

إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَى عَنِ  
الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ  
Surely,  
Prayer restrains  
one from  
indecent  
and manifest  
evil [29:46]



# monthly meeting GUIDE 2019



MAJLIS  
ANSARULLAH  
USA

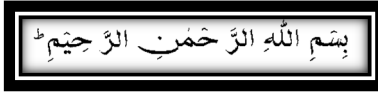


# 2019 Monthly Meeting Guide

صِبْغَةَ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللَّهِ صِبْغَةً<sup>ن</sup> وَنَحْنُ لَهُ عِبْدُونَ ﴿١٣٩﴾

*We will adopt* the religion of Allāh; and who is better than Allāh in *teaching* religion, and Him alone do we worship.  
(The Holy Qur'ān, 2 [Al-Baqarah]:139)





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## Anṣār Pledge

Say this part three times:

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ  
لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ  
مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

*Ash-hadu • allā ilāha • illallāhu • waḥdahū •  
lā sharīka lahū • wa ash-hadu • anna  
Muḥammadan • ‘abduhū • wa rasūluh*

Say this part once:

*I bear witness • that there is none worthy of worship • except Allāh. • He is One • (and) has no partner, •  
and I bear witness • that Muḥammad (peace be upon him) • is His servant • and messenger.*

Say this part once:

*I solemnly pledge • that I shall endeavor • throughout my life • for the propagation • and consolidation •  
of Aḥmadiyyat in Islām, • and shall stand guard • in defense of • the institution of Khilāfat. • I shall not  
hesitate • to offer any sacrifice • in this regard. • Moreover, • I shall exhort my children • to always remain  
dedicated • and devoted • to Khilāfat. • Inshā ‘allāh.*

Notes:

- *Text in parentheses is not in the original Arabic text and has been added to the translation.*
- *“•” in the text indicates where person leading the pledge should pause to allow members to repeat the same portion.*





**Dear Brothers,  
As-Salāmu ‘Alaikum Wa Raḥmatullāh**

Alḥamdulillāh, this is the fifth year in a row that the attendance in our monthly meetings has continued to grow. Our average monthly meeting attendance is still less than 50% of our total Tajnīd. There is still a lot of room to grow further. I sure hope and pray that with the help of you all, our attendance will surpass the 50% threshold this year, Inshā’allāh.

I would like to present the monthly meeting guide for 2019 to you all hoping that this can engage you in healthy discussions to help you grow spiritually as well as in knowledge. This year’s format is quite similar to that of the last year. We have selected the theme for each monthly meeting around a recent Friday sermon of Khalīfatul-Masīḥ (may Allāh be his helper). In each monthly meeting, a synopsis of the selected Friday sermon will be presented followed by two main discussion scenarios. After each scenario, the discussion will be pushed forward by adding a few variants of the same scenario. The scenarios are limited in scope and may not be applicable to the lives of many of us but our intention is that they raise awareness and help use self-analyze and bring about the pious changes in ourselves which Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) repeatedly reminds us in his Friday sermons. Being Anṣār, our responsibility is not limited to bringing about pious changes in ourselves alone but also to inspire our next generations to do the same as well as anchor themselves strongly around the Aḥmadiyya Khilāfat. For that purpose, in each of the monthly meeting guide, we have included some discussion points from the selected Friday sermons which can help you learn and spiritually grow together with your family members and children.

We have also included health related tips in our monthly meetings along with an informational slide for your general knowledge about the Niẓām-i- Jamā‘at (system of the Jamā‘at). The PowerPoint package for each month contains the full-featured monthly meeting material. However, this printed version will contain only the synopsis of the Friday sermons followed by two discussion scenarios to help you prepare in advance for the monthly meeting.

I would also like to request prayers for the team who has worked hard to prepare the PowerPoint monthly meeting packages as well as this printed version. The project was led by Nā’ib Ṣadr, Mansoor Qureshi Ṣāḥib and his team consisted of Mu‘āwin Ṣadr, Rizwan Alladin Ṣāḥib, Qā’id Tarbiyat, Moyenuddin Sirajee Ṣāḥib, Qā’id Publications, Rafī Malik Ṣāḥib, and Nā’ib Qā’id Publications, Naveed Malik Ṣāḥib. May Almighty Allāh abundantly reward them all and their families! Āmīn.

And finally, if you find a fault here and there in the printed version or the accompanied PowerPoint slides, I take full responsibility and seek your forgiveness in light of the prayer taught in the Holy Qur’ān, “Our Lord, do not punish us, if we forget or fall into error.” (The Holy Qur’ān, 2:287). I would request you not to argue with your Za‘īm or anyone else about an error or omission which you may spot in the monthly meeting material, rather bring this to my knowledge so that I can avoid such mistakes and omissions next time and/or take a corrective action. We are all brothers and we ought to continue to take steps to strengthen each other to keep growing in brotherhood and spirituality.

Wassalām,

Imran Hayee

humbly serving Majlis Anṣārullāh USA

## Selected Friday Sermons for the Monthly Meetings

#	Month	Topic of the Sermon	Sermon Date
1	January	Avoiding Shirk both obvious and hidden	11/02/18
2	February	Ṣalāt—The path to success and salvation	09/29/17
3	March	Benevolence towards parents and respecting relationships	01/16/04
4	April	Attributes of true Aḥmadī: financial sacrifice, obedience to Khilāfat and Niẓām-i-Jamā‘at	11/02/18
-	May	<i>Break for Ramaḍān</i>	-
5	June	Marrying off our children: guidelines for a Nāṣir	12/24/04
6	July	Mosque—a house of worship and a source of Tablīgh	10/19/18
7	August	Complaining and backbiting—habits to avoid for a true Aḥmadī Muslim	10/26/18
-	September	<i>Break for Anṣār Ijtimā‘</i>	-
8	October	Worship, anger-management and forgiveness	10/10/14
9	November	Religion, morality and material success	4/24/2015
10	December	New Year Resolutions for Aḥmadīs	1/2/2015

## Suggested Agenda for the Monthly Meetings

- Recitation of the Holy Qur’ān (selected verse from the Friday sermon)
- Pledge
- Priorities of the year 2019
- Sermon of the month (topic and date)
- Health tip
- Did you know?
- Reminders/announcements
- Silent prayer

**Topic 1 (Jan): Avoiding Shirk both obvious and hidden  
(FS: 11/2/18)**

**Synopsis:** Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) has laid down some conditions of Bai‘at. It is not enough to change one’s belief; in order to become a practical Aḥmadī one has to abide by these conditions with one’s full power and ability. Bai‘at means to sell one’s life to God. One who pledges Bai‘at has to adopt humility and has to part with his self and his ego. Bai‘at means to do everything in keeping with God’s commandments. If someone does so, then God does not allow such a person to perish and protects him in every way. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) says: Examine your faith and your deeds and become pure like the Companions of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) who emerged out of their ignorance, became godly people, repented of past idolatry and strove to stay away even from the subtle forms of idolatry. The true Tauḥīd (Unity of God) that God requires of us is simply not to accept anyone to be worthy of worship except Allāh. Whether it be an idol or a man, or the sun or the moon, or one’s own self and machinations. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said that if anyone thinks to the contrary due to his imperfect training, he should clear his mind about it. The second condition after Tauḥīd is to shun falsehood and other immoral activities. The Holy Qur’ān describes falsehood as a great evil and an abomination and has declared it to be equal to idolatry. Just as there is no substance in an idol, in the same way there is nothing beneath the embellishment of falsehood. One who puts his faith in falsehood ceases to put his trust in God. Thus, by telling lies one loses God. If you claim to be true believers, you have to remove falsehood from within you. It does not behoove a believer to resort to falsehood even in minor things. There are many cases where people resort to falsehood in settling their mutual disputes and get verdicts in their own favor. Falsehood leads to sin and transgression, and sin and transgression lead to hell. So, we always need to practice introspection. Another teaching of the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) to his followers was to protect themselves from adultery. This means not even to go near things that might cause such thoughts to be born in your mind, nor to adopt ways that might lead to this sin. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) specifically reminded both children and adults to avoid the wrongful use of TV and Internet. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) says: If you claim to follow me, then let not even thought of mischief or injustice enter your minds. To deprive someone of what rightfully belongs to him is a great wrong and a sin. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: We tell other people about the excellences of Islām, but if we do not ourselves practice them, then we belie ourselves. Every Aḥmadī should think deeply about this. If our actions match our teachings, then our preaching will bear good fruit. Let us not even entertain the thought of injustice, let alone act in such a way. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: Worship of God is a prerequisite for becoming a believer and it is the purpose of man’s creation. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) says: O ye people who consider yourselves to be my Jamā‘at, in heaven you will be considered my Jamā‘at only if you truly follow the ways of Taqwā (righteousness). Therefore, offer five daily Prayers with such awe and concentration as if you were beholding God. A religion is not a religion if it has no Prayer. What is Prayer? It is to present one’s shortcomings and limitations before God with humility and to seek from God their alleviation. Prayer means that a person’s heart remains engrossed in the fear and remembrance of God. And this is true faith. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: I have said time and again that people who live far from the mosque or Prayer center should arrange to pray together at one place with others who live nearby. In this way while they will merit the reward of Prayer, they will be reminded of the importance of Prayer, their children will become mindful of its observance, and it will be a means of their proper upbringing. I have said again and again that if all the office-bearers of the Jamā‘at and of the auxiliary organizations give their

full attention to Prayers at every level, the attendance can increase manifold. May Allāh enable every Aḥmadī to fulfil this obligation. This obligation will not be fulfilled by only offering the obligatory Prayers, rather it also requires that we also offer Nawāfil (supererogatory Prayers) and Tahajjud. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: An Aḥmadī should constantly seek forgiveness for his sins from Allāh. Man is weak, and sometimes he commits errors even when he tries not to. Istighfār (seeking forgiveness from Allāh) is the means for avoiding the repetition of these errors in future. Another important condition laid down by the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) is our obligation to be kind towards human beings. Do not demean anyone. Do not hold anyone as your enemy. These are the traits that should be demonstrated most of all by Ahmadīs. Arrogance is also a great sin. The Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) said that if someone has arrogance even as little as a grain of mustard seed, he will not enter paradise. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) says: In my view the best way to become purified is that one should not show any kind of arrogance or pride, neither on account of his intellect, nor his family, nor his wealth. I admonish my Jamā‘at against pride. No white person has any superiority over a colored one. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: In the outside world there is a lot of discrimination against black people, and some even claim that white people have greater intellect than black people. This is a state of arrogance, and Ahmadīs should keep away from it. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: I also want to draw attention towards financial sacrifices. By the grace of Allāh, the worldwide Jamā‘at is making progress in terms of making financial sacrifices. The Jamā‘at has an established financial system. After having a look at the statistics here, it seems that there is not sufficient attention being given to it. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said that a poor person can ask for his Chanda to be reduced or wavered, but those who are earning well should ask themselves whether they are paying Chanda according to their correct income. If everyone was to pay according to their correct income, there would be no need to make separate appeals for building mosques and other projects. Sacrifice means to put oneself in difficulty in order to fulfil the requirements of Allāh’s religion. Therefore, I remind those who do not pay Chanda according to their correct income to start doing so, so that they can reap Allāh’s blessings. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: The last thing I want to speak about today is obedience. Obedience to Allāh and His Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) is stressed upon in countless places. In the Conditions of Bai‘at, the word *Ma‘rūf* appears alongside obedience, and in pledges of the auxiliary organizations consists the line that “I shall abide by every Ma‘rūf decision of the Khalīfa of the time.” Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said that some people who have a negative bent of mind come up with various explanations of the word Ma‘rūf. This has to be discouraged. If people start to come up with their own explanation, then unity cannot be upheld. People will then start quarrelling over what Ma‘rūf means or does not mean. As long as true Khilāfat is in place—and by the grace of Allāh it will continue to remain—the Khalīfa will never make a decision that contradicts Allāh and His Messenger. Therefore, it is incumbent upon everyone to obey the instructions of the Khalīfa with regard to the Jamā‘at. Ḥaḍrat Muṣliḥ Mau‘ūd (may Allāh be pleased with him) says that even if the Khalīfa happens to make a wrong decision, Allāh will save the Jamā‘at from its harmful effects. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: This is the only way to preserve the unity of the Jamā‘at, and this will lead to more and more people becoming sincere and faithful Ahmadīs. We can only benefit from being Ahmadīs if we follow this injunction. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) says: One who does not offer full obedience tarnishes the name of the Jamā‘at. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) prayed: May Allāh enable us all to fulfill the obligations that the Bai‘at of the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) lays upon us. May we remain faithfully attached to Khilāfat and accept his every Ma‘rūf decision and act upon it with full obedience. May Allāh enable us all to do so. Āmīn.

