

# Friday Sermon: Humility: A pre-requisite for patience and prayers

**June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

‘And seek help with patience and Prayer; and this indeed is hard except for the humble in spirit, Who know for certain that they will meet their Lord, and that to Him will they return.’ (2:46 – 47)

In order to attain Divine nearness the basic matter that these verses, and many others in the Holy Qur’an, draw our attention to is humility and humbleness. The basis of all the commandments necessary to attain pleasure of God is humility and humbleness. Or, it could be said that following commandments of God takes one to humility and humbleness and these traits are certainly inculcated in a true believer if he follows God’s commandments.

Elucidating ‘...and it increases humility in them.’ [\(17:110\)](#) the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) says that the Word of God enhances humility and meekness in them.

When a believer claims to believe in God and to read the Word of God and says that he follow it in his practices, he cannot truly accomplish these unless he is humble and meek or unless owing to his humility and humbleness his worship of God and other deeds attain high standards. Prophets of God have come in this world to propagate this objective and they led by their own blessed examples. Among all the Prophets of God the supreme example is that of the blessed model of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him).

The Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) said: ‘Allah the Exalted is Ever Merciful and Compassionate. He nurtures man in every way and has mercy on him. It is by virtue of His mercy that He sends His Apostles and Messengers so that they may save people of the world from sinful life. However, arrogance is a most dangerous affliction. It brings about spiritual death for the person in whom it is instilled. I know for certain that this affliction is worse than murder. An arrogant person becomes Satan’s brother because it was arrogance which disgraced Satan. Therefore, it is conditional for a believer that he should not have any arrogance. On the contrary, he should have humility, meekness and modesty. God’s Apostles are exclusive in this regard; they have extreme humility and humbleness. More than the others, this characteristic was paramount in the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him). One of his servants was asked as to how did the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) treat him. He replied that the truth was that the Prophet served him more than the servant served him. Bless O Allah Muhammad and the people of Muhammad and grant him blessings and security. This is a supreme example of morals and humility. It is true that among one’s associates it is mostly those who serve/servants who are present around one most of the time. Therefore, if one needs to ascertain someone’s humility, humbleness, forbearance and tolerance, it can be found out from them.’ (Translated from Malfuzat, Vol. 8, p. 101)

This is the blessed model which the Muslim Ummah are advised to follow. When the Holy Qur’an enjoins us to follow God’s commandments, the perfect example of this is illustrated in the person of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him). With reference to his lofty standard of worship, God has stated that he should declare that his worship is only for the

sake of God and he did not wish to seek anything for himself through his worship of God. The level of the declaration: ‘Say, **‘My Prayer and my sacrifice and my life and my death are all for Allah, the Lord of the worlds.’** (6:163) is so high that none other than the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) could reach it. God states about patience: **‘But none is granted that save those who are steadfast; and none is granted that except the one who possesses a large share of excellence.’** (41:36) When we read about the life of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) we note his matchless and supremely lofty examples in matters of domestic problems and troubles, physical problems and troubles and communal problems and troubles.

He demonstrated an exemplary model of patience in Taif and saved the city from destruction although God had given him a choice. However, in spite of being injured and in spite of the troublemakers [of Taif], he said no. Weary of being persecuted, when his own followers requested him to pray against a certain body of people, he prayed for the guidance of those people and thus advised his followers to be patient and taught them that the real recompense was not through praying against them, but by praying for their guidance and by demonstrating high standards of patience. The exemplary humility of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) is evident in each instance. In this regard, the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) said: ‘We have been given a perfect model to attain nearness to God Almighty. And God has commanded us to emulate it and has also given us various directives and has stated that if we follow them we will attain His nearness.’

Along with these directives and the perfect model God has also signified that His nearness can be attained if humility and humbleness are adopted. This can be gained by following the blessed model of that person who had once assured someone who was under his influence not to be perturbed because he too was a human like him who had suckled his mother and his mother ate ordinary food and lived like ordinary people.

