpret what is ma'roof and what is not. Let it be very clear that ma'roof has been defined by God and His Messenger (may peace and blessings of Allah be on him). Ma'roof decision is the decision made in light of the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah. According to the prophecy of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) Khilafat was to be established on the precepts of Prophethood and according to the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) Khilafat is everlasting. Thus, Khilafat cannot operate contrary to Qur'an and Sunnah and there is no option but to obey Khilafat, or prove that Khalifa of the time did such and such thing contrary to Qur'an and Sunnah.

In order to prove that a decision is wrong much reflection will be needed and remaining within the confines of civility it should be written to the Khalifa of the time. However, gossiping and spreading rumours is not allowed. Of course hypocrites and the envious do what they do when the Jama'at grows and progresses. True loyalty to Khilafat is in making their plans fail each time and to not even go near those who encourage thinking ill of others.

The Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) said that when truly adopted obedience generates light in the heart. He said spiritual endeavours/exercises were not needed as much as obedience was needed. He also said unity cannot be established without obedience.

Stories of early Islam tell us that the Companions (may Allah be please with them all) gave their lives in obedience and thus Islam spread. This does not mean Islam spread with force. It was the spirit of obedience that made early Muslims face large number of enemies. We observe that the followers of Hazrat Musa (on whom be peace) disobeyed him and as result deprived themselves for forty years! The Jihad of this age is to reform ourselves and to spread the message of truth and this has to be done following the Khalifa of the time.

Huzoor said in order to be saved from being ruined we need to enhance our levels of obedience. No matter how much the enemies of Ahmadiyyat persecute us God will take us to our destination but obedience is the condition and the obedience has to be complete.

The other Muslims also believe in what we believe in but no patience or fortitude can be seen in them. Today, only the Jama'at of the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) demonstrates steadfastness and fortitude and this illustrates the subject stated in the Quranic verse: 'And *among* others from among them who have not yet joined them...' (62:4). Just as the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) said that the camel makes provision for his journey and is not negligent, similarly true believers should be always prepared and cautious and indeed the best provision to take with one is righteousness. We should adopt that tenor in our worship and our practice which will be the best provision for us. By accepting the Imam of the age we have obtained spiritual water, now it is up to us to look after it and to avail of it. Fortunate are those who listen to the words of the Imam of the age with perfect obedience and go on to obey and this leads them to also derive the beneficence of Khilafat.

People who chase worldly aims have no connection with spirituality whereas the purpose of those who seek pleasure of Allah has nothing to do with worldly gain and loss. We should try and attain nearness to God with perfect obedience and enhance in righteousness. Our objective is to establish kingdom of God on the earth and we spread the message of Islam to bring the world under the banner of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him).

These are the objective for which Khilafat works. What is needed is to understand the essence of what Khilafat is. And this can only happen with perfect obedience. No matter how academic or authoritative one thinks one may be, there is no room in Jama'at Ahmadiyya for one who is not obedient and such knowledge and wisdom cannot spiritually benefit the world either.

We should always be mindful of the phrase of the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace): 'It is essential that man makes a practice of following the Imam.'

Intellect and wisdom is fruitful with obedience of the Khalifa of the time and cessation of one's own interpretation of matters. In light of the commentary of the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) the remainder verses recited at the start of the sermon we see that man can attain spiritual heights only when he understands the concept of: '...obey Allah and obey His Messenger and those who are in authority over you...'(4:60)

Office-holders cannot rightfully be 'authority over' people unless they too completely obey Khilafat and do not desist from making their own interpretation; rather they consider each word of the Khalifa of the time as worthy of being obeyed. When some matters are investigated, at times the initial effort is to find out who made the complaint. No office-holder should be concerned with this. If they are asked to investigate and report they should not spin their own interpretations on matters. If an instruction of the Khalifa of time is not fully understood then rather than guess its interpretation Khalifa of the time should be written to and further advice sought.

If each member of the Jama'at is obedient we will head towards spiritual heights and our faith will be as strong as mountains and as a result message of Islam will spread in all directions in the world.

With reference to spreading Islam Huzoor said that some people are concerned about an objection raised over a saying of Hazrat Musleh Maud (may Allah be pleased with him) which was on a banner at Jalsa that if Germany is conquered Europe will be conquered. The objection raised was that we appear to have dangerous resolve although we seem peaceful. The objection was either raised due to unawareness or mischief. If it was mischief, then it is a dangerous step to incite against Muslims. Whoever explained to the objector also did not appear to have sufficient knowledge and has caused pointless concern. Generally speaking Germans are very sensible and they know the missionary and humanitarian works of the Jama'at are aimed to spread the beautiful teaching of Islam and to bring people into its fold. The word 'conquer' does not connote use of force or any aspirations of governance. We are spreading our message and let alone Germany and Europe, we aim to triumph all over the world, but not with the use of force.

Hazrat Musleh Maud (may Allah be pleased with him) had in fact articulated the significance of the German nation and alluded to their prominence within Europe and had meant to say that if the Germans understand Islam they will make the rest of Europe understand it. This is true, Germans are at the forefront even in the European Union, and their capacity is evident.

Huzoor said he laid the foundation stone of a mosque at Wiesbaden a couple of days ago. German guests came to the event and Huzoor briefly spoke on the teachings of Islam and everyone was appreciative of Huzoor's message.

We should remember that if we work with sincerity and seek help from God, these people or their next generation will come in the fold of Islam. Whoever God will wish, He will enable them to accept Islam. We do not need to be scared or defensive, worldly governance is not our objective. Our task is to instil love of God in hearts and we will continue to do this and for this each Ahmadi needs to be completely obedient to Khilafat.