

# FROM THE MINBAR

## COMMITMENT: LIVING UP TO OUR COVENANT WITH GOD

*Khutbah delivered by Imam Dr. Zijad Delic at SNMC on October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2012 corresponding to Zul Qa'dah 19<sup>th</sup>, 1433 H.*

### BACKGROUND

*Indeed all praise is for God, Lord of the worlds. Peace and blessings of God be upon Muhammad (S), his family, Khulafair 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

Upon saying the Shahadah and becoming a Muslim, each individual makes the covenant with Almighty Allah. At this point of time, these individuals promise a **commitment** which is the essential foundation of any Islamic activity, especially in Canadian Muslim community (ies).

These are the individuals named by Allah as *'The Just and Balanced Nation – Ummatan Wasata.'* They individually and collectively stand in the world as witnesses to humanity, as Almighty Allah described them: *"Thus We have made you a Just and Balanced Nation, that you be witnesses over mankind and the Messenger of Allah witness over you."* {Al Baqarah 143}

Being called *'Ummatan Wasata'*, having this status is a great honor but a great responsibility as well. Meeting the obligation to be Ummatan Wasata and playing the role of the Just and Balanced Community are the goals set for the believing community in Canada. To achieve these goals, the believing community must commit itself to the covenant made with Allah.

### ROLE MODELS

The best example of the commitment is found in the lives of Prophets, the Sirah of the Messenger of Allah, Muhammad (S) and the life of Sahabah. Those who read it, first what strikes them is the high level of commitment of early Muslim community to the cause of good in the name of Allah.

1. Look at the commitment of Bilal (r.a) who was tortured under the Arabian sun. (We are not asked to sacrifice so much!) Look at the faith which he had. Look at the words: *Ahad, Ahad, Ahad* (only One God). Look at the power of his sincere Iman. Look at his struggle for social justice! Look at his readiness to sacrifice that others could have freedom.

2. Look at the commitment of Abu Bakr! He leaves his property, good social status among the Quraysh and follows the Din of Islam. He gives ALL for the pleasure of Allah and betterment of people/community.



3. Look at the personality of the Messenger of Allah, Muhammad (S), his Iman, and his energy. He refuses all the gifts, power of Duniya by choosing the Din of Allah: *'If you would give me the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left hand I would never stop the mission ordered by Allah.'*

4. Look at the lives of Allah's Prophets such as Ibrahim and his son Ismail and you will find amazing examples of self-sacrifice and commitment.

### MEANING OF THE COMMITMENT

What is commitment? According to the lexicon, commitment means the state of being pledged, obliged to something.

What is then the Islamic commitment? It means to increase the sense, the feeling, the consciousness of being pledged and obliged to Almighty Allah and the Messenger of Allah, Muhammad (S) and the betterment of others and environment we live in. The sense of responsibility towards ourselves, others and environment. In short, commitment means to make more serious and concrete pledge to work and sacrifice for the cause of Allah.

Allah informs us about the Right Direction and the commitment to it in the following words: *"Say: Verily, my prayer, my sacrifice, my living, and my dying are for Allah, the Lord of the 'Alamin."*

{Al An'am 162}

## TYPES OF THE COMMITMENT

a) Dedication: from the conviction; from the heart; from within; out of belief is the catalyst of this type of commitment – done for HIS sake.

b) Constraints: Culture; social pressure; personal interest; family; ...

To make Islam a reality in North America, we are required to raise the level of our commitment as Rasul and Sahabah did. Almighty Allah is calling the believers: "Fulfill your covenant with Me so that I fulfill My covenant with you." {Al Baqarah 40}

By this covenant, the believers pledge themselves to the service of Allah and Allah pledges to His servants His support in Duniya and salvation in the Akhirah. The names of Canada's Muslims are also on this covenant. Muslims of Canada have the sources to help themselves come closer to Almighty Allah. Thus, Allah offers a great trade if we commit ourselves to the covenant carrying out the instructions set by Him.