## Discussion Scenario 1

You were finally able to make arrangements to go to UK for Jalsa with your wife and three children. You did not have any relatives in UK and were trying to make accommodation arrangements considering your tight budget. You found a great deal for a hotel room. Unfortunately, they only allowed 4 people in the room. For any more, you had to get another room.

### How would you respond?

1. Book another room.
2. Look for another hotel.
3. Make sure they don't find out and use the same room.
4. Any other response.

### How would your response change if?

Consider each separately:

- ... You have really young children (can easily squeeze the kids in one bed).
- ... The hotel is full (no other rooms available).
- ... Other Jamā'at members told you: "It's okay—the hotel staff doesn't care."
- ... Other hotel options are much further away; would require rental car and other expenses.

### Guidance from the Friday sermon

When taking Bai'at, a true Aḥmadī pledges to avoid all forms of overt and covert *Shirk* (idolatry). What is overt *Shirk*? Elaborating on this, the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) states, "... worshipping resources and revering worldly gods are also forms of *Shirk*. What is meant by worldly gods? These are worldly benefits, for which a person neglects and discards the commandments of faith and God Almighty. If a person discards a religious command to fulfill a worldly desire, he becomes guilty of *Shirk*..."

There are some who lie even in trivial matters. This does not behoove a believer. One should not come under the impression that small inaccurate statements are not lies. They most certainly are lies and take one far away from *Tauḥīd* (Unity of God).

## **Discussion Scenario 2**

A Nāṣir's daughter was in a marital dispute. Despite attempts at reconciliation, nothing seemed to be working. Both he and his wife believed that their son in-law was at fault. The case went to the Jamā'at's Qaḍā' system. The decision went in favor of the son in-law. The Nāṣir was extremely upset.

### **How would you respond?**

1. Accept the decision as it is and pray to Allāh for his daughter.
2. File an appeal to the Qaḍā' system as he is convinced that the decision was incorrect.
3. Seek professional legal advice.
4. Any other response.

### **How would your response change if?**

Consider each separately:

- ... One of the Qaḍā' Board members is a cousin of his son in-law's father.
- ... His daughter has two young children.
- ... His daughter was physically abused.
- ... The decision was upheld by both the appeals system and Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīh.

### **Guidance from the Friday sermon**

Thus, we will only fulfill the purpose of being an Aḥmadī when we realize this truth and strive to attain it with all our faculties. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) says: "Showing obedience is not a small matter or one that is easy to demonstrate. This requires a death on one's part. Whosoever does not show complete obedience seeks to malign this community." The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) further says: "I have advised my community on numerous occasions that one should not rely on the mere verbal proclamation of your pledge of allegiance. Until one understands the reality of the Bai'at, they cannot attain salvation."

### **Examples of what we can do to adapt our lives according to Ḥuḍūr’s guidance in this sermon**

- Make a pledge to avoid any form of Shirk (idolatry) in your life and avoid all types of falsehood, Inshā’allāh.
- Take time with your wife to reflect on your habits. Ask: “Are we cutting corners where we shouldn’t be?”
- Pair up with another Nāṣir to review your annual income and Chanda calculation.
- Learn the basics of the system of Qaḍā’ in the Jamā‘at at [ahmadiyya.us/departments/qadha-a](http://ahmadiyya.us/departments/qadha-a).

### **Examples of topics from this Friday sermon we can use to stimulate discussion among our family**

- What are the various forms of hidden Shirk, how can we identify them and avoid to the best of our ability?
- How do we build trust in Allāh the Almighty?
- How can we strengthen the Niẓām-i-Jamā‘at (system of the Jamā‘at)?

## **Topic 2 (Feb): Ṣalāt—The path to success and salvation (FS: 9/29/17)**

**Synopsis:** Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: Today is the inauguration of the annual Ijtimā‘ of Majlis Anṣārullāh UK. In this context, I would like to draw attention towards an essential point, and that is the observance of Prayer. When a person crosses the age of 40, he should realize that the days of life are now ebbing away, so he should become more inclined towards God. A believer should worry about fulfilling his obligations to God and to His creatures. Whenever Allāh draws our attention to Ṣalāt, He says that it should be offered in time and with congregation. This is what *Iqāmah* or observance of Prayer means. From the reports I receive, I get the impression that many do not give proper attention to this despite having reached such a mature age. Every Nāṣir should look within himself and strive to become punctual in Ṣalāt. The Anṣārullāh can only become helpers of God if they do their duty in observing the faith and having others observe it as well. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) says that Prayer is the weapon that will make us victorious; we should use this weapon in the manner that Allāh has taught us. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: Observe Prayers punctually and with the proper decorum. Some people offer only one Prayer in a day. They should remember that no one is exempted from prescribed Ṣalāt, not even Prophets. It is related in a Ḥadīth that a group of new converts came to the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) and asked that they be exempted from offering the Ṣalāt. The Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) refused, saying: “The religion that is devoid of practice is meaningless.” The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) says: What is Ṣalāt? It is a special form of prayer, but people treat it like a tax they owe to the sovereign. The naïve people do not understand that God benefits nothing from their Prayer and supplication. Instead, it is for man’s own benefit, for in this way he reaches his goal. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) says: I am pained to see that these days people do not aspire for worship and Taqwā (righteousness) and piety. The reason is the poisonous influence of the world that is causing the love for God to grow cold, so that people do not experience the kind of pleasure that they should derive from worship. Those who do not experience pleasure in worship should worry about their ailment, for they are ill. When God has created mankind for His worship, how can it be that he did not imbue it with pleasure and joy. There is pleasure and joy, but only if one is willing to experience it. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) says: Understand well that worship is not a burden or a tax. It has a pleasure and joy that is greater than all the joys of the world and all the pleasures of the self. Just as a sick person is unable to enjoy the taste of delicious food, so are unfortunate people deprived of the pleasure of God’s worship. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) says: Remember, Ṣalāt is something that embellishes a man’s worldly life and his faith. Allāh has cursed the worshipers who are not mindful of its essence. Ṣalāt is something that, when it is properly observed, it protects one from all kinds of sin and transgression. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: It is not in man’s power to offer such Ṣalāt, and it can only be achieved through God’s help. And this cannot come about unless one continues to pray and supplicate. Therefore, whether it is day or night, not one moment in your life should be empty of prayers. In order to experience the pleasure of Ṣalāt, it is important to seek Allāh’s help. We should beseech God that, just as He has given us the pleasure of fruits and other things, so should He let us experience the pleasure of Ṣalāt. When a drunkard fails to get intoxicated, he continues to drink cup after cup until he finds the pleasure he is seeking. And just as the alcoholic has a pleasure in



his mind that he strives for, we should employ all our faculties to find pleasure in worship. If we pray with the same zeal to find pleasure in worship, then, truly do I say to you, you will find that pleasure. Also, when praying we should bear in mind its benefits. “Surely virtues drive away evils.” (11:115) We should keep these bounties and the pleasures in mind and pray that we may experience the Ṣalāt that is the lot of the righteous. Prayer is not just going through certain motions. The essence of Ṣalāt is the Prayer which contains pleasure and joy. Regarding the essence and purpose of Ṣalāt, the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) says: All the postures of Ṣalāt are meant to attain the purpose and essence of worship. The postures of Prayer are in fact expressions of the soul. What the tongue speaks is also spoken by the soul. It is thus that one receives enlightenment and contentment. If a person reflects on how he was born and how he grew up, he can try to fulfil his obligations as God’s servant. In short, the pleasure in Ṣalāt comes from the relationship between the Master and the servant. If you wish to benefit from God’s grace, then you have to become His perfect servant. And it is then that you will experience the high degree of pleasure, which is not surpassed by any other. At this stage, man’s soul becomes as if non-existent and flows towards God like a stream and is cut off from all that is other than God. It is then that God’s love descends on him. It is the meeting of two passions: the passion of God’s providence from above and the passion of a person’s servitude from below. This is the state that is called Ṣalāt. And it is such Ṣalāt that burns all evil. Such Ṣalāt does away with sin and leaves behind a light and luster. This is the Ṣalāt to which applies the verse “Surely, Prayer restrains one from indecency and manifest evil.” (29:46) In short, Ṣalāt brings such pleasure and joy that I do not know how to describe it. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) says: The essence of true Ṣalāt is only attained through prayers. To beseech anyone other than God is contrary to a believer’s honor because only God is worthy of being beseeched. All of a believer’s faculties lie at the feet of God. The one who seeks from those beside God should know that he is most unfortunate and the time comes when he will not be able to turn to God even superficially. It is something to be dreaded that one should leave God and beseech someone else. It is therefore important to be regular in Ṣalāt. To turn to anyone other than God means to be cut off from God. Ṣalāt is the practical affirmation of God’s Oneness, and it remains unblest and of no use unless it is accompanied by humility and total devotion. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) says: Those who are not completely devoted to God are often visited by doubts and suspicions in their Ṣalāt. When a person turns to God with a pure heart, then Satan can never dare whisper in his heart. Look, your life is ebbing away, let go of heedlessness and be fearful. Pray in solitude so that God may preserve your faith and be pleased with you. Ṣalāt is something that can lead a person to the stage of Mi‘rāj, provided that it is the Ṣalāt that melts the soul. Wake up for Tahajjud Prayer and offer it with eagerness and zeal. If you wish to have a true relationship with God then become regular in your Prayers, so that not only your tongue but the very passions and objectives of your soul may become embodied in Ṣalāt. Huḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) prayed: May Allāh enable us to become firmly established upon Tauḥīd (Unity of God) and to safeguard our Prayers and to experience Prayers that are pleasurable. May we turn towards God alone, and to no one else. I have learned that there are no arrangements for offering congregational Prayers at Ijtimā’ venue. Next time, they should make arrangements whereby all five Prayers are offered at the venue. May Allāh make us His true servants. Āmīn.

## Discussion Scenario 1

A Nāṣir offers Ṣalāt on a regular basis; however, it feels like a mere routine. He feels that he can never maintain focus during Ṣalāt and has become very disappointed. One day he shared this with you.

### How would you respond?

1. This is very unusual and he should worry about his faith and say Istighfār (seeking forgiveness from Allāh).
2. This is very common and there is no need to worry as long as he can complete the count.
3. He should try to mix in yoga in his daily routine as it improves focus.
4. This is not uncommon and he should try to improve focus in Ṣalāt by various ways.
5. Any other response.

### How would your response change if?

Consider each separately:

- ... This is a brother who has not been attending Jamā'at activities.
- ... This brother and you are best friends.
- ... The standard of your own Ṣalāt is weak.
- ... This brother is a new convert.

