

Friday Sermon, February 5, 2010

Delivered at the Baitul Futuh Mosque in London, England, UK

After conveying his Salams and making the customary recitations, Hazur^{ab} recited the following verse of the Holy Quran [6:121]:

وَذَرُوا ظَاهِرَ الْإِثْمِ وَبَاطِنَهُ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْسِبُونَ الْإِثْمَ سَيُجْزَوْنَ بِهِمَا كَمَا كَانُوا
يَقْتَرِفُونَ

And eschew open sins as well as secret ones. Surely, those who earn sin will be rewarded for that which they have earned.

In this verse the word, '*ithm*' has been used twice. Literally '*ithm*' means sin, crime, or something wrong or exceeding the limits, or an act of disobedience that is punishable, or an act or a thought that prevents one from doing good deeds or any illegal action. There is also the word '*dhanb*' which connotes sin, but the difference in the meanings is that whereas *dhanb* may refer to a sin that may have been committed intentionally or unintentionally, *ithm* refers generally to a deliberately committed sin. In any case, in this verse, Allah has drawn our attention to two things in regard to *ithm*.

One direction is that we save ourselves from both the apparent and the hidden forms of *ithm* or sin. Before doing anything, think. There are some deeds that are quite obviously wrong and satanic. But there are other types of things which appear to be good but in reality they lead to bad results. Their true nature is hidden. Satan urges, that go ahead do this deed, it is no big sin, but after the deed is done, one realizes that by doing it one has become trapped in something undesirable from which escape is difficult. And then such a vicious cycle results that one commits one sin after another in an unending chain.

Allah, the Exalted, says that the duty of one who is righteous is not only to keep his or her eye on the obvious and manifestly bad deeds but that he should have the far sightedness to be aware of those hidden and deceptive actions which are likely to lead to bad results consequences also.

Before beginning to do anything he should seek help from Allah so that Allah should save him from the evil of that action – whatever ill there may be in that action he may be saved from it. Allah, the Exalted, says do not become ready to do some thing simply because it is apparently good looking and become so committed to carrying it out as if not doing it would cause you to die. But rather, and especially where there is likelihood of doubt and suspicion, there, do your due diligence fully and before carrying out the deed or committing to its carrying out, seek help and guidance from Allah, the Exalted.

This will cause the deed to become blessed and one would be saved from falling into evil or from the evil consequences of such deeds and thus Allah, the Exalted, keeps such a person safe from every ill consequence.

Second, Allah makes clear that if in life, in every deed, you will not keep in view the demands or requirements of *taqwa*, righteousness and the fear of God, and will not, at every step, take the requisite care, will not make the attempt to differentiate the permitted from the forbidden, then you will become guilty of committing sin and will receive the punishment of whatever sin you commit and the excuses that we did not realize etc. will not be of any help.

In the preceding verse, Allah, the Exalted, has mentioned one principle that a lot of people deceive others according to their own wishes; so you should be alert, and be able to differentiate between the permitted and the forbidden and be prepared to stop and not do those things that Allah has directed should not be done.

By using the word *ithm*, He has made clear that if, despite this direction, you do not desist and continue to walk along the wrong path and continue to fall prey to those who make people walk along the wrong paths, then this is such a sin that quite clearly you are committing deliberately and the sins that are deliberately committed make one deserving of punishment.

Allah, the Exalted, has given many directions with regard to *ithm*, sins, of which I shall make mention of some herein now.