## LACK OF COMMITMENT

Instead of commitment, we often find in the Muslim community "Lack of Commitment."

This flow has a great impact on the condition/direction/state/station (maqam) in which the Western Muslim community(ies) finds itself today.

Lack of commitment implies: a) a state of not being pledged to something or someone (60 or 70 branches of faith: faith, behaviors, ethics); b) weakness of feelings or consciousness of being pledged to duties and righteous works; and c) weakness of serious and concrete pledge to work and sacrifice for the sake of the Lord and the good for this great nation and every human being.

## SIMPTOMS OF THE FLOW

There are some of the features and symptoms/signs through which it could be noticed that the lack of commitment is our current reality. All of these aspects are interconnected and depend on one another.

- Neglecting to follow the laws and rules set by Almighty Allah and following one's own desires (*Du'a not accepted – living in Haram conditions*).
- Showing inaccuracy in our talk and our actions (*Surah As Safat*).
- Neglecting social manners and moral codes (*We were people of Akhlaq – Kana Khuluquhu Al Qur'an, Husnul Khuluq, Iman and Akhlaq*).
- Neglecting to rectify and purify one's soul (*Everything needs maintenance – Kalla Bal Rana 'Ala qulubihim Ma Kanu Yaksibun; Qad Aflaha man Zakkaha...*).
- Desiring victory to come without doing one's effort in order to achieve it (*Laisal iman bittamanny*).

This Issue 'From The Minbar' presents:

## COMMITMENT: LIVING UP TO OUR COVENANT ('AHD)

In next issue: Loyalty to the Message

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f) Not showing the firmness and strength in front of hardship and challenges in life (*Wa Bashshiris Sabirin*).

g) Interfering in other people's affairs (*Tuba liman Shagalahu 'Aybuhu 'an 'uyubun Nas*), and

h) Disregarding the rights of brothers and sisters and the human beings in general (*Khairun Nasi Man Yanfa'un Nas*).

**Proof for the Statement:** Almighty Allah says in the Qur'an: "Allah will not change the condition of a people as long as they do not change their state themselves." (Ar Ra'd 11) Do not expect CHANGE if you do not initiate the same – if you are not a change yourself!

## CAUSES BEHIND THE FLOW

a) Weakness of belief: Belief/Faith is a foundation, a base on which we could build a structure. Belief is a source of renewed energy and strong identity. It protects and guards the believer from the negligence or insisting on doing wrong. If a believer does not renew the faith, it becomes weak and the result will be weakness in one's personality and the lack of commitment in one's heart. No Faith = No Base The Messenger, Muhammad (S) said: *Renew your Iman*. It was said: *How to do it, Ya Rasullah?* He said: *Say much The Kalimah*. (Ahmad) – I do not mean just a lips-service!

b) Not understanding and realizing the importance of commitment and its dimensions.

c) Being in a weak and uncommitted environment would make a negative impact on the believers, especially youth.

d) Attachment to the bad habits and secondary issues.

d) Being unconscious of the consequences of not being committed. Due to this flow, many people regret not being committed to the right things in life, later.

## CONSEQUENCES BEHIND THE FLOW

- on conditions of individuals,
- on the conditions of the community and
- on an eternal society.

### 1. Consequences on Individuals

- Corruption of the soul;
- Prevention of servitude to the Lord (Salah, Islamic family, marriage...);
- Loosing the trust of people in work, worldly affairs, personal interests, family, etc;
- Anxiety and psychological disturbances:
- lack of commitment brings weakness of character – a person cannot understand his/her state/conditions if not with others,
- which causes sinning, and sinning brings psychological disturbance and anxiety (Al Ithmu Ma Haka Fi Nafsika...) (*loss of Faith but loss of integrity as well*).

