IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE GRACIOUS, THE MERCIFUL

**TOPIC: OBEDIENCE TO AUTHORITY; A NECESSITY FOR TAQWA**.

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**And they swear by Allah their strongest oaths that, if thou command them, they will surely go forth. Say, ‘Swear not; *what is required is actual*obedience in what is right. Surely, Allah is well aware of what you do.’** *(Al-Nur, 24:54)*

Respected Sadr Sahib, Majlis Khudamul Ahmadiyya Ghana, All invited Sadran and Honored Guests of the Promised Messiah*(as)*: Assalamu Aliakum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuhu!

The topic of my Dars is **Obedience to Authority*; A necessity for Taqwa***. A good understanding of this topic is critical to peace and harmony in our community and to our individual moral and spiritual success. I have therefore divided my Dars into two sub-topics, **Taqwa and Obedience to Authority**.

Before I move on to discuss these sub-topics, I’m reminded of a very noble person in the Jama’at and his high level of obedience, he was in the person of our late Ameer sahib Maulana Dr. Abdul Wahab Adam sahib of blessed memory. Maulana was fortunate to be the Ameer of our present khalifa, when he was posted here to serve under the Nuzrat Jahan scheme. Huzur, the then Mirza Masroor Ahmad will serve and obey the Ameer of Ghana (Maulana Wahab Adam sahib). Here comes the interesting part, when Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad was elected as the Khalifa, Maulana Wahab sahib never disobeyed a word of the Khalifa, someone who was under him for 8 years but suddenly becomes his superior, many of us would have harbored that pride in us, that he was under me and so why should I obey him. Maulana sahib was an epitome of true obedience to the Khalifa that Huzur will praise his obedience to Khilafat.

Huzur said about him that, ‘He operated on every gesture of the Khalifa of the time and accepted every decision of the Khalifa of the time with complete conviction and not only every instruction, big or small, but he used to be deeply concerned to even fulfil every wish of the Khalifa of the time. Huzoor worked with him for eight years in Ghana and found him so and also found him so when Huzoor became Khalifatul Masih.’

I turn to the sub-topics having given this perfect example of our revered father.s

1. **What is Taqwa?**

The word **“Taqwa”** is derived from the verb waqa, which literally means to preserve, protect, safeguard, shield, etc. The Arabic word taqwa means “forbearance, fear and abstinence.

In Tafsir ibn Kathir, tafseer of Surah Al Baqarah, Verse: 2, vol. 1 pg. 255



It was reported that ‘Umar ibn Khattab (radiyallahu ‘anhu) asked Ubayy ibn Ka’b (radiyallahu ‘anhu) about Taqwa. In reply Ka’b (radiyallahu ‘anhu) asked ‘Umar (radiyallahu ‘anhu), “O Leader of the believers, what do you do when you have to pass through a thorny road?” ‘Umar (radiyallahu ‘anhu) replied, “I lift my cloth up to my calves and watch my footsteps and take each step slowly from the fear of thorns lest they don’t prick me”. Ka’b (radiyallahu ‘anhu) said, “This is Taqwa”.

This tells us as a muslim and an Ahmadi to be precise, you have to always be ready to pass through all forms of difficulties and tries for the sake of Allah keeping in mind His pleasure and not breaking his commandments because of the condition you find yourself in.

In the 5th conditions of Bia’at, the Promised Messiah (as) states:

That he/she shall remain faithful to God in all circumstances of life, in sorrow and in happiness, in adversity and in prosperity, in felicity and in trial; and that he/she shall in all conditions remain resigned to the decree of God and keep himself/herself ready to face all kinds of indignities and sufferings in His way and shall never turn away from Him at the onslaught of any misfortune; on the contrary, he/she shall march forward.

The promised Messiah (as) writes:

A loved one of God sells his being in the way of God. In return, he earns the pleasure of God. Such are the ones upon whom the special mercy of God descends. (Islami Usul ki philosophy, Ruhani Khaza’in, vol. 10, p. 473)

**Sadr Sahib**, according to the Oxford Dictionary of Islam, the word taqwa and its derivatives appear “more than 250 times” in the Qur’an. Also, according to religious scholars, the term Taqwa is the most emphasized command given to the believers in the Quranic Scripture as well as Hadith. In fact, it is so commonly repeated that no other command comes with so much reinforcement and emphasis. As for Holy Prophet Muhammadsaw, he often emphasized on the importance of being muttaqin, during his address to the believers.

Explaining the definition of the word ‘Taqwa’, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmadatbasaid:

***“Taqwa means to have the love and fear of Allah the Almighty inculcated in one’s heart, and to dwell on the thought that, ‘Allah the Almighty is watching me’ before starting any and every task. ‘Those who do good’ are those who possess knowledge of virtuous matters and carry out good deeds.”***

God has made Taqwa (righteousness) a basic condition for a believer. Countless verses of the Holy Qur’an give various commandments to adopt it and maintain/uphold it. The Qur’an has called those who follow these commandments as Muttaqi (righteous) and has warned those who do not practice them about their ending.

