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Essence of New Year Greetings

On January 2, 2015, Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ V (May Allāh be his Helper) delivered the Friday Sermon at the Baitul Futūh Mosque, Morden, London.

Huzoor (May Allāh be his Helper) said:

Today is the first Friday of 2015. I have been receiving greetings of the New Year. I wish you all greetings of the New Year as well! However, I will also like to add that wishing each other greetings of the New Year will only be of benefit when we reflect upon the past year and determine to what extent we were able to fulfill the responsibilities of being an Aḥmadī and what efforts we will exert in future for the fulfillment of this responsibility. As such, going forward from this Friday, we must adapt such goals and means that help us become active and enable us to make efforts to fulfill this responsibility!

(Friday Sermon, January 2, 2015)

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَّسُولُ اللَّهِ

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Pearls of Wisdom

Selection from the Holy Qur'ān and Aḥādīth 2
So Said the Promised Messiah^{as} 3

Guidance from Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ V^{aa}

Summary of Friday Sermons 4

Articles

Speeches: Jalsa Sālāna Canada 2015

Remembrance of Allāh

Istighfār - A Spiritual Remedy 10

World Religions Conferences

Tackling Radicalization in Faiths - Guelph, ON 14

Existence of God - Myth or Reality - UNBC 17

Humanity First - Syria 19

Protect Yourself This Cold and Flu Season 20

Press Releases 21

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Current Issues - Archives - Contribute - Register - Contact

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Pearls of Wisdom



THE HOLY QUR'AN

And say, 'O my Lord, make my entry a good entry and *then* make me come forth with a good forthcoming. And grant me from Thyself a helping power.' (17:81)

وَقُلْ رَبِّ اَدْخِلْنِيْ مَدْخَلَ صِدْقٍ
وَ اَخْرِجْنِيْ مَخْرَجَ صِدْقٍ وَ اجْعَلْ
لِيْ مِنْ لَّدُنْكَ سُلْطٰنًا نَّصِيْرًا ﴿٨١﴾

HADĪTH OF THE HOLY PROPHET MUHAMMAD^{SA}

Hazrat 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd relates that the Holy Prophet^{sa} said: Truth guides to virtue and virtue guides to Paradise. A person persists in telling the truth till in the sight of Allāh, he is named Truthful. Lying leads to vice and vice leads to the Fire; and a person goes on lying till in the sight of Allāh he is named Liar. (*Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, Kitābul Adab qtd. in *Hadīqatus Sālihīn*, pp. 658-659)

عَنْ اِبْنِ مَسْعُوْدٍ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: اِنَّ الصِّدْقَ يَهْدِيْ اِلَى الْبِرِّ- وَاِنَّ الْبِرَّ يَهْدِيْ اِلَى الْجَنَّةِ ، وَاِنَّ الرَّجُلَ لَيَصْدُقُ حَتَّى يُكْتَبَ عِنْدَ اللهِ صِدِيْقًا- وَاِنَّ الْكَذِبَ يَهْدِيْ اِلَى الْفُجُوْرِ، وَاِنَّ الْفُجُوْرَ يَهْدِيْ اِلَى النَّارِ، وَاِنَّ الرَّجُلَ لَيَكْذِبُ حَتَّى يُكْتَبَ عِنْدَ اللهِ كَذٰبًا-

(صحيح بخارى - كتاب الادب، باب قول الله اتقوا الله
وكونوا مع الصادقين حديقه الصالحين ، حديث نمبر 697،
صفحه 658-659)



So Said the Promised Messiah^{as}

The Best Advice

Listen and remember well that God does not like this form of action. You - who have made a bond with me and purely for the sake of God - must be good to those who are good, and forgive those who do evil. No individual can become a *Siddiq [the Truthful]*, until he becomes sincere. One who adapts hypocrisy and double-sidedness is ultimately caught. There is a famous proverb: 'He who lies, contradicts his own words.' At this stage, I would like to say an important thing. Kings are also compelled to go on expeditions, and they do so for the protection and safety of its civilians. You have witnessed that our Government has had to go to war at the borders many times. Although, people at the border are Muslims, yet we do not consider them to be in the right. Their fight against the British is not correct, from any religious standpoint, nor do they really fight for a religious cause. Can they say that the government has not given freedom to the Muslims? Indeed, they have given freedom, and such freedom as can never be attained even in Kabul or the outskirts of Kabul. We do not hear very good things about the Amīr [of Kabul]. These deranged people at the borders have no other reason for fighting, than hunger. If they are given merely ten or twenty rupees, they stop their fights. They have transgressive natures, and only defame the name of Islām.

(Malfuzāt Vol. 2, p. 27)

Guidance from Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V^{aa}

The following summaries of Friday Sermons have been provided by Wakālat 'Ulyā', Tahrik Jadid Anjuman Ahmadiyya, Pakistan



Khalīfatul-Masīh II^{ra}: Pearls of Wisdom

Summary of Friday Sermon Delivered on February 6, 2015

Huzoor^{aa} said that the incidents related by Hazrat Muşleḥ Mau'ūd^{ra} regarding the blessed life of the Promised Messiah^{as} contain a number of moral lessons for us and are truly faith-enhancing.

Huzoor^{aa} said that the true benefits of the Holy Qur'an can only be obtained when we recite it with a pure heart. Bring about a change in yourselves so that it leads to purity of the heart, which will draw people towards Faith by looking at your piety and righteousness, the acceptance of your prayers and your strong relationship with Allāh.

On February 6, 2015, Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V^{aa} delivered the Friday Sermon at the Baitul Futūh Mosque in London, UK.

Huzoor^{aa} quoted a number of faith-enhancing incidents, full of advice, as related by Hazrat Muşleḥ Mau'ūd^{ra}, regarding the blessed life of the Promised Messiah^{as}. Huzoor^{aa} said that whether the books of the Promised Messiah^{as} will affect a person positively or negatively depends upon the intent and point of view with which a person reads them.

Huzoor^{aa} spoke about the debate that took place between Muhammad Ahsan Amrohi Şāḥib and Maulawī Bashīr Şāḥib. As a result of the debate, Maulawī Bashīr Şāḥib, who earlier on had a deep sense of respect for the Promised Messiah^{as}, came to reject him, whereas Muhammad Ahsan Amrohi Şāḥib, who initially was an opponent of the Promised Messiah^{as}, accepted him.

Huzoor^{aa} said that Hazrat Muşleḥ Mau'ūd^{ra} commented on debates saying,

According to psychology, debating is a harmful activity and at times results in grave consequences. These

are matters not all educationists are able to understand. Should we view even good words, which are full of wisdom and profundity, with intent to pick out faults in them, we may stumble and entirely misunderstand them.

Huzoor^{aa} said that many people read the books of the Promised Messiah^{as} out of context, and raise objections against them. Even the Holy Qur'an, which is a cure and mercy from God for the believers, can result in a grave loss for those who read it merely to raise objections against it, becoming guilty of a great wrong. In short, even the Word of Allāh cannot benefit anyone until one reads it with a pure heart.

Hazrat Muşleḥ Mau'ūd^{ra}, after having related an incident regarding the importance the Promised Messiah^{as} had placed on offering five daily prayers in congregation, said that at times, when the Promised Messiah^{as} was unable to go to the mosque for offering prayer, he would offer it in congregation at home. Hence, members of the Jamā'at should try to congregate together for prayer. And, those who might not be able to do so should ask their wives and children to join them in prayer to make it congregational. In short, members of the Jamā'at should make sure that wherever they are they offer prayer in congregation.

Huzoor^{aa} said to remember that the beauty of prayer lies in offering it with all the due care and attention.

Huzoor^{aa} also said that each member of the Jamā'at should try to be first to say *Salām* to others. Those who are juniors should try to be first to say *Salām* to their seniors and vice-versa. Office-bearers of the Jamā'at should, in particular, set

an example for others in this regard. Along with this, all Ahmadiis, the new and the old, should continue to enhance themselves in faith.

Huzoor^{aa} illustrated how God had helped and supported the Promised Messiah^{as} when he was prosecuted under false charges.

Huzoor^{aa} said that the number of the Promised Messiah's^{as} followers had reached hundreds of thousands during his very lifetime. People from all walks of life pledged allegiance to him. This happened not only in Punjab, but people from many other countries also took *Ba'iat* at his hands.

Huzoor^{aa} said that nowadays, those who are given to ridicule and poke fun at Islām should remember that God will not let their blasphemous remarks go unpunished. At times, God makes such people a sign for others in this very world. Therefore, we must not confront these people with our hands or guns, but rather we need to supplicate against them before God alone. We should try to create in ourselves a change that leads to purity of heart, so that the world comes to feel our righteous influence. Our condition should be such that people are drawn towards faith by looking at our pious conduct, the acceptance of our prayers and our strong relationship with Allāh. Remember that Ahmadiyyat will progress only through such righteous people.

Huzoor^{aa} spoke about Hazrat Maulawī Burhanud-Din Şāḥib shedding light on the strength of his faith as well as his devotion and love for the Promised Messiah^{as}.

Next, speaking about the importance of physical exertion, Huzoor^{aa} said that

the Promised Messiah^{as} used to work the whole day, yet he would go for a walk at least once a day. We, therefore, need to draw the attention of our children and youth towards playing in the open air. Students of Jāmi'ā Aḥmadiyya should particularly be instructed to play in the

open air at least for an hour and a half daily. If there is no difficulty, walks and games should be done in the open air.

Huzoor^{aa} said that Hazrat Muṣleḥ Mau'ūd^{ra} said that a believer should always remain active and engaged in his work and after

he has achieved one target he should strive to achieve the next one. This is the secret of success of every individual and the nation as a whole. May Allāh enable us to work accordingly! *Amin!*

Essence of Conscious Nation Building

Summary of Friday Sermon Delivered on February 13, 2015

Huzoor^{aa} gave a discourse, with reference to a Friday Sermon delivered by Hazrat Muṣleḥ Mau'ūd^{ra}, on individual and communal flaws and explained how they can be eradicated.

Huzoor^{aa} said the Nizām Jamā'at, at all levels, should do necessary planning to overcome the social ills that are undermining society.

Each individual not only needs to assess his own shortcomings, but also there is a need to identify communal ills and make necessary efforts to rectify them.

On February 13, 2015, Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ V^{aa} delivered the Friday Sermon at the Baitul Futūh Mosque in London, UK.

Huzoor^{aa} said that Hazrat Muṣleḥ Mau'ūd^{ra} once delivered a Friday Sermon wherein he pointed out a number of communal flaws and shortcomings, explained their root causes and admonished the members of the Jamā'at to protect themselves against them.

Huzoor^{aa} said that this subject is relevant till this very day. Just as flaws and shortcomings can be individual as well as communal, so are good qualities and righteous conduct. Whether it is goodness or evil, or it is shortcomings or righteous conduct, all result from the environment a person is surrounded by. The environment the person lives in influences both piety or evil in a person. Individual flaws can be eradicated by efforts of the individuals, but if the entire society has gone bad, then everyone living in it will be influenced by the communal flaws.

