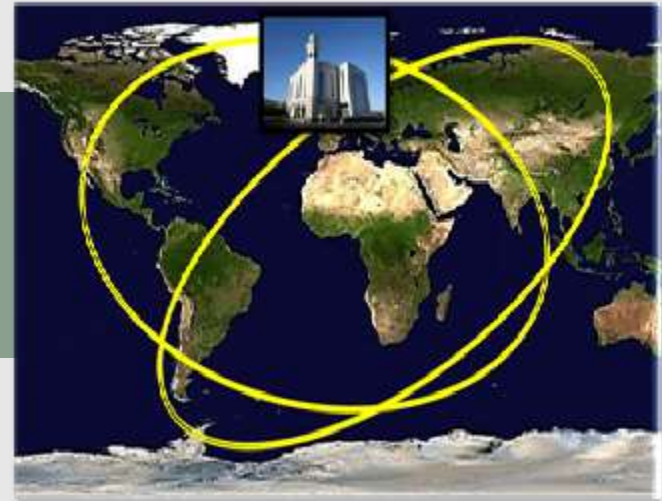


ASPECTS OF SELF REFORMATION



SERMON DELIVERED BY HADHRAT
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RELAYED LIVE ALL ACROSS THE
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NOTE: Al Islam Team takes full responsibility for any errors or miscommunication in this Synopsis of the Friday Sermon

Summary

If we carry out an honest self-analysis, we will realize that upon advice, we do try to reform ourselves but the effects is not long lasting

One of the reasons that our reformation efforts do not have the long-term effects is the wrongful notion that some sins are small!

Remember, the Islamic concept is that a great virtuous deed is the one that one finds **most difficult to do** and is different for every person.

Similarly, a great evil for a given person is the evil deed that is **most difficult to avoid**.

The second cause that hinders practical reformation is the environment, both at home and the society.

Martyrdom in Syria

Reasons why reformation may not be long lasting?

1. It is a misconception that some sins/virtues are small

Great sin and great virtue are different for each person depending upon their circumstances

2. Environment at home and society also hinders long-term reformation

I have been speaking in the last two Friday Sermons about the subject of practical, effective, personal reformation.

I've presented in my previous Friday Sermon the advice of the Promised Messiah (as) concerning self-reformation, in the form of questions and answers,

By asking those questions, I was trying to focus the minds to think as to whether we are engaged in these acts of righteousness or not.

But our practical reformation does not only have to do with these few things.

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This is why the Promised Messiah (as) has stated in “Our Teachings,” and for the benefit of our reformation, that, “I say to you truly that whosoever from among you is guilty of not attending to even the smallest of the commandments from among the 700 contained in the Holy Quran, he shuts the door of salvation upon himself with his own hands.”

This is a matter of great fear and concern for us. We need to take great care, therefore, before taking a single step or undertaking the smallest action.

I have said this in my previous sermons also, the purpose of the coming of the Promised Messiah (as) was to establish the teachings of the Holy Quran upon us and enable us to follow the sunna, the practical exemplary life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (sa).

And to fulfill this purpose he drew our attention to these matters again and again.

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The situation is like that of the jack in the box that remains in the box as long as the lid covers it.

However, the instant that the lid is lifted it jumps out.

If we carry out an honest self-analysis, we will realize that when our attention is drawn to reformation, we do try to reform ourselves but the effects is not long lasting and soon we revert back to our old selves.

So we reform when being advised, but as soon as the pressure of advices and discussions stops, the spring of a person's own self or the spring that incites to evil again causes most people to jump back into their same old ways and old sins return.

Reasons why reformation may not long be lasting?

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One of the reasons that our reformation efforts do not have long term effects is the idea that some sins are big and others small. Such a concept is an obstacle in attaining long term practical reformation.

- By regarding any sin as small or insignificant, man become audacious - committing a small sin seem acceptable.
- By regarding any sin as small, the wickedness of such actions does not seem important.
- Man begins to think that carrying out a small sin is harmless or that its punishment is not very severe.

