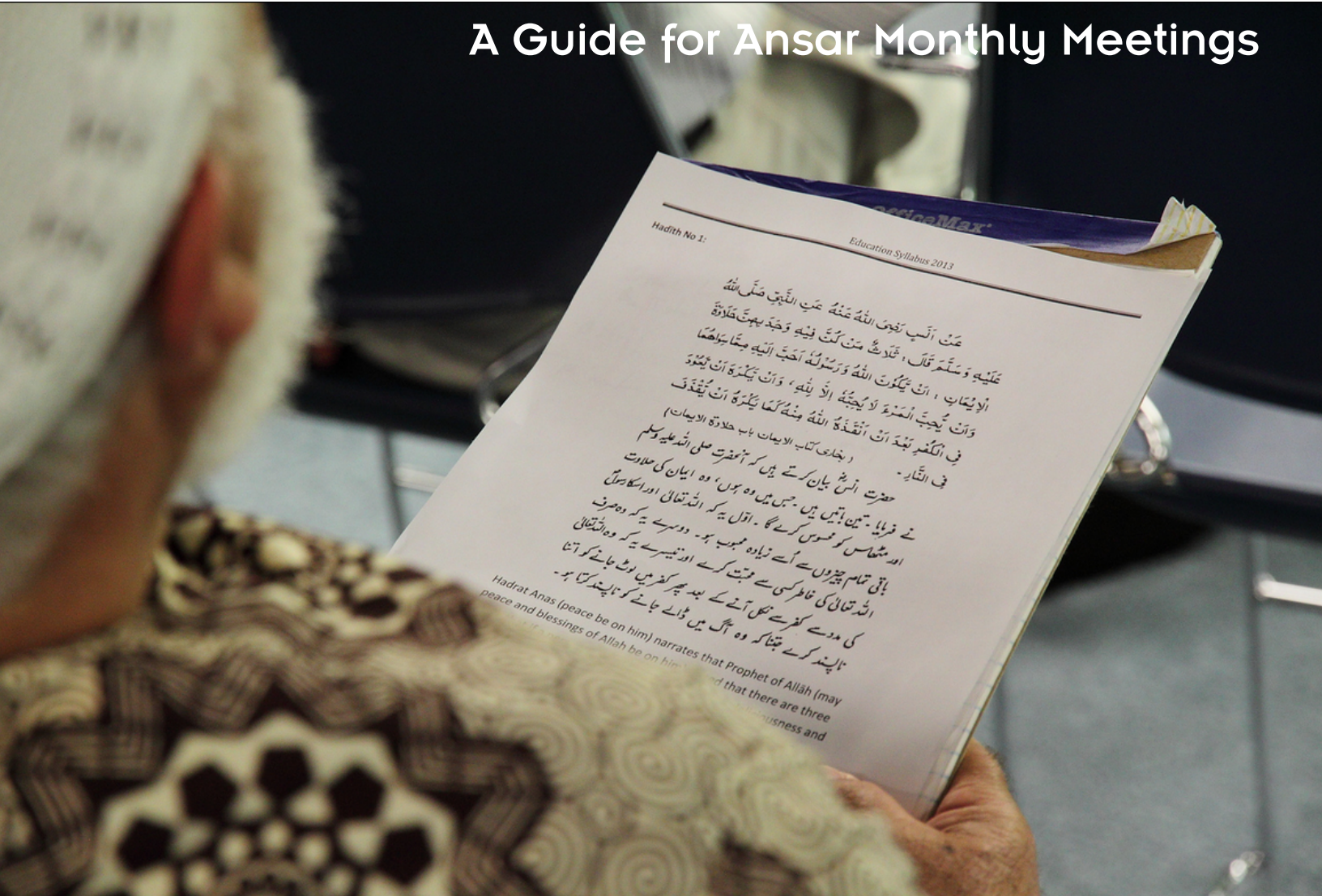


Save yourselves and your families from fire (66:7)

2014

Talim & Tarbiyat HANDBOOK

A Guide for Ansar Monthly Meetings



2014 Ta‘līm and Tarbiyat Handbook

(A Guide for Monthly Meetings)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ
وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ
وَالْحِجَارَةُ عَلَيْهَا مَلَائِكَةٌ غِلَاظٌ شِدَادٌ
لَّا يَعْصُونَ اللَّهَ مَا أَمَرَهُمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ
مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ ﴿٧﴾

[66:7] O ye who believe! **Save yourselves and your families from a Fire** whose fuel is men and stones, over which are appointed angels, stern *and* severe, who disobey not Allāh in what He commands them and do as they are commanded.

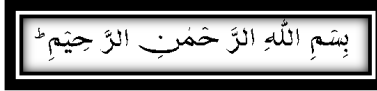


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Anṣār Pledge

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 (parenthesis) is not in the original Arabic text and has been added in 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,**

This handbook is an experiment. Its success—or failure—depends on how you conduct it.

In this experiment, we have tried to integrate the Ta‘līm, Ta‘līmūl Qur’ān, and Tarbiyat syllabus into a single theme for each meeting. The handbook contains a lot of original material. There are real life scenarios, built-in room for discussion, and poignant supporting data from the Holy Qur’ān, Ḥadīth, and the sayings of the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) and Khulafā’. There is also an answer key at the end. Sprinkled along these pages are the humble prayers of your servants who have been entrusted with this mammoth task.

But why did we choose these topics for the experiment?

Let’s get real. These scenarios, in one way or the other, lurk around us. Whether you are socializing at work, strolling through a mall, or browsing online, the good men of Islām/Ahmadiyyat are confronted with the beautifully packaged evil of Satan. Some believe that we should not talk about these issues because they are too provocative. To them, I lovingly cite verses 24-30 of Sūrah Yousuf of the Holy Qur’ān. Others concede that nothing can be done about these issues, that it is too late, that this is “part of life.” And my loving response to them is, “All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing.”

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul Masīḥ V (may Allāh be his helper) has instructed us to make the Qur’ānic injunction, “Oh ye who believe, protect yourselves and your families from a fire...” the 2014 theme for Majlis Anṣārullāh, USA. The exercises in this handbook identify some of those social fires for us—the fires we need to protect our families from.

Compiling this handbook was harder than what I had anticipated. Thinking, writing, proof-reading, and finding the best Islāmic material was a tedious and risky job. And despite our best effort, you may find an occasional error somewhere. I seek yours and Allāh’s forgiveness for any such errors.

I am deeply thankful to Qā’idīn Ta‘līm, Tarbiyat, Ta‘līmūl Qur’ān, and Ishā‘at for their commitment. Nā’ib Qaid ‘Umūmī designed a beautiful jacket for this book and Nā’ib Ṣadr Ṣaff Dom spearheaded this project with an admirable spiritual tenacity. May Allāh be their reward.

Now the experiment is in your hands. I urge you to conduct these discussions with the etiquette of Majlis Shūrā: contribute your truth with humility, respect the authority of the chair, allow everyone to make their points, align your opinions with the words of Allāh and His representatives, not the other way around, and above all, seek His mercy with sincere prayers.

“Our Lord, do not punish us, if we forget or fall into error; and our Lord, lay not on us a responsibility as Thou didst lay upon those before us. Our Lord, burden us not with what we have not the strength to bear; and efface our *sins*, and grant us forgiveness and have mercy on us; Thou art our Master; so help us Thou against the disbelieving people.” (2:287)

Faheem Younus Qureshi
Serving, Majlis Anṣārullāh USA

**Dear Zu‘amā and Members of Majlis Anṣārullāh,
As-Salāmu ‘Alaikum Wa Raḥmatullāh,**

We would like to present this Ta‘līm and Tarbiyat handbook as a guideline for you to conduct your monthly meetings during the year 2014. Although, the goal of the monthly meetings is the same as always i.e., to increase our religious knowledge and grow spiritually, the proposed meeting format has an interactive component to allow larger Anṣār participation. Below, we wanted to provide answers to some of the questions about the proposed format and how to facilitate the interactive discussions.

What is being proposed: Each monthly meeting will revolve around a particular Tarbiyat topic related to some moral challenges we face in everyday life. Department of Ta‘līm-ul-Qur’ān has provided the Qur’ānic references on the topic while the Ta‘līm department has provided sayings of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him), the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) and Khulafā’. Please note that the selected topics or moral challenges do not necessarily apply to any one Nāṣir in particular but they will typically apply to someone in our circle of influence. Furthermore, the suggested meeting agenda emphasizes on interactive exercises so that we can all have a correct understanding of the relevant moral challenge and more Anṣār can participate in the meeting to share their wisdom as well as learn collectively.

Rationale behind the proposed meeting format: Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul Masīḥ (may Allāh be his helper) has emphasized in many of his recent Khuṭbāt that all Aḥmadīs should pay special attention to continue to self-analyze and make pious changes in themselves. Specifically Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul Masīḥ (may Allāh be his helper) has instructed members of Majlis Anṣārullāh to focus on the Qur’ānic injunction, “Protect yourself and your families from fire (66:7).” The choice of topics and the interactive discussions i.e., Tarbiyat exercises are focused on the first part, that is., "protect yourself" of that injunction.

How to lead the interactive discussions? We would request either Za‘īm or whomever he assigns should chair and moderate the interactive discussion part of the meeting. To make the interactive discussion more fruitful, it is suggested that we stick to the guidelines of our Nizām-i-Mushāwarat. The chair should allow everyone to contribute in an atmosphere of prayers and patience. While making comments to the point, every member should address the chair, avoid arguments, and should not feel offended if asked to stop by the chair. Also, if a member feels that his point is already made, he should remain silent in the interest of time and wait for the next opportunity to speak. It is also suggested that each Nāṣir reads the material once before coming to the meeting to make the discussion more fruitful.

In conclusion, as Sadr Sahib also mentioned in his message, the purpose of these discussion is not to challenge the words of Qur’ān, Ḥadīth, Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) and Khulafā’ but to align our behaviors with those words.

At the end, Majlis Ansarullah, USA takes full responsibility of any miscommunication or errors in this document. Our team welcomes any feedback on the new format and the choice of topics. We would especially request your feedback after you have conducted a couple of meetings and have gotten a better feel of the new format.

Requesting prayers,
Ta‘līm, Tarbiyat, and Ta‘līmul Qur’ān Team

Suggested Agenda for Anṣār Monthly Meeting

The suggested agenda is intended for a 75 minute meeting. However, members can adjust the time allocations based on local realities.