### 2. Consequences on the Community

a) No progress of the community – one step forward two backwards;

b) No system in place – reactionary not proactive;

c) Islam becomes an easy target and defamed in the eyes of common people what makes our life difficult – ignorant people give themselves right to be Mufasssirs;

d) It also brings deprivation (no barakah) or Allah's support as Allah reminds: *O you who believe! If you help the cause of Allah, He will help you and make your feet firm...*" (Muhammad 7)

**3. Consequences on the larger society:** lack of cohesion and progress

## REMEDY

I do not say that there are no committed individuals. Your being here tells me that you are committed individuals. What I am suggesting is that Muslims in general terms are not committed to the Din's principles – in praxis: Ibadah, behavior, manners and ethics (reading, learning, knowledge, understanding and applying – praxis of one's faith).

Lack of Commitment in praxis created a disease that weakened our individuals and the community as well as the global village. Diagnose says that the Ummah is sick. When you know that you are sick, you look for the remedy! Now is the time to look into medicine/remedy that could help Canadian Muslim individually and collectively get better so that they will be able to do their responsibility towards Allah and others. Here is the remedy for the Lack of Commitment:

a) Be keen to renew and reinforce one's faith.

Identity: *It is not a narrow-minded identity confined to rigid and inflexible principles. It is an identity based on dialectical and dynamic movement between the Islamic formative principles and the environment*. Realize that fleeing to Allah is a challenging way that is often built on difficulties; however, it leads to eternal blessing and peace of mind and heart and the closeness to Allah *Face the challenge: Laqad khalafna insana fi kabad/Wa anna sa'yahu sawfa yura*

b) Understand the nature of both worlds – *be rational* (Duniya and Akhirah) and the relation between each of them and how to make balance between them: Allah points out in the Surah Al Qasas ayah 77: *Wabtagi fima Atakallahu Daral Akhirah...* The case of Khandala and Abu Bakr: Sa'ah wa Sa'ah, as Muhammad (S) said about the nature of our activities in Duniya.

c) Take people of commitment as your role models (Uswatun Hasanah).

d) Be part of Canadian Muslim community and do not leave them (*'Alaikum Bil Jama'ah*).

e) Treat parents, family members, relatives, neighbors and others, including the environment in which you live as ordained in the formative sources (respect – the concept of IHTIRAM).

f) Call oneself on account in order to realize one's own weakness and ways to be improved (Muhasabah).

g) Remind yourselves on the fruits of commitment

h) Make use of time, wealth, knowledge, health, youth because once these blessings would come to an end (*Igtanim Khamsan qabla Khams: Haytaka, Sihataka, Ginaka, Shababaka, Firagaka*), and

i) After you have done your share, put trust in Allah, ask for His help and protection (*Tawakkul: Tawakkul not Tawakul*).

## STRATEGY

How can a Muslim fulfill the covenant and accomplish his/her commitment in the Path of Allah?

1. *The first step: Purification, rectification, and reconstruction.* The believers have to make the survey of things around themselves. Then they have to evaluate each and every relationship with human society. At that point of time, if they find anything what is against Allah's Law, they should reject it be it in their personalities, homes, lives, businesses or people whom they befriend. That is the time when they examine everything critically and move towards reformation. As it can be concluded in the first step, the areas of reformation are believers ideas, concepts, approaches, moral values, attitudes towards food and friends – in short reformation of life as whole.

2. *The second step: Individual contacts with the like minded brothers and sisters in Islam.*

3. *The third step: Collective effort of the like minded brothers and sisters in Islam.*

They have realized that it is not enough only to be a good individual but to be a good member of the Just and Balanced Community.

4. *The fourth step: Reformation of the society.*

At this point of self-evaluation and realization, the believers see that the environment in which they live is quite different than the one they have been looking forward. They realize that the environment, the socio-economic and political values need polishing. It brings them to the point where they realize that they need to polish the environment for the good of ALL.



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## CONCLUSION

Here starts the real presentation of Islamic teachings (Islam in Action) through our participation in every possible, smallest action. Muhammad (S) said once: *"Ahabbul A'amali ilallah adwamuha wa in qalla --* The most loved deed in the sight of Almighty God is one done regularly, even if it is a small deed"

## AN ACTION ITEM

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