In short, individual flaws can be identified and rectified through individual effort, but so far as communal flaws are concerned, the whole group has to reflect and ponder over them to get rid of them. A community that is not united in

its efforts against evil and is not willing to get rid of them eventually becomes corrupt and flawed as a whole. A time then comes when such a community is ruined for good.

Therefore, just as it is important for each individual to reflect upon his own shortcomings, it is equally important to ponder over the flaws affecting us as a group.

There is a need for us to identify such flaws and then work together to rectify them and get rid of them. The whole community has to stand up and realize that there is a need for reform.

Huzoor^{aa} said that Hazrat Muṣleḥ Mau'ūd^{ra} explained how the Jamā'at should view communal evils and flaws. He clearly said that if the Jamā'at pondered over them in detail and try to rectify them, they would be able to overcome them.

Huzoor^{aa} spoke of the things and reasons that generate flaws and shortcomings. He particularly mentioned media in this regard, saying it has removed all boundaries between people. The children, for example, find ways to spend their time according to their own wishes and desires. As a result, they become unwilling to listen to their parents. Similarly, parents too are distancing themselves from their children. There are parents who destroy the purity of the atmosphere at home by watching inappropriate programmes on television. This destroys the peace of homes. The western society is heading towards destruction in the name of freedom and that so-called freedom has taken the form of a communal evil. Sadly, some Aḥmadīs too are being influenced by this. However, before this takes the form of a universal evil affecting people far and wide, and before the time comes when those who accepted the Promised Messiah^{as} once again return to ignorance,

we need to make efforts as a community to guard ourselves against it.

All parts of the Nizām Jamā'at should join hands and do necessary planning to eradicate evils as may affect us as a community. May Allāh enable us to make sure that we, as a community, never get influenced by the ills of the western society! *Amin!*

We have vowed to eradicate the ills of the whole world. If those, who seek to remedy the ills of the world, are themselves affected by them, who else will eradicate the corruption from the world?

Speaking of the ills that might be affecting the Jamā'at, Huzoor^{aa} advised Aḥmadīs to offer the five daily prayers in congregation, establish a firm relationship with the institution of *Khilāfat*, watch MTA regularly and remain in touch with the Aḥmadiyya website - www.alislam.org.

Huzoor^{aa} said that instead of consulting trash on the internet, we should consult our own website, which helps us understand the teachings of the Holy Qur'ān and guides us towards the extraordinary knowledge of the Promised Messiah^{as} and his cognizance of the Almighty God.

Huzoor^{aa} prayed that may God enable us to understand the true teachings of faith and eradicate evils before they become a communal malady. May God enable us to perform good acts in a way that they are performed by each and every member of the Jamā'at and become a communal excellence! May God, in His Grace, enable us to do this! *Amin!*

Next, Huzoor^{aa} announced the sad demise of four Aḥmadīs and spoke of their good qualities and services for the Jamā'at. Huzoor^{aa} announced that he would lead the funeral prayer of the deceased after the *Jumu'a* Prayer.

Individual flaws can be identified and rectified through individual effort, but so far as communal flaws are concerned, the whole group has to reflect and ponder over them to get rid of them. A community that is not united in its efforts against evil and is not willing to get rid of them eventually becomes corrupt and flawed as a whole. A time then comes when such a community is ruined for good.

Khalīfatul-Masīh II^{ra}: Pearls of Wisdom

Summary of Friday Sermon Delivered on February 27, 2015

Huzoor^{aa} illustrated the blessed life history of the Promised Messiah^{as} and Hazrat Muşleḥ Mau'ūd^{ra} in light of the observations made by Hazrat Muşleḥ Mau'ūd^{ra} and said that in the face of extreme opposition and vituperation, the Promised Messiah^{as} always expressed himself with decency and politeness.

Huzoor^{aa} said that no sooner did the Promised Messiah^{as} go to sleep each night, than the Almighty God comforted him and reassured him of His help and succour throughout the night.

On February 27, 2015, Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V^{aa} delivered the Friday Sermon at the Baitul Futūh Mosque in London, UK.

Huzoor^{aa} quoted some traditions of Hazrat Muşleḥ Mau'ūd^{ra} regarding the blessed life of the Promised Messiah^{as} and said that once a person came to see the Promised Messiah^{as} and advised him that before he went ahead with his claim of being the Promised Messiah^{as}, he should first personally have met with people to judge their reaction to his claim and convince them that there was nothing wrong with it. The Promised Messiah^{as} replied: "Had it been a manmade enterprise, I would probably have done the same. But, I have done what the Almighty God commanded me to do. And, I am well-pleased with the Will of God."

Huzoor^{aa} said that a follower of the Arya Samaj, Dharam Pal, wrote a book against Islām. To refute his allegations, Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh I^{ra} also wrote a book titled *Nūrud-Dīn*. One of the objections raised by Dharam Pal was that if, as the Holy Qur'ān claims, the fire had failed to harm Hazrat Ibrahim^{as}, why don't we witness such miracles ever being repeated today? Answering this Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh I^{ra} wrote that it was [not the real fire] but only the fire of antagonism that was cooled off for Hazrat Ibrahim^{as}. When the Promised Messiah^{as} read this answer, he rejected it by drawing a line through it, and instead wrote: "If they [the opponents] want to experiment, they may well throw me into the fire. I assure them that the fire will cool off as it did for Hazrat Ibrahim^{as}, for God has revealed to me that, 'Fire is not only our servant, but is also the servant of our servants.'" While relating this incident, Hazrat Muşleḥ Mau'ūd^{ra} said that the understanding granted to the Prophets of such miracles are not granted to other

people.

Speaking about how highly the Promised Messiah^{as} regarded Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh I^{ra}, Hazrat Muşleḥ Mau'ūd^{ra} said that the Promised Messiah^{as} held Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh I^{ra} in great regard. Once when the Promised Messiah^{as} was at his home and Hazrat Ammān Jān^{ra} [wife of the Promised Messiah^{as}] was also present. The Promised Messiah^{as} complimented Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh I^{ra}:

"It is a great favour of God upon us that He has granted us Hakīm Şāḥib, who throughout the day remains engaged in teaching the Holy Qur'ān to people and giving medicines to them, which saves thousands of lives. Indeed, he follows as does the pulse follow the heart."

Pointing to the issue of the *Khulafā'* making a mistake at times, Huzoor^{aa} said Hazrat Muşleḥ Mau'ūd^{ra} once said that one should not consider the *Khulafā'* to be equal in status to the Promised Messiah^{as}, for the respect of the *Khulafā'* lies in perfect submission to their *Matbū* [the one whose *Baī'at* they have taken, i.e., the Promised Messiah^{as}]. At times, lack of knowledge may result in a mistake on the part of the *Khulafā'*, but we ought to remember that the *Khulafā'* are much more capable of understanding and making a correct interpretation of what the Promised Messiah^{as} said.

While speaking on this subject, Hazrat Muşleḥ Mau'ūd^{ra} also pointed out that at times, errors remain in a document even after someone has gone over it and proofread it.

Huzoor^{aa} quoted Hazrat Muşleḥ Mau'ūd^{ra} and said that people would often ask the Promised Messiah^{as} to show them the sign of the lunar and solar eclipse as the Ḥadīth cited it to be the sign of the true Messiah. Huzoor^{aa} said that despite such insistence on the part of the people, when this sign was finally shown, they still continued to oppose the Promised Messiah^{as}.

Shedding light on the high moral standards of the Promised Messiah^{as}, Hazrat Muşleḥ Mau'ūd^{ra} said that the Promised Messiah^{as} always showed mercy and clemency towards his opponents. The opponents stopped him from fetching water from the well and told the potters not to make pots for his household. Regardless of this, whenever these people sought pardon

from the Promised Messiah^{as} for their wrongdoing, the Promised Messiah^{as} always forgave them. So much so, that once a magistrate refused to apprehend the criminals because he said there was no use, as the Promised Messiah^{as} would forgive the accused, and this is exactly what happened.

Huzoor^{aa} said that Hazrat Muşleḥ Mau'ūd^{ra} also related incidents of the opponents of the Promised Messiah^{as} throwing stones at him during his visits to Amritsar and Sialkot. Some of the stones also hit Hazrat Muşleḥ Mau'ūd^{ra}.

Hazrat Muşleḥ Mau'ūd^{ra} said: "I have always confronted my enemies cool-headedly. I have heard their vituperation against me, yet I have always responded to them with civility and politeness."

The Promised Messiah^{as} heard abuse being hurled at him all the time, yet no sooner did he go to sleep each night, than the Almighty God comforted him and reassured him of His help and succour throughout the night. How could a person like him then turn away from God his Lord?!

Huzoor^{aa} quoted Hazrat Muşleḥ Mau'ūd^{ra} saying that the Promised Messiah^{as} patiently heard what the followers of other religions had to say and only then preached his own religion to them. The Promised Messiah^{as} also invited the then Queen of England to Islām and advised her to follow the path of truth.

Huzoor^{aa} said that once a Turkish diplomat visited Qādiān. The Promised Messiah^{as} had a vision about him and, therefore, made a prophecy about him, which was fulfilled exactly as the Promised Messiah^{as} had foretold. Many newspapers of the time testified to the fulfilment of this prophecy.

Huzoor^{aa} said that when those who are responsible to run the affairs of a state become corrupt, the state too becomes weak and begins to deteriorate.

Next, Huzoor^{aa} announced the sad demise of Sameer Bakhota Şāḥib of Germany and Chaudhry Bashir Ahmad Şāḥib of Sheikhpura, Pakistan, and spoke of their services for the Jamā'at.

Huzoor^{aa} announced that he would lead the funeral prayer in absentia of the deceased after the *Jumu'a* Prayer.

Remembrance of Allāh

The following speech was delivered by
Maulānā Farhan Iqbal Ṣāhib, Missionary Peace Village,
at the Jalsa Sālāna Canada 2015



الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ
اللَّهِ ۗ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ ۗ ﴿٢٨﴾

Importance of *Zikr*

Today, I have been given the opportunity to speak about *Zikr illāhī* or “Remembrance of Allāh.” I will be using the word *Zikr* and “Remembrance of Allāh” in the same sense. In relation to this subject, I would like to address three questions:

1. What makes *Zikr illāhī* so important, and why is it emphasized so much?
2. What are the different forms of *Zikr*, and what is the best way to remember Allāh?
3. What are the benefits that we can get from doing *Zikr*?

First Question: Why should we do *Zikr*?

The answer to the **first question** – what makes *Zikr illāhī* so important – is very simple, as Allāh says:

وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ ۗ

“... and remembrance of Allāh indeed is the greatest *virtue*” (29:46).

This means that remembrance of Allāh is higher in status than all other acts of worship. And it should be part of our daily routine, as Allāh says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ ذِكْرًا

كَثِيرًا ۗ وَسَبِّحُوهُ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا ۗ ﴿٢٩﴾

“O ye who believe! Remember Allāh with much remembrance; and glorify Him morning and evening” (33:42–43).