 Its summarised definition as gleaned from the Holy Qur’an is to give precedence to the pleasure of God over everything else and to consider God as One and Incomparable and the Source of all powers. Taqwa is to pay God’s rights and in order to seek His pleasure, also pay the rights of His creation.

The Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) wrote:

‘It is obvious that to be mindful of the trusts of God Almighty, and to fulfil all the covenants of faith, and to employ all faculties and limbs both overt, like eyes and ears and hands and feet and others like them, and those that are covert, like the mind and other faculties and qualities, on their proper occasions and to restrain them from coming into action on improper occasions, and to be warned against the subtle attacks of vice and to be mindful of the rights of one’s fellow beings, is the way of perfecting one’s spiritual beauty.’ [Brahin-e-Ahmadiyya, Part V, Ruhani Khaza’in, vol. 21, pp. 209. Essence of Islam Vol. II p.348)

In surah Al-Baqarah, in the beginning Allah the Almighty has mentioned that this Quran is a book in which there is no doubt and in it there is guidance for those who possess Taqwa. (2:3)

In Surah Ash-Shuara, Chapter 26 Verse 132 and multiple other verses, there are various stories of different Prophets and at the end of each, every Prophets is making a sincere effort to address his people and bring them to the path of Taqwa and belief in Allah the Almighty and righteousness. They say;



‘So, fear Allah, and obey me. (26:132)

 Obeying the Prophet means obeying all those people the Prophet has assigned different duties and responsibilities to and they are those who are in Authority.

That brings us to the second part of my Dars which is **Obedience to Authority**.

**What is Obedience?**

Obedience means compliance, submission, agreement, duty, respect, and deference. According to the Holy Qur’an, the hallmark of true believers is:



**We hear and we obey.***(2:286)*

This attitude of ‘hear and obey’ is not under any duress. The context of this verse proves that this trait of true believers is a natural outcome of their belief in Allah, His Angels, His Books, and His Messengers. The history of prophets and their disciples indicates that the level and demonstration of this trait of obedience is directly proportional to their level of belief and conviction.

A mere proclamation of belief or allegiance is for naught unless it is accompanied by complete obedience. Allah tells the Holy Prophet*sa*to admonish his followers:

**Swear not; *what is required is actual*obedience in what is right.***(24:54)*

At another place in the Holy Qur’an, Allah says:

**O ye who believe! Obey Allah, and obey His Messenger and those who are in authority among you.** *(4:60).*

Therefore, complete obedience to the Authorities is incumbent on Ahmadi Muslims after their *bai’at*. Which in other words means obedience to the Nizam-e- Jama’at (The Jama’at System). The 10th Condition of Bai’at reads:

He/She shall enter into a bond of brotherhood with this humble servant of God, pledging obedience to me in everything good, for the sake of God, and remain faithful to it till the day of his/her death. He/She shall exert such a high devotion in the observance of this bond as is not to be found in any other worldly relationship and connection that demand devoted dutifulness.

Explaining this condition of *bai’at*, Hazrat Khalifatul Masihil Khamis*(ab)*says:

1. You should be mindful that this bond does not remain inactive, rather it should become stronger every day.
2. You have to be obedient without grumbling. You never have the right to say that such and such cannot be done or that you cannot do such and such at this time.

**Brothers in Islam Ahmadiyya**, are we able to demonstrate this level obedience. It is rather unfortunate that, sometimes, directives come from our beloved Huzur, from our Ameer Sahib, from Sadr Sahib, and down to the local office holder. And our response to those directives is’ we hear and we disobey’. We would sit in our comfort homes, in front our children, the young ones and even at times in the presence of non-Ahmadis and make all sought of ill comments. At the end even if we act on the directive, but it will be deprived of taqwa.

Admonishing those who took the *bai’at*on March 23, 1889, the Promised Messiah*(as)*said:

To utter these words (of *bai’at*) is easy, but to do justice to them is hard because Satan is always busy trying to make man careless about his faith. Satan shows the world and its benefits to be within reach, and faith to be distant. In this way, the heart is hardened and each subsequent condition is worse than the previous one. *(Dhikr-e-Habib, pp. 436-438)*

Therefore, after taking real *bai’at*, we are naturally obligated to obey the Nizam-e- Jama’at.

**Sadr Sahib**, in Jama’at Ahmadiyya the only way we can practice this beautiful Quranic teaching of Obedience to the Authority is by obeying the Nizam-e-Jama’at (The Jama’at System). However, it is easier said than done, especially, if obedience requires doing something against our own desires and expectations. In our daily lives, Obedience to Nizam-e-Jama’at (The Jama’at System) practically boils down to respect and obedience of a local office holder of the Nizam-e-Jama’at (The Jama’at System). And, if Satan has his way, personal ego, vanity and jealousy get in the way of such obedience, either in the form of a superiority complex about one’s knowledge and righteousness, or a victim mentality of some perceived unjust treatment, or some personal differences. In such situations, a couple of hadith should be kept in mind.