- 1) **Recitation of the Holy Qur'ān with Translation** **5 minutes**
(selected verses on particular topic – included in this handbook)
(Za'īm can assign this to Muntazim TuQ or someone who recites the HQ correctly)
 - 2) **Pledge** **2 minutes**
 - 3) **Introduction of the Topic of the Month** **3 minutes**
(included in this handbook)
(Za'īm could do this himself)
 - 4) **Ta'lim Material including Aḥādīth, Excerpts from the sayings/books of the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) or books/Khuṭbāt of Khulafā'** **10 minutes**
Ta'lim material – included in handbook. Please note that all Aḥādīth are either from The Words of Wisdom or from the Selected Sayings of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) of Islam.
(Za'īm could assign this to Muntazim Ta'lim or someone else)
 - 5) **Interactive Discussion using real life scenarios** **30 minutes**
(Tarbiyat exercises - included in the handbook)
(Za'īm could chair himself or assign his Muntazim Tarbiyat or someone else)
 - 6) **Open discussion/Questions** **5 minutes**
(Za'īm will entertain any question/comment in this segment. If there is no question, Za'īm will request Anṣār to relate any other real life scenario which they have encountered but not covered in the above segment)
(Za'īm could do it himself or also assign this to Muntazim Tarbiyat or anyone else)
 - 7) **Conclusion** **5 minutes**
In this segment, participants should return to the verses of the Holy Qur'ān and the religious guidelines provided in the beginning of the exercises to agree on the right answer and set goals for themselves, e.g., what changes would they make in their lifestyles or continue to follow the good practices which they have already been following. Anṣār could share some of their goals with each other.
(Answers to Tarbiyat exercises are available on page 49)
(Za'īm could lead this discussion himself)
 - 8) **Services** **15 minutes**
This is not included in the handbook. Each month, Za'īm will receive information about an aspect of a particular service provided by Majlis Anṣārullāh from the team of Mu'āwin Ṣadr to share with Anṣār brothers. Za'īm could share the information and give Anṣār brothers opportunity to ask questions.
 - 9) **Silent prayers**
-
- Total Time** **75 minutes**

Anṣār Monthly Meeting Topics

(Protecting ourselves and our families from fire - 66:7)

- 1) Let's get real about chastity and fidelity – Avoiding relationships outside of marriage
- 2) Let's get real about congregational Ṣalāt – The family that prays together stays together
- 3) Let's get real with our children – Communicating with our children about sensitive subjects
- 4) Let's get real about domestic harmony – How are we treating our wives
- 5) Let's get real about treating our elders - Are we giving respect to our elders which they deserve
- 6) Let's get real about speaking Urdu in the mosque - Is this a real problem or is it the complaint of a few?
- 7) Let's get real about honesty - A moral character that defines who we are
- 8) Let's get real about marrying our children - Are we dealing with marriage of our children in the best possible way?
- 9) Let's get real about our financial obligations – If donations are a measure of faith then how well do we measure up?
- 10) Let's get real about ego and self-esteem – Are we looking into fine traces of ego into ourselves?
- 11) Repeat of one of the above topics on which the Majlis' experience was the best. We have provided a total of 10 topics. One month will be Ramaḍān so regular monthly meeting will replace many other activities. Moreover, during the month of Jalsa Sālāna and National Ansar Ijtema, Anṣār monthly meeting is optional.

Topic 1: Let's get real about chastity and fidelity
(Avoiding relationships outside of marriage)

Introduction:

Today, we will discuss a moral challenge related to protecting our chastity and practicing 'lowering your gaze' in real spirit. There are many challenges living in this society where sometimes it becomes very difficult to analyze or deal with the situation thereby putting our chastity to risk. Although, many of us are grown up on strong religious grounds, still we can get caught in such situations where we have to decide between hurting someone's feelings and protecting our chastity. Today, we will discuss the guidance of the Holy Qur'an on this subject and learn what and why Allāh has warned us about 'lowering our gaze'. We will go through common scenarios and learn from each other regarding how we can protect our chastity within the society we live in.

Qur'ānic Guidance

<p>[24:31] Say to the believing men that they restrain their eyes and guard their private parts. That is purer for them. Surely, Allāh is well aware of what they do.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَعْضُوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا أَرْوَاجَهُمْ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ أَرْزَىٰ لَهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ ﴿٣١﴾</p>
<p>[5:6] This day all good things have been made lawful for you. And the food of the People of the Book is lawful for you, and your food is lawful for them. And <i>lawful for you are</i> chaste believing women and chaste women from among those who were given the Book before you, when you give them their dowries, contracting valid marriage and not committing fornication nor taking secret paramours. And whoever rejects the faith, his work has doubtless come to naught, and in the Hereafter he will be among the losers.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">أَلْيَوْمَ أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ الطَّيِّبَاتُ ۗ وَطَعَامُ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ حَلَلٌ لَّكُمْ ۗ وَطَعَامُكُمْ حَلَلٌ لَهُمْ ۗ وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ إِذَا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ مُحْصِنِينَ غَيْرَ مُسْفِحِينَ وَلَا مُتَّخِذِي أَخْدَانٍ ۗ وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِالْإِيمَانِ فَقَدْ حَبِطَ عَمَلُهُ ۗ وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَسِرِينَ ﴿٦﴾</p>

Religious Guidelines

Ḥadīth 1: *Ḥaḍrat Abū Amāma narrates that Prophet Muḥammad (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) stated that when a Muslim's eye catches the beauty of a woman and he lowers his eyes then Allāh gives him the ability to such worship that he tastes its sweetness. (Musnad Aḥmad Musnad Baqiul Anṣār)*

Ḥadīth 2: *Abū Raihana narrates that he was with Prophet Muḥammad (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) in one of the battles. One night he heard Prophet Muḥammad (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) saying that "Fire is forbidden on that eye that remained awake in Allāh's way and Fire is forbidden for that eye which shed the tears in fear of Allāh". And then there is this mentioned in this narration that fire is forbidden for that eye that gets lowered instead of seeing the forbidden things and it is forbidden on that eye that is gouged in the way of Allāh. (Sunan Dārimī, Kitābul Jihād)*

Ḥadīth 3: *A man shall never be alone with a woman except that the third party between them is Satan. (Tirmidhī)*

Excerpts from the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him):

God Almighty has not instructed us that we might freely gaze at women outside the prohibited degrees and might contemplate their beauty and observe all their movements in dancing etc. But that we should do so with pure looks. Nor have we been instructed to listen to the singing of these women and to lend ear to tales of their beauty, but that we should do so with a pure intent. We have been positively commanded not to look at their beauty, whether with pure intent or otherwise, nor to listen to their musical voices or to descriptions of their good looks, whether with pure intent or otherwise. We have been directed to eschew all this as we eschew carrion, so that we should not stumble. It is almost certain that our free glances would cause us to stumble sometime or the other.

*It does not behoove a pious person who desires to keep his heart pure that he should lift his eyes freely in every direction like an animal. It is necessary that such a one should cultivate the habit of *Ghaḍḍ al-Baṣar* in his social life. This is a blessed habit through which his natural impulses would be converted into a high moral quality without interfering with his social needs. This is the quality which is called chastity in Islām. (The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islām, pp 23-25)*

From the injunctions of the Holy Qur'ān and teachings of the Prophet Muḥammad (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) and the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him), it is made clear that both men and women are to conduct themselves with modesty and propriety at all times, and especially when in each other's presence. This teaching is based on the fact that Islām recognizes that "prevention is the better part of a cure." So segregation of the sexes is prescribed so that situations which cannot be controlled afterwards, are not allowed to develop in the first place. In this way, erosion of moral values can be prevented, and society is safeguarded from problems such as adultery, teenage pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases.

The Holy Qur'an requires that Muslim women dress modestly, cover their heads and wear an outer garment to conceal their beauty from strangers. However, you must understand that this physical covering is the only first step to developing Ḥijāb. The true and full observance of Ḥijāb/purdah is achieved when "veiling" extends to a man or woman's mind and heart. This means that one should veil or shield his/her mind and heart from impure and immoral thoughts when in contact with the opposite sex. One's thoughts, words and actions should reflect a sisterly love and respect towards fellow beings. This behavior leads to one's own moral uplift, and also creates an atmosphere where men and women, instead of resenting and degrading each other, treat each other with respect and understanding.

Tarbiyat Exercises

- 1) A Nāṣir is leaving work late at night. A female coworker is having car trouble and it is cold. She asks him for help. He gives her a ride home and she gives him an unexpected hug and at end as she is genuinely grateful. The next day she comes up to him and hugs him again, still being grateful. After that she repeats this a few times during the next few days. In this situation, what should that Nāṣir do?
- A) Try to walk away from her whenever he sees her and start to avoid her unless absolutely necessary
 - B) Approach her and explain that because of his obligations towards his faith, he would prefer not to receive hugs from her anymore.
 - C) Continue to accept hugs from her thinking if he stops her, it would hurt her feelings. After all, he does not see her that much on day to day basis.
 - D) Do something else.
- 2) A female colleague once comes to a Nāṣir's office and confides in him knowing that he is a gentleman. She tries to seek his help in resolving her personal family dispute with her husband. What should the Nāṣir do?
- A) Tell her that it is not appropriate for her to discuss any personal matters with him and strictly avoid any conversation with her on this topic or on any other personal matter.
 - B) He should listen to her and give her his best advice and ask her to avoid discussing the family matter with him in future. He should further advise her that she should try to resolve the matter herself with the help of a family member or a female colleague.
 - C) He should listen to her and give her his best advice and offer her unconditional help by telling her to feel free to discuss the matter or any other matter with him anytime in future
 - D) Should give her his best advice and go home and talk to his wife about this and tell her if she can also help her
 - E) Do something else
- 3) There is a Nāṣir who normally keeps his distance from female colleagues. He talks to them strictly about work. One day he has a big argument with his wife and is feeling very depressed when arriving at work. One of his female colleagues sees obvious signs of frustration on his face. She tries to sympathize with him and offers emotional support. What should the Nāṣir do?
- A) Open up his heart and discuss the details of his current and past arguments with his wife to vent his frustrations.
 - B) Thank her for asking. Mention that he had an argument with his wife and things would be OK later on.
 - C) Thank her for asking but tell her that he is having a bad day and need some time alone.
 - D) Do something else.

- 4) A Nāṣir and his your wife are invited to a non-Muslim friend's wedding. It is a full mixed social event. What should the Nāṣir do?
- A) Apologize for not making it at the last minute. Make up an excuse.
 - B) Go to the function, take his wife who is appropriately dressed in purdah. Refrain from hugs and handshakes
 - C) Go alone, apologize for her wife not coming. Have a good time and don't shake hands or hug the females unless they do first. Leave as early as possible
 - D) Send a nice gift card and decline the invitation explaining that it was an inappropriate gathering for a Muslim point of view.
 - E) Do something else
- 5) A Nāṣir is asked by a woman who just moved to his neighboring house to help carry something inside her house. The Nāṣir does not think twice as she is a neighbor and needs help. But once inside her house, she offers him a glass of water and seems to be in a mood to chit-chat. The Nāṣir accepts her offer for a glass of water and starts conversing with her in a casual mood. During the conversation, he finds out that she is a divorced mother of two and quite vulnerable because of her recent divorce. The Nāṣir spends about an hour with her learning about her as she seems to be very comfortable with the Nāṣir. Afterwards the Nāṣir feels bad about the whole incidence. What should he do now?
- A) Start praying earnestly, keep it to himself and avoid his neighbor as much as he can.
 - B) Start praying earnestly, tell his wife what happened and ask her to talk to her and provide her any support what she needs.
 - C) Start praying earnestly, but don't tell his wife and continue to offer his neighbor moral support or any other help whenever she needs.
 - D) Do something else

Note: Please refer to page 49 for the answers to Tarbiyat scenarios. Participants are encouraged to discuss and come up with their own responses before referring to page 49.