So, we can see the importance of remembrance of Allāh in these verses, and this importance is also stressed by the Holy Prophet^{sa}, as he has said:

مَثَلُ الَّذِي يَذْكُرُ رَبَّهُ وَالَّذِي لَا يَذْكُرُهُ مَثَلُ الْحَيِّ وَالْمَيِّتِ

“The comparison between a person who remembers his Lord and the one who does not do so, is like that of the living and the dead.”¹

In other words, the one who remembers Allāh is alive, and the one who does not remember Allāh is dead. This also shows how important remembrance of Allāh is for our spiritual lives!

Similarly, there is another Ḥadīth narrated by Hazrat Abī Dardā^{ra} that once the Holy Prophet^{sa} addressed his Companions and said,

‘Shall I tell you about your best action and the noblest deed (even for the kings) which raises your status, is better for you than spending gold and silver, and better for you than that you meet your enemy and cut off their necks, or that you yourselves attain martyrdom?’ The Companions said, ‘Certainly, please tell us.’ The Holy Prophet^{sa} said, ‘It is the remembrance of Allāh.’²

So, in light of all these teachings, we cannot stress enough on the importance of this great subject. A must-read book written by Hazrat Muṣṭafā Mau‘ūd^{ra} entitled *Remembrance of Allāh* goes much in depth about this matter, and it is a very motivational book.

Second Question: What are the different forms of *Zikr*?

This leads us to the second question I would like to address today and that is: what are the ways in which we can and should do *Zikr*?

This question is addressed in the Holy Qur’ān as it speaks about several types of *Zikr*. One form of *Zikr*, for instance, is to recite the Holy Qur’ān as the Holy Qur’ān

itself has been called “*Zikr*” when Allāh says:

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

“Verily, We Ourselves have sent down this Exhortation [*Zikr*], and most surely We will be its Guardian” (15:10).

Reciting this *Zikr* is of course very important and full of blessings. The Holy Prophet^{sa} has stated that reciting every letter of the Holy Qur’ān is equivalent to ten good deeds.

Another way of doing *Zikr* is to recite the attributes of Allāh and to acknowledge their truthfulness, and still another form of *Zikr* is the public proclamation of these same attributes by discussing the attributes of Allāh in public gatherings, and in various other forms of engagement.

This has also been emphasized in the Ḥadīth as it is narrated that the Holy Prophet^{sa} once said to his companions:

‘O People! Try to graze in the Gardens of Paradise.’ The companions asked: ‘O Prophet of Allāh! What do you mean by Gardens of the Paradise?’ The Holy Prophet^{sa} said: ‘The gatherings for the remembrance of Allāh are the Gardens of the Paradise.’³

So, in this sense, any gathering, even this Jalsa Sālāna where Allāh is remembered and His attributes are being discussed, is also included in this type of *Zikr*.

Among these various forms of *Zikr*, we must remember that the most important form is the performance of *Ṣalāt* and the five obligatory prayers, as Allāh says:

وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذِكْرِي ۗ

“... and observe Prayer for My remembrance” (20:15).

The Holy Prophet^{sa} considered *Ṣalāt* so important and loved it so much that he said:

وَجَعَلَ فِرَّةَ عَيْنِي فِي الصَّلَاةِ

“The delight of my eyes [my comfort] has been placed in prayer.”⁴

These, and many other statements of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, demonstrate the importance of *Ṣalāt* according to the Holy Prophet^{sa}. Even on his deathbed, it is reported that his last words of advice were:

الصَّلَاةَ وَ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ

“The Prayer, and those whom your right hands possess.”

In other words, he was saying that if there is one thing he can advise his *Ummah* [Nation] about, it is to safeguard the five daily prayers and to take care of the slaves.

In his last days, the Holy Prophet^{sa} needed the assistance of two of his companions in order to walk, but despite his extreme illness, the Holy Prophet^{sa} did not forget to inform us of the importance of *Ṣalāt*. Until his demise, he remained concerned for his *Ummah* and that they would take *Ṣalāt* seriously.

Similarly, when the Promised Messiah^{as} was on his deathbed, if there was one thing he was concerned about, it was *Ṣalāt*. He would be in and out of consciousness and would keep asking if the time for *Fajr* prayer has come or not.

That shows us that the greatest form of *Zikr* is *Ṣalāt*, and we should all ensure that we are never ever neglectful of this essential component of our faith.

Keeping God in Mind During *Zikr*

It is also important to note that doing *Zikr* alone just for the sake of doing *Zikr* and not keeping God in mind will not lead to any results. This is a mistake that many people have made in the past by focusing so much on plain recitation of some words without keeping their goal in focus, which is to form a connection with God Almighty.

A connection with God, a yearning desire to get closer to God, is an essential starting point if we want to fully benefit from remembrance of Allāh. The Promised Messiah^{as} has explained this when he said:

The real purpose of remembrance of Allāh is that man should not forget Allāh the Exalted, and always keep Him in mind. In this way, he will remain safe from sins. It is written in *Tadhkiratul Auliya'* that a merchant bought goods

worth \$100 000 and then sold them for \$100 000, but he did not forget God even for a moment. Hence, remember! The perfect servants of Allāh the Exalted are only those regarding whom He says,

رِجَالٌ لَا تُلْهِهِمْ تِجَارَةٌ وَلَا بَيْعٌ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَإِقَامِ الصَّلَاةِ وَإِيتَاءِ الزَّكَاةِ

[‘By men, whom neither merchandise nor traffic diverts from the remembrance of Allāh and the observance of Prayer, and the giving of the Zakāt.’ (24:38)]

When the heart develops love and a true bond with God the Almighty, then it cannot be separated from Him.⁵

The Promised Messiah^{as} has gone on to explain this by giving the example that if someone’s child becomes sick, he will always think of him no matter where he goes or whatever he is doing. His heart and mind will always be focused on his child. In the same way, those who establish a true bond and love of God the Exalted will never forget Him in any situation.

This is the same reason why the Sufis [Mystics] say that there is not as much reward when ordinary people cry, as there is in the laughter of the *Ārif* people [those who are close to God]. The remembrance of Allāh by those who are close to God is of a much higher value than those who are not so close to God. It is as if they are in a different orbit!

In another place, the Promised Messiah^{as} has explained the same concept by saying that those who have annihilated themselves for God are called *Atfālullāh* [the sons of Allāh]. This is a metaphor, not a literal meaning, to indicate that these people are like children who have intense passion for certain things, and so they remember Allāh like children do.. This is why the Holy Qur’ān also states:

فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمْ مَنَاسِكَكُمْ فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَذِكْرِكُمْ آبَاءَكُمْ أَوْ أَشَدَّ ذِكْرًا

“And when you have performed the acts of worship prescribed for you, celebrate the praises of Allāh as you celebrated the praises of your fathers, or even more than that” (2:201).

This is also the reason why God has been called *Abb* or *Pitā* or *Father* in the scriptures of every nation.⁶

Third Question: What is the benefit in Remembering Allāh?

Having understood the importance of remembrance of Allāh and the ways and means of doing proper *Zikr*, I come now to the third and final question and that is: How will we benefit by remembering Allāh this much? What can we gain out of so much remembrance of Allāh?

The answer to this question is given by Allāh in the verse:

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ

“Those who believe, and whose hearts find comfort in the remembrance of Allāh. Aye! it is in the remembrance of Allāh that hearts can find comfort;” (13:29).

You see, the pursuit of happiness and comfort is one of the fundamental desires of human beings. For example, when we are buying a new home or a new electronic device, or a young man or woman are getting married, all of these things are the pursuit of happiness and comfort in our lives.

In this age of materialism, we are told the newer the better, and as such many people always want the newest and the coolest model of whatever device is being sold. However, the harsh reality is that this materialism will only produce short-lived results at the most!

We see people earning a lot of money, running after power, earning profits in their businesses, making gains in their economic, family and social lives, but not finding peace, comfort or satisfaction with their lives. They fulfill one desire and another pops up, and so they are stuck in this vicious cycle. Every time they fulfill their wishes, they feel something is still missing and as if the real thing has not been gained.

In Aḥādith, it is mentioned that during a battle, the Holy Prophet^{sa} saw a woman who had lost her child. Whichever child she would find, she would run to them, embrace them, caress them, and then move on because it wouldn’t be her child. Eventually, she found her son and she sat down with peace at last! The Holy Prophet^{sa} was watching all this and he said to his companions: “Just as this woman has found happiness after finding her child, Allāh the Exalted is pleased far more when a sinful servant of His turns towards Him.”

The Holy Prophet^{sa} has explained something else by saying this, but we

should also note how restless that woman was because her objective was not fulfilled. But when she found what she needed, she was finally at peace. The same applies to us all! Until we build a connection with God – Who is our utmost objective – we cannot find peace!

In the commentary of the verse, “Aye! It is in the Remembrance of Allah that hearts can find comfort” (13:29), Hazrat Muşleḥ Mau‘ūd^{ra} has said:

Those people who seek the world, their desires keep on increasing no matter how much they , progress. But the one who goes towards God the Exalted, and as much as he turns towards God, his peace of mind increases correspondingly. This proves that God has made the pursuit of His Being the real objective of our lives!

This is also expressed in one of his couplets where he says:

کچھ لوگ وہ ہیں جو ڈھونڈتے ہیں آرام کو ٹھنڈے سائوں میں
پر لپٹی ہے تسکین دل جلنے میں تیرے پروانے کو

That is, “There are some people who search for comfort in cool shades, but those who rush towards God (like moths are attracted to light) are the ones who truly find peace of mind.”

Discussing the benefits of *Zikr*, the Promised Messiah^{as} has said:

أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ ﴿١٣﴾

اس کے عام معنی تو یہی ہیں کہ اللہ تعالیٰ کے ذکر سے قلوب اطمینان پاتے ہیں لیکن اس کی حقیقت اور فلاسفی یہ ہے کہ جب انسان سچے اخلاص اور پوری وفاداری کے ساتھ اللہ تعالیٰ کو یاد کرتا ہے اور ہر وقت اپنے آپ کو اس کے سامنے یقین کرتا ہے۔ اس سے اس کے دل پر ایک خوف عظمت الہی کا پیدا ہوتا ہے۔ وہ خوف اس کو مکروہات اور منہیات سے بچاتا ہے اور انسان تقویٰ اور طہارت میں ترقی کرتا ہے۔ یہاں تک کہ اللہ تعالیٰ کے ملائکہ اس پر نازل ہوتے ہیں اور وہ اس کو بشارتیں دیتے ہیں اور الہام کا دروازہ اس پر کھولا جاتا ہے اس وقت وہ اللہ تعالیٰ کو گویا دیکھ لیتا ہے اور اس کی وراء الورا طاقوں کو مشاہدہ کرتا ہے۔ پھر اس کے دل پر کوئی ہم و غم نہیں آسکتا اور طبیعت ہمیشہ ایک نشاط اور خوشی میں رہتی ہے۔

[Arabic] “Aye! It is in the Remembrance of Allah that hearts can find comfort.” (13:29)

The general meaning of this is that hearts can find comfort from the

remembrance of Allāh. But the truth and philosophy behind it is that when man remembers God Almighty with true sincerity and complete loyalty, and always believes himself to be under His watch, a fear of the greatness of the Divine develops out of this. That fear protects him from sinful and unwanted acts and man progresses in *Taqwā* (righteousness) and purity; so much so that the Angels of God Almighty descend on him and give him glad tidings. And the door of revelation is opened upon him. At that time, it is as if he sees Allāh the Exalted, and witnesses His deeply hidden powers. Then, no sorrow or worry can approach his heart. And his mood remains in a form of happiness and contentment.⁸

This benefit of *Zikr* (that Angels descend upon such people) is also mentioned in Ḥadīth. Hazrat Abū Sa‘īd Khudrī^{ra} and Hazrat Abū Hurairah^{ra} related that the Holy Prophet^{sa} has said:

“When a company of people gather for the remembrance of Allāh, its members are surrounded by Angels. And they are covered by mercy, and comfort descends upon them and Allāh makes mention of them to those around Him.”⁹

What can be a greater benefit than Allāh making mention of a person doing *Zikr*? What is more is that Allāh becomes the friend of those who spend their time in His remembrance as He says:

فَاذْكُرُونِي أَذْكُرْكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لِي
وَلَا تَكْفُرُونِ ﴿١٥٣﴾

“Therefore remember Me, and I will remember you; and be thankful to Me and do not be ungrateful to Me” (Holy Qur‘ān 2:153).

