

Advice of Khalifatul Masih al Khamis (aba) for Moral and Spiritual Training

by Imam Shamshad A. Nasir

My dear brothers and sisters, as-Salaamu alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatahu. The subject of my speech will be the advice and directives given to us by our beloved Khalifatul Masih al Khamis (aba) for our moral and spiritual training.

We are blessed as a community to have a spiritual leader to guide us and correct us so that we may achieve the highest moral and spiritual heights possible. This blessing was fulfilled in its greatest manifestation by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw) and the advent of Islam 1400 years ago.

This is explained in the Holy Qur'an, where Hadhrat Abraham (as) and Hadhrat Ishmael (as) at the time of the reconstruction of Khana Ka'aba made a very important prayer that is mentioned in Surah Al Baqarah, verse 130:

130. 'And, our Lord, raise up among them a Messenger from among themselves, who may recite to them Thy Signs and teach them the Book and Wisdom and may purify them; surely, Thou art the Mighty, the Wise.'

Allah accepted this prayer of Prophet Abraham (as) and sent our beloved Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw). In Surah Al Jummah, Allah states the coming and mission of our beloved Holy Prophet (saw) in these words:

3. He it is Who has raised among the Unlettered *people* a Messenger from among themselves who recites unto them His Signs, and purifies them, and teaches them the Book and wisdom, although they had been, before, in manifest misguidance;

4. And *among* others from among them who have not yet joined them. He is the Mighty, the Wise.

In these verses, Allah (ta 'ala) has mentioned four grand tasks of Prophet Muhammad (saw), and the same grand mission has been assigned to the Imam Mahdi and Promised Messiah (as), who is the subordinate prophet and servant of our beloved Master Prophet Muhammad (saw).

And since we have accepted Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as), as the one sent by Allah as *Imamokum minkum* and reformer of this age, these same four grand tasks now become the responsibility of his Khulafa.

The successors of Masih-e-Maud (as) will therefore continue to carry out these tasks until the Day of Judgment, since each new Khalifa carries out the tasks of his predecessor.

One of the tasks assigned to Prophet Muhammad (saw) **yuzakihim**, which means that he purifies them so they can be closer to Allah.

In complete obedience to Prophet Muhammad (saw) and in the capacity of being his deputy in this Age, the Promised Messiah (as) carried out the task of imploring us to purify ourselves and cleanse our hearts and souls. The Promised Messiah (as) has said:

“Those who join the fold of this Community through spiritual inclination and devotion with me, their intention should be to reach high stations of piety, goodness and righteousness. They should refrain from being rebellious, deceitful and immoral.

“They should regularly offer the five daily prayers. They should not lie, nor do harm to others with their tongues or hands. They should not commit misdeeds or even think of indulging in malice, dishonesty and cruelty.

“They should refrain from all manner of sin and criminal activity, and abstain from speaking or doing ill to others. They should avoid emotional outbursts or useless actions.

“And they should become good, pure-hearted, compassionate and humble servants of Allah. No poison should remain in their nature.” (“Majmooa Ishteharat,” vol. 2, pg. 220)

O devotees and disciples of Khilafat-e-Ahmadiyyat! hear these glad tidings that, until Judgment Day, our Khilafat will carry out these duties assigned to the Prophet Muhammad (saw) and his Imam Mahdi.

Khilafat-e-Ahmadiyyat will continue to keep us steadfast and nourish our spiritual and moral training by giving us direction and advice, insha'Allah.

Under the leadership of Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih Al Khamis (aba), Jama'at Ahmadiyya is progressing in the duties and mission prescribed for it by God.

And for the achievement of this grand mission, each and every member of the Jama'at -- whether old or young, male or female -- is ready and willing to offer any or all sacrifices for success.

From the moment Hadhrat Khalifatul Khamis (aba) was chosen by Allah, the Khalifa has implored members of the Community to establish a strong bond with Allah, to increase in spirituality, to hold fast to the Holy Qur'an as the supreme guiding light, to follow in the footsteps of the blessed Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw), and to purify themselves and indulge in service to humanity.

There is not a single sermon, speech, Question-and-Answer session or Dars that is not focused on directing and guiding the Community in one way or another. One can choose any of these avenues of knowledge and they will find true guidance.

I have chosen a few excerpts from Khalifatul Masih al Khamis' speeches, sermons and Q-and-A's that deal with our spiritual and moral betterment.

First of all, I will mention an advice given by Hadhur (aba) to Atfal ul Ahmadiyya on April 24th, 2011 in the opening address of their annual UK convention.

