

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Friday Sermon

HAZRAT MUHYI-UD-DIN AL-KHALIFATULLAH

Munir Ahmad Azim

18 March 2016 ~
(08 Jamad'ul Aakhir 1437 Hijri)

After greeting all his disciples (and all Muslims) worldwide with the greeting of peace Hadhrat Khalifatullah (atba) read the Tashahhud, Ta'uz, Surah Al Fatiha, and then he delivered his sermon on the subject of **“Abandon Materialism for the Remembrance of Allah”**:

ABANDON MATERIALISM FOR THE REMEMBRANCE OF ALLAH

يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تُلْهِكُمْ ءَمْوَالُكُمْ وَلَا ءَوْلَادُكُمْ عَن ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَمَن
يَفْعَلْ ذَٰلِكَ فَأُوْلَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْخٰسِرُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

**Yaaa-’ayyuhallaziina ‘aamanuu laa tul-hikum ‘amwaalukum wa laaa ‘aw-laadukum ‘an Zikrillaah.
Wa mayy-yaf-’al zaalika fa-’ulaaa-’ika humul-khaasiruun.**

*“O you who believe! Let not your riches or your children divert you from the remembrance of Allah.
If any act thus, the loss is their own.” (Al-Munafiqun 63: 10).*

فَاعْرِضْ عَن مَّن تَوَلَّىٰ عَن ذِكْرِنَا وَلَمْ يُرِدْ إِلَّا الْحَيٰوةَ الدُّنْيَا ﴿٣٠﴾
ذَٰلِكَ مَبْلَغُهُمْ مِّنَ الْعِلْمِ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَن ضَلَّ عَن سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ
أَعْلَمُ بِمَن أَهْتَدَىٰ ﴿٣١﴾

**Fa-’a’-rid ‘amman-tawallaa ‘an-zikri-naa wa lam yurid ‘illal-hayaatad-dunyaa. Zaalika mab-
laghum-minal-’ilm. ‘Inna Rabbaka Huwa ‘a-lamu biman-dalla ‘an-sabiilihii wa Huwa ‘a-lamu
bi manih-tadaa.**

*“So veer away from those who turn back from Our Remembrance and desire nothing but the life of
this world. That is what they could reach of knowledge. Surely your Lord is He Who knows best the
ones who have erred away from His way, and He knows best the ones who are guided.” (An-Najm
53: 30-31).*

The Remembrance (Zikr) of Allah is certainly food for our soul. The soul is such an entity that is associated with his Creator and thus to preserve the relationship between the soul and the Creator, man must strive to praise Allah (God Almighty) and remember Him, His Omnipotence and His Love and Mercy upon him in all aspects of his life so that he remains connected with Him (Allah).

Abu Musa Ash'ari (ra) narrated that the Prophet of Allah Hazrat Muhammad (pbuh) said: *“He/ She who does Zikr of Allah (practice the remembrance of Allah) and he/ she who doesn't, their example is of like an alive and a dead.”* (Bukhari)

Remember often Allah, and Allah will remember you in return. Thus Allah as stated in the first verse that I recited to you, Allah wants His servants to remember Him, and to illuminate their lives with the recitation of His attributes and His praises, meditating on His Greatness, His Uniqueness and His Omnipotence so that he remains under the protection of Allah, and that Allah grants him His favours and His love so that he can live a full and fulfilling life; in other words, so that he fulfils the duty he owes to God, that is to say, to worship Him without associating anything to Him in His worship and to worship Him by remaining always connected to Him.

That is why Allah addresses Him primarily to the believers and warns them not to let anything or anyone divert them from the remembrance of Allah, from His memory, His Zikr. We must not let our wealth and our children make us forget our worship of Allah. The verse in question mentions *“your riches”* before *“your children”* and this for the simple reason that people are much more concerned with the pursuit of worldly goods and children represent only a secondary interest to them.

The love of money is unfortunately prevalent in the world we live in. In the other verses which I quoted (*Surah An-Najm*), Allah draws our attention to these people who despite possessing knowledge but they use it only as a means to acquire the material goods of this temporary world. In examining this world, you will find that people are using their knowledge just to acquire worldly goods. They are invaded by the need to enrich themselves materially and forget their spiritual duty. Thus, they let themselves be fooled by the unreality of this material world and forget the beauty of the spiritual world. The Holy Quran teaches us to avoid those people whose objective of their knowledge is only get richer and richer materially and it also explains why one must remain aloof from them.