In Sura Al- Araf, Allah, the Exalted, has clarified this subject as follows:

[7:34] قُلْ إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّي الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَّنَ وَالْإِثْمَ وَالْبَغْيَ بِغَيْرِ
الْحَقِّ وَأَنْ تُشْرِكُوا بِاللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يُنَزَّلْ بِهِ سُلْطَانًا وَأَنْ تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

‘Say, ‘My Lord has only forbidden foul deeds, whether open or secret, and sin and wrongful transgression, and that you associate with Allah that for which He has sent down no authority, and that you say of Allah that of which you have no knowledge.’
(7:34)

In this verse, Allah, the Exalted, has made this statement of His even clearer. All kinds of wrong and Satanic deeds are forbidden with the greatest strictness by Islam. To live as a *Momin*, a believer, one should always be searching for those actions that lead one to follow the paths of righteousness; and be aware and alert to those actions that will take one away from these righteous paths and take one away from God Almighty.

Without a doubt, there are some deeds, the evil of which is hidden from man and Satan is on the lookout as to when he can deceive the son of Adam in the manner in which he beguiled Adam and make him inclined to these kinds of sins and in such a beautiful way present those sins to him, making them appear so attractive that he does not conceive it to be wrong but in fact deems it to be good and thus begin to do those things. And then once he is drowned in those evil deeds he should continue to occupy himself with the doing of those actions. Thus Allah, the Exalted, has alerted us and told us to save ourselves from these things, that they are forbidden things and that if you do them they will make you subject to the punishment from God. Allah, the Exalted, says [7:34]:

إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّيَ الْفَوَاحِشَ

That My Lord has only forbidden foul deeds – whether they are manifestly foul deeds and evil actions or whether they are hidden ill deeds and wrong actions. By saying that foul deeds are forbidden, Allah, the Exalted, has not finished His statement. Rather, where He has made clear what the evil and foul deeds are, that what actions are those that are foul and evil, there He has also indicated what the cure is and how you can save yourselves from these foul deeds.

Allah says at one place in the Holy Quran [29:46]:

إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ^ط

That, surely, Prayer restrains one from indecency and manifest evil.

And because indecency and manifest evil are visible to man at all times in all his daily occupations, especially in this day and age, and draw him to the commission of those indecent and evil deeds, so by prescribing the five daily Prayers, Allah has made arrangements for him to be saved from them and to remain in the protection of Allah Himself and has shown the right path.

The Promised Messiah^{as} writes: ‘What is *Salat*? It is a form of prayer which protects man from all sorts of evils and indecencies and makes him worthy of good and of Divine grace. It is said that ‘Allah’ is the *Ism-e-Azam* (the greatest name). Allah has placed all His other attributes under this.

The Promised Messiah^{as} says: Reflect a little; the *Salat* starts with the *Adhan* and the *Adhan* begins with ‘*Allah O Akbar*’, that is, with the name of Allah and it concludes with, ‘*La ilaha Il-lal-lah*’, that is, it comes to an end with the name of Allah.

This distinction, honor, is found in the Islamic form of worship alone that in it, both at the beginning and at the end only Allah, the Exalted, is the purpose and objective and nothing else.

The Promised Messiah^{as} Says: I assert without fear of contradiction that this type of worship is to be found in no other people or nation. Thus *Salat*, which is a Prayer and in which ‘Allah’, which is His *Ism-e-Azam*, has been given precedence; similarly, the *Ism-e-Azam* of man is steadfastness. *Ism-e-Azam* signifies that through which the excellences of humanity are attained.’

Thus if we ponder on this phrase of the Promised Messiah^{as} that the *Ism-e-Azam* of man is steadfastness, then we will always be involved in an effort to search for that type of *Salat* which takes one closer to Allah, the Exalted. And when man approaches near to Allah, the Exalted, He blesses him with the ability to offer that type of *Salat* as takes Him closer and closer to God and saves him from the attacks of Satan and the commission of

foul deeds and makes him deserving of God's blessings. Thus a man is saved from the commission of manifest and hidden evil deeds.

