

Unity of God ,Mindfulness, Listening and Simplicity

Considering that the predicted raptures have not occurred we still have time to redeem ourselves I thought I would share with you some thoughts on what we all should focus on during the coming year 2012 to improve our spiritual and secular lives and put ourselves on the path to rectitude and salvation. 2012 is expected to be tumultuous year and we must change to salvage ourselves.

The internet has increased our reach and the speed with which we can acquire info. Moral values and spiritual excellence cannot be downloaded they need to be uploaded the old fashion way. Forced effort. God-Consciousness, Unqualified dependence on God, Salat, prayers, associating with people who are righteous , patience and steadfastness.

Although we all claim to be Unitarians yet by our deeds and actions we belie our faith in the Unity of God. Idol worship is not the issue. The issue is exalting material things and human beings to status reserved for God. God will out of his Mercy forgive other failings and excesses but dalliance with shirk angers Him.

There is a story of a simple Arab , a new convert to Islam, who came for Fajr prayers during the time of the Holy Prophet^{sa} . The Holy Prophet^{sa} was leading the prayers. Hazur recited Surah Al Naziat (Ch 79:25) where Pharaoh says Ana Rabbokomol Ala I am your Lord most high On hearing this simple Arab spontaneously let out curse words for pharaoh. After the prayers were over The Holy Prophet sat quietly. Others began scolding this simple Arab saying that he had displeased Allah for violating the sanctity of salat and for using profane language in the presence of the Prophet. The poor arab trembled with fear until Gabriel appeared to The Prophet and said “Allah sends his salam to you and wishes that you get these people to stop scolding this man. Indeed , his spontaneous profanity moved My heart more than the holy prayers of the others” ...

To strengthen our faith in God we should focus on **Mindfulness, listening and simplicity**

Mindfulness.

Is the process of cultivating awareness.

So mindfulness means simply focusing on the present moment and quieting one's inner dialogue or thoughts .

For us Muslims and Ahmadis it is particularly important with regards to saying salat. Aqimusalata. Means to institute salat in a way that you are mindful of what you are doing, mindful of what you are saying and being mindful that you are in the presence of God and that you are in communion with God.

The Promised Messiah^{as} says that we are not commanded to say yaqraona , recite salat, but yuqimoonasalata , perform in a mindful way salat.

The Promised Messiah^{as} says “performing salat is an effort and it requires you to be mindful and keep away extraneous thoughts. You get blessings for your effort. When salat is no longer an effort and one looks forward to every salat, salat becomes a reward . It is paradise on earth. .. One attains the state of Mirage. This is the state when a person's link with God is strengthened until he loses himself entirely in the identity of God.”

This is what Khalifatul Masih V is repeatedly asking us to do. To improve the quality and quantity of our salat and prayers.

Listening

Hearing is one of the five senses. Listening is hearing with attention or be mindful of what you are hearing.

Listening is an active process. It requires the conscious desire to determine the meaning of what we hear. Listening is the most important yet often most neglected communication skill. It can be learned.

In describing His attributes Allah says in the Holy Quran **Laysa Kamislehe shayun, wa huwas sami ul basir (42:12)** There is nothing like Him and He is All Hearing and All Seeing.

It was the practice of the Holy Prophet^{sa} that whenever Hazur gave important instructions to someone he asked the person to repeat back to him his instructions to make sure that the person was listening.

The Holy Quran was memorized by many companions as it was being revealed. The collection of ahadith is based entirely on people who listened and memorized what was said by the Holy Prophet^{sa}.

Allah says **WattaQullaha Wasmaooh (5:109)** And fear Allah and Listen

And later **Innama Yustajeboo Allazena Yusmaoon (6:37)** Only those can accept the truth who listen

In these modern times we as a people are very busy. We have multiple distractions. Cellphones, I-Pods, I-Pads . We are constantly talking. Even when we seem to be listening we are continually chattering in our brain . Research shows that we listen at 125-250 words a minute. We think at about 1000-3000 words a minute. Even when we seem to be listening we are formulating an answer or reacting to what is being said. We remember 50% of what was said immediately and a day or so later we remember 20% or less.

True listening is a very humble quality. One has to restrain the mind so that there is no unnecessary inside chatter. The benefit of good listening is that you learn , that you grow and that you acquire wisdom.