As for the children, although they remain in the background for some people, but nevertheless there are people who really care for their children, and the love and the hours they devote to these children are much larger than the hours they spend in the remembrance of Allah. We live in this century such a time where both women and men work. I understand that it is sometimes necessary for some couples to work given the financial situation in which they find themselves – they have to honour (repay) debts and make ends meet. Therefore, I do not point finger towards those who are

really in a precarious financial situation, but only towards those who are financially prospered and do not really need to work.

In their zest to go in the quest of worldly riches, these people entrust their children to nurses or baby-sitters to monitor and care for them. This is really an unfortunate situation because while not being forced to work, especially mothers of affluent families, these women are leaving their homes to go in search of material wealth, and thus having no guide, the children let themselves get trapped by others and they therefore abandon the religion of Allah to grip materialism and an irreligious life.

The repercussions of these situations worldwide are serious. These people are cut off from our Creator and they only live for the material goods of this world.

Abu Huraira (ra) narrated that the Messenger of Allah, Hazrat Muhammad (pbuh) said: *“Any gathering in which people sit and do not do Zikr (Remembrance) of Allah and do not send Darood (blessings) upon their Prophet is of loss for them. If Allah wills, He gives them punishment and if He wills, forgives them.”* (Tirmidhi)

As these aforementioned verses and Hadith teach us, we must move away from those people who prefer to forget Allah, lest we meet with the same situation. We must not think that we are entertaining some spirit of revenge or boycott against anyone. We must not confuse in any way between the boycotting which the enemies of the Messengers of Allah and their followers suffer for the love of Allah, and the distance that true believers should take from those who are immersed in the ocean of materialism to the point that they forget Allah. And it certainly does not mean also that if these people salute you, you turn your back and reject their greetings! No, no and no!

These verses teach us that if these people are immersed in materialism so much so as to forget the remembrance of Allah, then we believers must not follow their example, that is to say, we must not imitate them in their pursuit of worldly wealth, in order to protect ourselves from this contamination, this thirst for money and power. And so, to protect our connection with our Creator, we must avoid frequenting too much these people imbued with this material world, those people who forget God.

Self-protection (i.e. to reserve oneself) for the worship of Allah is the essence of *Zikr-e-Ilaahi*. *Zikr-e-Ilaahi* is certainly an act of worship. How can a person imbued in *Zikr-e-Ilaahi* sit in an assembly where only the pursuit of material gains is discussed, where enthusiasm reaches its peak as soon as business and money is discussed? You who love Allah (God Almighty) and worship Him, won't you have any pang of conscience if you happen to find yourself in that kind of company or assembly? Do you not fear of attracting the wrath of Allah on yourselves? You are only being asked to cut your contacts with these people who distract you from your goal – that is to say, the *Zikr-e-Ilaahi* unless they change topics and start talking about God and accept all His teachings without judging His decisions and His decrees. We then have to be very selective when it comes to organize our

meetings and congregations. These are the mirrors that reflect who we are and make us see the depth of our hearts.

My attention is drawn to those people who only frequent people who live in opulence. They have in fact no bond of affection with those rich people. They do this just to give themselves a status in society and to flatter their egos. There are also very wealthy families whose way of thinking, their bad taste and their quest for personal interests are so deficient that it would be a punishment, an unbearable moment just to remain a few minutes in their company. It is these kinds of people which are spoken of in the verses of the Holy Quran which I mentioned and whom Allah asks us to avoid. Their interest is not the same as ours, for unlike them, we want the pleasure of Allah whereas they languish for worldly pleasures.

The person who thinks only of his Creator wherever he is will receive from Him many blessings. This makes me remember an anecdote in the time of Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal (*Rahimullah Alayh*). One day the Imam was to go to a place, and at nightfall decided to take refuge in a mosque. Not recognizing the Imam, the guardian of the mosque refused him entry into the mosque. Despite this, Imam Ahmad did not reveal his identity to him, and then he decided to sleep outside in the courtyard of mosque, but the keeper was furious and dragged him off the property of the mosque. A baker whose bakery was close by took pity on Imam Ahmad without recognizing him, and invited him to spend the night with him in his bakery.