To attain to such a level in the offering of our *Salat* the Promised Messiah^{as} has guided us further. He says: *Salat* is such a thing that through it our worldly affairs can be set in order as well as our spiritual life. *Salat* is that thing, through the offering of which, a human being can save himself from every type of evil and foul deed. But the ability to offer such type of *Salat* is not within man's own powers and abilities. Such Prayer cannot be achieved without the help and assistance of God and until and unless a man continues to occupy himself in prayers such awareness and fear of God cannot develop. So it is necessary that your days and your nights, indeed no moment of your life should be devoid of prayers.

So, it is necessary that we fill our hearts with the remembrance of God so that today we are saved from indecency and foul deeds that we see in all directions. Without such protection, Satan will take us into such directions into which one continues to sink..which continue to take us away from the discharge of our duties and errors upon errors continue to be committed and the commandments of God continue to be disobeyed. So it is said that we should save ourselves from rebellion for this too is forbidden. If the awareness is not developed then you will break all the bounds and exceed all limits and you will lose all sense of what actions are good and righteous and which are evil.

There are some who offer *Salat* regularly but at the same time are guilty of breaking the limits set by God. This is why the Promised Messiah^{as} said that God's help is needed to achieve the ability to offer the *Salat* properly and for this one needs to fear God every moment of one's life. And one needs to keep oneself pure from every type of *shirk*, associating partners with Allah. Thus, when this state of purity is achieved only then would a *momin*, a believer, achieve the state of being a true *momin* and become capable of safeguarding himself from all indecencies and foul deeds.

Then, in Surah Al Baqarah, with this same reference to *ithm* , Allah, the Exalted, says:

[2:220] يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ قُلْ فِيهِمَا إِثْمٌ كَبِيرٌ وَمَنْفَعٌ لِلنَّاسِ
وَإِثْمُهُمَا أَكْبَرُ مِنْ نَفْعِهِمَا^ط

[2:220] They ask thee concerning wine and the game of hazard. Say: 'In both there is great sin and also *some* advantages for men; but their sin is greater than their advantage.'

First, with reference to alcohol and gambling it is said that there is great sin associated with them and then it is said that God Almighty has also placed in them some benefits also. But it is said that their sin is greater than their good. At the end of this verse it is said:

كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَفَكَّرُونَ [2:220]

Thus does Allah make His commandments clear to you that you may reflect.

Thus it is made clear that whatever Allah has created, no doubt there are also benefits associated with them, and also dangers and losses, so remember this principle that the thing that has greater loss than its benefits, safeguard yourself from the use of such things.

And both these things, gambling and alcohol, are such things as are, '*ithmun kabeer*', in them are great sins, and despite having some benefits they are such as will cause you to grow in sins. And as I said when talking about the meaning of *ithm*, and, as also Allah, the Exalted, says at one place in the Holy Quran,

وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ يَلْقَ أَثَامًا

'and he who does that shall meet with the punishment of sin.' (25:69).

Thus despite the fact, and as stated by God, that there is benefit in gambling and alcohol, God has said very clearly that you should ponder not on this as to whether there is more to be gained than lost, but rather ponder on the fact that if I make use of these things then I will be guilty of committing a sin and thus become deserving of punishment because by saying *ithmohoma akbar*, their sin is greater, it has been said that you will be punished for committing this crime. This is such a sin that once one falls into it he keeps on falling into it. Deliberately and knowingly he continues to fall into this pit and a taste and an addiction develops and takes root to continue to be involved in both these foul deeds. And thus, adopting an attitude of rebelliousness, one becomes deserving of punishment. So both these things are such that in them one is also wasting one's lawfully earned and pure wealth and not only this, but by mixing unlawfully gained wealth through gambling, with his lawfully earned wealth, makes the whole of it unlawful and impure. Thus, the one who involves himself in gambling he wastes all his wealth. And the one addicted to drinking wastes his wealth in pursuing this addiction and destroys his own health in the process.

In another place in the Holy Quran there is the clear prohibition and it is said that alcohol, gambling and divining of arrows and idols, these are all Satanic things which stop one from the doing of good deeds and developing of high moral qualities and occupying oneself in worship.