The Holy Prophet^{sa} alluded to this saying “when you see a person who has aversion to worldly affairs and has brevity of speech seek his company for you will acquire wisdom”

The art of listening requires that we be MINDFUL and stop multitasking in our minds and focus on one thing. Listening.

Active listening is a learned behavior but anyone can learn it. It requires focused attention to the speaker , comprehending what is being said , remembering what is heard and responding appropriately at the appropriate time.

Simplicity

The Holy Prophet^{sa} said, “ a simple way of life is part of faith” and “Truly rich is he who has no desire for what others have”

What does it really mean to SIMPLIFY?

The Holy Quran says **Wa Kazaleka Jah alnakum Ummatun Wassatun (2:144)** We have created you as a people who exercise moderation or you are a people of the middle path. There is a hadith **Khairul Amorey Ausa toh ha** It is best to exercise moderation in your affairs.

Many years ago, "burned out" referred to the fire place where the coal or wood was all burned. "Chronic fatigue syndrome" occurred only in insomniacs. People described a car skidding on black ice as being "out of control," but we wouldn't refer to our lives that way. Today we do.

Times have changed. Our lives are cluttered. We face an ever-increasing pace of life governed by email, instant messaging and cellphones

Life is really simple, but we insist on making it complicated. The consumption society has made us feel that happiness lies in having things.

The greatest step towards a life of simplicity is **to learn to let go**. Material blessings, when they provide beyond what we need become a nagging headache and a burden.

The ability to simplify means to eliminate the unnecessary. We need to eliminate physical and mental clutter.

Do you have to give up all of your worldly possessions and move to a bark hut in the woods? Not hardly! Simplifying is all about having enough without having too much -- cutting back on unnecessary spending, slowing down, **and FOCUSING on your true priorities**.

What will you do to simplify your life this coming year 2012

Take a look at your life -- where do you see EXCESS around you?

Try to simplify one area of your life--- your job, your spending, your home -- at a time. Do not do too much at a time . **Tackle the biggest thorn in your side first and go onto the next one .**

Make a list of small CHANGES that you can immediately put into place.

Change is a must. We need to look at these issues in a new way not simply for today but to make our tomorrows more rewarding. Think and think often of what you are doing for the life hereafter and it will keep your priorities straight

Take home message is 1) Have faith in God. **Remember Allah much. Call on Him. Ud ooni yustajiblakum. Depend on Him.** 2) **Be mindful (be mindful of Salat)** Salat is a time limited obligatory online communion with God. Remembrance of Allah is an offline voluntary unlimited communion with Allah, 3) **listen (listen to Khalifatul Masih V) and 4) simplify your lives (learn to let go)** Remember the saying "The man who dies ... rich dies disgrace

As we close I wish to thank Naib Amir Hameed ur Rehman sahib, Maulana Shamshad sahib , the organizers and the workers for doing a wonderful job. May Allah reward them abundantly.

Please drive carefully as you make your way home from here. Take your time. When you get back home things will be the same.

May you all get back safely to the comfort of your homes and your families. The comfort of your wives. (Lay Yuskona elayha 7:190). God has made them special. They bring joy and color into our lives. Be kind to them and treat them well. God will have mercy on you. Remember what the HP said " The best of you are those who treat their wives the best"

In our prayers

Let us remember those who are suffering in various parts of the world under various forms of oppression and persecution.

Let us remember those who have passed away during the year. May Allah have mercy on them. May Allah have special mercy on the Ahmadi Martyrs and their families.

Let us pray for those who are sick and suffering. May Allah heal them and grant them health and wellness.

Let us pray for all those in difficulties. Legal, financial and family matters. May Allah help alleviate their distress.

Let us implore Allah to help us elect good leaders so we as Americans are better able to serve mankind. May Allah protect our country.

Let us pray for Khalifatul Masih V. May Allah grant him good health and a long life to guide us and lead us to the victory of Islam and Ahmadiyyat. We are the beneficiaries of the Divine Protection of Khilafat . This is our life line let us hold on to it firmly and not let go.

Let us pray for our parents. We owe them a lot. May Allah have mercy on them.

Let us send darood abundantly on our greatest benefactors The Holy Prophet^{saw} and The Promised Messiah^{as}

Let us pray that we enter the new year with increased vigor and determination to serve Allah and man to the best of our abilities and achieve true joy, peace and tranquility.

O Mighty Allah listen to our prayers and lighten our burdens

Rabbana Taqqabal Minna Inna Ka untus sami ul aleem