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The Promised Messiah (as) says:

“That if someone becomes ill, regardless of whether his illness is small or great, if no remedy is sought for the illness ..., the person cannot become well.

A small dark patch once it appears on the face of a person causes great concern lest it should grow and darken the whole face ...

There is a similar dark patch that evil deeds cause to appear on a person’s heart. **Small sins become big sins due to one not taking care to avoid them.**

The small sin is that same small dark patch that grows ultimately to darken the entire face of the person afflicted.”

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Allah, the Almighty, has assigned a punishment for every small and big sin.

The Holy Prophet (sa) has discussed and described small and big sins and good deeds, ...

When asked, what a great and virtuous deed was, the Holy Prophet (pnuh) gave different responses to different people, such as serving one's parents, offering tahajjud and to join in jihad.

So it becomes clear that for different people and different circumstances the great virtuous deed is different.

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Let me also say a few words with regard to jihad because it is alleged that we do not participate in jihad.

In that age when Islam was being attacked from all sides by the sword, the jihad with the sword was a very big virtue.

Under those circumstances, anyone who would not join in Jihad without any valid reason is deemed worthy of punishment.

But in the time of the Promised Messiah (as), the Holy Prophet (sa) had said that he would bring the wars to an end ...

... because the ways and means of attack on Islam would have changed.

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It was foretold that at the time of the Messiah of later days, Islam, the faith, would not be attacked by the sword. Indeed, the attacks on Islam would come from the media and press and other means of communication.

It was also foretold that the Promised Messiah (as) and his Jama'at would use the same means to defend Islam.

Now the action that can be called virtuous and allowed form of jihad that is the jihad of spreading the teachings of the Holy Quran, or the jihad of knowledge, the jihad of spreading the message and beautiful teachings of Islam using the press media and the available means of communication.

However, anyone who engages in this type of jihad but does not discharge his duties towards his wife and children and does not take care of their needs is indeed guilty of a grave sin.

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Once the Holy Prophet (sa) told a Muslim that the big and virtuous thing for him was to serve his parents instead of going to Jihad.

So for every person, the bigger and more important virtue depends on the occasion and their circumstances.

Also, the grave sin for every one is different according to their circumstances and conditions.

For example, some people may not commit sins such as mistreating others, killing etc. as they regard these bad deeds.

But they may be in habit of gambling and waste large amounts of money in pursuit of gambling.

So, the grave sin for such persons would be wasting large sums of money.

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If woman does not adopt a modest and chaste mode of dress and does not take care of the needs of purdah when she goes outside the home.

Despite being an Ahmadi Muslim, she goes about without a head-covering, without a hijab or a scarf or a shawl.

She wears a tight dress that displays her physical beauty...

But, she is generous and hates telling lies.

So for her, the great virtue would be to act on the Quranic commandment of Purdah and modesty.

The commandment that she neglected regarding it as a minor virtue, but this by not adhering to Purdah, she remains vulnerable to greater sins.

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So suffice it to say that every good or evil deed has to be measured and seen in the context of every person's own situation and circumstances.

It is clear that the definition of a big sin or a virtue for a given person is determined by the individual circumstances of a person.

So long as one regards some evils small and others big, a person cannot safeguard himself from evil nor can one become blessed with the opportunity to do goodness.

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It is vital to understand that the big evils for a given person are all those which one finds one's self unable to give up and which have become a part of his habitual actions.

Thus, from the outset, it needs to be understood that it is not the measure of the evil or good deed that makes it big or small sin or a virtue.

We will not attain conviction to do good and avoid evil, as long as we go on believing that some sins or virtues are small.

Our actions will become strong when we will keep this advice of the Promised Messiah in front of us that the one who does not act on the 700 commandments of the Holy Quran closes the door of salvation upon himself.

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Once the Promised Messiah (as) was making an address in the month of Ramadhan, in Amritsar. He was offered and took a sip of cup of tea because his throat was dry. He was travelling and hence was exempt from fasting according to the teachings of the Holy Quran.