In fact the blessings of remembrance of Allāh are so many that Allāh even helps those who remember Him properly, but who have not accepted Islām. Maulānā Abdus Sattar Khan Ṣāhib, Amīr and Missionary In-Charge Guatemala, narrates one such incident that proves how Allāh uniquely helps those who remember Him.

He says that on December 2, 2010, he answered the mission house phone to hear the voice of a woman crying profusely. He says he enquired from her the reason for her crying and she said that someone had tried to kidnap her, but she was saved due to the remembrance of Allāh. She then told him that that morning she was withdrawing money

from the bank, and as she was heading towards her car, a man casually put his arm around her neck, as if he was her husband and with his other hand, put a pistol against her side, signaling her not to make any noise and to keep walking. She complied and he led her to a car and forced her to sit in the middle of the back seat between two other men. They wanted her husband’s phone number so that they could demand a ransom as they seized her phone and the cash she had withdrawn from the bank. She says that during this time, she started to pray to God for help and suddenly found herself reciting the words “*Allāhu Akbar, Allāhu Akbar*” again and again. She says she repeated these words for 25 minutes, after which the car suddenly stopped and they pushed her out. She began to run, completely unaware of where she was, and when she had composed herself, she realized that she was near a restaurant owned by someone she knew. She called her husband from there and got home. This lady was formerly a Catholic, and in 2010 she was introduced to Islām Aḥmadiyyat by some newly converted Lajna members. Just a few days before this unfortunate incident, she had attended a *Tarbiyat* class in which remembrance of Allāh had been discussed. That is where she learned the phrase “*Allāhu Akbar.*” The very next day after the incident was Jalsa Sālāna, where she signed the *Ba‘at* form and entered the fold of Islām Aḥmadiyyat. And in 2014, she had the opportunity to attend Jalsa Sālāna UK and meet with Huzoor Anwar^{aa}.¹⁰

So, these are the blessings of remembrance of Allāh. This should not be underestimated. And we should not be careless about it. May Allāh enable all of us to reap all the benefits of remembrance of Allāh and find true peace! Amin!

(Endnotes)

1. *Ḥadiqatus Salihin*, Ḥadīth no. 75
2. *Tirmidhī*, Book of Supplications
3. *Ḥadiqatus Salihin*, Ḥadīth no. 76
4. *Sunan Nisā‘i*, Kitābu ‘Ashratun-Nisā’, Bāb Hubbin Nisā’
5. *Malfūzāt*, Vol. 4, pp. 15-16
6. Taken from *Tafsīr Hazrat Masīḥ Mau‘ūd^{as}*, Vol. 1, p. 693
7. *Tafsīr Kabīr*, Vol. 3, pp. 416-417
8. Commentary of 13:29 (by the Promised Messiah^{as})
9. *Gardens of the Righteous*, Ḥadīth 1453, p. 243
10. *Review of Religions*, April 2015, “Untold Stories”

Istighfār

A Spiritual Remedy

The following speech was delivered by
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at the Jalsa Sālāna Canada 2015

Since the inception of life, man has been taught the ways to live in this world. He is taught that the purpose of the creation of man is to worship Allāh. He is taught to tread on the right path in order to be the recipient of the blessings of Allāh. He is taught to be good with human beings. He is taught to refrain from evils so that he can save himself from punishment.

However, weaknesses are also a part of human nature and lead humans to commit mistakes, to commit faults or to falter with slackness. Being a human, every day we commit mistakes and sins. Sometimes we think our sins are too many, and that there is no way we can make amends. Other times we continue to commit errors and sins, but we do not even realize, and sometimes we are not even ready to accept, that we have done anything wrong.

Despite our weaknesses, we are very fortunate that Allāh Ta'ālā, being merciful, has taught us ways to overcome our weaknesses, faults and laziness. One of the best ways taught to us by Allāh Almighty is to do *Istighfār*.

What is *Istighfār*?

The Promised Messiah^{as} explained: “The root of *Istighfār* is *ghafara*, which means to cover up. Thus, the meaning of *Istighfār* is that God should cover up the natural weakness of the supplicant with His power.”¹

Dear sisters, *Istighfār* is the tool for repenting after committing some kind of sin. However, we must know that *Istighfār* is a great spiritual remedy. A remedy which, if done properly and with the blessings and acceptance of Allāh Almighty, is capable of doing boundless wonders for a believer.

If we go through Aḥādīth of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, writings of the Promised Messiah^{as}, and *Khulafā' Aḥmadiyyat*, we come to know how performing *Istighfār*

can do spiritual miracles.

In the Holy Qur'ān, Allāh says:

وَيَقُومِ اسْتَغْفِرُكُمْ ثُمَّ تَوْبُوا إِلَيْهِ
يُرْسِلِ السَّمَاءَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِدْرَارًا
وَيَزِدْكُمْ قُوَّةً إِلَى قُوَّتِكُمْ
وَلَا تَتَوَلَّوْا مُجْرِمِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾

“Ask forgiveness of your Lord, then turn to Him, He will send over you clouds pouring down abundant rain, and will add strength to your strength. And turn not away sinners” (11:53).

In this verse, Allāh Almighty has drawn our attention towards seeking forgiveness for our wrong deeds and gives us glad tidings that, in return He would give us strength, and advises us not to turn away from Him as sinners.

Hazrat Abū Hurairah^{ra} narrates that he heard the Holy Prophet^{sa} saying, “By the Name of Allāh! I ask for forgiveness from Allāh and turn to Him in repentance more than seventy times a day.”²

At another place Hazrat Ibn 'Umar^{ra} narrated: “I heard Allāh's Messenger saying, ‘O people ask Allāh for forgiveness, verily I ask Him for forgiveness hundred times a day.’”³

My dear sisters, the life of the Holy Prophet Mohammad^{sa} was free from sins. He followed the commandments of Allāh in its true spirit throughout his life, even then he would do *Istighfār* more than anyone else. We are ordinary human beings, prone to make mistakes. So, we need to do *Istighfār* more than Holy Prophet^{sa} would do!

Istighfār is a Spiritual Exercise

Istighfār is a spiritual exercise and it

brings us closer to our Lord and enables us to develop a relationship with Allāh Ta'ālā.

Hazrat Abū Mūsā Ash'arī^{ra} relates that the Holy Prophet^{sa} said:

Allāh, the Exalted and Glorious, stretches out His Hand during the night so that the people repent for the fault committed from dawn till dusk and He stretches out His Hand during the day so that the people may repent for the fault committed from dusk till dawn [He would accept repentance] before the sun rises in the west [before the Day of Resurrection].⁴

So *Istighfār* can cover and protect a believer from all kinds of evils and sins and it attracts the mercy of Allāh the Almighty so much so that all previous sins are forgiven.

In the Holy Qur'ān, Allāh says:

ثُمَّ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لِلَّذِينَ عَمِلُوا السُّوءَ
بِجَهَالَةٍ ثُمَّ تَابُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ وَأَصْلَحُوا
إِنَّ رَبَّكَ مِنْ بَعْدِهَا لَغَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٥٧﴾

“Then surely, thy Lord – to those who do evil in ignorance and repent thereafter and make amends – aye, surely, after that thy Lord is Most Forgiving, Merciful” (16:120).

وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ سُوءًا أَوْ يَظْلِمْ نَفْسَهُ ثُمَّ
يَسْتَغْفِرِ اللَّهَ يَجِدِ اللَّهَ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ﴿٥٨﴾

“And who so does evil or wrongs his soul, and then asks forgiveness of Allāh, will surely find Allāh Most Forgiving, Merciful” (4:111).

Istighfār helps the believer reform to

the extent that no further sins are committed!

The Promised Messiah^{as} explained that *Istighfār* signifies asking Allāh for forgiveness, to repent for the sins committed in the past, and to reform oneself to such an extent that sins are not committed again. It also means to repent against the evil to be encountered in the future and to seek forgiveness from the torment of the Fire.

So my dear sisters, to save ourselves from sins, from evil deeds, and to follow the commandment of Allāh and to gain the nearness of Allāh and to inculcate spirituality within ourselves, we must continue to do *Istighfār*.

***Istighfār* can relieve a believer from all distresses in life.**

Hazrat Ibni ‘Abbās^{ra} said that the Holy Prophet Muḥammad^{sa} said, “If anyone constantly does *Istighfār* or seeks pardon (from Allāh), Allāh will appoint for him a way out of every distress and a relief from every anxiety, and will provide sustenance for him from where he expects not.”⁵

My dear sisters, think for a moment about how loving and merciful our Lord is that not only does He forgive our mistakes, but He helps us escape our distress and relieves us from anxiety. So if we are in distress or in anxiety, *Istighfār* is the best spiritual remedy for us.

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masīḥ I^{ra} narrated that one day a person went to Hazrat Ḥasan Basri^{ra} and said that there is a famine in the area. He replied and told him to do *Istighfār*. Then another person came and said he was needy. He told him to do *Istighfār*. Then a third person came and said he has no children. Even to him, Hazrat Ḥasan Basri^{ra} advised to do *Istighfār*. Then, a fourth person came and complained about scarcity in harvest and cultivation. To him, too, he asked to do *Istighfār*. Then, Rabī bin Sahi, who was sitting in the *majlis* [gathering], asked Ḥasan Basri^{ra} regarding the four people who came with four different requests, and why he had given the same reply to them all. In reply, Ḥasan Basri^{ra} recited the following verses of the Holy Qur’ān:

فَقُلْتُ اسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّكُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ غَفَّارًا ﴿١١﴾ يُرْسِلِ السَّمَاءَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِدْرَارًا ﴿١٢﴾ وَيُمْدِدْكُمْ بِأَمْوَالٍ وَأَبْنَاءٍ وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ جَنَّاتٍ وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ أَنْهَارًا ﴿١٣﴾

“... ‘Seek forgiveness of your Lord; for He is the Great Forgiver. He will send down rain for you in abundance. And He will strengthen you with wealth and with children, and He will give you gardens and He will give you rivers” (71:11-13).