In Sura Al-Maida, Allah, the Exalted, says:

[5:91] يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ وَالْأَنْصَابُ وَالْأَزْلَامُ رِجْسٌ مِّنْ

عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

[5:92] إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ يُوقِعَ بَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ فِي الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ

وَيَصُدَّكُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَعَنِ الصَّلَاةِ فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ مُنْتَهُونَ

[5:93] وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَاحْذَرُوا فَإِن تَوَلَّيْتُمْ فَأَعْلَمُوا إِنَّمَا عَلَى رَسُولِنَا

الْبَلْغُ الْمُبِينُ

[5:91] O ye who believe! wine and the game of hazard and idols and divining arrows are only an abomination of Satan's handiwork. So shun *each one of* them that you may prosper.

[5:92] Satan desires only to create enmity and hatred among you by means of wine and the game of hazard, and to keep you back from the remembrance of Allah and from Prayer. But will you keep back?

[5:93] And obey Allah and obey the Messenger, and be on *your* guard. But if you turn away, then know that on Our Messenger lies only the clear conveyance of the Message.

These days drinking alcohol and gambling are commonplace in these countries, indeed these are everywhere, even where there are restrictions, these things can be found in certain places and people go there to drink and so on.

Not only is it the case that these things are commonplace, indeed people are enticed. In every service station or big store one can see the gambling machines on which, in one shape or the other, people occupy themselves with gambling.

And in so far as things relating to shirk, associating partners with God, are concerned, even if actual idols are not there visible, people have made their own wishes and desires their idols. Despite having believed, there are many such things that man does not take due care about, and then these self made idols become obstacles to occupying oneself in worship, in offering the *salat* – the *salat* that can help in safeguarding oneself from indecencies and foul deeds, such hidden associations with God become the cause for not offering these *salats*.

Then there is the custom of seeking one's fortune through divining arrows and these days one form of this is the lottery, in this also the people are not exercising due care and they

buy the lottery tickets. This also is forbidden. Allah, the Exalted, has said these are all Satanic deeds. Thus the duty of a true *momin*, a true believer, is that he should show steadfastness in worship and in the doing of righteous deeds he should be found to be constant, and trying always to safeguard himself from the commission of evil and foul deeds and this steadfastness will be achieved when his attention will always be towards the remembrance of Allah and the offering of *salat*.

Then, in order to advance in the doing of goodness and performance of righteous deeds and safeguarding oneself from sin, Allah has commanded as follows in one place in the Holy Quran:

[5:3] تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ ۖ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ ۗ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ

اللَّهُ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ

[5:3] help one another in righteousness and piety; but help not one another in sin and transgression. And fear Allah; surely, Allah is severe in punishment.

This is the beautiful teaching of Islam. In it, after first saying that the excesses committed by your enemy and his enmity should not incite you to act otherwise than with justice, then it is said that you should always be co-operative in the doing of goodness and righteousness..

Real righteousness is to be found in a *momin*, a believer, and so it should be – thus in the doing of good deeds, and making use of righteousness and the fear of God, co-operation must always be there and it is indeed *taqwa* that shall continue to further sow the seeds of righteous conduct. If there is the need for a *momin* to continuously and repeatedly say over and over again it is that the doing of good and giving currency to the doing of goodness is that thing that needs to be encouraged and re-emphasized again and again.

And if there is something from which a *momin* needs to safeguard himself, then it is sin and excess. It is not befitting or appropriate for a *momin* that he should be guilty of committing *ithm*, a sin that he should have committed deliberately and intentionally and which should be the cause for those who commit excess to go on committing excesses. Those who exceed the bounds lack the sense of their excessiveness; they go on committing tyranny to the limit. Allah, the Exalted, says that if you commit *ithm* and *udwan*, that if you commit sin and go on exceeding the bounds, or if you do not stop committing sins repeatedly and breaking the limits again and again then remember that Allah is severe in punishment.