- Upon seeing this, the non-Ahmadis sitting there raised a hue and cry that look, he claims to be a Mahdi and yet is not fasting in the month of Ramadan.

In the estimation of those people the importance of keeping a fast is such that they keep a fast even if it means disobeying a commandment of God; in the sight of God the fast of such a one is no fast at all, he simply remains hungry and thirsty.

Such people have set up their own standards of big and small virtues and sins and as a consequence they try to attain to what they think to be a big virtuous deed.

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By regarding any sinful act as minor, we will have the motivation to confront this.

By not confronting these, we will not be able to give these sins up

And so they go on getting deeper into evil by committing one evil deed and then the next!

Remember, the Islamic concept is that a great virtuous deed is the one that one finds **most difficult to do** and is different for every person.

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So, if we are desirous of reforming ourselves, then must try to adopt every good and virtuous act and do our best to save ourselves from every evil and sinful deed.

Not adhering to, what one regards as small virtues can deprive one of doing good deeds altogether

Similarly, many apparently small bad deeds, cause irreparable damage to one's spirituality and righteousness and deprive one of becoming the recipient of the bounties of purity and piety from God.

In Addition, if one does not abandon the doing of some evil deeds, the seed of the evil deed remains intact and sprouts the moment an occasion presents itself.

Great care needs to be paid to this.

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We will be able to uproot evil with the collective strength of the community once all people will begin to think along the same lines.

Muslims may be involved in many wrong practices, but as a group they instinctively avoid eating pork, even those born and brought up in the West.

This is due to that sentiment which has been developed among the Muslims as a whole community.

So in order to attain lasting reformation of our characters, we need to promote the collective understanding that even a small righteous act of goodness is a big virtue and that even a small evil act is a grave sin.

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The second cause that hinders practical reformation is the environment and the tendency to copy others.

Allah, the Exalted, has placed this tendency to copy in the nature of man and this can be seen from the earliest part of our childhood.

This tendency helps us to learn skills from our environment such as languages and moral behaviour.

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If the parents are righteous and observe salat, recite the Holy Quran, promote an atmosphere of love and affection and abhor falsehood, then the children will also adopt virtues



But if, on the contrary, parents show unsavory behaviour at home, then because of that tendency to copy, their child learns these same bad things.

When he goes out, whatever he sees in the surroundings and in the friends he tries to learn those things. **This is why again and again draw the attention of the parents that they should also keep an eye on the outside environment of the children.** And even within the house the programs that they watch on the television or see through the internet access, they should keep an eye on those also.

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Then this is also worthy of attention that the age in which the children can be trained begins from their earliest years.



The parents should never think that the child is still very young, what does he know.



He knows everything, and the child observes every act of his parents and these things are leaving a long lasting impression on his mind.



And then a time arrives when he starts to copy those things.

Children become set in their ways early on and so when they get older they will not accept anything different.

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So this is a very great responsibility of the parents that they, by their actions, ..

... should make their children such as observe prayer, make them truthful, impart to them the other high moral qualities.

They should avoid taking false oaths so that the children too can be safeguarded against these things.

Hazrat Musleh Maood (ra) says that actions can be seen, so they are copied and spread widely; whilst belief can not be seen, so it remains in its own limited circle.

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Explaining that actions have a more powerful impact than belief, Huzoor (aba) explained that

.. the example of belief is like that of propagating a plant by attaching a cutting (which grows slowly and has a limited potential)

Whereas the example of action is like a plant that propagates by planting of seeds.