He said the purpose of an Ahmadi's life is to establish a living relationship with Allah, and to fulfill this goal, Allah has enjoined the believers to offer Salat five times a day.

In the five pillars of Islam, the first and foremost is the declaration of belief (the Kalima) followed by the Salat, or the requirement to prove your sincerity of belief through regular, daily devotions.

Hazur reminded the young boys at their Ijtima how essential it was for them to offer congregational prayers in the Masjid or Salat center as often as possible.

He urged them in this duty in order for them to develop a strong bond with Allah, a deep love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw), and sincere devotion to the religion. That is the purpose of our creation.

Hazur told them: Do not think that you are just children. This time of your life is very important. Your future will be shaped by the spiritual education you receive now, therefore it is vital that you develop a strong connection with Allah now.

He said they should always remember that their parents and elders recognized the Imam of this age, and in accepting Ahmadiyyat, they blessed their children by raising them as Ahmadis under the divine direction of Khilafat.

The young people in the Jama'at should always appreciate this profound gift and be humble and thankful to Allah and to their parents for the blessings they receive as Ahmadi Muslims.

Hazur stressed that: "Some of you, around 13 or 14 years of age, who may come under the influence of Western society, may seek independence. Remember that this freedom should not be against the commandments of Allah.

This is the fundamental principle. When you understand this principle then we can say that our next generation is able to carry out the duties of the Community, and the future of Islam Ahmadiyyat is in safe hands." (Al-Fazl, 30th November 2011 pages 3-4.)

Hadhrat Masih-e-Ma'ud (as) in his announcement on March 4th, 1889, said: "I will not be lax of my duty to reform my friends. Those who have truly accepted me and wish to enter this Community,

"I will never be negligent of my responsibilities towards them. Indeed, I will not hesitate to sacrifice my life for the fulfillment of this purpose."

On the same pattern, our present Khalifa, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih al Khamis (aba), has worked tirelessly for our spiritual and moral reformation.

From his first sermon as Khalifa until now, he has repeatedly reminded us that, for our spiritual life to be successful, congregational prayer is an absolute necessity.

In his Friday sermon of April 12th, 2004, he advised the Community, saying, "In order to adopt righteousness, it is essential that Salat is established in congregation.

Therefore, it is the duty of each and every Ahmadi to populate the masjid and come for the five daily prayers whenever possible. Ahmadi must develop this habit in their children so that our mosques become filled with worshippers."

This reminder by Khalifatul Masih to do congregational prayers actually points to this hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (saw):

"A believer is in the masjid like a fish is in the water."

Obviously, a fish cannot survive outside water, so likewise, a believer cannot survive without being in the spiritual water of the masjid.

Drawing the attention of Khuddam to their responsibilities, while addressing their Ijtima on the subject of Eid attendance, Khalifatul Masih al Khamis said:

"Eid is such an important festival that, except for a serious emergency, participation is mandatory.

"Some students make the excuse of attending class to skip Eid prayers, but at other times they skip class.

“You are living in this western society where Islamic values are less cherished. If you claim to believe in the Imam of the Age, and proclaim giving precedence to your faith over worldly affairs, but then fail to do so, this would certainly be going against the desire of Allah and the Holy Prophet (saw).

“Those who call themselves Ahmadis need to honor this name and have regard for its sanctity. This is our duty. In order to achieve the goals of Hadhrat Masih-e-Maud (as) and honor his name, we need to make extreme sacrifices.”

Hadhrat Masih-e-Maud (as) said:

“Our Community has to be a model for other people, and if a person in my Community sets a bad example through moral failure and weak belief, then that person gives a bad name to the whole Community.” (“Al Fazi” Rabwah, Oct. 18th, 2011 pages 4-5.)

Khalifatul Masih al Khamis further said, “O Khuddam! the Messiah of the Age is calling you to bring about pure changes in yourselves and become the defenders of the religion of the Prophet Muhammad (saw).

“Today, the corrupt actions of radical Muslims have given our Faith a bad name. Today, when some non-Muslims attack Islam from every direction and defame the character of the Holy Prophet (saw), it is young Ahmadi Muslims who must rise up under the leadership of Hadhrat Masih-e-Maud (as) and establish the truth of the Faith.”

Nasiratul Ahmadiyya and Lajna Ima'illah.

Upon listening to a report by one country's national Tarbiyyat secretary of Majlis Lajna Ima'illah, Hazur said, “Tell the girls that they should realize their position as Ahmadis and be mindful of the expectations of Hadhrat Masih-e-Maud (as).”