The verses recited at the start illustrate adopting humility and ways to gain nearness to God. It is stated that God’s nearness will be attained if high levels of humility is adopted. Besides, one cannot abide by the commandments of God if one does not seek God’s grace with humility. Thus, one should seek God’s help for His grace with humility and humbleness. God’s teachings in the Holy Qur’an are given for the believers via direct commandments and also via stories of earlier people. Everything in the Qur’an is advisory for believers. Thus it is enjoined to adopt humility and try to attain God’s grace. Unless the spirit of ‘**And seek help**’ is not understood it is not possible to ascertain ways of piety. And the spirit of ‘**And seek help**’ is generated with humility and humbleness and with the stark realisation that one’s own qualities cannot make one worthy of blessings other than with the grace of God and it is the grace of God alone that can adorn our worldly life and the next life.

We should pray to God with utter humility: O God, in Your mercy and grace, come to our help and teach us ways which please You and teach us those ways of worship and patience which please You. It is stated that if you are seeking God’s help for these blessings, then show humility and heighten your level of patience. Lexicons describe ‘Sabr’ [Arabic word for patience] as enduring pain with dignity and without creating clamour, to remain content with the will of God and to remain content with complete gratification. To maintain and uphold one’s loyalty and strength of faith for God under any circumstance, to only remain connected to God and to only rely on Him and to remain steadfast on His teaching. God states that this is

the state of patience when adhered to makes one recipient of God's blessings. God never wastes His sincere people. When a person relies solely and completely on God, God rewards such patience. However, patience does not signify to simply sit back. Rather, the dues of Salat have to be paid and Salat signifies the prescribed Prayer, dua, turning to God and turning to Him in humility and seeking His grace. A person who is free from egotism can pay the dues of such 'Salat', one who has no conceit. The Salat of a person who does not have these attributes is not real Salat. God does not care for such a person.

Indeed, God cares for that person who has great humility and has a resilient, enduring connection with God. In the current age God specifically addressed the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) and said that He liked his humble ways. It was these humble ways that opened up great many avenues of progress. If one wishes to partake of these, if one wishes to taste the fruit of patience, have one's prayers accepted, then it is essential to turn to God with humility and resolve. This is what will save from Satan, this is what will strengthen faith and also grant Divine nearness.

It should not be assumed that it is easy to adopt humility. There is much egotism, a lot of indolence and much worldly greediness and interests that do not let one be humble, as the verse states: **'this indeed is hard'**. Humility is a weighty matter and many things stop one from attaining it. We should always be mindful that God wants His servants to display patience of the order and offer worship of the standard in which he does not even momentarily think of any other but God. Yet, He has Himself stated that this is not easy and is not possible to attain without His grace. Therefore, one should turn to God and seek His grace and this will come to pass when one turns with humility and with firm belief in: **'and that to Him will they return'**.

The blessed model of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) should not be adopted merely for one's own benefit. Rather, it should also be embraced out of ardent love for him; have ardent love for him blazing in one's heart and follow his blessed model. This is the condition that makes a true believer a true believer and God states that one who follows this is blessed with **'then will Allah love you'** and also given an insight into **'to Him will they return'**. When we pray to God mindful of Him having power and control over everything and also mindful of our own utter insignificance and we wish for Him to accept our prayer and grant us humility, then we also need to try and stay firm on patience and Salat. We also submit to God to forgive us if our prayer, our endeavour, or our apparent humility has any element of dishonesty, lest our sense of humility is mere deception of self. We pray to be included among the truly humble people about whom the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said that owing to their humility God raises them to the seventh heaven. We pray to God to enable us to live our lives in the way His beloved Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) and his ardent devotee wished us to live and for us to come up to the expectations that the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) had of his Jama'at.

The Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) said: 'Our Jama'at should pay attention to the matter that when one is embroiled in a lesser sin, no matter how small, it gradually takes one to greater sins. All manner of defects get embedded in such a covert manner in a person that it becomes difficult to rid of them.'