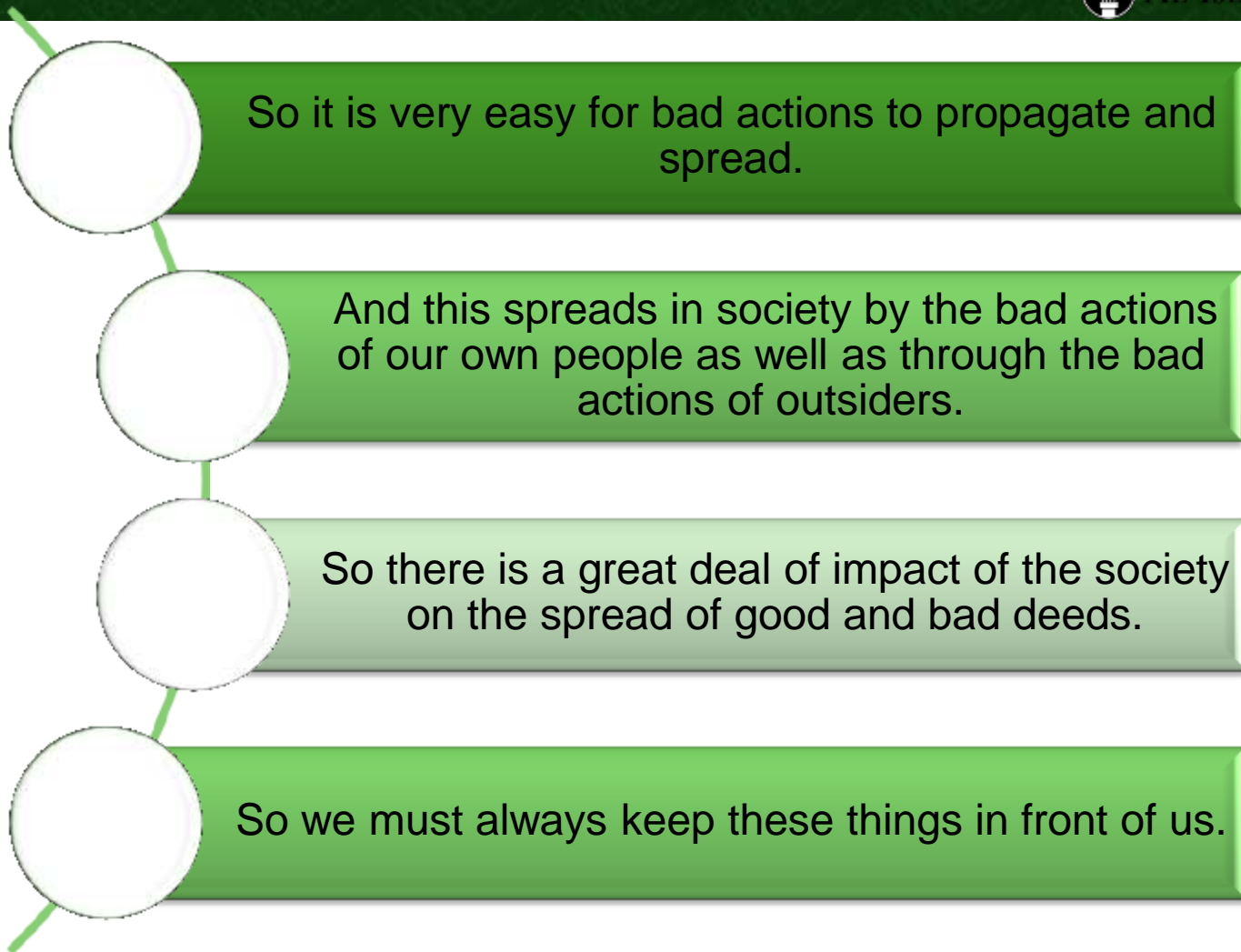
The seed grows by being planted in soil and it begins to grow by itself as soon as a suitable climate becomes available.

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May Allah enable us always to keep our attention focused on practically reforming ourselves and our children.



**Martyr of Ahmadiyyat; Khalid
Ahmad Albaraqi Sahib of Syria**

Today there is also a very sad news. And I shall lead the Janaza prayer after Jumu'ah of Khalid Ahmad Albaraqi Sahib of Syria. Khalid Baraqi Sahib was an engineer. He was of 37 years old. His parent were blessed in 1986 to take the bai'at - they were the first to do so in that area - and his father faced a lot of opposition as a result. In 1989 he had also to spend six months in jail as a result.