### Guidance from the Friday sermon

Furthermore, mentioning the reason and solution for why a person does not experience delight in Prayers, the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) says: "I observe that people are heedless and slack in Prayers as they are unaware of the delight and pleasure which Allāh the Exalted has placed therein... Upon this, the question arises why they are unaware of this pleasure and have neither experienced it."

Then with regards to one developing distracting thoughts in Prayers, as one occasionally develops other inclinations during Prayer, the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) states: "Those people who do not focus their attention completely on God Almighty in Prayers are the ones who develop many other thoughts. Observe how when criminal stands before a judge, does he develop any other thoughts in his mind?"

## Discussion Scenario 2

A Nāṣir who was jobless for a while finally found a job. While discussing the schedule and pay, he thought about bringing the topic of Jumu‘ah break.

### How would you respond?

1. The Nāṣir should wait a few months before bringing up this topic as by that time his position will be solidified.
2. Say it upfront that unless he gets all Fridays off, he will quit.
3. Bring up the topic and provide various options including offering at least two Jumu‘ah Ṣalāts a month and making up the time.
4. Any other response.

### How would your response change if?

(Consider each separately.)

... The nearest Jumu‘ah center is an hour away.

... The Nāṣir regularly offers other Ṣalāt at the mosque.

... The brother can still listen to Ḥuḍūr’s (may Allāh be his helper) sermon live on MTA.

### Guidance from the Friday sermon

Then whilst elaborating on the point that a true dignified believer never prostrates to anyone but Allāh the Almighty—as one should—and also refrains from making anyone other than Allāh the focal point of our attention, the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) states: “Another aspect that I wish to elaborate is that Ṣalāt—the likes of which can be truly deemed to be Ṣalāt—can only be attained through Prayer. To pray to anyone other than God is completely against the honor of a dignified believer because this honor of Prayer is only for God.

**Examples of what we can do to adapt our lives according to Ḥuḍūr's guidance in this sermon**

- I will try to improve all aspects of my Ṣalāt and lead by example for my family, Inshā'allāh.
- I will memorize the translation of the Arabic prayers and concentrate on them during Ṣalāt.
- I will augment my obligatory Ṣalāt with Nawāfil (supererogatory Prayers).

**Examples of topics from this Friday sermon we can use to stimulate discussion among our family**

- Discuss with your family, the ways to improve Ṣalāt at home with emphasis on offering Ṣalāt in congregation at the mosque.
- Discuss ways to derive pleasure in Ṣalāt and build a living connection with Allāh the Almighty.
- Discuss how Ṣalāt can protect from indecency.

### **Topic 3 (Mar): Benevolence towards parents and respecting relationships (FS: 1/16/04)**

**Synopsis:** Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) stressed the implication of the directive of unconditional obedience and deference to parents to the selfless hard work they put in with young children, the sacrifices they endure and the physical hardship they, in particular the mother, bear in bringing up children. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) expressed dismay at suggestions made by some that the Jamā‘at should organize centers for the elderly owing to the fact that certain individuals feel unable to look after their elderly due to work commitments, etc. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) enjoined to alter this thought process; he said no Aḥmadī should entertain this concept. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) related several Aḥādīth illustrating the significance of benevolence towards parents. The Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) enjoined to show kindness and to maintain all ties of kinship with one’s mother even if she is involved in Shirk (idolatry) and that the way to exercise benevolence towards parents even after they have passed away is by praying for them, by seeking forgiveness for them, by fulfilling their promises and by practicing benevolence towards their relations and friends. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) related the extraordinary esteem and goodwill the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) showed to his foster parents. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) spoke of how he would stand up and lay out his cloak for them to sit on. By stark contrast Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) mentioned the current regrettable practice of some young children remaining seated regardless of elders having nowhere to sit, Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) commented that even their parents do not ask them to vacate the seats. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said the beautiful teachings of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) are for implementation and we ought to put them in practice. Reading from the writings of the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him), Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) reproved disregarding one’s parents in the pretense of attaining social status etc. and young men disregarding their mothers due to domestic discord between their mother and wife. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) stressed the obligation upon men in such situations to exercise patience and to bring order with love and affection. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) taught us that the reference to the word Miskīn (poor, needy) in 17:27 is also to be inferred to parents in that with old age they are infirm and therefore deserving of our benevolence. However, Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) added that let there be no misinterpretation in that benevolence to parents is charity, he said it is an obligation. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) mentioned the case in point of Owais Qarnī, one of the only two individuals the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) sent his Salām to, the other being the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him). Owais Qarnī of course would be so engrossed and engaged in looking after his mother that he could not visit the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him). Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) cautioned against the error of citing Owais Qarnī’s example to avoid service to the Jamā‘at and said that his was a unique instance in that he did not even care for his worldly matters and looked after his mother in a most devoted manner.

The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) enjoined that if God had permitted any other being to be worshiped other than Himself it would have been parents, in that following Divine Rubūbiyyat (quality to create, nurture, sustain) parents have been granted a portion of Rubūbiyyat by Allāh the Exalted.

Next, Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) informed that the Bangladesh Jamā‘at is currently holding their Jalsa midst most adverse of circumstances; Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) asked all to pray for them and that may this Jalsa be blessed.

## Discussion Scenario 1

A Nāṣir has been living in America for several years. His elderly parents have now moved from Pakistan and started to live with him. His family had to make several adjustments in their lifestyle. One day his wife was a bit upset by the comments made by his mother.

### How would you respond?

1. The Nāṣir needs to talk to his mother that as she is now living with his wife, she has to be careful how she speaks.
2. The Nāṣir needs to talk to his wife that she has to show complete obedience and restraint at all costs.
3. The Nāṣir needs to sit with his wife and mother together and talk about what was said and try to resolve the matter.
4. Any other response.

### How would your response change if?

Consider each separately:

- ... The Nāṣir had been a bit impatient when his wife's parents visited a few months ago.
- ... The Nāṣir is going through financial difficulties.
- ... The parents have several health issues which require almost full-time care.
- ... The parents are healthy and can take care of themselves.

### Guidance from the Friday sermon

In the recited verse, it has been mentioned that worship none but Him who sent you in this world and before sending you, took care of your various needs and made arrangements for them. By worshiping Him, you will be a recipient of His blessings. The most significant of His blessings is that He gave parents who nourished you, served you tremendously in your childhood, stayed awake during the night and embraced you. During your sickness and restlessness, your mother spent her nights in unrest and agony, sacrificed her own sleep, and cleaned your filth...

So, today if they need your help, do not walk away, do not establish your own world, do not deride them... Those living here, having western thought process, write that they can't serve their parents, consider them as a drag and write that Jamā'at should open such centers for the elderly where they can be admitted because we have to work, our wives have to work, children go to school and when they come back, they are disturbed by the elderly parents and that's why it is difficult to take care of them. Have some fear of God. The Qur'ān advises to respect them, revere them and lower the wings of mercy on them in this age. Just like in your childhood they endured all difficulties and kept you under their wings.

## Discussion Scenario 2

A Nāṣir's father passed away recently. During the terminal illness, the Nāṣir had to pay large sums of money for his healthcare. With the grace of Allāh, he was a Mūṣī. However, he had not paid his Waṣiyyat on the property. After his death, there was a lot of discussion amongst the family members as to how to distribute his wealth.

### How would you respond?

Pick the right order:

1. Divide up the property amongst the heirs per the Holy Qur'ān.
2. Pay 1/10<sup>th</sup> of the property to the Jamā'at per the Waṣiyyat.
3. Pay off the father's debts, like medical payments and any other loans.
4. Pay off the father's funeral-related expenses.
5. Reimburse himself for any expenses or debt related to the care of his father.
6. Pay the father's unpaid dowry to the mother.

### How would your response change if?

Consider each separately:

- ... The mother is deceased.
- ... Some of the heirs are non-Aḥmadī.
- ... His father had pledged for 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of his property in Waṣiyyat.
- ... The property where the Nāṣir lives with his family will need to be sold.

### Guidance from the Friday sermon

Ḥaḍrat Abu O Sayed Assaidi says that we were in company of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) that a person of Bani Salma came and asked O' Prophet of Allāh (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) is there any good deeds one can perform for the parents after their death? The Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) responded, why not? You can pray for them, seeking forgiveness for them, you can fulfill any pledges they had made with people, treat their relatives with same kindness and benevolence as they used to in their life. Treat their friends with respect and regard...

Sometimes issues arise when some Mūṣiyān (those who have performed Waṣiyyat) pass away. Those poor souls pass away while they had done Waṣiyyat for 1/10<sup>th</sup> of their property. But for several years their children and their heirs do not pay their Waṣiyyat and in some instances completely deny, saying that they don't have the capability to do so. As if they have no regard for the pledges of their parents; they are not respectful of the Waṣiyyat of their parents. They are profiting from the property of their parents but have no regard for their pledges, which have to be paid from their (parents') property. In fact, the children do not own 1/10<sup>th</sup> of that property anyway. Parents have already done Waṣiyyat on that. Thus, they are not even giving back which does not belong to them...

**Examples of what we can do to adapt our lives according to Ḥuḍūr’s guidance in this sermon**

- Have a frank discussion with your wife about the rights of parents and pledge that both of you will show love, obedience and respect to parents of both sides.
- Have a frank discussion with your wife that you two need to be compassionate and forgiving towards your children and their spouses.
- Review the rules of Waṣiyyat and the responsibilities of the heirs in relation to the pledges of their parents at [ahmadiyya.us/departments/Wasiyyat](http://ahmadiyya.us/departments/Wasiyyat).

**Examples of topics from this Friday sermon we can use to stimulate discussion among our family**

- The responsibilities of children towards their parents.
- How the elderly become “childlike” and require extra care and love.
- How can the whole family practically fulfill their responsibilities towards their parents?



**Topic 4 (Apr): Attributes of true Aḥmadī: financial sacrifice, obedience to Khilāfat and Nizām-i-Jamā‘at (FS: 11/2/18)**

**Synopsis:** Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) has laid down some conditions of Bai‘at. It is not enough to change one’s belief; in order to become a practical Aḥmadī one has to abide by these conditions with one’s full power and ability. Bai‘at means to sell one’s life to God. One who pledges Bai‘at has to adopt humility and has to part with his self and his ego. Bai‘at means to do everything in keeping with God’s commandments. If someone does so, then God does not allow such a person to perish and protects him in every way. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) says: Examine your faith and your deeds and become pure like the Companions of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) who emerged out of their ignorance, became godly people, repented of past idolatry and strove to stay away even from the subtle forms of idolatry. The true Tauḥīd (Unity of God) that God requires of us is simply not to accept anyone to be worthy of worship except Allāh. Whether it be an idol or a man, or the sun or the moon, or one’s own self and machinations. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said that if anyone thinks to the contrary due to his imperfect training, he should clear his mind about it. The second condition after Tauḥīd (Unity of God) is to shun falsehood and other immoral activities. The Holy Qur’ān describes falsehood as a great evil and an abomination and has declared it to be equal to idolatry. Just as there is no substance in an idol, in the same way there is nothing beneath the embellishment of falsehood. One who puts his faith in falsehood ceases to put his trust in God. Thus, by telling lies one loses God. If you claim to be true believers, you have to remove falsehood from within you. It does not behoove a believer to resort to falsehood even in minor things. There are many cases where people resort to falsehood in settling their mutual disputes and get verdicts in their own favor. Falsehood leads to sin and transgression, and sin and transgression lead to hell. So, we always need to practice introspection. Another teaching of the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) to his followers was to protect themselves from adultery. This means not even to go near things that might cause such thoughts to be born in your mind, nor to adopt ways that might lead to this sin. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) specifically reminded both children and adults to avoid the wrongful use of the TV and the Internet. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) says: If you claim to follow me, then let not even thought of mischief or injustice enter your minds. To deprive someone of what rightfully belongs to him is a great wrong and a sin. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: We tell other people about the excellences of Islām, but if we do not ourselves practice them, then we belie ourselves. Every Aḥmadī should think deeply about this. If our actions match our teachings, then our preaching will bear good fruit. Let us not even entertain the thought of injustice, let alone act in such a way. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: Worship of God is a prerequisite for becoming a believer and it is the purpose of man’s creation. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) says: O ye people who consider yourselves to be my Jamā‘at, in heaven you will be considered my Jamā‘at only if you truly follow the ways of Taqwā (righteousness). Therefore, offer five daily Prayers with such awe and concentration as if you were beholding God. A religion is not a religion if it has no Prayer. What is Prayer? It is to present one’s shortcomings and limitations before God with humility and to seek from God their alleviation. Prayer means that a person’s heart remains engrossed in the fear and remembrance of God. And this is true faith. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: I have said time and again that people who live far from the mosque or Prayer center should arrange to pray together at one place with others who live nearby. In this way while they will merit the reward of Prayer, they will be reminded of the importance of Prayer, their children will become mindful of its observance, and it will be a means of their proper upbringing. I have said again

