

## Preparing for *the morrow* - Raising Pious Children

Address to the Ladies, delivered by Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih V<sup>aba</sup>, on the occasion of Jalsa Salana UK, Saturday, July 29, 2017 at Hadeeqatul Mahdi (Alton)

After *Tasha'hud*, *Ta'awuz* and the recitation of *Surah Al-Fatihah*, His Holiness<sup>aba</sup> recited the following verse of the Holy Quran:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ

‘O Ye who believe! Fear Allah; and let every soul look to what it sends forth for the morrow. And fear Allah; verily Allah is well aware of what you do.’<sup>1</sup>

This commandment of God Almighty is for both men and women. This verse is one of the verses recited at the occasion of *Nikah* [Islamic marriage announcement].

Both men and women are advised to tread the path of righteousness while keeping the morrow in mind. It is common knowledge that the root cause of every immorality or sin lies in careless attitude towards understanding what God Almighty and His Prophet<sup>sa</sup> desires from us. No effort is made to understand the commandments given in the Holy Quran, whereas, the Holy Quran provides us with complete guidance for leading our lives.

God Almighty says that if you are a believer, both men and women should keep this basic principle in mind that you must tread the path of righteousness and lead your life accordingly. You should always worry about the morrow and your future. Such worry of the future should not be about worldly desires, but it should be the worry about your moral and spiritual well-being: how to stay faithful to God Almighty, how to always show loyalty to God Almighty and make His commandments an essential aspect of your daily life. Once this sense of concern becomes a part of your lives, only then will we be able to live our lives like a believer and only then will we be able to adorn our life in the hereafter. Once we make it a firm resolve and a part of our faith that this world is only temporary and the hereafter is the real and everlasting life, once we have a firm faith on the accountability of our actions in the hereafter, once we have firm faith that God is Almighty and the Knower of the hidden and the apparent and that He even knows our secrets and what lies deep down in the recesses of our hearts, and that He is All-aware of the seen and the unseen, then we must carefully ponder over these words of God Almighty that ‘every soul look to what it sends forth for the morrow’. Ponder over what have you done to please God Almighty and what have you done to secure the future generation? The morrow should not be only the next day of our own life or the hereafter but it also pertains to our children: to raise them piously, to raise them with the highest morals, to raise them with a firm resolve in their faith, to raise them as a loyal citizen and to make them excel in every way of life. This would not only adorn their lives in this world, and their lives in the hereafter and to earn the pleasure of God Almighty, but it will also make us deserving of its reward owing to the good upbringing we provided

them. God Almighty does not let any good deed go by without a reward, then how could He not reward you for the works that you purely do to follow His commandment? Leaving behind pious children who pray for us will also adorn our future because they will continue our good deeds and pray for us and this will become a means of elevating our ranks in the hereafter.

Therefore, the morrow which God Almighty has told to us to be concerned about and stated that we should ponder over what we send forth for the morrow has a broad meaning. The morrow pertains to our future life in this world and the hereafter. It pertains to the commandment of shaping our own and the next generation's life. God Almighty has shown us the path of earning His pleasure by this one commandment. However, a worldly person could never reach this level. A world loving person will only think about accumulating wealth and property and is not concerned about his spirituality or God Almighty's pleasure.

A true believer is however commanded that although it is permissible to enjoy the worldly favours of God Almighty, however it is wrong to only indulge in them and to not be concerned about your spiritual life. If you failed to raise your children well, they will eat away and waste all your wealth in no time. If they are not raised well they will indulge in wrong habits and ultimately be caught by the law enforcement. At that moment wealth and money will not be of any use. The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> used to narrate an incident in this regard. He said:

'A young boy was very dear to his mother. It was his habit to be mischievous, indulge in wrongful acts and to harm people. Then he started stealing here and there. People used to grab him and bring him to his mother but she would always side with him. She knowingly covered up his actions. She would say, 'Nothing happened, it is not like my child to do such thing, you are only blaming him.' This child grew up while committing wrongs, encouraged by his mother's wrongful love and spoiling. He excelled in his wrong habits only to become a thief and a murderer. One day at last the law caught him. He was sentenced 'To be hanged till death'. At the time of his execution he was asked if he had a last wish. He said my one last wish is to bring in my mother. When his mother came near she asked about his last wish. He said, 'Mother I am going to die now but before I die I would like to kiss your tongue'. His mother protruded her tongue so he could kiss it but he bit it so violently that half of her tongue was severed. The mother started screaming and crying and people condemned him on this act of hurting his mother in his last moments. Hearing this he said, 'Whenever I did wrong and people brought me to my mother, instead of admonishing me or guiding me, she unjustly covered up my wrong actions. I got encouraged so much so that I became a hardened criminal. Had she guided me right, showed anger on such actions, admonished me or punished me, I would have not seen this day. Therefore a mother and her tongue that kept encouraging me on my wrong actions should have ended exactly in the way it did.'"<sup>ii</sup>