He further stated that when a girl becomes a Nasirat at the age of seven, her mother should teach her the ways of proper dress and encourage her to wear long shirts. In this way, the understanding and appreciation of Purdah and the benefits of modesty take hold and when she grows up, it will not be difficult for her to practice Purdah.

Khalifatul Masih al Khamis further directed Secretary Sahiba Training to enquire from mothers about the level of the observance of Purdah by their 14-25 year-old daughters. Their mothers should also be asked if they are regular in offering Salat and reciting the Holy Qur'an.

In response to a question about Purdah, Khalifatul Masih al Khamis said:

The face should be covered at the forehead and at the chin. The coat should be loose and be at least knee-length.

The arms should be covered to the wrists as required for Salat. Covering the head but wearing tight or low-cut blouses is not Purdah. Wearing jeans is not prohibited as long as the shirts are long.

In this regard, Hazur also said, "An Ahmadi woman should not be swayed by the immodesty that is wide-spread in the West. This immodesty supposedly exists as an expression of freedom and fashion.

The instinct for women to be modest is from Allah, and an Ahmadi woman should cultivate this and enhance it even more. A storm of nudity and vulgarity has erupted due to television and the Internet.

It is the duty of every Ahmadi girl to not suffer an inferiority complex so that she drowns in this flood of Western indecency. Instead, she should -- through her good character and high morals -- create such a strong wall against this onslaught that she proves to the world that by following Islamic teachings, she can protect herself against all trials and temptations. Behaviors to watch out for:

Not observing Purdah in malls or parks.

Attending mixed gatherings without observing Purdah.

Overly friendly relations with male cousins and male classmates.

Unnecessary friendly interaction with men who are not relatives.

Indulging in gossip, participating in or watching indecent shows.

Wearing revealing clothing like low-cut blouses or tight jeans.

Working at places where one has to wear indecent clothing.

Reading obscene books or novels.

Watching vulgar or morally objectionable movies.

Dancing at weddings.

All these actions are satanic temptations that will ultimately cause an Ahmadi woman to lose the inherent protection of Purdah, Islamic customs and modesty, and when these are abandoned, the hope of remaining chaste will be seriously endangered.

Therefore, an Ahmadi girl should remember that by accepting Hadhrat Masih-e-Maud (as), she has pledged to follow the true Islamic teachings. She should stay away from any action that will cast a shadow on her modesty and good character. She should pray to Allah fervently for protection and cover herself in the dress of righteousness.

And for all you Ahmadi boys and men, you are not off the hook just because you're not wearing Hijab. You are equally required to observe the same kinds of restrictions on immodest behavior and influences.

“Save your progeny from falling into the fire.”

Khalifatul Masih al Khamis says that it is essential to attach your boys and girls to the system of Jama'at and its auxiliaries by being fully committed yourself. If parents show any slackness in this regard, they are setting a bad example and laying the foundation for their and their children's future loss and dis-connection from Jama'at.

It is incumbent on the head of the household to save their children from this fire just as Allah saved them and their elders. (Friday sermon, April 23rd, 2010)

Don't make negative comments about Jama'at in your homes

In a sermon on June 27th, 2003, drawing the attention of parents to the training of their children, he advised, “Do not say anything in your homes that shows lack of respect for the system of Jama'at, and do not complain or say anything negative about a Jama'at office bearer.

Even though it may be a legitimate complaint, by mentioning it in your homes, you are bound to affect your children in their outlook on the

Jama'at. All those who express negative opinions about the system of Jama'at, their children will be more or less harmed by this and some of them may even go astray.

Advice to Ansarullah and Lajna Ima'illah

In a Friday sermon on the responsibilities of Ansars and Lajna dated October 1st, 2010, Hazur said, "Both these auxiliaries are very important in their position within Jama'at and each plays a critical role in the success of the Jama'at regarding education and training of the next generation.

"If Ansar and Lajna take their obligations in the Jama'at seriously, then our next generation will be guided and safe-guarded and will increase in sincerity and loyalty and remain attached to the Jama'at.

If we remain steadfast in taqwa and reform ourselves and our children . . . then and only then will we gain the benevolence and blessings of Allah."

He reminded the Ansar and Lajna of the advice of Hadhrat Masih-e-Maud (as) that your weapon is prayer, therefore diligently indulge in prayers because this is the only way to remove sin and avoid disobedience to Allah.