Hazrat Anas*(ra)*relates that the Holy Prophet*(as)*said:

Hear and obey even if a Negro slave, whose head is like a grape, is placed in authority over you. *(Bukhari)*

This hadith implies that, if we don’t have this level of obedience, we not only disrespect and disobey such a person, we also disrespect and disobey the System that put him or her in authority.

Similarly, Hazrat Abu Hurairah*(ra)*relates that the Holy Prophet*(as)*said:

You are obligated to hear and obey in prosperity and adversity, willingly or unwillingly, and even when you are treated unjustly. *(Muslim)*

To practice this level of obedience, we should separate our personal differences from the Nizam-e-Jama’at. Of course, we must resolve our personal differences sooner rather than later and do so within the Nizam-e-Jama’at. However, in the meantime, if we are unable to respect an officer as a person, we must respect and obey him or her as a face of the Nizam-e-Jama’at.

As Ahmadi Muslims, we are all members of this System and many of us also serve this Nizam in one capacity or another. So, let us review what is expected of us as members and then as officers.

**As Members of the Nizam-e-Jama’at**, we should not only obey this Nizam but we should strive to establish and strengthen it through active participation, preferring its interests over all personal interests. We should discourage all cynicism about it, remembering that obedience is inextricably tied to respect and reverence.  **And as those in authority**, we should strive to uphold the beautiful and good image of Jama’at and try to be sincere in discharging our duties.

**Dear brothers in Islam**, those people in the Authority may not be perfect, but they are the best we have. They offer a lot of sacrifices and take on a lot of grief out of their goodness for the love of Allah and this System. We should remember that they face the same struggles and frustrations of daily life as we do. We should help them in their services and pray for them to do better. In this regards, the following two hadith are very insightful and instructive.

Hazrat Ibn Abbas*(ra)*relates that the Holy Prophet*(as)*said:

If a person experiences something unpleasant at the hands of a ruler he should bear it with equanimity, for he who departs from obedience a hand’s breadth dies in error. *(Bukhari and Muslim)*

Similarly, Hazrat Auf bin Malik*(ra)*relates that the Holy Prophet*(as)*said:

Your best rulers will be those whom you love and who love you, and for whom you pray and who pray for you; and your worst rulers will be those whom you hate and who hate you, and whom you curse and who curse you. *(Muslim)*

On this point, the Promised Messiah*(as)*said:

If the ruler is a cruel person, you should not go about talking ill of him; you should try to reform yourselves and make yourselves better in every way. God will remove him or make him a better man. Whatever hardship a man passes through, it is the outcome of his own evil deeds. Otherwise so far as a believer is concerned God is with him.



God Himself provides him with everything. My advice to you is that you should become a model of every virtue. *(Malfoozat,Vol 2)*

Therefore, if we are true believers, we should love, respect and pray for all officers and servants of this System.

 **Sadr Sahib**, In Islam obedience to the Authority is a religious duty. The Qur’an commands Muslims to remain faithful to not only Allah and the Prophet Muhammad(sa), but also the authority they live under as stated in Ch. 4: V. 60, that;

O ye who believe! obey Allah, and obey His Messenger and those who are in authority over you ([Ch.4: V.60](https://www.alislam.org/quran/4%3A60)).

 The Prophet Muhammad(sa) stressed this point when he said:

 ‘One who obeys his authority, obeys me. One who disobeys his authority, disobeys me.’ (Muslim)

Our Beloved Huzur Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad(atba), has also explained:

 ‘A true Muslim can never raise his voice in hatred against his fellow citizens, nor for that matter against the ruling authority or government of the time. It is the responsibility of a true Muslim that he should remain loyal and fully abide by the laws of the land of which he is a subject.’ (Baitul Futuh Inauguration Reception, 11 Oct 2003)

This makes clear that according to Islam Muslims must obey those in Authority as anything to the contrary would mean that they are not obeying their Prophet or their religion.

If one believes in the Hereafter and wishes for a ‘good end’, then along with Allah and His Prophet (sa), one needs to obey ‘those in authority’ and should, no matter what the situation is, let go of disobedience. Those in Authority should also realize that if the standards of obedience need to be raised, then they need to adopt [this] principle as well.

The standard and speed of progress of a people is linked to the level of obedience of those people. When ever the level of obedience declines, so does the speed of progress. In the case of divinely established communities, there is also a reduction in the spiritual growth. That is why Allah has laid great stress on the subject of obedience in the Holy Quran.

May Allah Almighty enable us all to demonstrate higher level of obedience to the Authorities and may He enable us to be Muttaqin (Righteous) . Ameen Thuma Ameen…………………..