Despite the existence of this beautiful teaching, it is alleged that Islam was spread through tyranny and force and that it teaches the use of force and the committing of excess against the weak and every day in these countries people drop hints here and there in this vein against Islam.

But if we look at the world today and examine what is happening in the West, we see the excesses that are being committed against Iraq and in some other countries.

We have now heard the account of Iraq through the public inquiry [Chilcot Inquiry]. Many have acknowledged [in the Inquiry] that transgression was committed and is being committed in Iraq but there are those who have said that it was right [to go to war there] and that is what should have been done.

The teachings of Islam reject this latter stance. Islam says: No, this is not in accord with the demands of *taqwa*, righteousness. Islam says that wherever you have made a mistake, acknowledge your mistake and wherever there is need to make amends and peace and cleansing, and need of moving forward in the direction of doing good – there, making use of *taqwa*, righteousness, make effort to spread the doing of goodness and restrain yourself from transgression and if this does not happen then a *momin*, a believer, becomes deserving, in the sight of God, of receiving punishment.

When we are taught to take so much care when dealing with our enemies then one can imagine the extent to which we must go to treat each other in a loving and beneficent manner.

In this regard the Promised Messiah^{as} has advised the Jama'at as follows: He says it should be the practice that the weaker brothers be helped and they be provided strength and support. How extremely unacceptable is it that there are two brothers and one of them knows how to swim while the other does not, so is it not the obligation of the first that he should save the second from drowning, or should he let him die? It is indeed his duty and obligation that he should save him from death. This is why it is said in the Holy Quran:

تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَى [5:3]

[5:3] help one another in righteousness and piety;

So help lift the burden of your weaker brothers, and become helpers in practical deeds and spiritual matters and financial matters; wherever there is weakness become their helpers. Help provide for the amelioration of physical weaknesses also. No Jama'at can be considered a Jama'at till the weak members of the Jama'at are provided support by the stronger members. And this can happen only when the weaknesses of the weak members are not made public and kept from being disclosed. The Companions of the Holy Prophet^{sa} were taught this very thing, that upon seeing the weaknesses of the new Muslims they should not become upset. They were reminded that you too were weak just like them. Similarly, it is essential that the big help the small and deal with them with love and kindness.

The Promised Messiah^{as} said: Look, that Jama'at cannot be considered a Jama'at in which some devour others and when four among them get together they begin to complain against one of their own and continue to find faults with him and talk derisively concerning the weak and helpless among them and look down upon them with hate and disdain. Such must never be the case and must not be allowed to happen, rather what is needed is unity so that strength develops and oneness, unity, takes hold from which love develops and blessings are born. Why does it not happen that the high moral qualities are given reign and caused to spread and grow? This comes about when care for each other, sympathy and love and forgiveness and overlooking the faults of others and kindness are

exercised freely; and mercy and care for each other and hiding the weakness of the others are caused to become dominant over all other habits and customs.

Extreme harsh measures should not be taken when someone makes small errors or when some minor shortcomings are seen, for such actions can break the heart of the people and cause untold pain and suffering. A Jama'at comes into being when some come to the help and assistance of others and deal with others while hiding their weakness. When such a condition develops among a people then, becoming one, they all become devoted to each other and begin to consider each other as being closer than two brothers.

It was this very blessing of brotherhood that Allah had reminded the Companions of the Holy Prophet^{sa} of when He told them that even if they had spent mountains of gold they would still not have acquired that brotherhood that Allah had caused to grow between them through the person of the Messenger of Allah. Allah has established this Movement in the same way and on the same pattern and He will cause to come about that same type of brotherhood here.

So these are those high and elevated moral qualities that can bring about an improvement of our spiritual condition and cause us to march forward and can save us from committing sins and stop us from committing excesses. When one acquires the nearness of God through worship then through these high moral qualities one's attention is drawn to the need for the discharge of the obligations due to the creatures of God.