and again that if all the office-bearers of the Jamā‘at and of the auxiliary organizations give their full attention to Prayers at every level, the attendance can increase manifold. May Allāh enable every Aḥmadī to fulfil this obligation. This obligation will not be fulfilled by only offering the obligatory Prayers, rather it also requires that we also offer Nawāfil (supererogatory Prayers) and Tahajjud. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: An Aḥmadī should constantly seek forgiveness for his sins from Allāh. Man is weak, and sometimes he commits errors even when he tries not to. Istighfār (seeking forgiveness from Allāh) is the means for avoiding the repetition of these errors in future. Another important condition laid down by the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) is our obligation to be kind towards human beings. Do not demean anyone. Do not hold anyone as your enemy. These are the traits that should be demonstrated most of all by Ahmadīs. Arrogance is also a great sin. The Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) said that if someone has arrogance even as little as a grain of mustard seed, he will not enter paradise. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) says: In my view the best way to become purified is that one should not show any kind of arrogance or pride, neither on account of his intellect, nor his family, nor his wealth. I admonish my Jamā‘at against pride. No white person has any superiority over a colored one. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: In the outside world there is a lot of discrimination against black people, and some even claim that white people have greater intellect than black people. This is a state of arrogance, and Ahmadīs should keep away from it. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: I also want to draw attention towards financial sacrifices. By the grace of Allāh, the worldwide Jamā‘at is making progress in terms of making financial sacrifices. The Jamā‘at has an established financial system. After having a look at the statistics here, it seems that there is not sufficient attention being given to it. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said that a poor person can ask for his Chanda to be reduced or wavered, but those who are earning well should ask themselves whether they are paying Chanda according to their correct income. If everyone was to pay according to their correct income, there would be no need to make separate appeals for building mosques and other projects. Sacrifice means to put oneself in difficulty in order to fulfil the requirements of Allāh’s religion. Therefore, I remind those who do not pay Chanda according to their correct incomes to start doing so, so that they can reap Allāh’s blessings. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: The last thing I want to speak about today is obedience. Obedience to Allāh and His Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) is stressed upon in countless places. In the Conditions of Bai‘at, the word ‘Ma‘rūf’ appears alongside obedience, and in pledges of the auxiliary organizations consists the line that “I shall abide by every Ma‘rūf decision of the Khalīfa of the time.” Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said that some people who have a negative bent of mind come up with various explanations of the word Ma‘rūf. This has to be discouraged. If people start to come up with their own explanation, then unity cannot be upheld. People will then start quarrelling over what Ma‘rūf means or does not mean. As long as true Khilāfat is in place—and by the grace of Allāh it will continue to remain—the Khalīfa will never make a decision that contradicts Allāh and His Messenger. Therefore, it is incumbent upon everyone to obey the instructions of the Khalīfa with regard to Jamā‘at. Ḥaḍrat Muṣliḥ Mau‘ūd (may Allāh be pleased with him) says that even if the Khalīfa happens to make a wrong decision, Allāh will save the Jamā‘at from its harmful effects. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: This is the only way to preserve the unity of the Jamā‘at, and this will lead to more and more people becoming sincere and faithful Ahmadīs. We can only benefit from being Ahmadīs if we follow this injunction. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) says: One who does not offer full obedience tarnishes the name of the Jamā‘at. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) prayed: May Allāh enable us all to fulfill the obligations that the Bai‘at of the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) lays upon us. May we remain faithfully attached to Khilāfat and accept his every Ma‘rūf decision and act upon it with full obedience. May Allāh enable us all to do so. Āmīn.

## Discussion Scenario 1

A well-off Nāṣir is approached by Jamā‘at’s Finance Secretary for his obligatory Chanda: “Please provide your budget for next year and please re-evaluate your budget carefully as your last year’s budget seemed low and did not reflect the income standard for your profession.” The Nāṣir told the Finance Secretary that Chanda is a matter between an individual and Allāh the Almighty and the secretary should not interfere in his personal matters.

### How would you respond?

1. The Nāṣir is correct and he should not be questioned. Whatever he chooses to pay should be accepted by the local Jamā‘at.
2. The Jamā‘at’s Finance Secretary is correct in admonishing the Nāṣir however, the approach could have been better.
3. The Jamā‘at’s Finance Secretary is justified in admonishing the Nāṣir and the Za‘īm should also admonish the Nāṣir regarding Anṣār Chanda.
4. Any other response.

### How would your response change if?

Consider each separately:

- ... The Nāṣir is an ‘Āmila member of the Jamā‘at.
- ... He gave a large donation to Humanity First last year.
- ... The Nāṣir has recently become more frequent in the Jamā‘at.
- ... The Nāṣir is your real brother.

### Guidance from the Friday sermon

Another aspect which the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) has drawn our attention towards and which God Almighty and the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) have also instructed us to perform is financial sacrifices.

One should assess their income because the payment of Chanda is a matter between the individual and God Almighty. The administration or the Finance Secretary is not aware of what the Chanda-payers’ actual income is, however God Almighty has full knowledge of it.

Therefore, in view of this, everyone should assess their budgets again and revise their payments. Thus, all those people who—despite living in comfort do not pay their Chanda according to the prescribed rate—I would like to draw their attention towards this matter so that they can become the recipients of God’s blessings.

## Discussion Scenario 2

A Nāṣir has always been a proponent for integration with Western society to disseminate the message of Islām. For example, he permits his children to take part in trick-or-treating and wearing costumes on Halloween. In a recent Friday sermon, the local Murabbī has reminded the members about Ḥuḍūr's (may Allāh be his helper) sermon regarding refraining from celebrating Halloween.

### How would you respond?

1. Change his practice immediately and advise his kids against it as well.
2. Write a letter to Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) to explain that his purpose is ultimately to facilitate the spreading of the message of Islām.
3. Continue as-is until he feels at peace in his heart that he should change the practice.
4. Any other response.

### How would your response change if?

Consider each separately:

... The Nāṣir's wife is an American convert to Islām Aḥmadiyyat.

... The Nāṣir has been very successful in bringing non-Aḥmadī guests to the mosque.

... The Nāṣir is a member of the local Jamā'at 'Āmila.

### Guidance from the Friday sermon

Furthermore, the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) has also included obedience as one of the stipulations for taking the Bai'at, and that is, for one to pledge that they will obey every *Ma'rūf* command, until their last breath.

It is not the job of an individual to interpret what is meant by the word *Ma'rūf*. A *Ma'rūf* decision is one which is in line with the Holy Qur'ān, the practice of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) and his sayings, and also that which falls in line with the Just Arbitrator of this era—the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him). Through this, the unity of the Jamā'at can be upheld.

The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) has clearly stated that it was not his desire to increase the number of followers with those who had no idea of what obedience entails. In this regard the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) states: “If those who affiliate themselves with me and enter into my Bai'at, yet fail to reform themselves and do not live their lives according to the teachings of God and His Messenger (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him), then such a person's Bai'at is futile.”

### **Examples of what we can do to adapt our lives according to Ḥuḍūr's guidance in this sermon**

- Review your income and calculate the Chanda according to the prescribed rate.
- Pay obligatory Chanda Jāt (Chanda Ām and Chanda Jalsa Sālāna) monthly.
- Make a pledge to obey each and every recommendation of Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ (may Allāh be his helper), Inshā'allāh.

### **Examples of topics from this Friday sermon we can use to stimulate discussion among our family**

- The importance of financial sacrifice as to how it purifies us.
- Explain how Chanda is calculated and how these funds are used in the Jamā'at.
- Importance of complete and unconditional obedience to Khilāfat and how it is the key to our survival as a community.

**Topic 5 (Jun): Marrying off our children: guidelines for a Nāṣir  
(FS: 12/24/04)**

**Synopsis:** Citing verse 33 of Sūrah Al-Nūr (24:33) Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) admonished against the censorial outlook of some as regards the marriage of widows and explained that it was an Islāmic viewpoint, a Qur’ānic injunction and that it needed to be adhered to. As regards the mention of marriage of ‘slaves’ in the verse, Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) referred to the modern day ‘opposite number’ of the disadvantaged and said that while the Jamā‘at helps out in such instances lack of finances should not be used as an excuse to avoid marriage. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said often after marriage the young man develops a sense of responsibility and endeavors to provide for the family and with Allāh’s grace situation improves.

As regards widows, Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said Muslim society should reject the false customs that have crept into our way of life that hinder a widow to remarry. Indeed, in Islām a widow does not need anyone’s approval to get married, if her betrothal is good she has been given the right to go ahead. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) referred to verse 235 of Sūrah Al-Baqarah (2:235) for this.

With reference to Aḥādīth, Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) explained the Holy Prophet’s (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) counsel of ‘not to delay when it is time for Ṣalāt, or when a funeral is ready or when a compatible match is found for a widow.’ He also enjoined that a widow’s right supersedes that of her Walī (guardian) in the matter of marriage.

The Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) enjoined that if a man with good morals and piety comes with a marriage proposal, his offer should be accepted, he admonished that the four aspects a woman is married for are her wealth, her lineage, her beauty and her piety and that one ought to give preference to her piety. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) remarked that those who have physical appearance as a criterion should predetermine through photographs whether they wish to proceed or not with a match and should avoid humiliating the girls by visiting and rejecting them on the grounds of appearance. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) reiterated that if they gave preference to piety they would be the recipients of the Holy Prophet’s (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) prayers.

Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) touched upon the practice of some parents of delaying the marriage of their offspring in order to live off their earnings. He cautioned against delaying a daughter’s marriage for her earnings and the practice of keeping her and the son-in-law under one’s roof. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) instructed the Anṣār, Khuddām and Lajna to counsel their respective members against such erroneous practices. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) also expounded the misinterpretation and misuse by some of the Ḥadīth that allows prospective betrotheds to see each other in the presence of the family. He also admonished against those who are at the other extreme and make it a matter of honor for the young man and woman to be in each other’s presence.

Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said it is the responsibility of the entire society to pay attention to the marriage of those who are marriageable. With reference to the writings of the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) explained the significance of arranging marriages within the Community. He said it promotes unity and ensures that the next generation is raised in a pious environment.

Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) urged all to cooperate with the Rishta Nātā department within the administrative system of the Community. In conclusion, Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) prayed that may we be enabled to arrange marriages of those who are orphaned and of widows in accordance with the Qur’ānic injunction and may Allāh alleviate the anxiety of those parents of marriageable girls who are anxious.

## Discussion Scenario 1

A Nāṣir's daughter is of marriageable age. She has just finished her bachelor's in literature. The Nāṣir and his wife are fortunate to have several proposals for their daughter. He is discussing them with his wife and their daughter.