Topic 2: Let's get real about congregational Ṣalāt (The family that prays together stays together)

Introduction:

The Holy Quran repeatedly emphasizes the importance of congregational Ṣalāt. If we establish the habit of Ṣalāt in our families, then we will not worry about losing our children to the ills of the society. Today's exercises are about learning from each other various strategies which can help us establish congregational Ṣalāt either at home or at a Ṣalāt center/mosque.

Qur'ānic Guidance

<p>[22:42] Those who, if We establish them in the earth, will observe Prayer and pay the Zakāt and enjoin good and forbid evil. And with Allāh rests the final issue of all affairs.</p>	<p>الَّذِينَ إِن مَّكَّنَّاهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَمَرُوا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَنَهَوْا عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَلِلَّهِ عَاقِبَةُ الْأُمُورِ ﴿٤٢﴾</p>
<p>[2:239] Watch over Prayers, and the middle Prayer, and stand before Allāh submissively.</p>	<p>حَفِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوَسْطَىٰ وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ ﴿٢٣٩﴾</p>

Religious Guidelines

Ḥadīth 1: Abū Hurairah, may Allāh be pleased with him, narrates that the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said: Should I not tell you of something which if you practice, it will earn you Allāh's favor and by means of which Allāh will expunge your faults and elevate your rank? The companions said, 'O Prophet of Allāh, please do tell us'. The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him said, to perform the ablution thoroughly even though one may not feel like it: to walk to the mosque from a distant place: and, having offered one's Prayers, to await the next Prayer eagerly. (Muslim)

Ḥadīth 2: Ibn Umar, may Allāh be pleased with him, relates that the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said: Prayer (Ṣalāt) in congregation is twenty seven times more beneficent than Prayer performed by oneself. (Muslim)

Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) says:

Be aware, and in fact become good-hearted and humble in spirit. You shall be recognized by offering five daily Prayers and exhibiting good morals." (Majmū'ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 3, p. 48.)

Ḥaḍrat Muṣliḥ Mau'ūd (may Allāh be pleased with him) says:

The Muslims have usually forgotten the importance of offering Prayer in congregation, and it is the one major cause of their disunity and mutual differences. Allāh the Exalted has put lots of blessings in this act of worship. But unfortunately, the Muslims have ignored all of them. (Tafṣīr-i-Kabīr, vol.1, pp.104-106)

In my experience, I have not seen anything as effective as Prayer in congregation to do good and virtuous acts. The greatest thing for creating good morality is Prayer in congregation...I can also say on oath that regardless how wicked a person might be, if he offers his daily Prayers in congregation, he shall be reformed at the end. (Tafṣīr-i-Kabīr, vol. 7, p. 652)

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul Masīḥ IV (may Allāh shower His mercy on him) says:

"Actually, offering Prayers in congregation and to populate mosques come under the directive of "IQAMATUS ṢALĀT." And it needs to be emphasized to the maximum. It is proven by the traditions and sayings of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) that, without any legally acceptable excuse, there is no reason for the believing men to be absent from offer Prayer in congregation. Those who missed congregational Prayers of Fajr and 'Ishā', the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) called them hypocrites. He said to the extent that if it was permissible, I would have carried blocks of wood and put the houses of such persons on fire! (Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī, Kitābul Adhān, Bāb Fadlul Isha fil Jamā'ati)"

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul Masīḥ V (may Allāh strengthen his hands) says:

"To obtain dignity and receive the blessings of Khilāfat, the first and foremost condition is to establish congregational Prayer; because offering Prayer and worshipping God brings down the grace of Allāh to be absorbed. Therefore, every Aḥmadī must keep in mind that we will take advantage of the favor granted to us in the form of Khilāfat only when we will safeguard our daily Prayers."

(Khuṭbāt-i-Masroor, vol. 5, p. 151) (Daily Al-Faḍl, November 23, 2012, p. 1)

Tarbiyat Exercises

- 1) A Nāṣir has spoken to his family about offering congregational Ṣalāt at home two times a week or more. He has tried to get everyone together at the decided time of Ṣalāt but so far his plan is not working out. At the time of Ṣalāt, usually, someone is eating dinner and someone is doing homework or are busy with computer/TV. It is becoming difficult to do congregational Ṣalāt with everyone present at the decided time. He gathers everyone for a meeting to discuss about making it work by setting a time which suits everyone and also decides a dedicated place at home where the congregational Ṣalāt will be offered. What are some other possible strategies, he could have tried?
 - A) At Ṣalāt time, wait for everyone to finish homework or any other chore so that he could offer Ṣalāt with everyone present regardless of how late it is.
 - B) Call Adhān at Ṣalāt time. Wait for 5 minutes and begin prayers with whoever is there or by himself and remind the absentees to attend next time.
 - C) Agree that everyone will turn off all tech devices 5 minutes before Ṣalāt time - regardless of whether they are coming to prayers or not.
 - D) Try something different.

- 2) A Nāṣir regularly offers Ishā' Prayers with his family in congregation after coming back from work. He has two teenage boys and two younger girls. One day the Nāṣir has to be at work until late night so he cannot reach home before the regular time when they offer Ishā'. By the time he gets home that day, the younger kids are asleep. Wife has prayed with younger kids but teenagers have not yet prayed. They are doing homework or watching TV. What should the Nāṣir do?
 - A) Nāṣir should lead Ishā' Prayer with his teenage boys and let them go to bed before doing his dinner so that they can get up next day for Fajr.
 - B) Nāṣir should have asked one of the teenager to lead Prayer on time with his family without waiting for him so that their routine is not disturbed.
 - C) Nāṣir should have asked his wife to keep everyone up till he gets home regardless of how late it was so that they could all offer Ṣalāt together.
 - D) Do something else.

- 3) A Nāṣir with 3 young kids lives too far from the Mosque or a Ṣalāt Center to go for daily Prayers. During weekdays, he comes back home late and offer Maghrib and 'Ishā' Prayers together with his family. During weekends, sometimes, he goes to the Mosque with his family and avail the opportunity to offer Ṣalāt after Jama'at/auxiliary meetings. On weekends when there is no meeting, he often plans some fun trips with his family spending most of the time outside of their home. In this busy weekend schedule, they end up combining either Zuhr and 'Aṣr Prayers together and/or Maghrib and 'Ishā' together. Is there anything else he could try to teach his children that the five daily prayers should be offered on time?
 - A) He does not have any control on weekdays but on weekends, he should try to make plans around prayers so that he can offer most, if not all, prayers separately.
 - B) He should join Zuhr and 'Aṣr Prayer at Zuhr time and join Maghrib and 'Ishā' Prayer at 'Ishā' time so that he can find maximum time to plan outside trips with his family. He should verbally remind his kids that there are 4 prayers in addition to Fajr, but they are combining 2 at a time.
 - C) Regardless of where he is on weekends, he should offer prayers on time as well as ask his family to do the same.
 - D) Try something else

- 4) A Nāşir has 3 children – two college going and one in high school. All children and Nāşir’s wife live with him in a house which is not that far from the Mosque (or Şalāt center). However, the schedule of all 5 family members is quite hectic. Nāşir and his wife work full time and children work part time in addition to going to college/school. Their schedules are very busy and during any time of the day, not all of them are home at the same time. They can’t even have any meal together because of their busy and conflicting schedule. Could you give any suggestion to this Nāşir to help establish the habit of congregational Şalāt in his family.
- A) The Nāşir could start Fajr Prayer at home in congregation and try to offer Fajr with whomever is present. Slowly, others may begin to join as their schedules allow.
 - B) The Nāşir should make every effort to ask all his family members to schedule their activities/work to keep room to offer at least Friday prayer in the mosque.
 - C) The Nāşir should fix the time for at least one congregational Şalāt at home and request all family members to join him during that time whenever available.
 - D) The Nāşir should post the Şalāt timings of nearby Mosque (or Şalāt center) on the refrigerator and advise everyone who is present at home at the Şalāt time to go the Mosque (or Şalāt center) for congregational Prayer.
 - E) Try something else
- 5) This Nāşir is regular in five daily Prayers. However, his wife and children are not as regular. He has four children, all of them are grown up (two are in high school and two in college). The college going students live separately near their college and visit home on weekends only. What the Nāşir can do to bring his family’s attention towards being regular in five daily Prayers.
- A) The Nāşir could start congregational Prayer at home during weekends when his college going students visit home.
 - B) The Nāşir could remind his children and wife either in person or on phone to do their five daily prayers every day.
 - C) The Nāşir could start at least one Şalāt daily at home in congregation at a fixed time with whomever is available so that slowly they could develop the habit of offering Şalāt without reminding.
 - D) The Nāşir could bring one Adhān timing clock at home and place it in the living room and also gift it to his college going children as a constant reminder to offer Şalāt.
 - E) Try something else.

Note: Please refer to page 49 for the answers to Tarbiyat scenarios. Participants are encouraged to discuss and come up with their own responses before referring to page 49.

Topic 3: Let's get real with our children
(Communicating with our children about sensitive subjects)

Introduction:

There is no greater responsibility for us than passing on the beautiful teachings of Islām and Ahmadiyyat to our children. Setting a personal example for our children is by far the number one way to accomplish this. Communicating with our children in the most effective way is the next essential responsibility. In order to do that, we must first know our children, then empathize with them, and then we must develop the courage to communicate with them about real life moral challenges. The combination of love and guidance needed requires a special balance. Everyone has different styles of communication. The goal of today's discussion is to learn from each other to communicate with our children in most difficult situations.

Qur'ānic Guidance

<p>[3:135] Those who spend in prosperity and adversity, and those who suppress anger and pardon men; and Allāh loves those who do good.</p>	<p>الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ فِي السَّرَّاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَالْكُظُمِينَ الْغَيْظِ وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٣٥﴾</p>
<p>[20:133] And enjoin Prayer on thy people, and be constant therein. We ask thee not for provision; it is We that provide for thee. And the end is for righteousness</p>	<p>وَأْمُرْ أَهْلَكَ بِالصَّلَاةِ وَاصْطَبِرْ عَلَيْهَا لَا نَسْأَلُكَ رِزْقًا ۗ نَحْنُ نَرْزُقُكَ وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلتَّقْوَى ﴿١٣٦﴾</p>

Religious Guidelines

Ḥadīth 1: Anas Ibn Malik, may Allāh be pleased with him, relates that the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said: “Respect your children and give them good moral training.”