Advice on Nikah and Wedding ceremonies

Another important training issue involves Nikah and weddings. Advising in this regard, our beloved Khalifa in a Nikah sermon delivered on September 25th, 2011 said,

"We must establish good morals by being righteous models for others. But sometimes exactly the opposite behavior is displayed. Establish your behavior and relations based on Qaul-e-Sadid (speaking the truth)."

"Remember that an Ahmadi girl has a restriction in that she cannot marry a non-Ahmadi. Under special circumstances, Ahmadi men are allowed to marry non-Ahmadi women, but Ahmadi girls are not allowed under any circumstances to marry non-Ahmadi men."

Hadhrat Masih-e-Maud (as) has stated it very clearly that Ahmadi parents who marry their daughters to non-Ahmadi men are committing a sin -- he has used the word sin. It is critical for Ahmadi boys to marry Ahmadi girls so that these relations are developed among Ahmadis and that the Jama'at's next generation is safe.

These days various television shows (both Western and Indian) present different customs regarding weddings, and through these shows, un-Islamic practices are promoted. We must safeguard ourselves against such practices, and we need to be ever vigilant that no such traditions influence us or creep into Ahmadiyya practices.

In this regard, Nizarat-e-Islah-o-Irshad has published an article titled "Avoidance of Bad Practices at Weddings" which gives instructions by different Khulafa. I have chosen some to bring to your attention.

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih al Khamis (aba) states that weddings are a religious not secular tradition, which is why Prophet Muhammad (saw) has said that, when getting married, give preference to that person who is more pious and religious.

The best advice and direction at the time of marriage is rooted in cultivating and increasing taqwa. One should, then, only indulge in moderation those practices that Islam has allowed, and one should not exceed the boundaries and corrupt the religion.

Regarding the expenses associated with the wedding ceremony, Hazur says, "There are certain practices that are indulged in with great fanfare, with a great deal of money being spent, and for some reason the perception persists that such things are part of Islam, when they are not.

"For example, there is Mehndi, which for some reason is given great importance, where Mehndi parties are thrown, cards are printed, and stages are decorated. It goes on for many days and sometimes weeks. "All these customs have engulfed even those who cannot afford such lavish spending. Consequently, they get in debt.

"Non-Ahmadis are known to do that, but now some Ahmadi families are also indulging in such customs. Previously I admonished you to refrain from lavish spending and ceremony at Mehndi parties, but people paid

no attention. Now I openly tell you to refrain from indulging in these things. Just stop it.”

Hazur is not saying that Mehndi is prohibited, but that it should be done at home, without excessive spending or fanfare.

Khalifatul Masih al Khamis (aba) also condemned dancing at weddings or other occasions. He said that even ladies dancing with each other is objectionable. As far as singing is concerned, appropriate wedding songs that girls traditionally sing are not objectionable.

During a meeting with Waqfeen Nau, a question was asked by one girl as to how humbleness can best be cultivated. Hazur replied, “Develop fear of Allah and resolve in your heart that you are going to be humble.

With your own efforts, humility can grow. Whenever you do something and wish that people praise you, it breeds arrogance, so be mindful to not seek praise from others, and instead, in your five daily prayers, supplicate for increased humility.”

Cultivating Love for Allah

To another question on how to cultivate love for Allah while we are young, Hazur responded, “Seek help from Allah in your prayers and ask Allah in the words of Prophet Muhammad (saw): Allahuma usaloka...”

He stated that if you are mindful of your duties to Allah, only then will you will grow to love Him. Allah says that if you take one step towards Him, then He takes two steps towards you, and when you walk towards Him, He runs towards you.

Hazur said that if the love of the world takes hold of you, if TV and the Internet occupy you so much that you are lax in your Salat, then the love of Allah cannot develop within you. And to attain Allah's love, sacrifice of worldly desires is required. (Al Fazl, Nov. 21st, 2011, pg.3)

Waqfat-e-Nau must set a High Standard

Khalifatul Masih al Khamis advised waqfat-e-nau: “You should always remember that . . . you should stand out and be beyond reproach in the way you carry yourselves, your speech, and your appearance. Your

Purdah should be of a very high standard. You should offer Salat regularly and recite the Holy Qur'an.

“You are not only a model for other girls but also for older ladies. Through your example, you will set the standard for others to follow. Do not care what the older ladies are doing, nor complain that they gossip or backbite. Follow the teachings of the Holy Qur'an.”

Khalifatul Masih al Khamis (aba) said that in order to be a model for others, they should master religious knowledge, be regular in prayers, recite Qur'an daily, and wear Hijab or head-scarf and observe Purdah.