Man, who is a humble being, begins to feel pompous and becomes conceited and haughty. One cannot rid of such matters unless one considers oneself most lowly in the way of Allah. Truly said Kabir:

It is good that we are lowly and have to greet everyone

Had we being of high birth, how could we have found God!

That is, thank Allah the Exalted that we were born in a humble family. Had we been born in a rich family, we would not have found God. When people are proud of their grand ancestry, Kabir is grateful for his lowly origins. Man should always consider himself to be lowly and consider his being insignificant. When each person, no matter how grand his lineage, reflects over himself, in some manner or the other and providing he has insight, he will definitely consider himself unworthy and lowly compared to the cosmos. Man can never be granted entry into God Almighty's kingdom unless he extends the same courtesy to an old and helpless old woman, that he would or should extend to a person of aristocratic background and unless he saves himself from all kinds of pride, conceit and arrogance.

With the slightest of variation good morals can change into bad morals. Allah the Exalted has only opened one door for the good of His creation, that is, prayer. When a person enters this door weeping and crying, the Noble Lord covers him with purity and encompasses him with His greatness to such an extent that the person runs miles from useless matters and misdemeanours. What is the reason that in spite of believing in God, man does not avoid sin?

The fact of the matter is that there is an element of atheism in man and he does not have complete and absolute belief and faith in Allah the Exalted. Otherwise, if he knew that there is a God Who will recompense and can destroy him in one moment, how could he commit sin? Hadith explains that no thief commits theft in a state of being a true believer and no fornicator fornicates in a state of being a true believer. One can only be rid of wickedness once the insight and awareness is instilled in one that God Almighty's chastisement comes down like lethal lightning and destroys like raging fire. It is then that greatness of God is embedded in hearts that all wicked acts are dissolved.

Thus, there is salvation in spiritual awareness/knowledge. Love is enhanced with spiritual awareness, therefore it is fundamentally important to have spiritual awareness. Two aspects increase love; beauty and favour. How can a person love who does not know the beauty and favours of Allah the Exalted? Thus, Allah the Exalted has stated: '**...nor will they enter Heaven until a camel goes through the eye of a needle...**' [\(7:41\)](#) That is, the disbelievers will not enter Heaven until a camel passes through the eye of a needle. Commentators interpret this in the apparent sense. However, I say that the seeker of salvation should trim down his uncontrolled, refractory self through spiritual endeavours to such an extent that he can pass through the eye of a needle. As long as the self is corpulent with worldly pleasures and selfish desires it cannot pass through the sacred path of Shariah and enter Paradise. Bring about a death on worldly pleasures and trim yourself down with fear and awe of God, then alone will you be able to pass through it and this passage will be a source of your salvation in the Hereafter by taking you to Paradise.' (Translated from Malfuzat, Vol. 5, pp. 437 - 439)

May we, as a Jama'at and each Ahmadi individually, reach that stage of humility and humbleness, where our patience is real and our worship of God is also real and gain His acceptance. May our patience and prayers bear fruit in the Hereafter as well as this world in a way that the world may witness that we are the Jama'at established by the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace); a Jama'at that submits to God with humility, pays the dues of worship of God and abides by His every directive with humility. That it is a Jama'at which seeks God's pleasure and will bring about a revolution in this world with patience and prayer. It does not turn to the world in times of difficulty and hardships, in fact it turns to that God Who has power over everything and Who can vanquish the enemy in spite of all his apparatus. When the world will observe this, it will be compelled to say these indeed are the true believers in whom God can be seen, who attain the love of their Lord. These are the people who can show the world the ways to find God. May God make each one of us attain this stage, and as the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) said, may each one of us adopts humility and increase in love of God so that salvation in the Hereafter is attained!

Prayers should be said for Ahmadis in Pakistan as they are going through a difficult period. May God strengthen their faith and enhance them in their connection with the Divine. Pakistani Ahmadis should specifically pray a lot for their own faith. May God enable everyone to gain God's nearness!