(Ibni Mājah)

Ḥadīth 2: Ayyūb ibn Mūsā, may Allāh be pleased with them, relates with reference to his father and grandfather that the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him said: “There is no better and superior present that a father can give to his children than cultivation of good morals.” (Tirmidhī)

Statement by the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him): I wish that, instead of punishing children, parents would have recourse to prayer, and should make it a habit to supplicate earnestly for their children; for supplications of parents on behalf of their children meet with special acceptance.

(*Malḡūzāt, vol 2, p4*)

Excerpts from the sermon delivered by Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul Masīḥ II (may Allāh be pleased with him) – Way of Seekers – Moral Training of Children:

1. Address a child politely and courteously, for a child is a great mimic. If you address him rudely, it will return the compliment in kind.
2. Do not lie to a child nor be peevish or arrogant with it. It will certainly imitate you. It is the parents who teach a child lying. The mother does something in the child's presence but denies having done it when asked by the father. Thus the child learns to lie.
3. Teach them to admit their mistakes, as a matter of habit. For this the following methods would be found helpful:
 - Do not try to hide your own mistakes before a child.
 - Be sympathetic when it commits a mistake. Let it feel that the mistake is a kind of loss it has suffered. Hence so much sympathy. Also let it feel that a particular mistake has resulted in a certain loss.
 - To guard against the repetition of a mistake, talk to the child in a manner that brings home to it the trouble its mistake has occasioned to the parents. They could, for instance, pay for the loss its mistake is supposed to have caused. This will make it realize that the result of damaging things is not good. The doctrine of atonement is not valid but the method is useful for the training of a child.
 - If you want to reprimand a child, do not do it before others; do it in privacy.

Excerpt from the Friday sermon delivered by Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul Masīḥ V (may Allāh be his helper) on December 13, 2013, Aspects of Self Reformation:

If the parents are righteous and observe the Ṣalāt and recite the Holy Qur’ān and live with each other in an atmosphere of love and affection and abhor falsehood, then the children, under their care and influence, will also be such as will adopt virtues. But if, on the contrary, lying, fighting and disputes, abusive talk of others in the house or of disrespect to others, not taking due regard of Jamā‘at affairs even, or other such bad actions; when the child sees these, then because of that tendency to copy or because of the impact of the environment the child learns these same bad things. Similarly the wrong deeds of the father leave an impress on the child’s brain and whatever wrong replies that the father gives, the child registers them in his or her brain. So the mother and father both, from the point of view the training of the child, if they are acting wrongly or doing wrong things they are taking the child in a wrong direction and imparting to him wrong education by their own actions. And when the child grows older he replies with these same types of answers. So if we want to carry out a real practical reformation of our future generations and our children so that the level of our practical reformation is high, then the parents will have to keep an eye on their own situation and actions also, and will need to have friendships with such people who are alright from their practical actions point of view.

Tarbiyat Exercises

1) Let's start with a quiz: Do you know your kids or grandkids?

Answer the following questions and if you think you know the answer for at least your unmarried kids or grandkids, give yourself one point for each answer you know. You will add up your points at the end to know your total score.

- 1) What are their favorite colors? _____
- 2) What is the name of their best friend or friends? _____
- 3) What are three music groups they like? _____
- 4) How many hours a day are they on the internet? _____
- 5) What is three of their favorite video games? _____
- 6) What is their favorite subject in school which is their least favorite? _____
- 7) What is their favorite TV show? _____
- 8) How much time do they spend out of the house with their friends in a week? _____
- 9) What is their favorite Sūrah to recite? _____
- 10) What is their favorite sports team? _____

Your score: _____

If you score above 50% you pass! If you fail, you should work on getting the passing grade in future.

2) A son, 12, asks his father one day that he needs a smart phone. He needs to communicate with his friends and also it would be useful for his educational purposes. What should father do?

- A) Father should show his anger on son's asking for a phone at such an early age and say to him straight that cell phones are not good for younger kids and he should wait for 2 more years before he can get a cell phone.
- B) Father should calmly listen to his son and have a dialogue with him about pros and cons about cell phones at such an early age. He should involve his wife in the decision making process and come to a joint decision between the three of them about his son having a cell phone or not.
- C) Father says, 'yes, son, I will get you the cell phone tomorrow'.
- D) Deal with it in a different way

3) A 16 year old daughter comes to his father and asks him to go to her senior Prom. Father is caught off guard as it has been an underlying rule that she would never go to a mixed social function/dance. She explains that she would go with her friend and wear her head covering. She would not dance or sit and chat with boys. She said it's a one-time opportunity that she doesn't want to miss. How should the father handle this?

- A) Empathize, but explain why it's a religious line she just can't cross.
- B) Trust her. She has always been good and told the truth. Let her go.
- C) Offer to be a chaperone at the dance or to have an older brother or sister go with her.
- D) Express that he is upset that she is putting him in this position she knows she can't go
- E) Something else.

- 4) A son comes home from his first semester of college. He is a bit withdrawn. He immediately wants to go out with his friends. He comes home much later than normal and goes to his room. He avoids saying Salaam to his parents. Father becomes worried that he might be struggling with alcohol at school. Perhaps he was even drinking that night. Father knows that he needs to approach his son. What is the best possible action father should take?
- 1) The father follows the son right up to his room and asks him what is wrong. He is frustrated. He asks him why he seems so different. The son says in an irritated way, “nothing is wrong”. The father says, “I don’t believe you”. The father immediately demands a report on activities at college.
 - 2) The father waits till the next day. Asks to sit with his son and catch up with him about school. After some chat he comes right out and says “are you struggling with alcohol at school?” The dad explains to son that it was hard for him to resist temptations in school and that he tried alcohol once. Only after that he found that it was not that what he thought it would be. He asks him straight out again if he also had a similar experience.
 - 3) Leaves him alone. It may push the son away from him. It’s better not to know or make the son feel bad. He has seen the dad’s good example and there is no point in pushing the issue with no proof that it is even a problem. Keep praying for him, and whenever get a chance in future, discusses with him in general about the hardships of early college life, being a Muslim.
 - 4) Try another approach.
- 5) A father is worried that his teenage son has a girlfriend because of his son’s secret phone calls in the evening times and also once a girl called the home number asking about the son. The dad also notices some dating sites being used by the son on his computer. The son has, in fact, met a girl he likes. They have started a secret but innocent relationship. The son is very conflicted. He really wants advice from his dad but they have never talked about this subject before. They are both afraid to broach the subject. Dad needs to make the first move. What is the best possible action Dad can take?
- A) Dad asks the son straight out who is that girl. Let him know about his suspicion and tell him that he saw those dating sites which he visited on his computer.
 - B) Dad sits down with his son and speaks with him in general about the tough outcomes of secret dating, or engaging in physical activity. He lets him know that he should talk to him if it becomes too much to deal with it. Dad trusts him to take it from there and doesn’t bring up any other issues. Dad keeps praying for the son.
 - C) Dad lashes out on son and tells him that he is grounded and his computer will be confiscated for one month because he went to inappropriate sites.
 - D) Use another approach.

Note: Please refer to page 49 for the answers to Tarbiyat scenarios. Participants are encouraged to discuss and come up with their own responses before referring to page 49.

**Topic 4: Let's get real about domestic harmony
(How are we treating our wives?)**

Introduction:

Study after study shows spousal abuse is rampant in our society. One in four women will be abused in their lifetime. Four million physical attacks and rapes occur annually by past or present partners. Men are victims of regular abuse as well. Millions of children witness this violence on daily basis. Sadly our Jama'at is not 100% immune from these social ills. Many of us know of at least one such incident involving verbal, emotional or physical abuse, committed by a man or a woman, within our social circles. The real tragedy is that such incidents typically occur in secret. Since this is an Ansar meeting, we will focus on what men can do to mitigate such situations.

Qur'ānic Guidance

<p>[4:20] O ye who believe! it is not lawful for you to inherit women against their will; nor should you detain them wrongfully that you may take away part of that which you have given them, except that they be guilty of a flagrant evil; and consort with them in kindness; and if you dislike them, it may be that you dislike a thing wherein Allah has placed much good.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَرِثُوا النِّسَاءَ كَرِهًا ۗ وَلَا تَعْضَلُوهُنَّ لِتَذْهَبُوا بِبَعْضِ مَا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَنَّ بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُّبِينَةٍ وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ فَإِنْ كَرِهْتُمُوهُنَّ فَعَسَى أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَيَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا ﴿٢٠﴾</p>
<p>[30:22] And <i>one</i> of His Signs <i>is this</i>, that He has created wives for you from among yourselves that you may find peace of mind in them, and He has put love and tenderness between you. In that surely are Signs for a people who reflect.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً ۗ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾</p>

Religious Guidelines

Ḥadīth 1: Abū Hurairah, may Allāh be pleased with him, relates that the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said: “The most perfect believers in respect of their faith are those whose behavior is most excellent and the best of you are those who behave best towards their wives.” (*Tirmidhī*)

Ḥadīth 2: Abdullah ibn Amr, may Allāh be pleased with him, relates that the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said: “The world is but a provision and none of the provisions of the world is better than a pious wife.” (*Ibni Mājah*)

Ḥadīth 3: Ibn Umar, may Allāh be pleased with him, relates that the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon, said: “The most disliked of all the lawful things in the sight of Allāh, the Almighty, the Exalted, is divorce.” (*Abū Dāwūd*)

Excerpts from the Life Sketch of the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) as stated in The Review of Religions December 1996:

The Promised Messiah's dealings with his own family were a beautiful example of gentleness and kindness. Those who had the occasion to observe closely his relations with his family, bear witness to the fact that he possessed the most excellent morals in this regard. The female servants of the house were often heard to remark that he 'accords the wishes of his wife,' which was a practice not commonly observed in other households. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) has himself commented that, 'It appears to me to be highly disgraceful that we being men should quarrel with women..... We should treat women with kindness and gentleness.

The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) was much opposed to the beating and rebuking of children. Quoting again from Ḥaḍrat Maulawī Abdul Karīm (may Allāh be pleased with him), “No matter how troublesome and naughty they are and however pressing may be their unreasonable demands and however much they may insist on having what is unprocurable, he never beats them or scolds them or shows any sign of anger.” Ḥaḍrat Maulawī Abdul Karīm (may Allāh be pleased with him) further states, “I have often seen that nothing annoys him as much as to hear that someone has beaten his child. A gentleman here one day beat his children, as a matter of habit. This greatly moved the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) who sent for him and delivered a highly touching discourse”.