By spending time with the baker, Imam Ahmad noticed that he spent the night working (i.e. baking bread), but what surprised strongly is that the man in question did not cease to praise Allah while working, until sunrise. The Imam was very amazed by what he saw and he asked the baker if he had ever received from Allah some (special) favours for all the praise that he dedicates to Him (Allah). The baker replied that Allah has always fulfilled his prayers, wishes, requests, all except one. The Imam, surprised asked him what that exception (that unfulfilled request) was. So the baker said he wanted to meet for a long time the famous Imam Ahmad (ibn Hanbal) but this request was not granted. Then, the voice filled with emotion, Imam Ahmad revealed his identity to the baker and told him it was not in vain as he was dragged out of the mosque to reach the baker, because Allah certainly wanted to grant the wish of his servant (the baker) by (literally) dragging the Imam Ahmad to his door!

Moreover in a Hadith, the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) has acknowledged that Allah has proclaimed that one who moves his lips for His *Zikr* (to remember Him), Allah says that He is with that person. (Bukhari)

In addition, this story of the past, among others makes us understand that it is certainly not only the mosque which is the only place wherein the believer can reach Allah; the mosque is not the only place where we receive the immeasurable blessings of Allah. It is also necessary that you know that the *Zikr-e-Ilaahi* has a great relationship with *Istighfar* (forgiveness) and both propel the believer to a much higher status if he is constant and sincere in his pursuit of the pleasure and proximity of Allah. Allah loves those who love Him, He cherishes those who cherish Him and

responds to their prayers by fulfilling them. In the story I just told you, Imam Ahmad, though a beloved servant of Allah had to bear abuse for the chance to meet another beloved servant of Allah, such a servant who had carved his whole life, till even in his workplace on the Remembrance of Allah (*Zikrullah*). And Allah decreed to grant him his request and made him meet the Imam Ahmad by thereby literally dragging Imam Ahmad to him!

In this regard (on the subject of *Zikr-e-Ilaahi*) the Promised Messiah Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as) said: *The person who sees Allah in front of him all the time [the Khalifatullah Hazrat Munir (atba) then cited the examples of seeing the name of Allah in the sky, on trees etc. as witnessed in this era] would not even dare to make mistakes. He will always think he has before him a Watcher – a Being more powerful than him and who has the power to punish. It is truly our alienation from God which draws us into sin. If this distance is temporary, our sins will be too. But if it becomes permanent then we are sinners forever. Allah watches over us and monitors (each of our movement) every time, at every moment. How dare we then commit sins?*

Zikr-e-Ilaahi has the advantage that it makes us live in the sight of Allah and drifts us away from the evils of this world. Business affairs or money affairs should not distract us from our worship of God. Whatever the affairs that concern us in the world here, be them commercial transactions, agricultural or other, *Zikr-e-Ilaahi* must find its place. Follow the example of the baker, who seemingly ordinary has been awarded a place high in the esteem of Allah to such a degree that Allah fulfils all his requests (supplications)! This example I have quoted gives us an idea that the mundane work which we do to support ourselves is in no way an excuse to forget Allah (It can become a fragrant field by the Zikr of Allah). Rather, the more you remember Allah, the more Allah will come near to you.

Zikr-e-Ilaahi brings benefits that are well beyond our expectations. We have to remember Allah in all that we do, and that is how we hope to reform the world. Invite people to Allah, to His Remembrance. Talk to them about Allah, talk about His greatness, His beauty, His favours and meditate on Him yourself also. It is then that a genuine connection and a deep love will be weaved between Him and you, and this union will be eternal.

Then let us enrich our daily prayers, our *Salaat*, by *Zikr-e-Ilaahi* (the Remembrance of Allah). Our prayers should be filled with *Zikrullah* or they shall resemble arid and infertile land. May Allah grant you my dear Muslim brothers, sisters and children the steadfastness and sincerity in your quest to have the ability to maintain that strong connection with Him through the *Zikrullah*. *Ameen*.