### Select the order of preference...

1. Ameen: Well-educated man who holds a master's in computer science and attends all Jamā'at functions.
2. Anees: A physician who is not very active in the Jamā'at.
3. Michael: A man who grew up in USA and is from a good family and is willing to convert to Aḥmadiyyat to marry their daughter.
4. Rizwan: Raised in the US; he just graduated from Jāmi'a Aḥmadiyya Canada.

### How would your response change if?

Consider each separately:

- ... Ameen recently moved from Ghana.
- ... Anees was engaged once before.
- ... Michael is less-educated than their daughter.
- ... Rizwan is being considered to serve in South America.

### Guidance from the Friday sermon

It should be noted that in the Jamā'at where an Aḥmadī girl wants to marry or is marrying, the boy must be an Aḥmadī. Since the purpose of marriage is to establish pure society of pious people and to seek virtuous and moral children. If Aḥmadī boys and Aḥmadī girls leave each other aside and marry outside the Jamā'at then there is a danger of disturbance in the society and disorder in the family. This will be a potential reason for new generation drifting away from religion. Our boys and girls at times tend to marry outside the community. It is essential that we pay attention towards this issue especially in this unbridled society. System of the Jamā'at is concerned that the frequency of cases has risen, where the matches are freely made outside the community and with other faith adherents.

It is mentioned in one tradition that the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) said that if a person brings a proposal to you who is religious and of good morals then you should yield to that proposal. If you don't comply with that instruction then there will be disorder on earth. A person attempted to ask a question, but the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) repeated thrice that if a person brings a proposal to you who are religious and of good morals then you should accept that proposal. (Ṣaḥīḥ Tirmidhī, Kitāb-un-Nikāḥ).

## Discussion Scenario 2

A Pakistani Nāṣir's son is of marriageable age. The son is finishing his bachelor's in computer science and was raised in the US. The Nāṣir's wife has several options in mind and is discussing them with the Nāṣir and their son.

### Please help the Nāṣir prioritize...

1. Aisha: An African American girl who is well-educated and active in the Jamā'at.
2. Maha: An exceptionally "good-looking" Pakistani-descent girl, whose family is only seen on 'Īd and don't pay Chanda.
3. Naila: A Pakistani-descent girl who is the son's first cousin.
4. Faiqa: A well-educated girl who is the daughter of a missionary.

### How would your response change if?

Consider each separately:

- ... Aisha's extended family is Christian.
- ... The Nāṣir's wife is really adamant about choosing Maha.
- ... Naila is one year older than the Nāṣir's son.
- ... Faiqa's family was recently posted to the US from Pakistan.

### Guidance from the Friday sermon

Drawing our attention towards the future generations' piety, the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) has pointed to the apparent means to achieve this objective. He (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) has drawn our attention to creating peaceful domestic environment, because if mother is pious and religious then normally children are religious too, and there is no wealth greater than pious children that provides peace to parents...Every Aḥmadī should focus on this. These complaints are becoming rampant now that a girl is of good nature and character, educated and is active in Jamā'at but face is a bit less attractive or height is not as tall by someone's standard, so people come and see her and leave. I have drawn attention that since one can find out about face and height from photographs or relevant information then what is the point of going to these girls' home and putting them in difficulty. That is why Allāh's commandment is that do not focus on these material things but keep eye on the piety. That is why the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) has said that if you want to protect your future generations then focus on piety and religiosity.

The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) stated that different castes are no form of distinction or honor. Allāh has created these for mere recognition and nowadays the purity of castes is very difficult to determine past four generations. It is not honorable for a righteous person to get tangled in this caste system especially when Allāh has clearly told us that greatness is only due to Taqwā (righteousness).



### **Examples of what we can do to adapt our lives according to Ҳуқӯр’s guidance in this sermon**

- Start praying for the Rishta (match) of your children on a daily basis.
- Familiarize yourselves with the Jamā‘at Rishta Nātā system and preferably talk to a Rishta Nātā coordinator.
- Register both your sons and daughters of marriageable age in the Jamā‘at Rishta Nātā system.

### **Examples of topics from this Friday sermon we can use to stimulate discussion among our family**

- Have a frank discussion with your children about marriage and how to self-analyze first and how to prioritize in match selection.
- Stress the importance of marrying within the Jamā‘at.
- Help your children get into the habit of praying for their match and be regular in writing letters to Ҳуқӯр (may Allāh be his helper) about it.

**Topic 6 (Jul): Mosque—a house of worship and a source of Tabligh**  
**(FS: 10/19/18)**

**Synopsis:** Delivering the Friday sermon at Baitul Aafiyat Mosque, Philadelphia, Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: Allāh, by His grace, has enabled us to build the first mosque in this city, and today it is being formally inaugurated. The first and foremost purpose of building a mosque is to fulfil our obligation of worshipping Allāh. We all claim to believe in Allāh and the Last Day, but we can only demonstrate this practically if we are steadfast in our Prayers. This means, first of all, that we should pray punctually in congregation. Secondly, it means to pray with full concentration, beseeching Allāh and seeking His forgiveness, and this is what we learn from the sayings of the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him). Each one of us can look within ourselves and see how far we have been able to uphold our worship. The other condition is to pay Zakāt and make financial sacrifices for the faith, and also spend for the welfare of mankind and fulfil our obligations towards them. Allāh says that true believers do not fear anyone except Allāh, and their only fear is lest, on account of some wrongdoing on their part, they might incur His displeasure or be deprived of His love. They act at all times in keeping with God’s commandments which He has given to the true believers. This is not a small responsibility, for you have to fulfil your obligations towards God as well as to your fellow beings. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: There are many kinds of Shirk (idolatry). Even though there still exist people who take stones or lifeless objects or idols to be God, in this time of knowledge and enlightenment such practices are viewed with revulsion. Man is now at a stage where his mind cannot accept that these stones and idols can do anything for us. But there is another kind of idolatry that is working secretly like a poison and is growing rapidly in this age, and it is that people do not have faith and trust in God. They are more concerned about their jobs and businesses and worldly endeavors and are less concerned about Prayers and attending the mosque. We should pray that God may make us perfect believers, because this can only come about through His grace and it can only be achieved by beseeching Him. We should not be content that we have built a beautiful mosque in this city, rather we should fulfil our obligations regarding this mosque so that when we appear before God we hear the words: These are the people who built a mosque for the sake of God and then did their best to fulfil their obligations towards it. When we have this intention and strive to achieve it, we will experience the blessings of this mosque in this world as well. Our children will become attached to the faith and we will be able to spread the message of Allāh in this city and establish God’s Oneness in the world. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) says that if you wish to spread the message of Islām in an area, you should build a mosque there. At this time the Jamā‘at needs mosques, and once a mosque is built in a village or town, you can rest assured that you have laid the foundation for the progress of the Jamā‘at. God will then bring people towards it. But the condition is that our intention in building the mosque should be pure and there should be no element of ego in it, only then will God bless it. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: Another responsibility that now lies upon Ahmadīs here is that they have to make this mosque a means of Da‘wat Ilallāh (calling toward Allāh). It is said that there are up to 47 Prayer centers in this city, but this is the first purpose-built mosque. Through Prayers and worship and spreading the peaceful teachings of Islām and demonstrating it in practice we need to increase the population of Ahmadīs. This is a large area of land and if houses are built here for Ahmadīs, there can be a large congregation. If this is practical, it should be worked upon. When there is an Aḥmadī population near the mosque and they come here with the intention of spreading the message, God will bless their efforts. Now that Allāh has enabled us to build this beautiful mosque, the Jamā‘at and the missionary should strive to make this a beautiful and peaceful place so that people are attracted to come and live here. If the true message of Islām

reaches the people of this city, true worshipers will be born among them. Every mosque that we build challenges us to improve our character as it opens for us new avenues of Da'wat Ilallāh (calling toward Allāh). The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) says that the beauty of a mosque does not lie in its building rather it lies in the worshipers who come to pray in it with pure heart. Thus, if we come to this mosque with sincerity and Taqwā (righteousness), we shall be able to spread our message. We should be mindful of the Hereafter. Every day we should keep track of ourselves and reflect on how far we have progressed. Those who forget their obligations towards God on account of their worldly businesses should remind themselves of their pledge of Bai'at and check whether they are acting upon it or not. To immerse in the worldly matters only is to ruin oneself. Always remember to give your faith priority over the world. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) says: Remember, this Jamā'at was not established in the manner of the common worldly people who only verbally profess to be in this Jamā'at without the need for any practice. It was this state of the world that required my coming for its reformation. Therefore, if someone associates himself with me but does not undergo practical transformation and does not strengthen his practical faculties and considers it enough to verbally profess faith, such a person, through his actions, emphasizes that there was no need for my coming. Be loyal to me. Learn the meaning of the Holy Qur'ān and act upon it. Value it and show with your example that you are indeed the community of the truthful. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: This is not easy, and it requires focus and attention. Always remember that material wealth does not guarantee the future of our progeny. The only guarantee is to follow the wise commandments of the Holy Qur'ān. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: The land for the mosque was bought in 2007. The construction began in 2013 and was completed this year after some hindrances. The total cost is 8.1 million US dollars. 2 million was contributed by the local Jamā'at and 4.47 million by the national Jamā'at. Initially, two acres of land was bought, now the total area is four acres. Houses can also be built in this land. The covered area is 21,400 square feet. It is a three-story building. There are separate halls for men and women. There is a 6000 square feet multi-purpose hall. Community offices are also located here. There is parking space for up to 45 cars. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) prayed: May Allāh enable every Aḥmadī to fulfil the objectives of this mosque, and may this mosque prove to be a milestone in our efforts to spread the true message of Islām. Āmīn.

## **Discussion Scenario 1**

For the past three days, you have been bringing your family with you to offer ‘Ishā’ Prayer at the mosque. It’s winter and cold outside. And your family has been the only family present at the mosque. On Day 4, your children ask if Ṣalāt can just be offered at home.

### **How would you respond?**

1. Tell your family that you are disappointed as well and will talk to the officeholders about it.
2. Tell your family to give it one more chance and that if no one shows up, tomorrow, ‘Ishā’ will be offered at home.
3. Don’t succumb to family pressures. Continue to offer Ṣalāt at the mosque each evening.
4. Any other response.

### **How would your response change if?**

Consider each separately:

- ... The mosque is a 10-minute drive from your home.
- ... The mosque is a 30-minute drive from your home.
- ... Your children complain they don’t have time to complete their homework due to the time it takes to offer Ṣalāt at the mosque.

### **Guidance from the Friday sermon**

The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) elaborated on this fact in the following manner that in comparison to God Almighty, people have more trust and faith in other objects and means. They are more inclined towards their employments, their businesses and their worldly endeavors and undertakings.

We should not rejoice at the mere fact that we have constructed a very beautiful mosque in the city of Philadelphia. Rather, we should fulfill its rights and when we are presented before God Almighty, we should hear the words that these are the people who constructed a mosque for the sake of God Almighty and also tried to fulfill its rights. Hence, these people are counted among those guided ones and those people whom God Almighty is pleased and happy with. Thus, we should strive to develop this thought within us. Once we have developed this thought and we strive to act accordingly, we will experience the blessings and bounties of this mosque in this world. Our children and offspring will remain attached to their religion. We will be among those who are spreading the message of Allāh the Exalted in this area and city. We will be among those who establish the unity of God in the world and the ones waving the flag of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) throughout the world.

## Discussion Scenario 2

A newly-formed Jamā‘at is eager to have their own mosque. There are many views on the table. What should be the priorities for choosing a site for a mosque?