Excerpts from the book “Ḥaḍrat Ammā Jān (may Allāh be pleased with her)”

In this society the Promised Messiah's (may peace be on him) partnership with Ḥaḍrat Ammā Jān (may Allāh be pleased with her) was truly revolutionary, because it showed that men and women should coexist harmoniously, with mutual respect and love. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) and Ḥaḍrat Ammā Jān (may Allāh be pleased with her) were a union of souls as well as bodies.

In their 24 years of marriage everyone close to them (including their children), commented that there was never a raised voice let alone an argument between husband and wife. Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad's (may Allāh be pleased with him) analogy of them as being “one heart beating in two chests.”

Ḥaḍrat Ammā Jān's (may Allāh be pleased with her) brother, Dr. Mir Muhammad Ismail who was very attached to his elder sister, also paid tribute to their harmonious union. Having observed their marriage right from its initial stages he states:

“As far as my memory serves me from childhood, I have never seen or heard the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) angry with Ḥaḍrat Ammā Jān (may Allāh be pleased with her). I have always seen their circumstances like an ideally matched couple. Very few husbands take as much care of their wives' emotions as the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) did.”

Tarbiyat Exercises

1) A Nāṣir is the sole earner for a family of five. One day he comes home tired, after working a 12-hours shift. While parking his car in the garage he notices that there is a big dent in the minivan which his wife drives. He becomes angry and as soon as he enters the house, he starts yelling at his wife. He speaks nonstop, “You have been driving for 15 years but still do not know how to drive correctly, I have told you hundreds of times that you need to drive carefully. I am sure you were thinking about your clothes and jewelry when you hit someone. Who is going to pay for this? Do you have any idea how much hard work is needed to earn these dollars. All what you know is to waste my hard earned dollars on your stupid clothes or unnecessary pieces of furniture”. He doesn’t even notice that his wife's neck is bruised by the accident she had. If you were that Nāṣir, how would you have reacted to such a situation?

- A) You would ask your wife if she is OK and if she or any of the kids were hurt in the accident before venting out your anger.
- B) You would ask what happened to the car before venting out your anger.
- C) You would not become angry and would ask your wife about what happened to the car, and based upon her answer, you would respond accordingly.
- D) You would be even harsher on the wife. After all, men are allowed to discipline their wives.
- E) Would do something else

2) A Nāṣir takes good care of his wife and children and makes sure that all of their needs are fulfilled. However, due to one incidence which happened five years ago, he has strictly forbidden his wife from keeping any connection with her relatives, including her parents. Neither her relatives can visit her nor is she allowed to visit them. She is not allowed to even speak to them on phone. The Nāṣir is so strict in his stance that he has threatened to divorce his wife if she violates this rule. Other than that, he is very kind and takes care of all the needs of his wife and kids. How would you feel about this situation?

- A) You would approve this behavior only if wife's relatives have done a great harm to the Nāṣir and his family.
- B) You would not go to that extreme as to forbid your wife from talking to or taking care of her parents.
- C) You would unconditionally approve this behavior. After all, the Nāṣir takes good care of family and provides for family so his wishes should be respected.
- D) Any other response

3) A Nāṣir is having a conversation with his wife on dinner table and gets involved in an argument with his wife. His wife questions something which makes him so angry that he slaps his wife. His wife goes to the bedroom. He realizes after a while that it was a mistake. Then he goes to his wife, apologizes, and promises not to hit her again. After a couple of weeks, he hits his wife again and again apologizes. He tells her that he cannot overcome his anger so she should be careful not to instigate him. If that Nāṣir were you, what would you have done?

- A) Try to curb your anger seeking Allah's help through Tahajud prayers
- B) You would go to a psychiatrist for counseling to manage your anger
- C) Tell your wife to call police next time when you do this
- D) Don't do anything, after all, according to the Qur’ān, you have a right to beat your wife
- E) Do something else

4) A Nāṣir has recently married his son in Pakistan. In first few months of marriage, he comes to know that his son is involved in domestic abuse. He has seen him getting angry at his wife and once his son slapped her in front of him. How the Nāṣir should deal with this situation?

- A) He should warn his son never to hit his wife or he would report him to police
- B) He would politely ask his son that he should try to avoid this in future
- C) He stays out of his son's business. After all, he is all grown up and an adult so he should handle his matters himself.
- D) He should talk to his son to try possible anger management therapies and also talk to his daughter in law from time to time to make sure that it does not happen again.
- D) Do something else

5) A Nāṣir's wife expresses her concern that the wife of an Āmilah member has been behaving distraught lately. She tells the Nāṣir (her husband) that this sister covers herself with stricter purdah garments even among ladies. Today when this Nāṣir's wife returns from Lajnah meeting, she tells him that she saw bruises on the neck and shoulder of that sister when she was helping in the kitchen. The Nāṣir's wife was very upset and asked the Nāṣir what he could do to help. What is that Nāṣir's moral obligation in this situation?

- A) Tell his wife that she should handle it herself
- B) Nāṣir should tell his wife that it is none of their business and they should avoid suspicion.
- C) The Nāṣir should ask his wife to pray intensely that Allah helps them to figure out the appropriate next step in this situation.
- D) Tell his wife to ask that sister what happened and try to get the "inside scoop."
- E) Do something else

Note: Please refer to page 49 for the answers to Tarbiyat scenarios. Participants are encouraged to discuss and come up with their own responses before referring to page 49.

Topic 5: Let's get real about treating our elders
(Are we giving respect to our elders which they deserve)

Introduction:

Our elders are our heritage. We ought to protect our heritage. We should treat our elders with respect and care what they deserve. Sometimes, in our fast pace lives, we neglect our duty towards our elders. In today's exercises, we will try to align our priorities towards our elders so that we become more aware of treating our elders with patience and kindness.

Qur'ānic Guidance

<p>[17:24] Thy Lord has commanded, “Worship none but Him, and <i>show</i> kindness to parents. If one of them or both of them attain old age with thee, never say unto them any word expressive of disgust nor reproach them, but address them with excellent speech.</p>	<p>وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا ۗ إِمَّا يَبُلُغَنَّ عِنْدَكَ الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَيْهِمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا آفٌ وَلَا تَنْهَرَهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا ﴿٢٤﴾</p>
<p>[2:84] And <i>remember the time</i> when We took a covenant from the children of Israel: ‘You shall worship <i>nothing</i> but Allāh and <i>show</i> kindness to parents ...</p>	<p>وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ لَا تَعْبُدُونَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ ۗ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا</p>

Religious Guidelines

Ḥadīth 1: Anas (may Allāh be pleased with him) relates that the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) said, if a youth honors an older person on account of his age, Allah will appoint someone who will honor him in his old age. *(Tirmidhi)*

Ḥadīth 2: Abū Hurairah (may Allāh be pleased with him) relates that the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) said “May he be disgraced, may he be disgraced, may he be disgraced.” “Who?” The Ṣaḥābah enquired. “The person whose parents, or any one of them, attain old-age during his life-time and he does not earn Paradise (by being kind-hearted and dutiful to them). *(Muslim)*

Summary of the Friday sermon by Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul Masīḥ V (may Allāh be his helper) on 1/16/04

The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) taught us that the reference to the word Miskīn (poor, needy) in Qur’ān (17:27) is also to be inferred to parents because 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 Uwais al-Qaranī, one of the only two individuals the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) sent his salaam to, the other being the Messiah. Uwais al-Qaranī 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 Uwais al-Qaranī’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 worshipped 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.

Incident from the Life of Promised Messiah (may peace be on him)

The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) instilled in his children great respect for their mother, recalling the saying of Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) that ‘paradise lay under the feet of mothers’. Once when his wife and her (wife's) mother had a disagreement and were both in tears, he took his wife and led her in front of her mother where she bowed her head, her mother immediately raised her daughter's head and embraced her. All annoyance was gone. (Sīratul-Mahdī)

Tarbiyat Exercises

- 1) There is an elder Nāṣir who has stopped coming almost completely. He has a daughter and grandkids. His son-in-law is not an active Jamaat member. The Za‘īm senses that there is a great need to offer help. What are some possible strategies Za‘īm could adopt to help.
 - A) Reach out to his daughter through Lajna Ṣadr and find out if there are issues she can't handle and whether she needs help with her elderly father.
 - B) Za‘īm could see the grandchildren on an occasion and ask them directly how their grandfather is doing. Get a sense of what is going on without intruding on their mother.
 - C) Za‘īm could pick up phone to talk to this elderly gentleman or visit him to find out what is the matter with him and then try to offer every possible help to bring him back to the meetings.
 - D) Do something else.

- 2) How important it is to visit and take care of our elders?
 - A) It is very important. We should adopt a policy of visiting elders and should not wait till it's too late.
 - B) We should not only visit our Jamā‘at elder members but each Nāṣir should also visit elderly near their homes or Mosque perhaps in a retirement home or hospital.
 - C) Za‘īm should request all ‘Āmilah members to sequentially visit all elderly members of our Jamā‘at so that no one is left behind.
 - D) Some other strategy/response

- 3) Your Jamā‘at has gone to a great effort to accommodate converts and second/third generation Aḥmadīs by making non-spicy food at meetings. Also, they try various kind of sports which do not include table tennis or cricket etc. They always speak English at the meetings and during refreshments. Things at mosque are fast paced. Kids are a bit wild. There is an elderly gentleman who feels uncomfortable and unwanted there. What would you do in such a situation?
 - A) Make sure he feels respected and cared for changing the food menu to his liking
 - B) Have someone sit with him and interpret during meetings
 - C) Go to his home and visit him from time to time
 - D) Isolate him further so that he stops coming to the meetings.
 - E) Try something else.

- 4) An elder Nāṣir is a devoted Aḥmadī. He attends Tablīgh programs and is excited to do Tablīgh. When he gets into discussions with visitors or clergy of other faiths, he becomes so passionate that the guests feel attacked. This often causes embarrassment. Even when converts have taken the Bai‘at, he still preaches to them. How would you handle this situation?
 - A) Talk with Tablīgh secretary and suggest that he sets up a special training for him.
 - B) Take it upon yourself to become closer to this elder. Offer to be a team with him during Tablīgh functions. Through example, demonstrate to him, a new way to converse.
 - C) Suggest that Jamā‘at Tablīgh Secretary or Jamā‘at Ṣadr give him a different responsibility at Tablīgh functions which is more in line with his strengths.
 - D) Completely bar this person from attending any Tablīgh functions for damage control.
 - E) Try something else.