Similarly, once a person requested prayers for his debts to the Promised Messiah^{as}. He said, “I have a huge loan on me, please pray that my entire loan is paid off.” The Promised Messiah^{as} said: “Recite *Istighfār* abundantly. It is a remedy for humans to be relieved from distress and moreover, it is a tool for progress.”⁶

Then a person who did not have children asked Huzoor^{as} to pray for him that he be bestowed with children. The Promised Messiah^{as} told him, “Recite *Istighfār* abundantly. Sins are wiped off with it, and Allāh Ta‘ālā grants children as well.”⁷

So for every kind of success, to be protected from debts and loan, to remove

distress and affliction, *Istighfār* is a great remedy. However, Hazrat Masīḥ Mau‘ūd^{as} said that it should be recited with concentration, only verbal utterance is not enough rather one should analyze himself and his sins and then try to protect himself through *Istighfār*, then doors of progress will be opened for him.

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masīḥ I^{ra} said that our Jamā‘at must recite *Istighfār* abundantly.⁸

My dear sisters, the verses of the Holy Qur’ān and Aḥādīth that I have presented before you show the importance of *Istighfār* and also shed light on the benefits associated with seeking repentance. However, it is truly important for us to

know why sometimes sin and evil are committed by us. Once we know the reason behind it, we can save ourselves from doing wrong and from committing sins.

Dear sisters, sins and evils are committed because of Satan. The Promised Messiah^{as} explains that Satan incites man to take one small step towards evil. He presents evil in a beautiful package and then invites him to take another step, and slowly and steadily, the man continues in these satanic ways towards the bigger evil, until he falls into the pit of sin and decadence, so cunningly designed by Satan.

The first attack of Satan comes on our soul [*Nafs*]. He incites us to do evil through our *Nafs*. So the biggest *Shar* [evil] of a person is the *Shar* of his

Nafs, which knowingly or unknowingly incites people on doing evil. It incites upon:

- Harming Others
- Behaving ill with others
- Being arrogant; thinking oneself as better than others
- Lying
- Backbiting
- Spending time in vain activities
- Diverting the attention of people towards worldly pleasures

Hazrat Imran bin Ḥasīn^{ra} narrates that the Holy Prophet^{sa} taught this prayer:

اللَّهُمَّ الْهَمْنِي رُشْدِي وَأَعِزَّنِي مِنْ شَرِّ نَفْسِي

O Allāh! Inspire my heart to guidance, and save me from the evil of my Nafs (soul).⁹

Therefore, we must do *Istighfār* so that our *Nafs* does not incline us towards doing evils. By doing *Istighfār* we can save ourselves from the sins which we haven't committed yet.

In this regard my dear sisters, there are some important issues towards which I would like to draw your attention. These issues have ruined the peace of homes in particular and community in general. I feel pain when I come to know that sometimes old parents, and especially, mothers of spouses are treated very badly by the daughter-in-laws. The mothers or old parents are in such miserable situations that they feel they are a burden on their children and seek a way out, so that they can go somewhere and live peacefully and respectfully. This is not how we should treat our parents or parents of our spouses. This is not the teaching of our religion. It does not teach us to treat our parents in such a way that they feel that they better go to old homes or shelters. Such girls who behave so wrongly with their in-laws must do *Istighfār*, immensely, to save themselves from the wrath of Allāh.

Similarly, it is again painful that some in-laws, especially mother-in-laws, treat their daughter-in-law so badly that the poor girl has no way out, but to bear the atrocities of the husband and his family. Such households and mothers must seek *Istighfār* from Allāh Almighty, otherwise their continued misbehaviour can bring them under the wrath of Allāh, and all their good deeds could be wasted.

As Hazrat Abū Umāmah^{ra} narrates that the Holy Prophet^{sa} said that on the Day of Judgement a register of his deeds will be brought to man. He would read it and ask Allāh Almighty that I did such and such good deed in the world. Allāh Almighty would reply that due to backbiting, all those good deeds have been erased from your account. So just due to backbiting all the good deeds of offering prayers, fasting, *sadaqāt* [almsgiving], helping the needy, were wasted.

The above-mentioned ḥadīth states that good deeds are wasted because of backbiting; similarly good deeds could also be wasted because of ill treatment of others.

Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ V^{aa} said that once we read these Ḥadīth, fear increases and the only remedy is that we continue to do *Istighfār*.¹⁰

Huzoor^{aa} has also said: “We must analyze

our actions and deeds and we should keep ourselves protected from the satanic thoughts. To save oneself from Satan, it is incumbent that along with prayers we must continue to do *Istighfār*.”¹¹

The next thing that I would like to touch upon is the role and the behaviour of the office bearers. Some office bearers are very God-fearing and are humble in their behaviour; however, some of us do not realize that we are the servants of the Jamā'at and sometimes become very rude and arrogant. Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ V^{aa} has drawn our attention many time towards this aspect and asked us to do *Istighfār*. Huzoor^{aa} said that each office-holder is expected to discharge the responsibilities as helpers of Khilāfat. Therefore, they should first self-reflect if they are abiding by God's commandments and presenting themselves as a role model so that they can remind others about their responsibilities. If they only remind others while not practicing on the commandments themselves, it a great cause for concern and they should engage in *Istighfār*.¹²

So office bearers must pay heed to the advice of Huzoor Anwar^{aa} and seek *Istighfār* to save themselves from displeasure of Allāh Almighty.

My dear sisters, all of us as a member of Jamā'at Aḥmadiyya, require obeying the words of *Khalīfa Waqt* in its true sense. We hear the instructions and noble advices of our beloved Imām Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ V^{aa} but many of us do not show true obedience as is required from us; whether Huzoor Anwar^{aa} draws our attention towards regularity in offering five daily prayers and recitation of the Holy Qur'an, whether he reminds us of watching MTA and listening to the Friday Sermons or doing self-reformation, or developing humility as an office bearer, or observing *pardah* as an Aḥmadi Muslim woman, or avoiding unislamic practices at weddings, we do not show complete obedience to him. Our prayers are sometimes missed or offered in a rush without any concentration. We are still not watching MTA regularly, many of us do not watch Friday Sermons, we still wear short coats or coats without buttons. Our weddings are still extravagant and breach of *pardah* is observed by having male members coming and going from the ladies side. These are some of the examples of not showing obedience to the *Khalīfa Waqt*, who is the direct representative of God on earth. Therefore, we must repent and do *Istighfār* to Allāh Almighty for not showing obedience to *Khalīfa Waqt*, and pledge to Allāh Almighty that we may

amend our actions. May Allāh give us strength to do so through *Istighfār*! Amīn!

Furthermore, Huzoor^{aa} mentioned the complaints he receives against some youth and other members who do not follow the system of *Nizām Jamā'at*, or who are engrossed in watching dirty movies. He said that once we have performed *Ba'at*, there should be no contradiction between our words and our practices. Those people who watch dirty movies should remember that not only are they indulging in immoral activities, but are also incurring financial losses upon themselves, because such activities cost significant amounts of money. *Taubah* and *Istighfār* should be such that we do not even think of indulging in these activities. *Istighfār* and *Durūd* are remedies against lowly desires of the self. One should remain steadfast in offering *Istighfār* and *Ṣalāt*, and a time will come when such a person shall observe a transformation in his heart.

Dear sisters, while in the verses of the Holy Qur'an and Ḥadīth we are told the importance of *Istighfār*, at the same time, do Allāh Ta'ālā and Holy Prophet Muḥammad^{sa} tell us how to do *Istighfār* properly?

The Holy Prophet^{sa} told us that we must seek forgiveness in the following words:

أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ رَبِّي مِنْ كُلِّ ذَنْبٍ وَ أَتُوبُ إِلَيْهِ

“I seek forgiveness of Allāh, my Lord, for all my sins and turn to Him in all sincerity.”

Then Allāh Almighty has taught another prayer:

قَالَ رَبِّمَا ظَلَمْنَا أَنْفُسَنَا وَإِنْ لَمْ

تَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ

الْخَسِرِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾

‘Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves; and if Thou forgive us not and have not mercy on us, we shall surely be of the lost.’ (7:24)

We are taught that we must repent to Allāh, but remember that these should not be mere utterances of our mouth. Hazrat Masīḥ Mau'ūd^{ra} said that the true *Istighfār* is when a person weeps and cries in front of Allāh and begs for His forgiveness.¹³

Hazrat Shadād bin Aus Ansāri^{ra} narrates that the Holy Prophet^{sa} said that “*Sayyidul Istighfār*” [best prayer for seeking forgiveness] is:

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ

اللَّهُمَّ أَلْهِمْنِي رُشْدِي وَأَعِزَّنِي مِنْ شَرِّ نَفْسِي
اللَّهُمَّ أَنْتَ رَبِّي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ خَلَقْتَنِي وَأَنَا عَبْدُكَ
وَأَنَا عَلَى عَهْدِكَ وَوَعْدِكَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُ أَعُوذُ بِكَ
مِنْ شَرِّ مَا صَنَعْتُ أَبُوءُ لَكَ بِنِعْمَتِكَ عَلَيَّ وَأَبُوءُ
لَكَ بِذُنُوبِي فَاعْفُرْ لِي فَإِنَّهُ لَا يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ

O Allāh! You are my Rabb. There is no true god except You. You have created me, and I am Your slave, and I hold to Your Covenant as far as I can. I seek refuge in You from the evil of what I have done. I acknowledge the favors that You have bestowed upon me, and I confess my sins. Pardon me, for none but You has the power to pardon.

Whoever makes this dua during the day with firm belief in it and dies on the same day (before the evening) he will be one of the dwellers of *Jannah* (Paradise); and whoever makes this dua during the night with firm belief in it and dies before the morning, he will be one of the dwellers of *Jannah* (Paradise).¹⁴

Hazrat Masīh Mau'ūd^{ra} said that there are **three conditions for repentance**:¹⁵

1. Get rid of evil thoughts and wicked

fancies. That means we do not think evil of others in any circumstances

2. Sinner should express remorse (regret, shame) over sin and evil actions. That means if we do anything wrong consciously or unconsciously we feel regretful.
3. Firm resolve that he will not go back to those vices. We promise ourselves that we will not do these evil things again.

We must also remember that gates of God's Grace are never closed:

Sometimes our heart and mind does not incline towards praying and supplication. Sometimes we feel sad and lose hope that our sins are so much that Allāh will not forgive us. But we must not lose hope and we must remember that **Repentance washes out stains of sin:**

Hazrat Bilāl bin Yasār^{ra} relates from his grandfather that Holy Prophet^{sa} taught him a prayer and said whomsoever recites this prayer of forgiveness, Allāh forgives his sins even though they are innumerable.

Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V (may Allāh be his Helper) said that with true connection with God, repentance and *Istighfār*, one

can experience paradise in this world and greater rewards, which will be granted in the Hereafter.¹⁶

May Allāh enable us to do *Istighfār* so that we may experience this paradise in this world and greater rewards in hereafter! *Amīn!*

(Endnotes)

1. *Essence of Islām*, Vol. II, pp. 241-242
2. *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*
3. *Masnad Aḥmad*
4. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*
5. *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*
6. *Malfūzāt*, Vol. 1, p. 422
7. *Malfūzāt*, Vol. 1, p. 444
8. *Haqā'iqul Furqān*, Vol. 4, p. 215
9. *Tirmidhī*, Kitābud Da'awat qtd. in *Treasure - House of Prayers*, p. 134
10. Friday Sermon, Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V^{aa}, December 26, 2015
11. Friday Sermon, Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V^{aa}, December 12, 2003
12. Friday Sermon, Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V^{aa}, July 03, 2015
13. *Maktūbat Aḥmad*, Vol. 2, p. 481
14. *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, Kitābud Da'awat
15. *Malfūzāt*, Vol. 1, p. 138-140; *Essence of Islām*, Vol. 2, p. 241
16. Friday Sermon, Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V^{aa}, July 10, 2015

Tackling Radicalization in Faiths

35th World Religions Conference

Nabeel Ahmad Rana, Chief Planning & Coordinating Officer (WRC)



500 attendees at Canada's largest multi-faith event

November 1, 2015 – River
Run Centre, Guelph, Ontario,
Canada

Radicalization of men and women of all faiths – both in the West and East – has become one of the most significant threats of terrorism in the world today. National President of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamā'at Canada, Lāl Khan Malik Ṣāhib, said that “we feel it is the responsibility of faith groups and faith leaders to address this growing global crisis.” And as such, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamā'at Canada hosted the 35th World Religions Conference (WRC) on Sunday, November 1, 2015.

The conference was held at the prestigious River Run Centre in Guelph, Ontario and was addressed by scholars of seven faiths and philosophies on the theme of “Tackling Radicalization in Faiths.” Several municipal, provincial and federal leaders attended, including local Member of Parliament Elect Lloyd Longfield of Guelph, Provincial Member of Parliament Honourable Dave Levac of Brantford, and Member of Provincial Parliament Bob Delany of Mississauga-Streetsville. Several other councilors of local municipalities delivered greetings at the opening ceremony of the conference.

The conference, considered Canada's largest multi-faith event, aimed to explore the teachings and practices of different religious and philosophical traditions, with the hope that such mutual exploration will encourage better understanding and promote harmonious co-existence among the members of Canada's religious mosaic. The event was moderated and chaired by CBC Radio's

host, Craig Norris of Guelph.

Opening Ceremony

After an opening prayer recitation, all speakers and dignitaries were called to the stage to participate in the opening ceremony of the conference. Guelph's newly elected MP, Lloyd Longfield, and Respected Amīr Ṣāhib, unveiled the World Religions Conference plaque. The conference moderator then formally declared the commencement of the 35th World Religions Conference. Thereafter, the national anthem of Canada was sung by Kitchener-Waterloo's well-known vocalist, Marhee Clifton, who is a school teacher and member of the Grand Philharmonic Choir in Kitchener.

Respected Amīr Ṣāhib outlined the objectives of the conference. Describing the basis of respect of other faiths, and inculcating respect for the founders of all religions, Respected Amīr Ṣāhib quoted from the writing of the Promised Messiah^{as}, the Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamā'at:

One of the principles upon which I have been established is the following: God has informed me that of the religions which have spread and are firmly established in the world through Prophets, holding sway over a part of the world and achieving survival and long life, none was false in its origin. . . . Therefore, this principle lays down the foundation of love, peace and harmony, and supports moral values, in that we consider all those prophets true who appeared in the world . . . In light of this principle, we honour all religious founders. . . . (Toḥf Qaiṣariyyah [A Gift for the Queen], pp. 4-7)

For 35 years, the WRC has served as an invaluable forum for different religious and ethnic communities to gather in the

spirit of tolerance, peace, cooperation, and understanding. While giving his opening remarks to the audience as the moderator of the conference, Craig Norris said: “The WRC serves the noble purpose of educating members of the community regarding interesting and relevant topics by providing a platform where all major religions can pool their collective wisdom and teachings regarding the topic.”

Each faith representative was invited to present introductory remarks on the theme of this year's conference, which was followed by greetings from the dignitaries present.

Numerous other written greetings were received from municipal, provincial and federal leaders including the Chief of Police of Guelph and Waterloo.

Lunch was served to all the delegates, and numerous faith groups had set up displays and exhibitions where volunteers of different faiths interacted and exchanged ideas during the break.

Theme Session

Each of the seven participating faiths were invited to speak on the theme, “Tackling Radicalization in Faiths” from their religious perspective, which was followed by a recitation from their holy scriptures.

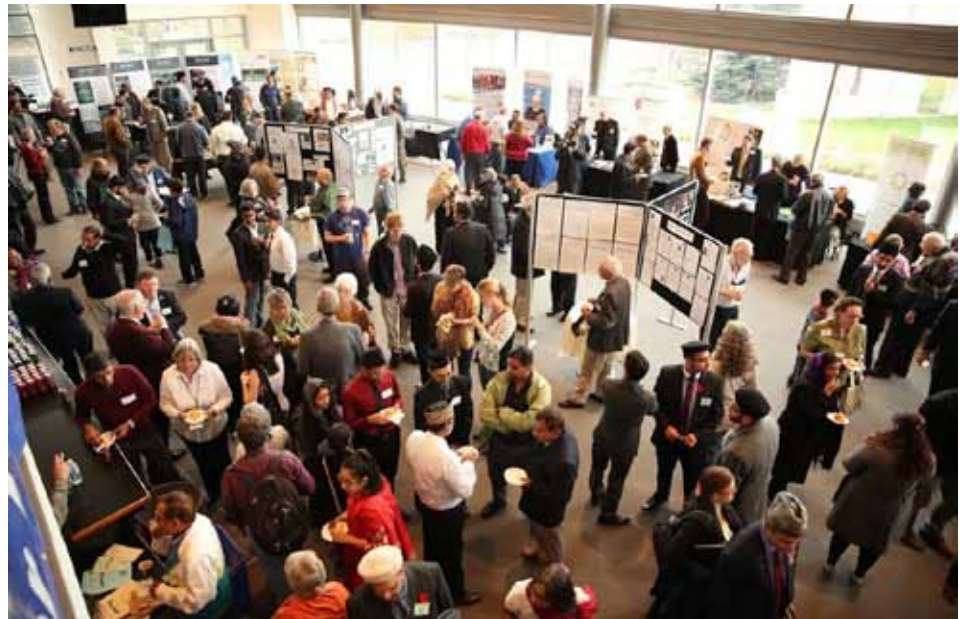
Humanist Perspective: Doug Thomas of Elmira, an extensive writer, a lifelong agnostic and an active Secular Humanist since 2002, presented the Humanist perspective. He mentioned that radicalization is not a major problem among humanists because they focus on reason to govern their response to radical statements by examining the evidence that the promoters claim makes extreme action appropriate.

Sikh Perspective: Simerneet Singh of Chicago, a brilliant orator and a scholar of Sat Sri Guru Granth Ṣāhib, presented how



radicalization is tackled among the Sikh community. He said that radicalization is not a new phenomenon. Mr. Singh said that Guru Nanak, the first Sikh Guru, faced it in the 1500's and in the 500 years since then, little has changed. He also said Sikhism teaches that God is not found through extremism of the body as in pilgrimages, fasting, austerities, or physical suffering, but instead by finding the temple of the mind within the body. He further elaborated that Sikhism teaches that we can find God through focused meditation performed through the practical application of the teachings of Sri Guru Granth Śāhib. Sri Guru Granth Śāhib is meant for anyone on the path to God, irrespective of their religion. Mr. Singh said that the teachings could be used as a supplement to help interpret the scriptures of other faiths in an effort to overcome fear, weakness, and superstition so that we can be in control of our own destiny.

Islāmic Perspective: Imām Farhan Iqbal Śāhib, a powerful orator and articulate missionary and Imām of one of the largest mosques in Ontario, presented the Islāmic response to radicalization. He said that it is important to state in the very beginning that the Islāmic faith and radicalization are diametrically opposed to each other. Extremism and radicalization run parallel to faith, and not because of faith, he said. As far as Islām is concerned, the way to tackle the problem of radicalization is to promote and propagate the true and original teachings of Islām, which are nothing but peace, he explained. Imām Śāhib further outlined that the battle against extremism and radicalization is ultimately a battle for the mind or a battle against an ideology, which cannot be defeated with war. He concluded by proposing that we need a counter-narrative to disarm these ideas before they can take root.



Christian Perspective: Reverend John Buttars of Guelph, who is a former minister at the United Church of Canada, presented how radicalization is tackled in Christianity. He said that radicalization is an agent of death, an assertive, aggressive form of religion. It is not a step towards violence, but a step right inside the house of violence. Radicalization of any religion is the opposite of opening one's arms to the neighbour whom we are called to love as ourselves or welcoming the stranger, teachings which are part of the Christian tradition. Radicalization involves the accusing finger against "the Other". He said that the foundational sacred traditions of Christianity have nothing to contribute to radicalization, distortion, or violence. He said that, talking, and having genuine conversations, is a major practice that works against radicalization.

Aboriginal Perspective: Walter Cooke of Hamilton, an elder and counsellor of Ojibway Cree of the Bear Clan, spoke about how Aboriginal Religions tackle radicalization. He said that all Canadians

should follow the Ojibway/Cree way of living. He explained the four aboriginal medicines and how each works. He said that is why Aboriginals do not physically fight, but respect each other to combat any radicalization in Aboriginal faiths. Hence, Canadians should follow the First Nations of Canada.

Judaic Perspective: Dr. Daniel Maoz of Cambridge, a scholar-in-residence at Wilfrid Laurier University, presented the Judaic perspective on radicalization of followers. He said that there are many helpful ways the topic of dealing with radicalization in the Jewish faith community can be considered, and beginning with Jewish Ethics can prove informative and helpful. He said that as a speaker representing Judaism, he must keep in mind that one of the Jewish ethical principles of common sense is not to speak about that which one does not know. He said that much study, more conversations, and even more learning, had to take place before he could feel justified in accepting the challenge to address the topic at this conference.

He said that Jewish people have been dealing with radicalization from within and without their faith for at least three millennia, as attested by the Scriptures, by Judaic Literature, and by writings of the Rabbis throughout history.