This is a great lesson for those mothers who get caught in the moment and spoil their children and don't think about their own future or their child's future. They only worry about accumulating wealth or acquiring the luxuries of this life. Thousands of people go

bankrupt every year including successful businessmen. Their parents had left them wealth and property for them. They take equity loans and these repeated loans render them empty handed and even totally impoverished. Then they commit suicide or indulge in wrongful acts. Had they been raised with right guidance they would have developed a balanced nature and would not have been consumed with worldly provisions. They could have enjoyed the pleasures of this world and at the same time elevated their spiritual level. If we see some children of non-Ahmadi women raised in this manner we can say that it is due to lack of any arrangement for their children's moral training. However an Ahmadi woman who has accepted the Imam of the age, has a responsibility that she should elevate her own spirituality and raise her children in a manner that they give precedence to their faith over the world.

One can argue that there are many people who are well off and prosperous in this world. They start out being rich from the wealth they have acquired from their ancestors and continue to become wealthier with time. They are fraudulent in their business pursuits and have other vices and yet they are never caught? So here God Almighty has pointed out that we should worry about the morrow because no doubt some people stay in a good condition however you, who claim to be a believer, you, who claim to have accepted the Imam of the age, you, who claim that you have accepted the true servant of our beloved Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> and you who claim that after taking *Bai'at* at his hand, you have acquired the means for your reformation, then you should in particular be mindful for the morrow and what you are preparing for the hereafter.

Those who have neither faith nor spirituality show no concern in regards to their future or the hereafter. They are actually helpless and excusable because they consider this world to be everything and they do not watch for their spiritual well-being in the hereafter. God Almighty says that there awaits a life after death and if someone escapes punishment for their wrongs in this world they will certainly be held accountable for it in the next.

However, you, who claim to be spiritual, must prepare for both worlds. We, who claim to belong to the community of the one who is commissioned by God Almighty; we, who firmly believe in the finality of the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup>, that he is the final law bearing prophet and the book revealed to him is a complete guidance for us to reform in this life and the next, we must bring about a pious change in our lives and we must strive to follow all the commandments. We must become role models for our next generation so that our future, our progeny consists of those who continue to earn God Almighty's pleasure.

Islam has placed the primary responsibility on mothers for training our next generation. It is women who can secure the future of not only one generation but also of the subsequent generation. If a woman does not understand God Almighty's commandments or does not even make an effort to understand it, then we cannot guarantee that the next generation will have any moral training.

Our beloved Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> has pointed out the high status of a true Muslim women. His statement was not something that was merely said out of extreme emotion and nor an

ordinary statement, in fact, he has given a purpose of life to women by this statement and thus secured the future generation's reform in this world and the hereafter. In one sentence he placed women on the highest most status and drew their attention towards their responsibility. He said:

'Paradise lies under the feet of the mothers.'<sup>iii</sup>

In this sentence, on one hand he gave a glad tiding to women regarding their high status, and on the other a warning that if a mother does not carry paradise under her feet she carries hell the example of which I have given you in the incident of the thief and murderer.

Thus, paradise lies under the mother's feet because due to her upbringing the child grows up to be a good citizen, he grows up to be an asset for his nation and he grows to be a person who gives precedence to his faith over this world. It should also be remembered here that the moral upbringing is blessed only when the mother is also praying. By watching their mother praying children will also be inclined to pray. So the training should not only be an outward training but it is also important for a mother to pray so that they develop a strong relation with God Almighty.

No doubt that fathers should also keep in mind that their spiritual level and their standard of worship should be very high because after a certain age boys do start looking up to their fathers. I receive many letters from children, however, who say that our mother's pious influence and guidance is affecting us however our father neither pays attention to us nor to our mother. Children do complain about such behaviour and sadly some of them end up spoiled, although a large number of them are still saved by their mother's prayers. Therefore, if mothers have made up their mind and have a firm resolve that they are going to save their children from being wasted, they have to tread the path of righteousness then the children will also remain attached to their faith even when the husband is non cooperative, cruel or displays a wrongful attitude.

So I would say this to the fathers that they should also play their part in making their home like paradise. Don't place the sole responsibility on mothers. When men express their love at home and fulfil their responsibilities then a mother's pious training is more fruitful. Mothers however should not hold on to this excuse now, that since their men are not cooperative therefore they are helpless. As I have said earlier there are many families where despite the wrong attitude of the fathers, the children grow up to be well trained in in religion as well as good citizens owing to their mother's efforts.