- 5) There is an elder who feels compelled to interrupt and make corrections all the time. He causes some frustration to those younger Anṣār or converts who are trying their best in learning the recitation of the Holy Qurʾān and are trying to be up to speed on many Urdu and Arabic terms related to Niẓām-i-Jamāʿat. It has become a distraction for many of younger Anṣār and new converts. How should a younger Nāṣir or a convert handle such a situation?
- A) Set an example for other younger Anṣār by accepting his elderly gentleman's behavior with patience. Treating elders with respect is a very important part of the faith.
 - B) After the meeting, speak directly to the elderly gentleman and explain that he is hurting the confidence of young speakers by interrupting in front of others. Let him know that you believe his intention is good but it's got to stop
 - C) Go to his Zaʿīm and explain that the gentleman's interruptions are really causing stressful feelings. Ask the Zaʿīm to speak with him but also suggest that maybe he be given a small role to help one or two people with their recitation of the Holy Qurʾan.
 - D) Do something else.

Final Exercise:

We should all visit one elderly person in our Jamāʿat or outside of Jamāʿat. Please share these experiences locally or send it forward to national Tarbiyat department.

Note: Please refer to page 49 for the answers to Tarbiyat scenarios. Participants are encouraged to discuss and come up with their own responses before referring to page 49.

Topic 6: Let's get real about speaking Urdu in the Mosque

(Is this a real problem or is it the complaint of a few?)

Introduction:

The Khalifatul Masih V (may Allāh be his helper) has instructed us many times that we should conduct the meetings in local language. Do we really understand the rationale behind Ḥudūr's (may Allāh be his helper) instructions and are we implementing it in our meetings or not? Are there any negative consequences of violating this instruction or it is just a complaint of a few? Should we limit ourselves to conduct the meetings in English and forget about speaking English in front of non-English speaking members as soon as the meeting is over? Today's discussion will help us answer these question and understand the pros and cons of this challenge.

Qur'ānic Guidance

<p>[16:126] Call unto the way of thy Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation, and argue with them in a way that is best. Surely, thy Lord knows best who has strayed from His way; and He knows those who are rightly guided.</p>	<p>أَدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ ۗ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴿١٢٦﴾</p>
<p>[3:104] And hold fast, all together, by the rope of Allāh and be not divided; and remember the favor of Allāh which He bestowed upon you when you were enemies and He united your hearts in love, so that by His grace you became <i>as</i> brothers; and you were on the brink of a pit of fire and He saved you from it. Thus does Allāh explain to you His commandments that you may be guided.</p>	<p>وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا ۗ وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا ۗ وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَىٰ شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِنَ النَّارِ فَأَنْقَذَكُمْ مِنْهَا ۗ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٠٤﴾</p>

Religious Guidelines

Ḥadīth: Ibn Mas'ud, may Allāh be pleased with him, relates that the Holy Prophet peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said: "Where there are three of you, two should not converse separately, excluding the third, till the number increases, lest the third should be hurt." *(Muslim)*

Directions of Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul Masīḥ V (may Allāh be his helper) given to Jamā'at members in a Friday sermon delivered on November 8, 2013.

I have received some complaints in this regard that meetings are conducted in Urdu and the Japanese members do not understand the proceedings. Urdu translation should be provided for those who do not know Japanese rather than the other way around and Japanese Aḥmadīs should be fully involved in all programs and should be asked to make speeches and asked to serve in other ways.

Directions of Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul Masīḥ IV (may Allāh shower His mercy on him) about the language spoken in formal meetings of the Jamā'at given in response to the question raised by a lady in Canada during question/answer session:

Essence of instructions is that the language of the formal Jamā'at meetings should be in the language of the country. For detail answer, members are encouraged to listen the audio file. This is the recording of a question regarding what is the preferred language to conduct meetings. Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul Masīḥ IV (may Allāh shower His mercy on him) answered this question in detail.

Question: Why are the local official meetings of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community conducted in English and not Urdu, since conducting them in Urdu would allow the young children to learn the language?

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul Masīḥ IV (may Allāh shower His mercy on him) answers this question. Please listen to the audio file attached.

Here is the link, if you have access to the internet:

http://www2.alislam.org/askislam/mp3/MEI_19910701_07.mp3

Respected Za'im, please make sure that you have access to the actual audio. This audio file is about 20 minutes long. First 10 minutes and last 2 minutes are very relevant to the interactive discussion on today's topic. Also, it is advised that all Anṣār can hear this before coming to the meeting so that they can spend time on interactive exercises in the light of the instructions of the Khulafā'.

Tarbiyat Exercises

1) Anṣār meeting is going to start and Za‘īm notices that everyone present that day can understand Urdu. Respected Za‘īm announces that he would conduct the meeting in Urdu. A Nāṣir objects and following dialogue takes place between that Nāṣir and Za‘īm.

Nāṣir: It is not a good idea to conduct the meeting in Urdu because Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul Masīḥ’s V (may Allāh be his helper) clear instructions are that we ought to conduct meeting in local language which is English in our case.

Za‘īm: I agree but the intention behind Ḥuḍūr’s (may Allāh be his helper) instruction is to benefit those who do not understand Urdu but today none of such persons is present in the meeting, so it is OK to conduct the meeting in Urdu.

Nāṣir: It is not OK because we need to understand the broader picture behind Ḥuḍūr’s (may Allāh be his helper) instruction. It is not only for the benefit of understanding the meeting but rather to raise awareness in us that we need to feel comfortable in the local language and use that as a preferred language in our religious and social events so that we can strengthen the bonds of brotherhood with the locals, and in our case, with our English speaking Aḥmadī Muslim brothers. If we do not get into habit of using the English language and only use it when we have to, then we are risking alienation of many of them.

Whose point of view will you endorse, Za‘īm’s or the Nāṣir’s?

- A) Za‘īm
- B) Nāṣir
- C) No one, my take is this

2) In a medium sized Aḥmadī Muslim Mosque, right after Jamā‘at meeting, lunch is in progress. On men's side there are about 30 Anṣār/Khuddām, enjoying a nice Pakistani style meal. They are mainly sitting in three round circles. The biggest circle consists of mainly Pakistani Anṣār who are sharing Punjabi jokes and discussing Pakistani politics in Urdu-Panjabi mix while enjoying their food. The second small circle is a few younger Khuddām along with a couple of English speaking Anṣār who are involved in a discussion on role of social media in recent Presidential elections. The third small circle contains a few African American brothers who are talking in their local language about Ḥuḍūr’s (may Allāh be his helper) last visit to Ghana.

The three groups are so much involved in their discussions that they don't even realize the presence of other groups around them. As an impartial Nāṣir, what would you advise them?

- A) No advice needed because all of them seem to have fun and this is social hour in which they are supposed to lighten up and enjoy.
- B) You would advise them that it is a good idea to choose a common theme of discussion and make one big group so that you all can develop a bond of brotherhood with each other
- C) You would advise all the groups to conduct the conversation in English language so that a person can switch from one group to another group if he chooses to.
- D) Advise something else

3) A Nāṣir recently moved from Pakistan who has 3 kids from ages 6 to 12. During his first month, he diligently attended Jamā‘at meetings including Anṣār meeting. His kids also attended MKA meeting.

During his second Jamā‘at meeting, he raised a concern to the President of the Jamā‘at, He said, “I have attended both Jamā‘at and Auxiliary meetings during last month which were very good but they were totally in English language. I also noticed all of you speak English even during the refreshment time in spite of the fact that many of you know Urdu. My concern is that if we continue to do that, our kids will slowly forget Urdu and will not be able to learn it. Many of the Promised Messiah’s (may peace be on him) books are in Urdu so we should promote Urdu by speaking Urdu during our meetings and social gatherings so that they can stay in touch with Urdu. Besides, Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) always deliver Khuṭbah in Urdu so we should follow his example.”

President Ṣāhib responded, “Ḥuḍūr (may Allāh be his helper) has certainly advised us that we should do special efforts to teach our children Urdu but he has also advised us that we should strictly use English language to conduct our meetings. These two are distinct instructions and have two separate objectives. Teaching Urdu to our children has an objective what you stated and you should try to teach Urdu to your kids at home by speaking with them in Urdu and also they should listen to Urdu programs on MTA to stay in touch with Urdu. However, during the meetings and our social gatherings, this is important that we speak in English so that we don’t leave anyone out and can create true bond of brotherhood among Aḥmadī Muslims of all nations. Besides, if we do not become comfortable in English, then we cannot perform the task of Tablīgh very well. That is why, when we get together in the Mosque, we try to speak in English so that we can create a bond of true love and brotherhood among all brothers and not just among Pakistani Aḥmadīs. That is also the reason, that in our social gatherings, we speak in English because all of us are present in those gatherings as well.”

Would you agree with President’s response and why?

- A) You would agree with President’s response.
- B) You would disagree with President’s response
- C) Have a totally different opinion?

Note: Please refer to page 49 for the answers to Tarbiyat scenarios. Participants are encouraged to discuss and come up with their own responses before referring to page 49.

Topic 7: Let’s get real about honesty
(The single most important moral character which defines who we are)

Introduction:

Honesty is among a few beautiful human qualities that Allāh loves the most. Although, better than many other countries, we live in a society where dishonesty is a way of life. Corporate, political, family, and individual dishonesty is prevailing in one form or the other as a means to gain material goods, respect and acceptance. Our level of honesty directly reflects the depth of belief in Allāh Almighty. If He exists in REAL, we should not worry what men think but only what Allāh thinks. Being Aḥmadī Muslims, we must uphold the highest standards of honesty in our everyday decision making process. Honesty is the best Tablīgh possible without saying a word. It is in fact what the prophet Muhammad (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) was known for and did throughout his life. Let's pray that Allāh Ta'ala enables us to stay firm on this quality to its highest standards.

Qur'ānic Guidance

<p>[5:120] Allāh will say, 'This is a day when <i>only</i> the truthful shall profit by their truthfulness. For them are Gardens beneath which streams flow; therein shall they abide forever. Allāh is well pleased with them, and they are well pleased with Him; that indeed is the great.</p>	<p>قَالَ اللَّهُ هَذَا يَوْمٌ يَنْفَعُ الصَّادِقِينَ صِدْقُهُمْ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿١٢٠﴾</p>
<p>[3:162] And it is not possible for a Prophet to act dishonestly, and whoever acts dishonestly shall bring <i>with him</i> that about which he has been dishonest, on the Day of Resurrection. Then shall every soul be fully paid what it has earned; and they shall not be wronged.</p>	<p>وَمَا كَانَ لِنَبِيٍّ أَنْ يَغُلَّ وَمَنْ يَغُلْ يَأْتِ بِمَا غُلَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ثُمَّ تُوْفَى كُلُّ نَفْسٍ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿١٦٢﴾</p>

Religious Guidelines

Ḥadīth 1: Abū Bakrah (may Allāh be pleased with him) relates that the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) said: Shall I tell you what are major sins? We said: Certainly, Messenger of Allāh. He said: Association of others with Allāh; disobedience of parents. He had been leaning on a pillow, suddenly he sat up, and said, and telling a lie or giving false evidence. He repeated saying this last one so many times that we wished he would stop. *(Bukhārī)*

Ḥadīth 2: Abū Hurairah, may Allāh be pleased with him, relates that the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said: It is enough to make a person a liar that he should go on repeating all that he might hear. *(Muslim)*

Excerpt from the Friday Sermon dated June 21, 2013 of Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul Masīḥ V (may Allāh be his helper):

The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) wrote: “Qaul-i-Sadīd (the right word) entails uttering what is completely true and appropriate and has no hint of randomness, uselessness and falsehood.” “O’ you who believe, fear God and say what is based on truth, honesty, fairness and wisdom.” “Do not talk randomly and speak at the right time and place.”