### Prioritize the mosque criteria...

1. On a busy street with a lot of pedestrians and Tablīgh opportunities
2. Number of members living within a 20-minute commute
3. Purpose-built mosque
4. Open space for sports
5. Ample parking
6. Classrooms for Ṭāhir Academy
7. State of the art and beautiful facility
8. Visible from major highway
9. Proximity to good public schools
10. Proximity to public transportation
11. Properly zoned for place of worship

### Would you sacrifice your Top Priority if a property becomes available that:

Consider each separately:

- Would be the largest in the state?
- Is in an unsafe neighborhood?
- Is significantly cheaper?
- Has adjacent living space for a missionary?

### Guidance from the Friday sermon

The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) states, “At present, our Community is in great need of mosques. This is a House of God. In whichever village or city a mosque of ours is constructed, you may consider that the foundation of the progress of the Community has been laid. If you wish to spread Islām in a village or city where few Muslims can be found, or there are no Muslims at all, you should build a mosque, and God will draw Muslims there Himself. However, this cannot be achieved by merely constructing a mosque.”

The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) states, “The condition is that when constructing a mosque one’s intention should be sincere.” The mosque should be constructed with full sincerity and not for pretention. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) further states, “It should merely be done for the sake of Allāh.” In other words, the mosque should merely be constructed for the sake of Allāh the Exalted. “Personal interests or vices should not have anything to do with it. Only then does God shower His blessings.” (Malfūzāt, Vol.7, p. 119)

### **Examples of what we can do to adapt our lives according to Ḥuḍūr's guidance in this sermon**

- Analyze your regularity in the mosque and try to improve upon it.
- Think of ways to bring your family to the mosque on a more regular basis.
- Participate in at least one unique activity to bring non-Aḥmadīs to the mosque which could help them come close to Islām Aḥmadiyyat.

### **Examples of topics from this Friday sermon we can use to stimulate discussion among our family**

- The benefits of staying connected with the mosque
- The obstacles which may be keeping you and your family being regular in the mosque for offering Ṣalāt in congregation
- Ways and means to use the mosque to propagate the message of Islām Aḥmadiyyat

## **Topic 7 (Aug): Complaining and backbiting—habits to avoid for a true Aḥmadī Muslim (FS: 10/26/18)**

**Synopsis:** Delivering the Friday sermon at Baitul Samī‘ Mosque, Houston, Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: It is God’s great favor upon us that he enabled us to accept the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him). His words are a beacon and a source of guidance for us at every step. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) guided his followers with great fervor to fulfil their obligations of Bai‘at and to become true believers. His sayings are the means of spiritual development, understanding of faith, finding nearness to God, learning the hidden insights of the Holy Qur’ān, recognizing the status of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him), correcting our beliefs and improving our practical condition. It will be unfortunate for us indeed if, in the presence of this treasure, we still fail to benefit from it. It is the duty of all members of the Jamā‘at to read and listen to these words and to act upon them so as to attain the standards that the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) expected of us. Today I will cite some sayings of the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him), and in their light everyone can do some introspection and see where he stands and where he should be and realize what Taqwā (righteousness) is and what it requires, and what our responsibilities are. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) says: In order to attain the true Taqwā (righteousness) that pleases God, Allāh repeatedly commands: “O believers, fear Allāh.” And He says that He is with those who adopt Taqwā (righteousness). Muhsinīn are not those who merely abstain from evil, rather they perform good deeds in a befitting and appropriate way. We can only attain God’s nearness and receive His help when Taqwā (righteousness) is accompanied by good deeds. It is no great feat to merely abstain from evil, nor is it anything to be proud of. Until one shuns evil and adopts piety, one cannot survive in the spiritual realm. There are major sins such as falsehood, adultery, dishonesty, giving false testimony, usurping people’s rights, etc. But there are other more subtle sins that people are not even aware of, such as bearing grievances and grudges, expressing displeasure at minor things, speaking against people behind their backs. Most people take these things to be very minor, whereas the Holy Qur’ān describes them as great sins. The same is the case with miserliness and anger; all these are evil traits. Man should shun these and avoid all other sins, whether they relate to the eyes, the ears, the hands, the feet or any other organ. Do not unduly follow that which you do not know, for the ear, the eye, the heart, and every other organ shall be brought to account. Do not give place in your heart to anything that you do not know for certain. This is meant to do away with thinking ill of others. Unless one has witnessed and truly judged something, one should not give it a place in one’s heart or bring it to one’s tongue. There are many who will be held answerable for their tongues. If we can get rid of the habit of thinking ill of others, half of the discord and quarrels in our society would disappear and unity will prevail. So, it is imperative that you do not think ill of others and instead entertain positive thoughts about them. And if you hear something, investigate it. If you merely have a thought, you will not be held accountable for it, but if you act upon it, such as tax evasion and thus causing loss to the government or hiding true income and promising Chanda less than merited by your income, then God will hold you answerable. These are the sins that are not given much attention to but they can lead to a person’s ruin. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) says: The first step for man is to adopt Taqwā (righteousness). Allāh does not desire that you create disorder on earth. He wants to spread Oneness, but the person who hurts his brother and acts with injustice and dishonesty is the enemy of oneness, for such acts cannot produce love or brotherhood. Until such evil thoughts are discarded, true unity cannot come about. This is why this has been declared as the first stage. The blessing of being a Jamā‘at lies in having unity, and it is for this purpose that the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) came and gathered people on one hand. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) says: Read the Holy Qur’ān again

and again and note down the evil deeds outlined in it and then strive to avoid them with God's help and grace. To avoid evil deeds is the first step of Taqwā (righteousness). When you strive in this manner, Allāh will grant you the camphoric elixir that will make your desire for sin to grow cold. Thereafter you can only do good deeds. What is the use of Prayer and fasting if after offering Prayer you start criticizing and complaining. The sign of worship and Prayer is that we should start shedding the major and minor evils, have a greater desire to do virtuous deeds and move towards the truth. If this is not happening, then our Prayers are mere actions in haste. If we want proper upbringing of our children, the elders and particularly the office-bearers need to inculcate Taqwā (righteousness) in themselves. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) says: I again strongly remind my Jamā'at that if you progress in Taqwā (righteousness), God will be with you. Do not rest content and be arrogant that you have pledged Bai'at, for until you have fully entered into it you will not be saved. Mere belief will not help you until you become one in word and deed. The real thing, for which we should strive, are our deeds. It is not enough to be called an Aḥmadī; it is essential to mold ourselves according to God's commandments and to become a true believer. Referring to the Companions of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him), the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) says: They were ready to lay down their lives in the path of God. And they fulfilled their obligations when they were commanded to sacrifice their lives and did not incline towards the world. It is important therefore to give preference to faith over the world. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: These days I am relating accounts of the Companions of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) so that we are reminded of the examples of those people regarding whom the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) said that each one of them is a star and whomever of them you follow, you will be guided aright. Thus they are a holy example for us. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) says: In the eyes of Allāh only those people are part of this Jamā'at who have given up the world. Allāh only loves those and only their progeny is blessed who follow Allāh's commandments. The world becomes the ruin of those who leave God and incline towards the world. Remember that in the eyes of Allāh only that person is considered a true believer who after pledging Bai'at gives preference to the faith over worldly affairs. Until man's deeds are not reformed, mere words avail nothing; they are mere verbosity. True faith is that which enters the heart and all the deeds take on its color. Blessed are those who give preference to the faith over the world; whereas those who prefer the world will never see the face of true success like a carrion. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) says: Be steadfast in obedience to God. Be steadfast in observing the pledge you have made during the Bai'at. Do not hurt God's creatures. Read the Holy Qur'ān with care and act upon it. Avoid all ridicule and frivolity and idolatrous gatherings. Observe the obligatory five-time Prayers. Keep your body clean and cleanse your heart of all malice and jealousy. This is what God requires of you. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: May Allāh enable us to bring about this holy transformation in ourselves. May we give preference to our faith over the world, fulfil our pledge, and follow the guidance of the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him). Āmīn.



## Discussion Scenario 1

There was a spirited discussion in an ‘Āmila meeting about a topic. The decision was in favor of the majority. A Nāṣir was very upset as it was against his opinion. On the way back home, he started talking to his wife as how ‘Āmila members have lost the spirit of Taqwā (righteousness) and make wrong decisions!

### How would you respond?

1. It is OK for him to talk to his wife as he strongly believes in his opinion and wants to hear her opinion.
2. It is OK for him to talk about it with others as long as he does not mention any names.
3. It is not OK for him to talk to his wife or any other Jamā‘at member at all as this is against the trust of the ‘Āmila meeting.
4. Any other response.

### How would your response change if?

Consider each separately:

- ... He is the Za‘īm of the Majlis.
- ... His wife promises not to speak to anyone else.
- ... The issue is of general nature and would impact the entire membership.
- ... His wife is the local Lajna Ṣadr.
- ... His young children are in the car with him.

### Guidance from the Friday sermon

The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) further states that they pray in the mosque and in the same place they begin criticizing and complaining about others, they begin thinking ill of others and speaking behind their backs and are dishonest in their conduct.

There is also an element of trust in meetings and therefore office-bearers should pay special attention to this that they should not spread what is mentioned in their official meetings of the Jamā‘at to their household members, nor unnecessarily to any other person. There should be a restriction on this. The majority of issues and troubles occur as the official matters are leaked to others. Also, people harbor jealousy regarding the station of another and attack their character.

## Discussion Scenario 2

After an Anṣār meeting, a Nāṣir came to you and said the person who recited the Holy Qur'ān had made a lot of mistakes. “This brother doesn't know how to recite and should not be given opportunity in the future. I don't think he recites the Holy Qur'ān daily.”

### How would you respond?

1. Encourage the Nāṣir to take the matter up with Za'īm Ṣāhib.
2. Try to minimize the conversation and change the topic.
3. Encourage the Nāṣir to politely approach the brother and correct his mistakes.
4. Any other response.

### How would the response change if?

Consider each separately:

- ... The brother is a recent convert to Islām Aḥmadiyyat and has been trying his best to improve his recitation.
- ... You don't recite the Holy Qur'ān daily.
- ... The reciter is very sensitive to criticism.
- ... Based on your knowledge of the Holy Qur'ān, it was read incorrectly.
- ... Based on your knowledge of the Holy Qur'ān, it was read correctly.

### Guidance from the Friday sermon

God Almighty becomes displeased at the fact that a person utters such words, which would degrade his fellow brother. God Almighty has stated, “Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his brother who is dead?”

The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) states, “God Almighty becomes displeased at the fact that a person utters such words as would degrade his fellow brother and acts in a manner that would cause him harm.” In other words, one should not even utter such words, because then such utterances develop into complaints, and people begin to hold grudges, think ill of others and backbite and ultimately a person reaches a stage where he then physically tries to also cause harm to the other person. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) states, “To make a statement regarding one's brother, which would portray him to be ignorant and foolish, or which subconsciously would develop an enmity and hatred towards his habits are all forms of evil.”

**Examples of what we can do to adapt our lives according to Ḥuḍūr's guidance in this sermon**

- Lead with personal example and avoid passing any negative comments about any one. Ask your wife and children to point out if you do so.
- Read the commentary of verse 49:13.
- Learn the true meaning of Istighfār and offer it in abundance.

**Examples of topics from this Friday sermon we can use to stimulate discussion among our family**

- Share examples of backbiting and thinking ill of others from day to day life.
- Make a family pledge to avoid backbiting under all circumstances.
- As a family, practice a positive attitude and avoid the habit of complaining.

