

FROM THE MINBAR

LOOKING AFTER ONE'S OWN "SELF"

Khutbah delivered by Imam Dr. Zijad Delic at SNMC on January 6th, 2012 corresponding to Safar 12th, 1433 H.

BACKGROUND

Indeed all praise is for God, Lord of the worlds. Peace and blessings of God be upon Muhammad (S), his family, Khulafai Rashidin, all his Companions, and all those who follow in their footsteps until the Last Day. All praise is for God! We praise Him. We seek His help and ask for His forgiveness. We seek God's refuge from evils of ourselves and from our evil actions. I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped except God, alone, having no partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad (S) is His Messenger.

My dear brothers and sisters in Islam ~ As Salamu 'Alaikum Wa Rahmatullahi Wa Barakatuhu.

INTRODUCTION

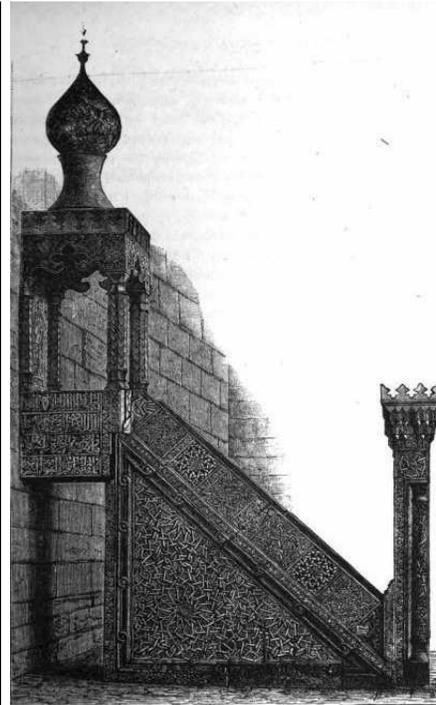
Muslims believe that Islam wants them to stand out among people, readily distinguished in every aspect of their lives, i.e., strong and unshakable faith in ONE God, decent behaviour in all human affairs and good deeds that they exhibit towards all God's creation, so that they become good examples and worthy of the great message that they live and share with people around them.

BACKGROUND

Muslims believe that their happiness in both worlds – Duniya and Akhirah – is determined by the extent that they discipline, improve, purify and refine themselves. Similarly, they know that their unhappiness comes about by them ruining and spoiling their selves. Almighty God explains this in the Qur'an: *"Indeed he succeeds who purifies his ownself. And indeed he fails who corrupts his ownself."* {Ash Shams 9, 10}

Muslims also believe that what purifies their souls and further cleanses them is the beauty of faith and good deeds. The aspects that ruin and destroy their souls are the evil of disobedience and bad deeds they do.

Almighty God says in the Qur'an: *"Nay! But on their hearts is the 'Ran' (covering of sins and evil deeds - rust), which they used to earn."* {Al Mutaffifin 14}



The Messenger of God, Muhammad (pbuh) said: *"When a believer commits a sin, a black spot is dotted on his heart. If he leaves that deed and repents, his heart is cleansed of that dot. If he continues such acts, the black covering is increased over his heart until it covers it entirely."* {An Nasai, At Tirmithi}

Due to that, Muslims are always living in a state where they are refining their souls, purifying it and cleansing it. They use all means for purification and keep their souls from everything that ruins or spoils it, whether it be evil beliefs or impure speech and actions – unacceptable behavior.

STEPS TOWARDS IMPROVEMENT

True believers strive against negative influences night and day. It is a continuous work that could make our lives fulfilled and help us maintain strong faith and good character. It is not seasonal activities that will help us in achieving this goal in life.

Muslims hold themselves to account for every single action every moment of their lives. They try to completely turn themselves away from evil and indecency. In order to protect

the soul and purify it, they follow the following steps:

TAWBAH: REPENTANCE

The first step on the road to better ourselves is to better our relationship with the Creator of ours – make Tawbah (Repentance) often. What is meant by this is the ceasing of all sins and acts of disobedience, feeling remorse for every sin they have committed in the past and firm conviction not to return to perform any sin for the rest of their lives.

Almighty God calls believers: *"O you who believe! Turn to God with sincere repentance! It may be that your Lord will remit from you your sins, and admit you into Gardens under which rivers flow."* {At Tahirim 8}

If they do so then their destination is the happy destination – here and in the hereafter. God confirms it in the Qur'an: *"And turn you all together towards God in repentance. And all of you beg God to forgive you all, O believers, that you may be successful."* {An Nur 31}

God's Messenger, Muhammad (pbuh) said: *"O people! Repent to God! Verily, I repent to God one hundred times in a day."* {Muslim}

MUHAFAZAH: BEING ON GUARD

The second step that we need to face on the road to becoming better servants of the Creator as well as better human beings is that we continuously guard our Tawbah.