The above statements [of the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him)] make it clear that Taqwā is attained when truth is upheld in every situation, in times of difficulty or ease; be it when arriving at a decision when in a decision-making capacity, at the time of giving testimony, at home with wife and children, with friends and family, in business while selling or buying and with one’s employer. In daily matters and exchanges everything should be completely truthful and without ambiguity, which may not lead the other to random interpretation. One should be truthful even if it goes against one. Some people think that a little falsifying in every day matters does not matter. God states, it matters. Such practices lower the standard of Taqwā, leads one to falsehood and distant from God or is rejected by God. True believers stay firm on Qaul-i-Sadīd (the right word).

The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) said regarding honesty: ‘Fact is that insight is a good thing, it gives man an inherent understanding about another’s honesty. There is courage and valor in honesty while a liar is a coward. One whose life is embroiled in impurity and foulness is always frightened and cannot compete. He cannot express his honesty with courage and valor like a truthful person can and cannot give evidence of his purity. *(Translated from Malfūzāt, Vol. 10, p. 252)*

Excerpt from The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islām: The second quality in the context of the discarding of evil is the one known as honesty or integrity, that is to say, intolerance of the causing of harm to a fellow being by taking possession of his property dishonestly or unlawfully. Integrity is one of the natural conditions of man. That is why an infant, who follows his natural bent and who has not yet acquired any bad habit, so much dislikes anything belonging to another that it can only be persuaded with difficulty to be suckled by a wet nurse. If a wet nurse is not appointed for it while it is quite small and has not yet developed a keen consciousness. It becomes very difficult for a wet nurse to suckle it. It is naturally disinclined to be suckled by a woman other than its mother. This disinclination sometimes imposes great suffering upon it, and in extreme cases pushes it to the brink of death. What is the secret of this disinclination? It is that it naturally dislikes to leave its mother and to turn to something that belongs to another. When we reflect deeply upon this habit of an infant it becomes clear that this habit is at the root of all honesty and integrity. No one can be credited with the quality of integrity unless his heart becomes charged with dislike and hatred of the property of another as is the case with an infant.

Tarbiyat Exercises

- 1) A Nāṣir meets with his accountant at tax time. The accountant shows him a loophole to save significant money in his taxes. The accountant expresses that if he gets audited, he may get hit for more taxes as it's not a totally legal loophole. The accountant explains that his clients have never gotten caught with this angle before. Besides, he explains, that chances of getting audited in this income bracket is very minimal. The Nāṣir does not politically agree with the tax system but nevertheless he knows it is unavoidable. What should the Nāṣir do?
 - A) Decide not to try the loophole, it is purely dishonest?
 - B) Try it...it's part of the tax game and very common practice
 - C) Try something else

- 2) A Nāṣir is a mortgage broker. He is finalizing a loan for a couple. After a long process he gets the approval. On his final meeting with the couple they show up in a brand new car. They express that they got a great no-money-down finance deal on that car. The Nāṣir (mortgage broker) knows it is too soon to appear on their credit report. But if it did, it would probably kill the loan. It is a huge bank he is dealing with and a really nice couple. Getting the loan to the couple will not hurt the bank but it may be against the moral obligations of a mortgage broker. What should the Nāṣir do?
 - A) Be honest with the bank tell them that their debt load was increased.
 - B) Let things be. He is not responsible for the outcome, his job is to connect the buyers with the bank and feed his family.
 - C) Tell the buyers that he will not be dishonest. If they can prove to him that they can handle the debt he will plead their case. If not they will have to use someone else.
 - D) Try a different approach

- 3) There is a Nāṣir who is a general practitioner. The daughter of a close Aḥmadī Muslim friend comes to his office for a physical exam, and blood work etc., for her new job. She is over 18. During the process the Aḥmadī Muslim doctor discovers that she has illegal drugs in her blood stream. Next time when the Nāṣir sees his doctor friend, he asks him, "How did everything go?" How should the doctor respond and what should he do?
 - A) He just says that confidentiality is critical in his field. Tell him maybe he should ask her. She is over 18 and a legal adult.
 - B) Tell him the truth with good intention about what was found. It is incredibly important for him to know in this situation to take any corrective actions.
 - C) Just say "it went ok" in order to keep peace among everyone.
 - D) Do something else.

- 4) A Nāṣir has been struggling with his relationship with a college going son. During a heated discussion with his son who gets upset and tells his father that he shouldn't be expected to live a perfect and unrealistic life. He also asks his father if he ever got tempted to do something

inappropriate and got involved in trouble at his age. Although, the father has always showed his son a solid example of himself as a perfect moral character, in fact, when the father was young, he did go through a period of partying and indiscretions at college. It was hard time for him as well which led to some difficulty early in his marriage. In these circumstances, what should be the father's best response to his son's question?

- A) Don't acknowledge the past. It will only confuse the son and he will think less of the father and question Islām
 - B) Father tells him in general terms how hard it was to make things right and that he would never want his son to repeat those mistakes.
 - C) Explain in a nice way that his past history is not relevant to his life one way or the other. Explain that he has tried to do everything to make his son's life wholesome and comfortable, demanding respect.
 - D) Do something else.
- 5) An Aḥmadī Muslim grandfather is very close to his grandchildren. One of his granddaughters is an outstanding high school student looking to get into a good college. She is struggling in one of her classes in the final year of high school. The final research paper is falling apart and it is a major part of her grade. The grandfather has been counseling her but in the end he just kicks in and writes the complete paper himself. She turns it in and maximizes her chances to get and an excellent grade which will increase her chances to get in the college of her choice. At high school graduation ceremony her teacher approaches the grandfather and tells him that he should be proud of his granddaughter saying how his granddaughter really pulled it off an excellent paper. What should the grandfather do at this point?
- A) Tell the teacher he wrote the paper because she was an excellent student and was stuck at this time so he wanted to help her. Ask the teacher to please consider all factors and be lenient in grade.
 - B) He should thank the teacher and not say anything. A grandfather's place is to come through in a situation like this especially with a good student when a lot is at risk.
 - C) He should have left it up to his daughter to handle it to begin with. Perhaps she could turn in her best draft or she would turn it in late and deal with the consequences.
 - D) Do something else.

Note: Please refer to page 49 for the answers to Tarbiyat scenarios. Participants are encouraged to discuss and come up with their own responses before referring to page 49.

**Topic 8: Let's get real about marriage of our children
(Are we dealing with marriage of our children in the best possible way?)**

Introduction:

Marrying our children to Ahmadi Muslims is our priority. Some of us are worried about our daughters not getting married and some of us are worried about our sons not prepared for marriage even in their thirties. Should we start talking to our children about marriage at an early age or wait until they reach maturity. And when they reach to marriageable age, what should we look into a good proposal? All these questions are on our minds and we may have many answers to these questions. Let's discuss these questions through today's scenarios and try to learn from each other in the light of Islamic teachings.

Qur'ānic Guidance

<p>[25:75] And those who say, 'Our Lord, grant us of our wives and children the delight of <i>our</i> eyes, and make us a model for the righteous</p>	<p>وَالَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا وَدُرِّيتِنَا أَقْرَبَةً وَاجْتَنِبْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا ﴿٧٥﴾</p>
<p>[2:222] And marry not idolatrous women until they believe; even a believing bond-woman is better than an idolatress, although she may <i>highly</i> please you. And give not <i>believing women</i> in marriage to idolaters until they believe; <i>even</i> a believing slave is better than an idolater, although he may <i>highly</i> please you. These call to the Fire, but Allāh calls to Heaven and to forgiveness by His command. And He makes His Signs clear to the people that they may remember.</p>	<p>وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ حَتَّىٰ يُؤْمِنُوْا وَلَا مَمْلُوْةً مُّؤْمِنَةً خَيْرٌ مِّنْ مُّشْرِكَةٍ وَّلَوْ أَعَجَبْتُمْ۟هَا وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ حَتَّىٰ يُؤْمِنُوْا ۗ وَلَعَبْدٌ مُّؤْمِنٌ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ مُّشْرِكٍ وَّلَوْ أَعَجَبَكُمْ ۗ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ يَدْعُوْنَ إِلَى النَّارِ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ يَدْعُوْا إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ وَالْمَغْفِرَةِ بِإِذْنِهِ ۗ وَيُبَيِّنُ آيٰتِهِ لِّلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُوْنَ ﴿٢٢٢﴾</p>

Religious Guidelines

Ḥadīth 1: *“Marriage is my precept and my practice. Those who do not follow my practice are not of me.”* (Ibn Majah)

Ḥadīth 2: *Abu Hurairah, Allah be pleased with him, relates that the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him said, Usually one marries a woman for four reasons: For her wealth, for her family, for her beauty or for her righteousness. Give preference to the one who is righteous. May you remain humble.* (Bukhari)

Ḥadīth 3: *If a boy is born in the house of a person, he should give him a good name, teach him manners, and arrange for his Nikāḥ when he grows up. And if he does not arrange his Nikāḥ when he grows up, and the boy commits some form of sin, then his sin shall be the responsibility of his father.* (Baihaqi)

Purpose of Marriage in Islām

Allāh has enjoined marriage for the believers for three basic reasons. They are:

1. To enable a man and a woman to live together and experience love and happiness, within Islāmīc law.
2. To produce children, and provide a stable and righteous environment for their upbringing.
3. To provide a legal union **which safeguards society from moral and social degradation.**
4. To widen the circle of relationships.

According to the Islāmīc point of view, marriage is not an ordinary combination of two opposite sexes, nor is it only to quench one's sexual desires. It is rather holy reunion of two inevitable life companions on whose virtues or vices lies the prosperity or the disaster of human society. Marriage in Islām means laying the foundation of a fabric from which emerges a benevolent and beneficial society and therefore it enjoins upon every Muslim to marry. The first thing in this respect is that what the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) has said: *O company of the youth! he who can afford to marry should marry, for it keeps the eyes cast down and keeps the man chaste; and he who cannot afford to marry should take to fasting for it will have a sobering effect upon him.*

Excerpts from the Friday Sermon delivered on January 19, 2001 by Ḥadīrat Khalīfatul Masīḥ IV (may Allāh shower His mercy on him):

“A question was presented that there is an Aḥmadī girl whose parents are non-Aḥmadī. The parents want her to marry a non-Aḥmadī and the girl wants to get married to an Aḥmadī. The parents insisted and in this dispute the age of the girl reached 22 years. In this era, the age of girls reaches up to thirty years or even thirty five, but at that time it was incomprehensible. It was written to the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) that she has gotten old and she has reached the age of twenty-two. The girl married an Aḥmadī without the permission of her parents out of agitation, whether the Nikāḥ was lawful or unlawful. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) said the Nikāḥ is lawful. In such cases an Aḥmadī becomes the guardian. If the guardian is appointed through the Khalīfah of the time or the Amīr Jamā‘at, then it is lawful.”