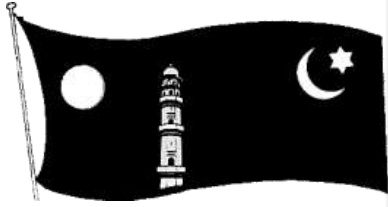
Similarly in the current situation in Syria his father was arrested twice, once in 2012 and then again in 2013. All the brothers and sisters of Khalid Buraqi Sahib are Ahmadis since birth. He was arrested on the evening of September 18, 2013 by some branch of the intelligence agency. After that no news could be gotten about him until December 9, 2013 when his father was called by a branch of the military intelligence and there he was given some papers related to his son and was told that his son had died on October 28, 2013. Inna lillahay wa inna elaihay rajayoon. His body was also not returned to his father.



**Martyr of Ahmadiyyat; Khalid
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It is quite likely that he was tortured as a result of which he died. The piety, righteousness and high moral qualities of Albaraqi Sahib and his level of religious knowledge are borne witness to by many Ahmadis and non-Ahmadis of the region. His voice at the time of reciting the Holy Quran was extraordinarily beautiful. He possessed a very soft heart and cared for others and carried out all assigned duties with great zeal and attention. Sincerity, cooperation and love of the Nizaam of the Jama'at and Khilafat was a part of his beautiful personality. He loved his country and its people. He was President of a local Jama'at also. He was serving at the moment of his arrest as Secretary Talimul Quran and Waqf-e-Aarzee. He was a Moosi. He paid his chandas with regularity. His wife is also an Ahmadi and they have three children.

Daughter Shurook and son Ahmad both are under six years old and Hisamud Din, who was born just a few weeks prior to the arrest, is a Waqf-e-Nau child and enrolled in this Scheme.



**Martyr of Ahmadiyyat; Khalid
Ahmad Albaraqi Sahib of Syria**

Khalid Albaraqi Sahib had written on his Facebook page before his arrest that love of one's country is a part of faith. O God safeguard our country and free it from all difficulties and make it stronger than before and more beautiful and make its people closer to Thyself. And O God make the hearts of its people incline towards each other and make them such as would love each other. O God help the righteous people of this land spread peace and security forever. *May Allah accept this prayer in favor of this country and for the whole of the Muslim Ummah so that the disorder that prevails there comes to an end.*

Tahir Nadeem Sahib says that he maintained contact with him via email. During our stay in Syria we came to know him. He was an example of hospitality and simplicity and humility. He was a young man who was happy and righteous. He used to live in a residence of the Jama'at in Damascus which was used as a center for the Jama'at. He had such a great desire for knowledge that he would come with a cousin of his and we would discuss many things. Whichever book of the Jama'at he would find, he would read with great love and attention. He would take out old books and issues of Al Bushra magazines of the Jama'at and find subjects in those old magazines and wrote them again on the computer and sent them to us. He would help us with the work of translations.



**Martyr of Ahmadiyyat; Khalid
Ahmad Albaraqi Sahib of Syria**

He had great love for the Promised Messiah (as) and Khilafat. He would always become very emotional upon listening to the Masih-e-Maood Day programs. Watching one such program in Arabic he sent us a very emotional message. He also recorded a Qaseeda written by the Promised Messiah in his very beautiful voice.

On April 1 2012 he wrote me a letter in which he had written one of his visions of 2006 from which he understood that he would be bestowed a very heavy responsibility and a trust and in the vision he was told to remain steadfastly on the truth and to not show any weakness. After this vision when he was made the President of a Jama'at he thought that maybe this vision had been fulfilled. But in the vision he had been told to remain steadfastly on the truth and to lay down his life and not show any weakness. And it seems that in this same way he laid down his life and remained attached to his faith and did not let his faith waver. May Allah continue to elevate his station. Aameen.