Boys who are well trained by mothers will grow up to become husbands and fathers who perform righteous deeds. They would possess high morals and they will be helping their wives make their home like paradise. Thus, if mothers could not control one generation because they have no influence over the fathers, they can still control the next generation, by training their boys to become good future fathers and husbands. And by training their daughters well, they will be raising future mothers who will carry paradise under their feet.

Hence, this is a huge responsibility that Islam places on the believers, and our Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> has described this in such a beautiful and profound manner. Therefore, our women and girls should always keep this in mind.

In Germany a press representative asked that these days a huge issue has been raised in regards to why women cannot become the Imams of the mosque. I explained to her that a woman is excused from worship and saying prayers during certain days and in certain circumstances. Besides, in Islam there is a division of responsibilities among men and women. Islam assigns some tasks to men and others to women. Furthermore, while Islam instructs a man to help out his wife in the daily household chores, as is evident from the life and practice of our beloved Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup>, however it never advised a woman that she must also help in men's responsibilities. We learn from the traditions of the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup>, how he used to help his wives in their household chores.<sup>iv</sup> So I explained that Islam excuses women from fulfilling certain commandments in specific circumstances. However, those commandments are such that an Imam cannot be exempt from and must perform those duties. Besides, Islam has division of tasks relating to men and women.

Also, the Muslims don't show concern as much as the non-Muslims do by taking up this issue and it is they who distort and project this issue of *Imamat* [leading prayer] and speak all sorts in regards to it. In fact, the status which Islam has given to women is much higher than leading the prayers. The Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> says:

'Paradise lies under the feet of your mothers.'

An Imam who leads the prayers cannot guarantee that those who are following him in prayers will be sent to heaven! On the contrary such narrations are found that if a wrong thought crosses the Imam's mind then he bears the burden of wrong thoughts of all those following him. How would he guarantee heaven for them? A woman on the other hand is someone who in respect of being a mother prepares good Imams for the future and thus leads them to heaven. She raises men to become good citizens. She raises men to be good scientists. She raises one to be a good leader of the nation. Therefore, the status of women is much higher in Islam. A true Muslim woman, an Ahmadi Muslim woman, therefore, should have no inferiority complex.

Recently, this news report was widely promoted where a Muslim woman has built a Mosque in Germany where the Imam would be a woman. Men and women will offer their prayers together. Also, women will not have to cover their heads and they would not be required to wear scarves. She announced her intention to come to the UK and do the same.

These issues are raised out of a lack of understanding of the religion and because of an inferiority complex in women. Anything that is introduced into faith and goes against the teachings of God and His Prophet<sup>sa</sup> is considered a [harmful] innovation. These innovations are brought into religion out of ignorance. Or it could be a well thought out scheme by the opponents of Islam who seek to conspire and cause disintegration in Islam. The other religions are already disintegrated and it hurts them to see that Islam is

still in its original form. Therefore this is an effort to corrupt Islam. The Holy Quran claims that Islam has always been protected, its commandments are everlasting and God Almighty will continue to always protect it.

This is not easy for the powers working against Islam to accept. Thus they are trying, and will continue, to introduce innovations in Islam. Once the Holy Quran has clearly stated that a woman should dress modestly and cover herself, then introducing the notions that scarves are not required, lengthy and loose modest clothes are not required any more or women need not hide their embellishments any more, are nothing but an effort to distort Islam. Furthermore, it is also wrong for men and women to stand together and pray. Once God Almighty has commanded separation of gender during prayers then there is no need to be influenced by the opponents of Islam and do things otherwise. The worldly people, who are spiritually blind, could never grasp the significance of following God's commandments.

Once a leader of a political party came here to visit me and asked that will there ever come a time when men and women will pray together? I told him that such time is not awaited but has already occurred a long while ago. In the time of the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup>, prayers were said in the same room. Men used to stand in the front rows while women stood behind them. This method could still be practiced if the circumstances require. However, now women have themselves felt the need to say prayers in separate halls so that they are free during prayers and when they are not offering prayers they could freely sit with their scarves off their heads. I also told him that not all men have the same thoughts. Prayer is worship and if we stand our women in front rows or alongside with us then most of the men would be watching the women instead of focusing on their prayers. He laughed and said, 'You are absolutely right.' I came to know later that this political leader has been repeating my answer in his future meetings and agreed that this answer was very logical and based on truth.