Then, drawing our attention towards another very big fault, Allah, the Exalted, directs us as follows in the Holy Quran:

[49:13] يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوا كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الظَّنِّ إِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا وَلَا يَغْتَب بَّعْضُكُم بَعْضًا أَيُحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَن يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَوَّابٌ رَّحِيمٌ

[49:13] O ye who believe! avoid most of suspicions; for suspicion in some cases is a sin. And spy not, nor back-bite one another. Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his brother who is dead? Certainly you would loathe it. And fear Allah, surely, Allah is Oft-Returning *with compassion and* is Merciful.

Allah, the Exalted, desires to have come about love and affection and brotherhood among the *momineen*, among the believers. And this develops on the basis of giving the other the benefit of the doubt. So it is said, avoid thinking ill of others because this takes one towards sin which is not only destructive for one personally, but this is such a sin which also goes on to destroy societal peace. The hearts become distanced from one another. Thus Allah, the Exalted, has termed this a very big sin. A sin which sometimes man is committing to satisfy his own ego.

Then it is said, 'spy not.' This tendency to spy also develops sometimes because of thinking ill of others. And when one is spying on another and does not find the full

information, then whatever information is obtained becomes the cause for the increase in doubts and misgiving and thinking ill. And sometimes man become so totally blind on the basis of such thinking ill of others that one is amazed to see involved in this grave sin such people as are otherwise quite learned and who are also devoted to the service of the faith. They are found saying such things as totally ignorant and simple women folk even would not be found guilty of saying. They become so engrossed and burdened with such small and tiny complaints and begin to think them so enormous that nothing else is as great in comparison in all their life. And by getting thus all consumed by this, they do not just cause damage to their own interests, and their own affairs and work. They make their own life a total enormous burden and that also of the one against whom they have the complaint. They make his life also weighed down by talking here and there about the matter. And sometimes such matters arrive to me also. And when an investigation is made, nothing is found or a totally small thing is found.

Then, sometimes, it is found that the matter at the root had in fact nothing directly to do with that person. He heard something from one source and another from another, having a propensity to looking into things excessively, so developed interest in finding out more, discovering whatever little or much is added upon with his own thoughts and the like and these are then spread around. And when this is done about the other person, when he is talked about and things spread about him in the social circles, his life is weighed down under an immense burden. He goes around trying to hide because he is being looked at by everyone as if he is someone guilty of having committed a grave sin. Nevertheless, this is such a sin from which Allah, the Exalted, has forbidden with severity. Every Ahmadi must save himself from it.

Then backbiting is another sin through which instead of reforming society and making it better the peace of the society is destroyed and disorder spreads. Allah, the Exalted, while prohibiting this foul deed and making its abhorrence clear, has said that you indulge in backbiting thinking nothing of it. You wanted to talk and enjoy saying what you wanted to say, so you did it, and whatever poison you wanted to spit out about someone, you spat it out, but remember that this is such a disgusting act that is tantamount to you having eaten the flesh of your dead brother. And who is it that would not lathe eating the flesh of his dead brother?

Backbiting is just this that one should make mention of someone's bad trait behind his back or in his absence. Thus, if you desire reformation, then, with regard to the person about whom you have some complaint, make him understand in isolation, just with him alone so that he may reform himself.

But if he does not understand even then, you have the right to go to the person incharge of reformation work in the Jama'at or there is the President or even the Ameer of the country and if for some reason you are not satisfied then the message can be conveyed to me also.

And some people do write to me their complaints but it is apparent from those complaints immediately that reformation is not their intention, rather what they want to do is spill before me all their heart's venom. And then almost always it is the case that the person making the complaint does not write his or her name. They generally just write below the letter signed, 'An Ahmadi', or 'A Sympathizer' etc. or they write a name and address which does not exist or is totally wrong.