Advice concerning Facebook

One girl asked Hazur about Facebook. He said that it is not appropriate and refrain from it. He clarified that he never said that if you do not unsubscribe from it you will become a sinner, but that he warned that the negative consequences of Facebook far outweigh the benefits.

Those who have these accounts will eventually make connections with the opposite sex, and then our boys and girls may end up getting caught up in dangerous relationships with devastating consequences.

It is better to stay away from such things that may lead to bad morals. He said my task is to advise -- the Holy Qur'an says to keep on admonishing and those who do not listen, their sin is on them.

If the purpose of having a Facebook account is to call people towards Allah, then go to the alislam.org website where the Jama'at Facebook account is available for doing this outreach.

Khalifatul Masih al Khamis said “Al hikmata Daalata ul Momin” meaning that “Wisdom is the lost property of a believer.” It does not mean every creation of Western society is beneficial. He said that it often happens that girls who do not heed his advice later write to apologetically say how they made a mistake and suffered because of it.

He also stated that the person who started Facebook said he created it so that every person can be openly presented to the world. The question is, does an Ahmadi girl need or want to freely present herself to the world? The answer to that should clearly be “no.”

Another girl asked Khalifatul Masih al Khamis if it was appropriate for some Ahmadi ladies to wear expensive clothing and jewelry. He responded that if such ladies have a high standard of worship and are generous in their financial sacrifices, then there is no harm in wearing expensive clothing and jewelry, but if that is not the case, then it is inappropriate and becomes a roadblock to righteousness. (Al Fazl, Nov.21st, 2011, pg.5)

Covering the Faults of Others & Attachment to the Khilafat

With regard to good morals, Hazur in his sermon on November 19th, 2004, said, "Allah (ta'ala) has directed that we need to cultivate good morals. Respect each other's rights and nurture love among yourselves. Do not search for faults in your companions, brothers, neighbors and society at large.

If you learn of someone's flaw accidentally, then overlook it. We are clearly commanded to refrain from advertising anything that creates disorder or becomes a cause of disorder in society. We should pray – this is the only and best remedy.

In one of his writings on May 11th, 2003, Hazur addressed the Jama'at and said:

"If you desire to progress and prevail in the world, then my message to you is to remain attached to the institution of Khilafat and hold fast to the rope of Allah."

My dear brothers and sisters! In closing, Allow me to submit two final points for your consideration. One is the great blessing we receive by heeding the advice of the Khalifa of the time and successfully carrying out his directives.

Hadhrat Ameerul Momineen is dispensing guidance for our training and spiritual progress. We must all act upon it. Pray, pray and pray even more so that, as Hadhrat Masih-e-Maud (as) has said, there is a great clamor in the heavens.

A few days before his demise, Hadhrat Masih-e-Maud (as) said:

“It is of grave concern to Jama’at Ahmadiyya that, on one hand, hundreds of thousands of our opponents call us Kafir, and yet on the other hand, if we do not become true believers in the sight of Allah, then we are doubly at a loss.” (Hayat-e-Tayba, pg. 352)

So do not let it be that, due to disobedience and giving in to worldly desires that go against the Holy Qur’an and Sunnah, we suffer a double loss – in this life and in the next.

The second point is the one where Hadhrat Masih-e-Maud (as) has said:

“You are the last Community of God. Practice the good to an extent where it reaches its perfection.” (Kishti Nuh, page 15)

In his landmark booklet of advice to the Community, “The Will,” the Promised Messiah (as) writes:

“Do not be smitten by worldly pleasures because they keep you away from God. Adopt the life of hardship for God’s sake.

“The hurt you suffer by which Allah is pleased with you is better than that pleasure which angers Him. And that defeat by which Allah is pleased is better than that victory that invites His wrath. . .

“God has addressed me and said that Taqwa is that tree that should be planted in one’s heart. . . Therefore, do not waste your pious capabilities.

“Do not think that God will waste you, for you are that seed planted in this earth by God’s hand. God tells me that this seed will grow and prosper and its branches will sprout in all directions and it will grow into a huge tree.

“Therefore, blessed is he who has faith in God’s promise.... God has informed me that I should instruct my Jama’at that those who have faith -- faith which is devoid of worldly impurity and is not hypocritical or cowardly and is not disobedient, then those are the beloved of God and those are

the ones whose every action is that of the truthful.” (The Will)

Come towards me with truth -- it is far better!

Wild beasts are everywhere, I am a castle of security.