This Issue 'From The Minbar' presents



LOOKING AFTER ONE'S OWN "SELF"



In next issue: 'Bettering Our Relationship with our Creator'

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This means that Muslims make their souls realize that they are being watched by God and that God is seeing everything they are doing, knows all their secrets, and is watching all of their actions. God will then judge them and every soul will receive what it has earned.

At this point of time, Muslims feel great pleasure in remembering God and find rest and pleasure in obeying Him. They become very anxious to become closer to God – turning to Him and turning away from Hurumat (forbidden matters).

Then, if they ask themselves what is the meaning of submitting one's face to God, He is informing them: *"And who can be better in religion than one who submits his/her face (himself/herself) to God and he/she is doer of good deeds."* {An Nisa 125}

At this level of submission Muslims can grasp the essence of the Kalimah 'La ilaha illallah', as Almighty God informs us: *"And whosoever submits his/her face to God, while he/she is doer of good deeds, then he/she has grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold."* {Luqman 22}

MUHASABAH: BEING ACCOUNTABLE

The third step is Muhasabah. This is what Muslims are concerned about during all their life, day and night, for what will help them in the Akhirah, that will make them qualified for its honors and the pleasure of God.

As we look every day into our bank accounts, we should, at the end of every day, look into our account of deeds and see, are we going to be people of success or failure – winners or losers. If we see that we have shortcomings in good deeds, we must rectify them at that moment.

If we see that we have many shortcomings in both obligatory and voluntary deeds, we should seek God's forgiveness. Almighty God says: *"Let every person look to what he/she has sent forth for tomorrow."* {Al Hashr 18}



It is narrated that Al Ahnaf ibn Qais used to come to a candle and put his finger on it until he felt the fire. Then he would say to himself: "O Hunaif, what made you do what you did today? What made you do what you did today?"

It is awareness of God (At Taqwa) that makes people more conscious of their place and deed – their actions. It is awareness of God that makes people reject whims and desires and use some sense and logic in their lives.

It is At Taqwa that will pave the path of Jannah to such individuals. Almighty God says: *"But as for him/her who was aware of standing before his/her Lord, and restrained himself/herself from impure evil desires and lusts, verily, Jannah will be his/her abode."* {An Nazi'at 40, 41}

MUJAHADAH: STRIVING

And the last step on the path of achieving the status of a good servant is "countineous striving in our lives. This is where Muslims realize that their greatest enemy is their own selves that are within their own skin. By its nature, it could lead them to evil and make them flee from good deeds and the path of excellence.



It prevents them in doing good deeds, as mentioned in the Qur'an: *"And I free not myself (from blame). Indeed, the human self is inclined to evil, except when my Lord bestows His Mercy (upon whom He wills). Verily, my Lord is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."* {Yusuf 53}

The soul loves calmness and relaxation. It desires free time, idleness, and irresponsibility. It is swept away with desires. It will happily follow its present lusts even though they may lead to the misery and destruction.

If Muslims realize that, they will take it upon themselves to strive against such souls. They prepare themselves to battle with it. They follow this disciplining course until the souls become peaceful, pure, and wholesome.

This is a goal of those who are asking for Hidayah (guidance). Almighty God says: *"And for those who strive hard in Our Cause, We will surely, guide them to Our Paths. And verily, God is with the Muhsinin (good doers)."* {Al 'Ankabut 69}

If Muslims strive against their base selves for the sake of God, in order to purify it, refine it, rectify it, and make it peaceful, they become befitting of God's special blessings and His pleasure.

This is the training of the pious and the path in imitation of their example and following along in their footsteps. When God's Messenger, Muhammad (pbuh) was asked of

his commitment in prayer, he said: *"Shall I not be a thankful servant."* {Bukhari, Muslim}

Look at the examples of these giants! Umar bin Khattab (r.a) reproached himself for missing the 'Asr prayer in congregation by giving away a piece of land as Sadaqah that was worth 200.000 Dirhams.

Abu Ad Dardah (r.a) said: *'If it were not for three things, I would not like to live even for one day. These three things are: Having thirst for the sake of God during the midday heat, prostration for the sake of God during the middle of the night and sitting with a people who choose the most pleasant speech in the same way that one chooses the sweetest fruit.'*

The Messenger of God, Muhammad (pbuh) said: *"The best of people is one who lives a long life and whose deeds are good."* {At Tirmithi}

CONCLUSION

If we hope to meet our Rabb (Lord) with happy faces then it is our duty to ask Him for forgiveness if we sinned, to be watchful and on guard all the time, to take account of our own selves and our actions, and to strive against desires and our own selves that try to overpower us and control us in all our day-to-day affairs.

By doing so, we would come closer to adhering to the standards of the community of the righteous people and will secure our successful present and the future, Insha Allah.

Allahumma Amin.

AN ACTION ITEM

If YOU like this Khutbah and what we, at your SNMC, do, PLEASE:

Support our activities & projects

Please Donate ONE Prayer Spot for \$2,500 and be the ONE who will build the Masjid and the Center so that it could help us and our children maintain Islamic Identity and build strong Canadian National Identity, Insha Allah.



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