Therefore those people who deviate and try to introduce [harmful] innovations in Islam are wrong. They are actually mocking their own religion. In the name of Islam they are saying these things while they call themselves Muslims. They are making a mockery of their own religion and this is due to a lack of knowledge about religion and sheer ignorance. Muslims were bound to come to this stage because the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup>, prophesied that Muslims one day will act like this.

The other extreme end of Muslims is those who perpetrate cruelties against women in the name of Islam and the woman is highly abused and has no value. This is why God Almighty sent an Imam in this age, who is the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> and the Imam Mahdi so that the excesses introduced or deficiencies in the practice of Islam, taught by different Islamic scholars which thus led Muslims to be either too lenient or too extreme could be rectified. These [harmful] innovations are being introduced in the teachings of Islam for either personal convenience or at the other extreme to impose too many restrictions.

Whatever wrongs had been introduced were to be corrected by the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup>. Both these extremes of Muslims were to be shown the right path by the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup>, and he did. So we Ahmadis are fortunate to have accepted him. After accepting the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup>, if we still have an inferiority complex or show weakness in giving precedence to our faith over this world, then it is a cause of great concern and a point of embarrassment. Always remember that the word of God will prevail and is without any flaw.

The man made laws and regulations could never be free of defects. Recently we heard that a lady from Sweden, who organises musical concerts on a large scale, has announced that at their annual concert this year only women will be invited to the concert. Men will not be invited. Her reason was that in the past years they experienced that men showed absurd behaviour and degraded women, so much so that it ended up in a rape.

This is the consequence of mixed gatherings. That is why Islam teaches us that if you see a remote possibility of such disorder, you should avoid it. Now those who level objections against Islam are accepting the fact that in some situations separation of gender is wise. In some places a possibility of making separate organizations for men and women are talked about. This worldly society is also sensing the need of separating the men and women. Those who level allegations against us regarding the segregation of genders are now accepting this fact that in some situations separation is a must.<sup>v</sup> Therefore, an Ahmadi woman should strongly believe that our teaching is the one that will triumph and their efforts in the name of freedom of women will only fail.

The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> further explained the need to keep men and women separate in the light of the Islamic teachings. He says:

‘This is the philosophy that underlies the Islamic regulations relating to the observance of the veil. The Book of God does not aim at keeping women in seclusion like prisoners. This is the concept of those who are not acquainted with the correct pattern of Islamic ways. The purpose of these regulations is to restrain men and women from letting their eyes to rove freely and from displaying their good looks and beauties, for therein lies the good both of men and of women.’

The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> further states:

It should be remembered that to restrain one’s looks and to direct them only towards observing that which is permissible is described in Arabic by the expression *ghadd-e-basar*, which is the expression employed in the Holy Quran in this context.<sup>vi</sup>

At the time of need if you must look at each other it should be with semi-opened eyes. But mostly one should keep their eyes cast down. To avoid glancing improperly is also called, *ghadd-e-basar*. The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> further states:

‘Those who insist on the issue of relaxation of *Purdah* [veil] and raise slogans in the name of women’s freedom should know that this would only cause evil and disobedience.

This will drive you away from your religion and gradually you will be caught in other vices.’

The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> further said:

If freedom of sexes has helped increase their chastity and virtue, we will readily confess that we were mistaken.’

The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> further stated:

‘Look at men, how unbridled their behaviour is! (The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> has also admonished men here and described their state). They have neither fear of God nor faith in the hereafter. They only worship mundane pleasures. Thus, it is necessary therefore, that before granting such freedom as is being advocated, the moral condition of men should be improved and rectified. After men have developed enough self-temperance to restrain control their passions, you may consider whether the veil is necessary or not. To insist upon unrestricted freedom in the present circumstances would be like putting sheep at the mercy of lions.’<sup>vii</sup>

The lady who organises the concerts has said exactly the same thing that the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> mentioned. She said we couldn’t have men and women together until the men understand and assure us that women will be respected and men will fully control their passions. Today this voice has been raised, and though it has come from those who are related to the music and dance industry, but still someone has realized the dangers of bringing men and women together. Those teachings given by our religion many hundred years ago, and about one hundred and twenty five years ago the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> expounded upon them, are finally understood by these people who have experienced for themselves that shamelessness has become widespread. One day they will have to fully agree that this it is the teaching of Islam that is everlasting and grants the guidance to mankind to remain in the boundaries of humanity.

Therefore, a true Muslim woman should have no inferiority complex. We cannot board on two boats or we will be drowned. Once you have taken the pledge to give precedence to your faith over worldly pursuits then you have to follow the commandments of God Almighty.

