

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

The Amīr/National President

Jamā‘at Ahmadiyya,

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Dear Brother,

السّلام علیکم ورحمة اللّٰه وبرکاته

**The Holy Prophet ﷺ set the highest examples of clemency and forgiveness.**

**The primary objective in punishing a culprit or a sinner is to bring about reformation and improving the morals.**

**The departments of Umur ‘Ammā and Qadā’ should go deep into the cases before making recommendations or issuing verdicts so that we can create a system that is pleasing to God.**

On 22nd January 2016, Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V (May Allāh be his Helper) delivered the Friday Sermon at Baitul Futūh Mosque, London.

After reciting verse 41 of Sūrah *Al-Shūrā*, which is translated as follows:

**'And the recompense of an injury is an injury the like thereof; but whoso forgives and his act brings about reformation, his reward is with Allah. Surely, He loves not the wrongdoers.'** (42:41)

Huzoor (May Allāh be his Helper) said: Islām teaches us that those who are guilty of wrong deeds or of causing harm to others should be dealt with in a manner that focuses on reformation. Islām does have the concept of punishment, but it also encourages forgiveness and clemency. This verse teaches that we should punish the wrongdoers, but that the motive behind the punishment should be their reformation, and that if you find that they can be reformed through forgiveness, then forgive them, and this forgiveness will earn you great reward from God. On the other hand, if you mete out excessive punishment, then you will be counted among the transgressors. This is the basic principle regarding punishment and reformation that is mentioned in the Holy Qur’ān. Hence, in punishing a culprit the primary objective should be reformation and betterment of morals, and for this purpose the focus should not be on punishment but on reformation. If it is necessary to punish culprits, they should be punished in proportion to their crime. To punish excessively is transgression which God does not like.

Huzoor (May Allāh be his Helper) said that Islām, unlike other religions, does not teach excess nor deficiency. We find the highest examples of this in the life of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. When he saw that the culprits had been reformed, then he forgave them even if they were his mortal enemies. Huzoor (May Allāh be his Helper) illustrated this with episodes from the Holy Prophet’s ﷺ life. But, on the other hand, he also meted out punishment where it was necessary for reformation. So the objective is to reform and not to avenge.

Explaining the philosophy behind punishment and forgiveness, the Promised Messiah عليه السلام says that punishment should be proportionate to the crime committed. But when one forgives and the occasion is such that forgiveness results in reformation and not in

further evil, in other words it is exercised at the most appropriate occasion, then such a person will be rewarded for it. In other words, the one who forgives will find his reward with God. The Qur'ān does not teach that evil should never be resisted, rather it has to be resisted in certain situations, hence it is important to realize whether the situation calls for punishment or forgiveness. The path, that is best for both the culprit and the society, should be adopted.

Huzoor (May Allāh be his Helper) said that that when making such decisions it is also important to bear in mind the impact they will have on the society as a whole. The Promised Messiah عليه السلام says that in choosing between punishment or forgiveness, we have to consider what effect either option will have on society. If forgiveness is likely to embolden other criminals, then in it is essential to punish. Huzoor (May Allāh be his Helper) said that Islām teaches us that once we have forgiven someone we should cleanse our hearts of all malice and prejudice. Huzoor (May Allāh be his Helper) cited the example of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in this regard.

Huzoor (May Allāh be his Helper) said that the institutions and office bearers of the Jamā'at should bear these things in mind. Sometimes I receive recommendations or verdicts regarding people which, although it cannot be said that they are motivated by revenge, but sometimes the office bearers are naturally inclined towards either severity or leniency, which causes problems. Neither forgiving nor punishing is in itself a merit. The purpose is to win Allāh's pleasure and that is only possible when the focus is on reformation. The relevant departments like Dārul Qadā' or Umur 'Amma should bear this in mind and make their recommendations after deep scrutiny so that we are able to create a Jamā'at that acts in keeping with the will of God, and for this we also need to pray and seek Allāh's help.

Huzoor (May Allāh be his Helper) said that we should always remember that every action should be aimed at winning Allāh's pleasure, only thus can we bring about reformation. We must keep these teachings in mind because we are tasked with reformation, doing away with evil, and creating a peaceful and harmonious society. May Allāh enable us to understand and act upon these teachings. Huzoor (May Allāh be his Helper) also read out several extracts from the writings of the Promised Messiah عليه السلام relating to punishment, reformation and forgiveness.

At the end of the sermon Huzoor (May Allāh be his Helper) informed the Jamā'at of the tragic martyrdom of Bilal Mahmood Sahib, son of Mumtaz Ahmad Sindhi Sahib of Rabwah and led his funeral prayer in absentia after the Friday prayer.

Please convey these guidelines given by Huzoor (May Allāh be his Helper) to members of your Jamā'at.

Jazākumullāh.

Wassalām,

(Hameedullah)

Wakīl A'lā,

Tahrīk Jadīd Anjuman Ahmadiyya Pakistan,

Dated: 28 January 2016