Hindu Perspective: Dr. Praveen K. Saxena of Guelph, a Hindu Scholar and Professor at the University of Guelph, presented the Hindu perspective on radicalization. Explaining the causes of radicalization, he said that it originates from many socioeconomic causes, which are then exploited by groups of individuals driven by the quest for political power, economic supremacy, and superior social status. He explained that studies on the roots of radicalization suggest that unemployment, corruption, economic disparity, and violations of rights of ethnic and religious minorities lead to religious radicalism, extremism and even terrorism. He said that Hindu philosophies may provide a mechanism to disconnect religion from factors that lead to radicalization. He said that Hinduism emphasizes the importance of Dharma and spirituality in tackling radicalization.

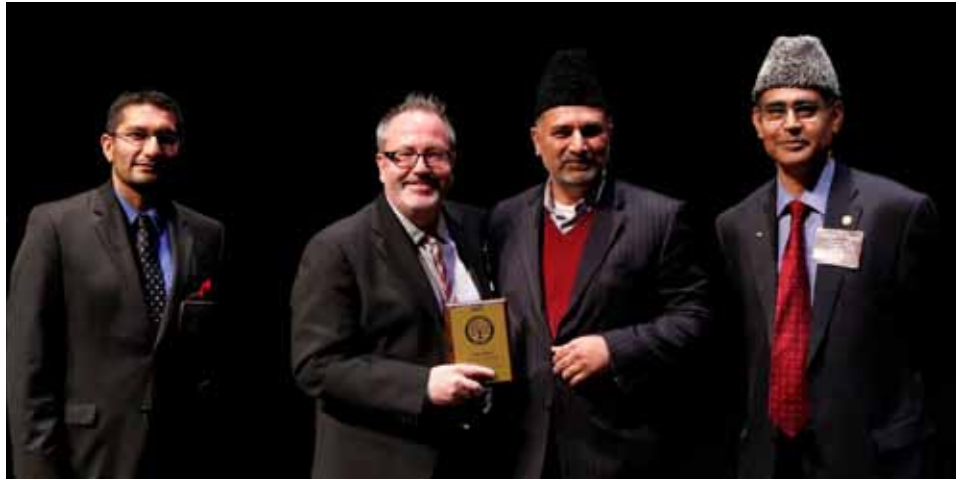
Concluding and Interactive Session:

The day long event concluded with a 45-minute lively and interesting Questions and Answer session with all the speakers of the conference, that was moderated by CBC's Craig Norris.

Fawad Malik Şāhib, president of the WRC organizing committee, thanked the organizing committee, all volunteers, partners, speakers and media. National Vice President, Amir Shiekh Şāhib presented plaques to all the speakers, as well as the moderator of the conference, and adjourned the event with a silent multi-faith prayer.

Guests were then invited to a meet-and-greet.

The entire live proceedings of the conference were broadcasted live via web stream on the conference website. Moreover, both broadcast and print media provided extensive coverage both before and after the event. For more information, complete reports or video of the entire conference visit www.worldreligionsconference.org or call 1-877-INFO-WRC.



Guelph Mercury Monday

November 2, 2015 . Serving Guelph and Wellington County . 95 cents + tax (\$1.00) . guelphmercury.com

Spiritual leaders unite at conference aimed at countering the growth of religious radicalization

Chris Seto, Mercury staff

GUELPH The radicalization of men and women of all faiths has become one of the most significant threats linked to international terrorism in the world today, says Lal Khan Malik, an Islamic religious leader.

Speaking at the 35th annual World Religions Conference at the River Run Centre on Sunday morning, the national president of Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat Canada outlined the importance of this years conference.

The theme of the event was how to tackle radicalization in the major faiths.

The conference ran from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and was open and free for the public to attend.

Guelph has hosted the annual conference for the past three years.

Seven speakers, each from a different faith tradition, sat elbow-to-elbow on stage and spoke about tackling radicalization, as it pertained to their own belief systems.

The seven speakers were Doug Thomas of Elmira, representing Humanism; Simerneet Singh of Chicago, representing Sikhism; Farhan Iqbal of Toronto, representing Islam; John Butters of



Seven speakers, each representing a different faith tradition, stand and sing O Canada at the beginning of the 35th World Religions Conference at the River Run Centre on Sunday.

Guelph, representing Christianity; Walter Cooke of Hamilton, representing Aboriginal Peoples; Daniel Maoz of Cambridge, representing Judaism; and Praveen Saxena of Guelph, representing Hinduism. Each speaker had the chance to

go over their thoughts on radicalization and how the issue can be tackled. SEE CONFERENCE ON PAGE A3

Guelph Mercury Monday, November 2, 2015 A3

Religions ponder rise of radicals

► CONFERENCE FROM PAGE A1 They were held to specific time constraints by the moderator, CBC Radio host Craig Norris.

During the morning session, a little less than half of the seats in the main auditorium were filled. In between sessions, people milled about in the lobby and took in a variety of display boards outlining world religions.

Farhan Iqbal is the Imam of the Baitul Islam mosque, one of the largest in Canada. In his opening remarks, he made it clear he sees no connection between the original teachings of the Islamic faith and radicalized and extremist groups seen around the world today.

The Islamic faith and radicalization are diametrically opposed to one another, he said. Radicalization and extremism may run parallel to any faith, but they are never a result of that faith.

In an interview after the session, Iqbal said radicalization occurs partly, not wholly, because of distortions of the teachings of Islam. These distortions could come from clerics with extreme views or other groups online who take phrases from the Quran out of context. When they distort the faith they tend to sometimes attract criminals to an extremist ideology, he said.

One way to tackle the problem is to provide a counter narrative, demonstrating the real, true teachings of Islam are based in peace, he said.

Real teachings of Islam have nothing to do with hatred or violence and all these things. That's why our motto as Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat is love for all, hatred for none.

Praveen Saxena, professor at the University of Guelph, sat on the panel as a representative of Hinduism. He said the problem of negative radicalization originates in peoples minds: its their attitude toward life.

He said radicalization isnt always a negative thing, however: It can actually be positive.

Hinduism proposes that everyone is consciousness and this consciousness is pure energy. Energy is neutral in nature, so if it becomes positive, it seeks the path of religion and spirituality. The end product of this is eternal peace.

Hindu scriptures propose simple strategies of meditation and karma yoga to keep control of the mind. These are the two techniques the faith offers as a solution to prevent radicalization from happening.

Its about having control over your own thoughts, or being neutral to them, so you can analyze them objectively, he said.

cscto@guelphmercury.com



University of Northern British Columbia 10th World Religions Conference

Rizwan Saeed Pirzada Sāhib

By the Grace of Allāh Almighty, the 10th World Religions Conference was held in Prince George, B.C at the University of Northern British Columbia on September 27, 2015 by Aḥmadiyya Muslim Jamā‘at. The theme of this conference was “Existence of God - Myth or Reality.” The following faiths were represented at

the conference: Baha’i faith, Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islām and Sikhism. Respected Maulānā Mubarak Ahmad Nazir Šāhib, Missionary Incharge Canada represented Islām, delivering a powerful and very eloquent presentation. By the Grace of Allāh, 151 guests and 16 Jamā‘at members attended the

conference. The program was moderated by His Worship, Lyn Hall, Mayor city of Prince George. The conference received extensive coverage from the following media outlets: Newspaper- *The Citizen*; Radio - CBC, CFIS FM, CFUR; Television - Shaw TV.



Abdullah Khalid reciting verses from the Holy Qur‘ān



His Worship Lyn Hall,
Mayor of Prince George moderating WRC



Dr.Daniel Weeks, President of UNBC
delivering Welcome Remarks



Guests of WRC PG



Dr.Balbinder Deo, Professor of UNBC delivering Welcome



Students are Receiving Bursary Award from Mr. Richard Foo, Scholarship and International Studies



Maulāna Mubarak Nazir Şāhib, Nā'ib Amīr I & Missionary Incharge Canada presenting Islām



Group Photo of WRC Moderator, Speakers & Organizers



Fazal Moeen Siddiqui, CEO Rawal TV, Receives York West Centennial Medal in a Celebration of Diversity of the 42nd Parliament

For celebrating the diversity of Canada's 42nd parliament, congratulating and honouring the newly elected Liberal Members of parliament, a beautiful dinner evening was organized in the evening of November 19, 2015 at Rizzo Banquet Hall.

The evening was graced by elected Liberal Member of Parliaments from GTA, MPPs, Municipal Politicians, Diplomats, Local Community leaders, and media. This event was organized by Major Abdul Hafeez Khalifa and master of the ceremonies was Mr. Khalid Usman, Chair of Markham Stouffville Hospital.

Many Pakistani-Canadians enjoyed the evening and the company of Hon. Judy Sgro, Hon. Dr. Reza Moridi, Minister Colleges & Universities Ontario, Dr. Iqra Khalid, Majid Jowahri, Gagan Sikand, Ruby Sahota, Gurbax Singh Malhi, Ramesh Singh, Dr. Shafiq Qaadri, Mr. Asghar Ali Golo, Consul General Pakistan, Mr. Erdeniz Sen, Consul General Turkey, Steve Pellegrini, Mayor of the Township of King, Mario Ferri, Regional Councilor Vaughan, and many others.

One highlight of the event was that MP Hon. Judy Sgro, ex Minister of Immigration and Citizenship honoured Mr. Fazal Moeen Siddiqui, CEO of Rawal TV with the York West Centennial Medal for his hard work, dedication and services to the community as a strong media advocate, who has made Rawal TV the voice of the Canadian communities. While awarding the medal, she expressed that Rawal TV has played a big role in the recent federal elections to bring the community together by encouraging them to get out and vote.



Humanity First Report on Syria

Resettlement Department, Humanity First

The war in Syria has created the highest number of refugees in more than a generation. The Syrian people have endured incredible suffering and loss, with more than half of its population displaced. Although the Syrian war has raged on for more than four years, it was the photograph of a three-year old Syrian boy, Alan Kurdi, washed up on the shores of a tourist beach in Turkey that brought the plight of these refugees into sharp focus and shook Canada and other countries around the world to action.

The scale of destruction in Syria is immense. Prior to the start of the war in 2011, Syria had a population of 22 million. Today, 12 million have been displaced, which is more than 50% of its entire population. Four million of those are living in desperate conditions; in overburdened and under-funded camps in Jordan, Turkey, Lebanon, Iraq and Egypt. Over 220,000 have been killed in the conflict, and thousands have perished while fleeing the country, never making it to a safe country of refuge.

Humanity First has mobilized its team of volunteers and is working alongside other civil society and grassroots organizations in Canada to respond to the Syrian refugee crisis. Currently, Humanity First is in the process of sponsoring over 200 Syrians, with hundreds more sponsorship applications in the pipeline. Humanity First is also well positioned and ready to assist the government of Canada to resettle some of the 25,000 Syrian refugees by the end of 2015.

Humanity First's work with refugees extends beyond the Syrian community, and predates the current crisis. A purely volunteer organization, Humanity First has been sponsoring and resettling refugees since 2011, and has successfully resettled hundreds of families in Canada. These refugees have fled their home countries in fear or have been victims of



violence, torture, arrest and detention, often by their own governments. Many of these refugees flee from countries where they are not free to practice their faith, and are punished if they do so.