God Almighty says that the men should cast their gaze down and this injunction is given to men first. They have to practice *ghadd-e-basar* and refrain from looking at women unnecessarily. They should avoid attending women’s gatherings. Only by following this commandment can the men avoid further vices and shape their world and their hereafter.

After that God Almighty says to women that they should lower their gaze and are not to expose their embellishments to men and maintain their sanctity. Thus, once women follow this commandment, only then would they keep themselves and their next generations on the path of modesty.



So when I say this to women that they should set high standards in their worship, morals and also adopt modesty in their dressing and become models for their children and thus secure their future, I say this to men as well that they should also become a model for their children. And, particularly those men and women who are office-bearers, they should set high standards for their children. Simply holding an office and working for Lajna is not enough. They have to be mindful of these issues. They have to become role models for their own household and for those working under them.

These days the Burqa has taken many forms. Some people button up only up to their abdomen area and leave the rest open to expose their outfits. They make these Burqas by cutting the cloth tangentially and revealing their outfits. In the time of the Hazrat Musleh-e-Maud<sup>ra</sup> objections were also levelled against such style of Burqas. At the time Hazrat Musleh-e-Maud<sup>ra</sup> said:

‘Some Burqas are open from the front showing the outfits.’ Even in those days people objected just like nowadays people object to certain Burqa designs being too tight from the back. Hazrat Musleh-e-Maud<sup>ra</sup> stated:

‘I have received complaints from people that the Burqas are either open from the front or they are inappropriate from the back.’

And so, Hazrat Musleh-e-Maud<sup>ra</sup> advised the Lajna by saying:

‘You should design your Burqa yourselves as you know how to design them but in a way so that they properly cover and are also convenient.’<sup>viii</sup>

Today, again we have the same need that these Burqa should serve the purpose of modesty as well as be convenient to manage during work. If you leave your clothes open for display then don’t expect that men will keep their eyes down. They will examine you from head to toe. Some married couples and families are already suffering the consequences of these issues. Therefore, I would like to advise you that instead of racing in the trends and fashions of this world you should excel in the race of religion.

Adorn yours and your children’s future in this world and in the hereafter. Once you give precedence to God Almighty over everything else and in every aspect of your life, then God Almighty promises in the Holy Quran:

وَلِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ جَنَّاتٌ

[But for him who fears to stand before his Lord, are two Gardens.]<sup>ix</sup>

Expounding on this verse, the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> says:

‘Those who reach out to God Almighty with truth and sincerity are never wasted and they are blessed with the favours of God Almighty in both worlds. Just like God Almighty said:

وَلِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ جَنَّاتٌ

[For him who fears to stand before his Lord, are two Gardens.]<sup>x</sup>

This has been stated so that no one should think that by coming towards Me (i.e. going towards God Almighty) one would have to give up everything in this world. Instead they would inherit two paradises; one in this world and the other in the hereafter.<sup>xi</sup>

Thus we have to remember that God Almighty wants us to keep our eyes on the morrow. Thus we would be able to inherit the paradise of this world as well as the next. God Almighty does not limit the freedom of women. God Almighty desires that men and women stay within their own sphere of responsibilities and thus create an atmosphere of paradise in this world and also inherit the paradise of the afterlife by treading on the paths that enable them to earn His pleasure.

May God Almighty enable everyone to live in a way that their actions become a source of God's pleasure and they inherit paradise in both worlds!

Please join me silent in prayer.

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i The Holy Qur'an, 59:19.

ii Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad<sup>as</sup>, *Malfuzat*, Vol. 2, (UK, 1985), p.373.

iii Ali ibn Abd-al-Malik al-Hindi, *Kanz al-Ummal*, Vol.6, (Dar Al Kotob Al Ilmiyah Beirut Lebanon, 2004), Hadith no. 45431.

iv *Sahihul Bukhari*, Kitab ul Adab Baab Kaifa Yakunu Al-Rajalu fi Ahlehi, Hadith no. 6039.

v "Sweden To Hold 'Man-Free' Music Festival". 2017. *BBC News*.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-40504452>.

vi Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad<sup>as</sup>, *The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam*, Ruhani Khazain, Vol.10, p.344.

vii Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad<sup>as</sup>, *Malfuzat*, Vol. 7, (UK, 1985), pp.134-136.

viii Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmood<sup>ra</sup>, *Mastoorat se Khitaab*, Anwar ul Uloom, Vol.12, pp. 560-561).

ix The Holy Qur'an, 55:47.

x The Holy Qur'an, 55:47.

xi Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad<sup>as</sup>, *Malfuzat*, Vol. 10, (UK, 1985), p.78.