**Topic 8 (Oct): Worship, anger-management and forgiveness**  
**(FS: 10/10/14)**

**Synopsis:** Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: God has drawn the attention of the true believers towards becoming ‘Ābid (worshiper of God) and towards adopting good morals, without which one who claims to have faith cannot be called a true believer. The sign of the true believers is that they worship God and shun idle and frivolous matters. It cannot be that one is a true believer but is also discourteous. Discourtesy is borne of arrogance and this is why God states about servants of the Gracious God that they ‘...walk on the earth in a dignified manner...’ and one who is dignified and humble not only avoids altercations, seeks reconciliation and is courteous to others but he also inculcates many other high morals. Thus, the attributes of a true believer are being ‘Ābid and being humble. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) drew the attention of Khuddāmūl-Aḥmadiyya and Lajna Imāillāh towards making special efforts to instill the habit of regular observance of Ṣalāt in the youngsters. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: Youth is a time of good health when worship can be offered with its due requisites. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) especially drew our attention to this fact. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: A main quality of those with high morals is being truthful and remaining truthful. It is incumbent upon a believer to not only completely refrain from falsehood but also to actually abhor it. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: Almighty God speaks of high moral values saying: ‘...and speak to men kindly...’ So each member of the Jamā‘at should strive to become a model of humanity and adopt high moral values. One should not get entangled in egotism over trivial matters and must keep one’s emotions constantly in check. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: God commands us to suppress our anger, treat others with courtesy, not to be obstinate about our mistakes and strive to pay the dues of mankind. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) even said that a person who does not pay the dues of men and does not show courtesy as commanded by God will also not be paying the dues of God and of Prayer and the worship of such a person will be in vain. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) said: ‘Remember wisdom and anger completely repel each other. And whoever is patient and displays even-mindedness is given a light which illuminates his senses and then this light goes on to create more light...Remember a person who is harsh and is short-tempered can never utter words of wisdom and discernment...One should use his faculties at proper and warrantable occasions’ Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) has mentioned time and again in his writings and speeches that we should keep our emotions in check. This command is meant for all Ahmadīs and all office-bearers of the Jamā‘at. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) said that even if you are in the right, you should lower and humble yourself as if you are a liar. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) instructed the office-bearers of the Jamā‘at to take decisions while fulfilling all the requirements of justice and to be kind and courteous in their dealings. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: When punishment is given or disciplinary action is taken, it is always done with a heavy heart and not with pleasure. The day when my post includes recommendation of pardon for someone from Umūr ‘Āmma or Amīrs of countries after the people concerned have remedied their mistakes is a day of greatest happiness for me. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) said “God wills that your person goes through a great revolutionary change and He demands a kind of death from you after which He will give you life! Hasten to reconcile with each other and forgive the sins of your brothers because mischievous is the one who is not inclined to reconcile with his brother. Such a person will be cut off because he creates divisions.” Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: Aḥmadī society should also have a realization to stop wrong and immorality and to remove and eradicate these evils and to dislike them as commanded by the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) in his sayings.

We should not aid anyone who usurps the rights of others. ҲуҶӯр (may Allāh be his helper) said: May God enable us to set an example for others in high morals and may He also enable us to make it possible for others to set such examples. May God protect us from all kinds of selfishness, Āmīn. Next, ҲуҶӯр (may Allāh be his helper) spoke of the sad demise of Asiya Begum Şāhiba, wife of the late Chaudhry Muhammad Abdur Rahman Şāhib of Gujranwala. She was currently living in the UK. ҲуҶӯр (may Allāh be his helper) announced that he would lead the funeral Prayer of the deceased after the Jumu‘ah.

## **Discussion Scenario 1**

The Za‘im Anṣārullāh approached a Nāṣir about attending monthly meetings, “Sir, it is very important to attend monthly meeting and is expected from a good Nāṣir.” The Nāṣir responded, “Why don’t you ask your ‘Āmila members to be regular in monthly meetings before asking others?”

### **How would you respond?**

1. The Nāṣir could have shown some restraint in his response.
2. The Za‘im could have been more careful in his approach.
3. It is OK for the Za‘im to question the Nāṣir for being absent in the meeting.
4. Any other response.

### **How would your response change if?**

Consider each separately:

- ... The Za‘im had urged this Nāṣir several times before.
- ... The Nāṣir had been ill and could not attend several meetings.
- ... The Nāṣir had been an ‘Āmila member before.

### **Guidance from the Friday sermon**

God has drawn the attention of true believers towards becoming “Worshiper of God” and towards adopting high morals because without this, one who claims to have faith, cannot be called a true believer. The sign of true believers is that they worship God and also shun idle and frivolous matters. It cannot be that one is a true believer but is also discourteous. Usually discourtesy is borne of arrogance and this is why God states about servants of the Gracious God that they: ‘...walk on the earth in a dignified manner...’ and one who is dignified and humble always avoids altercations, seeks reconciliation and is courteous to others.

## Discussion Scenario 2

A Nāṣir returns home very hungry after a long day at work. He finds his wife busy talking to someone over the phone. After waiting a little while, he finds something to eat. Later on, before his wife could say anything, he expresses his frustration “You are too busy on the phone and never have time for me.” The wife got upset saying, “What is the big deal if you got yourself something to eat?!” The matter escalated and there was heated argumentation in the presence of children.

### How would you respond?

1. The wife should apologize as it was her fault.
2. The husband should apologize as he had no reason to be upset.
3. They both need to stand their ground as an apology would weaken their stance.
4. Any other option.

### How would your response change if?

Consider each separately:

- ... The wife usually is very careful about her responsibilities.
- ... The husband is generally very caring and considerate.
- ... You have on occasion acted like this Nāṣir!

### Guidance from the Friday sermon

Almighty God says: ‘...and speak to men kindly...’ People who are irritable and bad-tempered by nature do not show their petulance at all times... Owing to their nature some people do get inflamed easily. However, if they show remorse and redress the hurt they have caused and also repent, then God states the door to repentance is always open. As for those who disregard this commandment and are needlessly and regularly harsh and do not show any remorse not only lack morals but are also sinful by discounting God’s commandment. Their worship will not avail. God gives hope of forgiveness to those who show anger under the influence of some passion but are later mortified and try and rectify the situation. As for those who are not ashamed and regretful even after coming to their senses, none of their excuses will work before God.

The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) said that excessive anger leads one to lose their faith. He also said that the beauty of Islām is in high morals, suppressing needless anger and promoting forgiveness.

**Examples of what we can do to adapt our lives according to Ḥuḍūr’s guidance in this sermon**

- Apologize to your wife for the times you have been angry with her.
- Concentrate on the meaning of “Love for all and hatred for none” and make it a part of your life.
- Think of someone who you may not be “getting along with” and try to improve the relationship.

**Examples of topics from this Friday sermon we can use to stimulate discussion among our family**

- Ways to control one’s anger.
- Ask your family to share instances where you had hurt their feelings by being angry.
- Make a family pledge to avoid anger and be the first to apologize.
- Think of ways to appreciate the family members who bring a positive change.



**Topic 9 (Nov): Religion, morality and material success**  
**(FS: 4/24/15)**

**Synopsis:** Huḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: A question keeps nagging the minds of the youth in particular and the public at large: ‘If someone has good morals, and if the worldly education leads a person to good moral attitude, why is there any need for following a religion, since the purpose of religion itself is to teach good morals?’ In answer to the question, Huḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) quoted references from a Friday sermon delivered by Ḥaḍrat Muṣliḥ Mau‘ūd (may Allāh be pleased with him) and said: Shedding light on the relationship that religion has with morality and material progress, Ḥaḍrat Muṣliḥ Mau‘ūd (may Allāh be pleased with him) said: It is hard to separate religion from morality and fulfilment of man’s physical needs since they all are well-related to each other. One who believes in religion cannot separate it from morality. Nor can such a person say that religion has made him independent of the world or that he is no longer in need of worldly objects. To believe oneself not to be in need of any worldly object would hinder the path of human and material progress. In other words, religion, morality and material progress are all well-related to each other. However, they are distinguishable as well. Reflecting upon these matters, one finds that material progress, morality and religion are so related to each other that for an ordinary man it is hard to decide their boundaries. Therefore, to understand these matters, we will have to study the blessed life of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him). Huḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: The Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) has expounded all the necessary details regarding the correlation between spirituality, morality and man’s material progress. However, he never declared every matter to be an essential part of religion. Unfortunately, by declaring their personal ideas to be part of religion, people these days spread ignorance in the world. Being Ahmadīs, however, we are fortunate that the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) protected us from ignorance and guided us towards studying the blessed life of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) so as to know the truth. The Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) said that true faith is to adopt moderation in all matters giving due consideration to each one of them. Also, the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) said that while the worship of God is extremely important an act, one also has to fulfil the rights of one’s own self as well as those of one’s wife and neighbors. When everyone in society will be acting upon this principle, the society will become a role model of spiritual, moral and material progress. Huḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: To reform the world in this age, God has sent the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him). In fact, it is at such times that God sends His messengers to the world, so that by imparting proper guidance to mankind they may put things, such as religion, morality and material progress, in perspective. Although, their message is apparently concerned with spirituality, the other two matters are also related to it. Spiritual excellence results in moral rectification and moral rectification helps one obtain material progress. However, it will be wrong to suggest that all those who are making material progress are morally upright. Again, it is not necessary that one who has good morals must also be following the true religion. God wants man to turn to Him and this is what the purpose of man’s creation is. This is why God made moral rectification and material progress dependent upon religion, so that one who turns to religion should be able to find everything by following one basic principle. God says that a perfect believer is blessed with all kinds of progress. But, those who are lost in worldly pursuits exhaust all their energies in this path and thus fail to make spiritual progress. This tells us that the means of obtaining the three objectives are quite different from each other. However, there is one mutual way as well and that is to establish a perfect relationship with Allāh. Moral rectification shall result in moral progress, and pursuit of worldly advancement shall result in material progress, and the efforts made for

these things will only result in benefits peculiar to these fields. However, those who strive for spiritual advancement are granted all kinds of bounties. In short, by adopting the true religion, one can acquire all worldly blessings, provided one has faith capable of absorbing Allāh's grace. How can the one who is blessed with perfect faith abandon high morals? If man should observe all the various aspects of a good moral conduct, he will be granted the ability to speak the truth, become honest and fair in his dealings, and adopt Taqwā (righteousness) and purity. This will also enable him to obtain worldly progress. It is for this reason that a believer should focus his attention upon improving his spirituality and relationship with Allāh.

## **Discussion Scenario 1**

A Nāṣir is an officeholder in the Jamā‘at. Za‘īm Ṣāhib approached him for an office in Anṣār ‘Āmila which he accepted. The national Tarbiyat department had now requested him to participate in the team for translation work. He has a very busy profession and has two pre-teen sons. His wife wants him to decrease his Jamā‘at work!

### **How would you respond?**

1. He should participate in the Tarbiyat team and tell his wife that there is blessing in Jamā‘at work and we should give precedence to our faith over worldly matters.
2. He should excuse from participating as he is also responsible for his wife and upbringing of his children.
3. He should accept the national Tarbiyat team assignment but excuse from Anṣār work.
4. Any other response.

### **How would your response change if?**

Consider each separately:

- ... The Nāṣir has grown up children.
- ... His wife is busy with Lajna offices.
- ... Both his wife and children allowed him to take on the new responsibility.
- ... He has recently been diagnosed with high blood pressure.

### **Guidance from the Friday sermon**

We are fortunate as Aḥmadīs, that the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) saved us from these issues and guided us to follow the blessed model of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) who of course taught moderation in everything. He taught that most certainly worship of God is most important; it is the objective of our creation. However, one’s own self also has rights as does one’s wife and neighbors. In order to fulfill these rights we have to employ three kinds of resources. Firstly Prayer and worship of God, secondly control one’s emotions and ponder over human psychology, thirdly to be honest in one’s employment or profession and seek knowledge of world sciences.