The Holy Qur'an commends those who give shelter and aid to refugees:

“And those who have believed and left their homes and striven for the cause of Allāh, and those who have given *them* shelter and help — these indeed are true believers. For them is forgiveness and an honourable

provision” (8:75).

Members of the Jamā'at are encouraged to come forward and help Humanity First in this noble work by donating their time and resources to this cause.

For more information, please contact Humanity First at humanityfirst.ca or 416-440-0346.

Protect Yourself This Cold and Flu Season

Sara Arain, Nutritionist

Disclaimer: This following information is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease. The information in this article is provided for your information only and may not be construed as medical advice or instruction. No action or inaction should be taken based solely on the contents of this information; instead, readers should consult appropriate healthcare professionals on any matter relating to their health and well being.

Do you get sick often? Or are you prone to catching the flu or colds easily, especially during the winter months? You may benefit from giving your immune system a bit of a boost. Below are some tips that I have found help me to survive the cold and flu season:

1. Elderberry Syrup

Syrup extracted from elderberries has been used for centuries in traditional European medicine for immune support and also as part of their daily diet. It's a great family friendly option, and it is safe for children over the age of one. I personally have used it for immune support and to help clear up my cold symptoms as soon as possible, and they have all worked well!

A few of my favorite brands include: *SURO Elderberry Syrup* and *Dr. Dunner Elderberry Concentrate*.

The *SURO* brand contains some apple cider vinegar, benefits of which are outlined below, echinacea root and propolis. Propolis is collected from bee hives and contains extremely potent anti-bacterial properties. Bee propolis is something my dad used to give to my sisters and I when we felt any symptoms of the cold or flu, and it was extremely effective. Luckily, *SURO* has a nice, sweet, mild flavour and is definitely tolerable and great for kids. Just follow the dosage on the bottle.

A [study](#) published in the *Journal of International Medical Research*, showed

elderberry syrup to be effective in curing Influenza Type B within two to three days, in 90% of participants. In comparison, it took six days to cure the placebo group, who did not take any elderberry syrup¹.

2. Probiotics or Fermented Foods

We all have good bacteria and bad bacteria in our gut. It is important though to ensure that there are more good guys versus bad guys.

Some studies show that good bacteria can actually help to activate the body's immune responses to fight off infections.

A lack of good gut bacteria, also known as flora, can result in:

- Gas
- Bloating
- Constipation
- Low immune function
- Allergies
- Yeast Infections

So how can we ensure that we are creating this perfect balance of bacteria within our gut? Eating fermented foods or taking a high quality probiotic (i.e., good bacteria) supplement can help with this.

Examples of Fermented Foods:

- Organic kefir
- Unpasteurized kimchi
- Unpasteurized sauerkraut
- Kombucha
- Apple Cider Vinegar- which is a great immune booster in itself

Examples of High Quality Probiotics/ Fermented Supplements:

- *Progressive HCP*
- *Dr. Ohirras Probiotic*
- *Genuine Health Fermented Products*

3. Manuka Honey

Manuka Honey is collected from bees from the manuka tree, which is native to New Zealand. This honey is extremely unique because it contains higher antibacterial components than regular honey, specifically methylglyoxal (MG). Manuka honey is rated according to the levels of the antibacterial properties. When looking for manuka honey, look for a rating of ten or higher, indicating higher antimicrobial activity.

Take a teaspoon a day for boosting your immune system or during a bout of cold or flu. It is also highly effective when taken during the first sign of a cold or the flu.

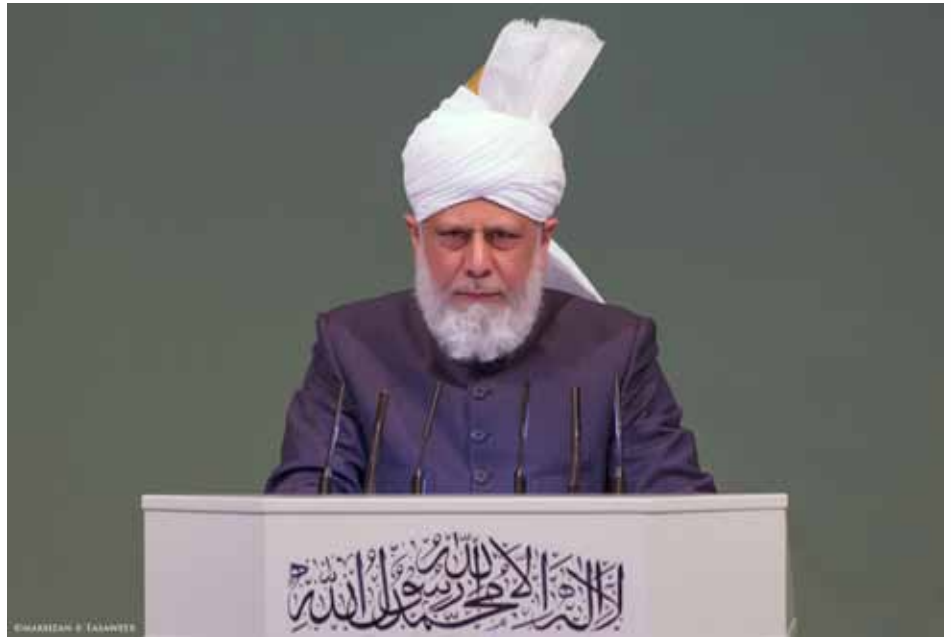
As you can see mostly everything recommended here is a food based product and is a great natural way to support your body and your immune system. All of the products mentioned above can be found at your local health food store. I hope that you gained some insight on how to potentially protect yourself and your family from any nasty bugs this year!

(Endnotes)

1 Zakay-ronen Z, Thom E., Wollan T, Wadstein J. "Randomized study of the efficacy and safety of oral elderberry extract in the treatment of influenza A and B virus infections." *Journal of International Medical Research*. Mar-Apr.2004: 132-140. Print.

Aḥmadiyya Muslim Jamā‘at Press Releases

Photography Courtesy of Makhzan-e-Tasaweer



Head of Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community Warns of Risk of Third World War

Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad^{aa} also speaks of threat of civilian casualties in airstrikes

The World Head of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community, the Fifth Khalifa (Caliph), His Holiness, Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad^{aa} has delivered a strong warning to world leaders and governments about the potential escalation of current conflicts into a full scale Third World War. His Holiness made the comments during his Friday Sermon on December 4, 2015 delivered at the Baitul Futuh Mosque in South West London.

His Holiness highlighted how the world's problems stemmed from grave injustices perpetrated by both Muslim countries and other world powers. His Holiness called upon Aḥmadi Muslims worldwide to pray for long-lasting peace in the world.

Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad^{aa} said:

Today the world is in great danger and moving rapidly towards a catastrophe and so special and sincere prayers are required from members of our community.

Warning of the potential devastating consequences lying ahead, Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad^{aa} said:

The severity of the situation is such that a Third World War could begin at any time - in fact in reality a Third World War has already begun on a small scale. I have been warning of

this for a number of years but only now analysts and world figures have started to agree.

Speaking about air strikes against the terrorist group Daesh in Iraq and Syria, Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad^{aa} said:

If governments wish to carry out air strikes they must be aimed directly at the perpetrators of cruelty and not innocent people. May Allāh the Almighty protect the innocent and members of the general public.

Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad^{aa} continued:

The people of Syria are trapped with no means of escape. The neighbouring countries should have united with the local governments to end the conflict a long time ago. Instead the disorder was allowed to ferment and spread further afield and is now effecting much of the world. Certainly the neighbouring Muslim countries have failed in their duty to bring an end to the conflict and disorder.

Speaking about escalating contempt and conflict, Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad^{aa} said:

It is being said that some governments are trading with Daesh and are purchasing their oil. Russia has made this allegation against Turkey. Turkey denies it and has levelled the same allegation against Russia. Wherever the truth lies it is certain that some form of trading is taking place. Furthermore,

ever since Turkey shot down a Russian plane the expressions of enmity have only increased.

Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad^{aa} said:

It is also being said that Daesh has made a plan that if it is forced to abandon Iraq or Syria it will form a base in Libya. It is obvious that air strikes will then also begin in Libya and once more the general population will be killed. The Western nations repeatedly help these nations before turning against them. In Libya, Syria or Iraq they have either removed their governments or are attempting to do so. Unfortunately, the Muslim governments in their own countries are also cruel and unjust. The disorder prevalent in the world is the result of a cycle of perpetual injustice.

Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad^{aa} continued:

Despite the precarious situation the world faces, it still does not seem as though the major powers or the Muslim governments are paying any attention to the paramount need for justice. Even if the barbaric terrorists of Daesh are defeated it does not mean peace will instantly be achieved. In fact certain factors indicate that division and warfare could continue beyond as tensions between Russia and the West are increasing. Again it will be innocent members of the general public who will suffer the most and lose their lives.

Concluding, Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad^{aa} said:

Thus the world stands in grave danger and so we must bow down in prayer. May Allāh the Almighty save the world from the all forms of destruction and may world leaders and governments act with sense and justice.

An Important Reminder for Jamā'at Members

For the convenience of all members of Jamā'at Aḥmadiyya Canada, the Tajnīd Department has been providing the following services in order to update any changes to their address, phone number and the arrival of newborn babies for Tajnīd records:

Telephone

905-832-2669 Ext: 2235

Please record your name, member code and phone number clearly. In case of address change, please spell your address to avoid any mistake.

Fax

The above information can also be faxed to the Tajnīd Department at 905-832-9382. This fax number is solely for Tajnīd purposes.

E-Mail

Jamā'at members can also send their information via e-mail at tajnid@ahmadiyya.ca

Website

Visit ahmadiyya.ca/memberservices and fill in the appropriate form available online.

All the Jamā'at members are requested to please update their information at their earliest convenience by using any one of the above four methods.

Announcement of Demise

We are sad to announce that *Muhtarama* Rezia Begum Ṣāḥiba, wife of Mukarram Nizamul Haque Ṣāḥib of Peace Village East *Halqā*, passed away on November 17, 2015 at the age of 57. May Allāh grant forgiveness to the deceased and elevate her spiritual station in Heaven. May He also shower His Mercy upon the grieved family and enable them to bear this loss with patience! *Āmīn!*

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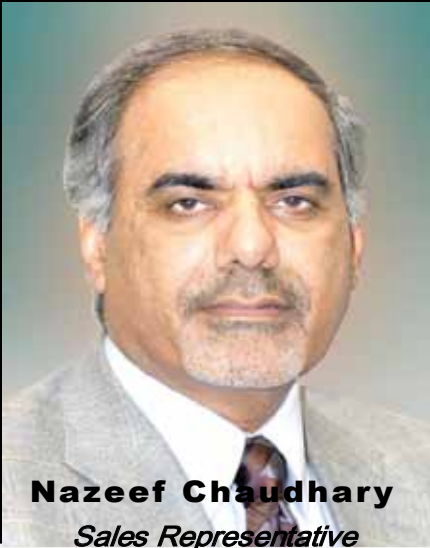
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