So such people are just trying to develop in my heart a knot against someone and nothing else is their intent. And they fail to succeed in this also. Because when they hide their name, it becomes clear that this is not anyone genuinely concerned with welfare, rather he is just interested in defaming someone else. Usually no action is taken on such letters and in any case my duty is that fulfilling the demands of Justice I ask first for an investigation and try to find out. But when no name and address is given then no investigation can be carried out. And even if someone is punished as a result of some action, no hatred develops in my against such a person nor any kind of knot concerning that person, rather I am pained by the fact that an Ahmadi had to be punished for whatever reason.

So in any case every Ahmadi must always remember that Allah, the Exalted, says, *watatqullah*, that fear Allah, be mindful of Allah, and adopt righteousness, *innallaha tawwabur raheem*, that certainly Allah is He who accepts repentance and repeatedly shows Mercy. Those who suffer from this type of propensity to think ill of others, spying or backbiting, they should examine their own hearts and have the fear of Allah, the Exalted. They should seek the forgiveness from Allah of their own sins. Allah, the Exalted, says that if you come to Me with a sincere remorseful heart, I will accept your repentance and will deal with you with Mercy.

The Promised Messiah^{as} says:

Mischief starts with this that man begins to partake of false suspicions and doubts.. If a person thinks well in every situation, he is bestowed the capacity to achieve good. A mistake at the very start makes it difficult to reach the goal. Thinking ill of another is a great vice which deprives a person of many opportunities of doing good and which goes on mounting till a person begins to think ill of God Almighty.

Then, at another place, he says: Thinking ill of others is a thing that can cut the root of truthfulness, so save yourselves from it and pray that you may be bestowed the highest virtues of a *siddeeq*, a truthful one.

Then he says: Some sins are so subtle that one is embroiled in them without realizing. One goes from being a young man to old age unaware that one is committing sin. For example there is the habit of telling tales. Such people consider it a most trivial and small matter although the Holy Qur'an has declared it extremely bad and has stated:

أَيُّبُ أَحَدُكُمْ أَنْ يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَوَّابٌ

رَّحِيمٌ

‘Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his brother who is dead?’

God is displeased when one utters something which insults one's brother and takes an action which harms him. To say something about one's brother that proves his ignorance and foolishness or stealthily generates dishonor or enmity about his habit are all evil deeds.'

May God enable us to avoid every kind of sin and do every kind of piety. May we practice all His commandments and attain the Paradise of His pleasure.

Today also, we have very sad news. Mr. Samiullah Sahib, son of Mr. Mumtaz Ahmad Sahib of Shehzadpur in district Sangher, Pakistan, was martyred on February 3rd, in Shehzadpur. *Inna lillahay wa inna elaihay rajayoon..*To Allah we belong and to Him shall we return. He was coming home after closing his electric shop in the evening, when two assailants on a motorcycle shot him in the head near his hometown. He was stopped by them and while one pretended to ask for some direction etc. the other assailant shot him in the head and he was martyred there on the spot. He was 53 years old and he was a very hard working member of the Jama'at and served the Jama'at in various capacities: Secretary Islah-o-Irshad, Secretary Dawat-e-Ilallah, Zaeem Ansarullah, Naib Nazim Ansarullah at the District level. He was actively involved in preaching and even at his own shop he would preach despite opposition and without any fear. He had MTA installed and would continue preaching. He also took part in questions and answer sessions. He had a noble sense for the honor of his faith and was a brave and fearless person. He was a Moosi by the Grace of Allah. Had two wives. One wife resides in Canada with their three daughters and one son while the other was with him in Shehzadpur with their two sons and one daughter. May God grant the Martyr a place in the Paradise of His Pleasure and elevate his station of nearness to Him and grant steadfastness and patience and courage to the bereaved and may He be their Helper and Protector. After the prayers his *Namaz janaza* in absentia will also be offered.

The Khutba concluded with the customary second khutba..