## **Discussion Scenario 2**

A Nāṣir's son opened up at dinner table. He argued that the developed countries have achieved tremendous material success and are thriving. Muslim countries keep talking about faith and worship but don't seem to get anywhere? The Nāṣir started scratching his head thinking about a response. Help this Nāṣir come up with a best response.

### **Choose the best response.**

1. The material success is temporary and it will be destroyed.
2. Material success is of no use unless you have faith and good morals.
3. True faith in God leads to spirituality which improves morals and good morals help achieve material success.
4. Morality is very subjective and does not influence material success one way or the other.

### **Respond to counter questions.**

- Why are the Muslim nations failing in material progress?
- Is morality a requirement for material progress?
- How did we learn true morals?

### **Guidance from the Friday sermon**

The Western world gave precedence to worldly matters over faith but at least they succeeded in attaining their worldly goals even if through wrong means. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) was sent for the reformation of both these extremes. It is at such times that God sends His people to the world who keep things in perspective and employ faith in faith's context, morality in its context, and worldly matters are dealt with in their context. On the face of it, God's people bring spiritual message but the three aspects are correlated. Excellence in spirituality definitely leads to reformation of morals, and good morals definitely lead to better material conditions. However, it is not necessary that a person who has material gains will also be moral or that one who has good morals will also be spiritual. God wishes to bring man closer to Him. For this, He has made moral reformation and material success conditional to spirituality or being religious. God says that a true believer is granted all kinds of success.

### **Examples of what we can do to adapt our lives according to Ḥuḍūr's guidance in this sermon**

- Ask yourself a question “Am I practicing exemplary morals?” Think of ways of improvement.
- Read a book on the life of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) to learn how he manifested the highest levels of spirituality and morality, e.g. Life of Muḥammad.

### **Examples of topics from this Friday sermon we can use to stimulate discussion among our family**

- How our faith in Allāh the Almighty can lead to true spirituality.
- Importance of always sticking with high morals even when faced with hate.
- Seek honest opinion from your wife and children if you are fulfilling their rights?

## **Topic 10 (Dec): New Year Resolutions for Aḥmadīs (FS: 1/2/15)**

**Synopsis:** Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: We ought to reflect upon the past year and see if we spent it in accordance with the pious vows we had made at its beginning. We should then make a firm resolve to make up for the shortcomings which occurred during the past year. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: We have been assigned the task of performing good deeds and, therefore, we need to assess ourselves if we have done our level best to fulfil our obligations in this regard. Besides, we need to realize that we must acquire the level of piety and righteousness that the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) expected of us. Each one of us makes a solemn pledge, at least once a year, on the occasion of the International Bai‘at, that he will try to obtain the level of piety expected of him by the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) as stated by him in the Ten Conditions of Bai‘at. In order to obtain this level of righteousness, one has to always keep in view the Ten Conditions of Bai‘at. It is not enough to merely believe in the Conditions; rather it is important to act upon them fulfilling all their requirements. One should protect oneself from impious acts as one protects oneself from wild beasts and animals. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) said: Although the Conditions of Bai‘at are only ten in number, they contain as many as thirty commandments. The first commandment enjoins one to refrain from Shirk (idolatry). The Shirk is not only to worship idols made of silver and gold, but rather at times one begins to worship one’s own words and actions and plans as idols. The second commandment enjoins one to eschew falsehood, for he who relies upon falsehood stops relying upon God. Therefore, one must avoid falsehood in all matters of life. The third commandment forbids adultery and fornication. In light of this, one also has to avoid the occasions and excuses as might lead to the committing of these evils. To avoid the occasions and excuses as might lead to such evils is the sign of true chastity. The fourth commandment forbids the trespasses of the eye. Indeed, the fire of hell is forbidden for the eye that avoids looking at things God has declared unlawful for it to look at. The fifth commandment forbids all manner of evil and sinfulness. To act against the commandments of the Almighty God and utter abuse and vituperation is an act of sinfulness. The sixth commandment forbids us to commit wrong, that is, to usurp the rights of one’s fellow beings. The seventh commandment forbids dishonesty. One has been enjoined not to be dishonest even to those who are guilty of dishonesty. The eighth commandment prohibits all kinds of disorder, mischief and quarrels. The ninth commandment prohibits all manner of rebellion. One should, therefore, avoid performing such acts and uttering such words against the government and the Nizām-i-Jamā‘at (system of the Jamā‘at) as amount to the violation of the laws. The tenth commandment forbids one to be carried away by passions and enjoins one to be obedient to the commandments of the Almighty God. The eleventh commandment enjoins upon us five obligatory Prayers to be performed on time and with all the due requirements. Also, it enjoins one to try to be regular in offering Tahajjud Prayer as well, so that one is able to constantly offer Prayers to God. The twelfth commandment enjoins upon one to recite Durūd [invoke blessings upon the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him)]. The thirteenth commandment enjoins upon one to constantly supplicate to God for the forgiveness of one’s sins. The fourteenth commandment enjoins upon one to remember and be grateful to God and glorify Him for His bounties. One should also be grateful to those who have done any favor to him. The fifteenth commandment enjoins upon one to glorify Allāh in all circumstances of life. The sixteenth commandment enjoins upon one not to cause any harm to Allāh’s creatures. The seventeenth commandment enjoins upon one to forgive others and avoid bearing enmity or grudge towards one’s fellow beings. It also says that if one wishes the reformation of a person, one should convey one’s complaints against him to the authorities. The eighteenth commandment enjoins upon one to always remain obedient and show submission to

God Almighty. The nineteenth commandment enjoins upon one to stop following erroneous customs and traditions. The twentieth commandment urges one not to follow one's selfish desires. When one shuns selfish desires for the sake of Allāh, He raises the status of such a person in heaven. The twenty-first commandment enjoins upon one to accept God as the Absolute Sovereign over one's life and act upon all His commandments. The twenty-second commandment enjoins upon one to take the word of God and the word of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) as the beacon of light to follow. The twenty-third commandment enjoins upon one to completely shun arrogance and pride. The twenty-fourth commandment enjoins upon one to adopt humility, meekness and humbleness. The twenty-fifth commandment enjoins upon one to adopt civility and good manners. The twenty-sixth commandment enjoins upon one to adopt righteous conduct and stresses upon one to live a life of humility and modesty. The twenty-seventh commandment enjoins upon one to hold the honor of and love for Faith dearer to oneself than the honor of and love for one's own life, wealth and dignity. The twenty-eighth commandment enjoins upon one to show sympathy towards God's creatures for the sake of His pleasure alone. The twenty-ninth commandment enjoins upon one to utilize one's God-given faculties towards the good of mankind. The thirtieth pledge we make is that we will establish such a relationship of submission and obedience to the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) as is not to be had with any other person. May God enable us to fulfil our pious vows and act upon the teachings mentioned above! May God overlook the shortcomings we have committed in the past year and may He enable us to perform good deeds during the current year, Āmīn. Next, Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) announced the martyrdom of Luqman Shahbaz Ṣāhib of Bhirri Shah Rahman in District Gujranwala, Pakistan, and spoke of his devotion and his sincerity for the Jamā'at. Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) also announced the sad demise of Shehzade Satanos of Macedonia and said that he would lead the funeral Prayer of both of the deceased persons in absentia after the Jumu'ah.

## Discussion Scenario 1

As a Nāṣir and his wife sit down with a cup of coffee to watch the New Year's celebrations on TV, they tell their children to sleep early so they can wake up for Tahajjud and Fajr. The New Year's festivities on TV are not appropriate for younger audience anyway. The children leave reluctantly. The next morning their son asked "Why was it appropriate for you but not for me?"

### How would you respond?

1. Don't ask too many questions.
2. As the parents are more mature, the TV content is unlikely to cause any harm.
3. Apologize to the son and say that next time they would not watch anything that wouldn't want their children to see.
4. Any other response.

### How would your response change if?

Consider each separately:

- ... The Nāṣir and his wife routinely watch movies once the kids go to sleep.
- ... The kids watched the same New Year's celebrations on their phones in their rooms.
- ... The parents offered Tahajjud and Fajr in the morning with their children.
- ... The parents decide to watch all of the festivities with their children.

### Guidance from the Friday sermon

The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) also took pledge to keep away from fornication. He said, do not go near fornication. That is, stay away from such functions which could even trigger the thought of it and do not adopt the ways which have risk factors as regards these sins. These days, lewd films are shown on television and the Internet or can be accessed on it. This is fornication of the eyes and thoughts and also a source of getting embroiled in bad practices...

Another pledge sought by the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) is to stay away from trespasses of the eye. The Holy Qur'ān commands Ghaḍḍ al-Baṣar (lowering the gaze) and the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) said that Fire is forbidden to that eye which restrains from looking at what God has forbidden. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) said: We have been positively commanded not to look at women outside the prohibited degrees (not a close relative) and their beauty. He said unrestrained looks end up in stumbling at times. God has sent this excellent teaching because God wills our eyes, hearts and intentions to remain pure. Islām has enjoined these boundaries on both men and women. Just as women are commanded to observe Purdah, men are commanded to observe Ghaḍḍ al-Baṣar. We should reflect as to how much we practice this!



## Discussion Scenario 2

A Nāṣir sits down with his family on New Year's Eve to come up with New Year's resolution. Every family member came up with a suggestion. His teenage son suggested that they all start offering Tahajjud regularly. In the last Khuddām meeting they were encouraged to do so because the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) wanted Jamā'at members to offer Tahajjud.

### How would you respond?

1. It is a good idea son, but you need to be regular in daily Prayers before worrying about Tahajjud.
2. It is a good idea son, we will all make it a New Year's resolution.
3. Son, I work hard all day and it is hard to wake up early in the morning.
4. Any other response.

### How would your response change if?

Consider each separately:

- ... You have already been offering Tahajjud regularly.
- ... You are not regular in your five daily Prayers.
- ... You are not a morning person and find it hard to wake up early.
- ... Your parents were regular in offering Tahajjud.

### Guidance from the Friday sermon

Pledge is also taken from us to organize offering Tahajjud Ṣalāt. Tahajjud should be organized because it was the way of the earlier righteous ones and it is a source of gaining closeness to God. This practice keeps one away from sin and removes bad habits and also keeps one away from physical ailments. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) said our Jamā'at should offer Tahajjud. Our Jamā'at should be regular in Tahajjud. If not much they should offer two units of Prayer. Attention needs to be given to this matter!

We need to self-reflect how much we fulfilled our pledges last year and if there were any deficiencies how we can make good this year. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) said: "Only that person joins our Jamā'at who makes our teaching his modus operandi and puts it in practice according to his strength and endeavor."

May God overlook our weaknesses of last year and enable us this year to make utmost efforts to mold our lives according to the expectations of the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him).

**Examples of what we can do to adapt our lives according to Ḥuḍūr's guidance in this sermon**

- Write a letter to Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) wishing him a Happy New Year and request prayers for you and your family.
- Make a pledge and strive to offer Tahajjud on a regular basis.
- Plan to exercise on a regular basis during the New Year.

**Examples of topics from this Friday sermon we can use to stimulate discussion among our family**

- Reflect in which ways the family is better than last year.
- Reflect on ways to improve as a family.
- Go over the conditions of Bai'at with them.





Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his helper) said:

How many of us reflect over our responsibility in being associated with the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) once a day, once a week, or once a month? What our worship of God and other morals are like? What role are we playing in helping Khilafat? Through God's mercy the Promised Messiah's advent took place and He enabled us to accept him. Does it suffice to come into the Bai'at of a great person? Indeed, when the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said that the latter days will be blessed like the early days of Islam, it signified that the followers of the Messiah will be part of the revolution for which he was sent. Today, it is the task of each Ahmadi to play his or her role in this. (Friday sermon, Sep 23, 2011)



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