In the same sermon, Ḥudūr (may Allāh shower His mercy on him) said: “The parents of a boy do not care about his marriage even though the boy has reached the age of marriage and can support himself. They keep delaying in this matter saying, ‘Why does it matter for a boy?’ Why does it not matter for a boy? Boys should also get married quickly. My experience is that if marriages are done at an early age, then both the men and women stay youthful for a longer period of time.”

Tarbiyat Exercises

- 1) A father of a 12-year-old girl is having dinner with the family when his wife shares that her 19-year-old niece got engaged. Father inquires about the wedding plan and the wife explains that the wedding is scheduled for next summer. "Why did they engage her at such an early age? She will barely be a sophomore in college and already married" The father remarked and then continues, while looking at his daughter "We are certainly not going to put pressure of marriage on our daughter until she completes her medicine degree". Right away, mother counters his comment ". It is not easy to get good proposals these days. What they did makes sense. . She can continue her study after the marriage because her fiancé also wants to complete his Masters after the marriage". Who will you side with, father or mother?
- A) Father - because it is very crucial for girls to complete their studies before the marriage and also because father is preparing his daughter at early age that she should give preference to education over marriage.
- B) Mother - because she is right in getting daughters married at an early age especially in this society.
- C) Father or Mother for a different reason
- 2) Parents of a 24-year-old girl who is about to finish her Masters degree are trying to find a good match for her. The girl wants to marry her cousin who has a car mechanic diploma from a polytechnic institute and is working in a well-reputed car dealership. The mother knows her daughter's desire and one day she shares the information with her father who disagrees with daughter's choice. "I will never marry my educated daughter to a car mechanic" he said. The wife said, "we have seen the boy grow in front of our eyes and we know that he is very well connected with Jamā'at. Besides, we can always help him to start his own business after the marriage". The father continues to show reluctance. What should they do?
- A) They should respect their daughter's choice and marry her with her cousin.
- B) They should tell their daughter that they respect her choice but they know better. They want her to marry an educated professional who can support her in the best possible way.
- C) They should strictly tell their daughter that she should forget about her cousin and they will find a good match for her.
- D) Something else.
- 3) A 22-year-old female recent college graduate from a very active Ahmadi family is proposed by the family of a handsome 28-year-old doctor who is completing his fellowship in cardiology. The girl's mother is ready to say yes but her father is reluctant because he has never seen the boy in the masjid except Eid prayers. Father even enquired from the local Jamā'at president who confirmed his reservation and said the boy has not paid any Chandah in the last two years. The mother is still very adamant to accept the proposal but father is not agreeable. What should they do?
- A) They should reject the proposal. After all, this is important for the boy to be well connected with the Jamā'at.
- B) They should accept the proposal because the boy is well settled and it is hard to get proposals like this every day.
- C) They should tell the boy's parents their concerns and decide based on the response they get.
- D) Do something else
- 4) A young Ahmadi boy has finished his college degree and started a new job in a different state. His parents are trying to find a good match for him but he rejects every proposal. Finally, he reveals that

he likes an American Christian girl whom he wants to marry. Parents try their best but cannot seem to change his mind. Time is running out. What should parents do?

- A) Threaten the boy that if he marries this girl, they will sever all ties with him.
 - B) Tell him that he should ask this girl to sincerely accept Islām before marriage.
 - C) Accept your son's decision happily and marry him with this girl. After all, it is allowed in Islām to marry Christian girls.
 - D) Do something else.
- 5) A young Ahmadi Muslim girl is working in the city for the past one year. Her mother is desperately trying to find a match for her but she rejects every proposal, ultimately revealing that she would like to marry this non-Ahmadi Muslim colleague of hers. Parents try their best but their daughter threatens to leave the home and marry this man regardless. What should parents do?
- A) They should warn the daughter that they will sever all ties with her if she was to proceed with this marriage
 - B) They should happily marry their daughter to this non-Ahmadi Muslim boy. After all, he is Muslim.
 - C) They should sincerely try to convince the non-Ahmadi Muslim boy to accept the truth of the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him), wait for a year, and then allow her to marry him.
 - D) Do something else.

Note: Please refer to page 49 for the answers to Tarbiyat scenarios. Participants are encouraged to discuss and come up with their own responses before referring to page 49.

**Topic 9: Let's get real about our financial obligations
(If donations are a measure of faith then how we are measuring up?)**

Introduction:

What is the significance of financial obligations in Islām and what are the obligatory Chandah Jāt (donations) in our Jamā'at? How do we prioritize so many Chandah Jāt when we are trying to create a balance between giving in the name of Allāh and also to take care of our families? These are the questions which some of us face from time to time and today we will review the religious guidelines on this subject and also will go over some exercises to learn from each other to grasp the concept better.

Qur'ānic Guidance

<p>[2:272] If you give alms openly, it is well <i>and good</i>; but if you conceal them and give them to the poor, it is better for you; and He will remove from you <i>many</i> of your sins. And Allāh is aware of what you do.</p>	<p>إِنْ تَبَدَّوَالصَّدَقَاتِ فَنِعِمَّا هِيَ ؕ وَإِنْ تَخْفَوُهَا وَتُؤْتُوهَا الْفُقَرَاءَ فَهِيَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ؕ وَيَكْفِّرْ عَنْكُمْ مِّنْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ ؕ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ﴿٣٧﴾</p>
<p>[9:103] Take alms out of their wealth, so that thou mayest cleanse them and purify them thereby. And pray for them; thy Prayer is indeed a <i>source of</i> tranquility for them. And Allāh is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.</p>	<p>خُذْ مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ صَدَقَةً تُطَهِّرُهُمْ وَتُزَكِّيهِمْ بِهَا وَصَلِّ عَلَيْهِمْ ؕ إِنْ صَلَّوْتَكَ سَكُنَ لَّهُمْ ؕ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٠٣﴾</p>

Religious Guidelines

Ḥadīth 1: Abū Hurairah reported Allāh’s messenger as stating that Allāh the Almighty says: “Spend with an open heart, Allāh will spend upon thee. *(Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim)*

Ḥadīth 2: Each morning, two angels descend, one of them saying: ‘Allāh, bestow a (good) return upon the spender’; and the other saying: ‘Allāh, destroy the property of the miser. *(Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī)*

Ḥadīth 3: Whoever spends anything in the cause of Allāh, is rewarded seven hundred times more. *(Tirmidhī Babu Fadlul Nafqatu Fi Sabilillah)*

Excerpt from the books of the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him)

“O Well to do people of Islām! I convey to you the message that you should assist this Institution of reform, which has been established by Allāh Almighty, with all your heart, attention and sincerity. You must consider all the aspects of this institution with reverence and do quickly whatever you can do to help it. Whoever wishes to offer an amount each month, according to his means, should make it binding upon himself like a debt, and make his payment each month without fail. He should take this duty purely as an obligation to Allāh, and should not be late or slow in its payment. He who wishes to pay all at once can do so, but remember that the true method which will ensure the continuous progress of this movement is that people, who truly care about the faith, should make it binding upon themselves to pay a certain amount each month which they can give with ease and regularity, unless they are faced with unexpected circumstances. Of course, whoever has the means and the resources to give something, apart from his monthly pledge, is welcome to do so.

(Fath Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, volume 3, pp. 33-34)

It goes without saying, that you cannot love two things at the same time: it is not possible for you to love wealth as well as to love Allāh. You can love only one of them. Lucky is he who loves Allāh. If any of you loves Him and spends his/her wealth in His cause, I am certain that his/her wealth will increase more than that of others, for wealth doesn’t come by itself, rather it comes by Allāh’s will. Whoever parts with some of his wealth for the sake of Allāh, will surely get it back. But he who loves his wealth and doesn’t serve in the way of Allāh as he should, will surely lose his wealth. Do not ever imagine that your wealth comes of your own effort, no, it comes from Allāh, the Almighty. And do not ever imagine that you do a favour to Allāh or his Appointed One by offering your money or helping in any other way. Rather it is His favour upon you that he calls you to this service.

(Majmū‘ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 3, pp. 497-498)

One who neither promises to give anything nor tries to help this Movement in any other way, is a hypocrite and he will not remain in this movement. I will wait for three months after the publication of the announcement to see if each of my followers agrees to assist me with a certain amount each month. Anyone who does not respond during this period will be excluded from this Community. And if someone makes a pledge but fails to send his money for three months, he too shall be excluded. And henceforth no arrogant and heedless person who is of no assistance will be able to remain in the Community.

(Majmū‘ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 3, pp. 468-469)

Tarbiyat Exercises

- 1) A family in a Nāṣir's hometown loses their home to fire and is in dire need of money. Their home insurance is poor quality so they don't get any immediate help from the insurance company. One Nāṣir pitches in and donates a large sum of money to this family personally, jeopardizing his own finances for a couple of months. What should the Nāṣir do about his Jamā'at financial obligations (Obligatory Jamā'at Chandah)?
- He should pay some Chandah, and not stop completely, till he is back on track. After all, Allah is the best of the helpers
 - He should express his situation to his Jamā'at President and follow his advice.
 - He should not have helped this family and should have kept Jamā'at Chandah as the only priority
 - He should do something else
- 2) A Nāṣir is mentoring a new convert. The new convert has been paying his Chandah dutifully. He has been paying some towards Jalsah Sālānah fund as well in addition to Chandah 'Ām and Anṣār Chandah. He keeps getting requests by more and more people for Mosque fund, Taḥrīk Jadīd, Waqf Jadīd, and Ṣadaqah etc. He is getting confused as to how he is supposed to financially balance all this and what should be the exact order of priority of these donations. At the end he says to himself "obviously this covers my Zakāt, as well." The Nāṣir takes him to the Jamā'at Ṣadr to go over the exact list of priorities of all those required Chandah Jāt. What does Jamā'at Ṣadr or Secretary Finance should explain to him?
- Zakāt is optional but he must pay all other Chandah Jāt whenever asked
 - As a Muslim he must pay Zakāt first if it is applicable to him than there are obligatory Chandah Jāt ('Ām, Jalsah Sālānah, and Anṣār), and the rest he will have to pay.
 - He should pay Zakāt as well as pay something whenever a request is made. He will be blessed by paying more Chandah and will never be straitened.
 - Explains something else
- 3) A Nāṣir is approached by the Jamā'at Secretary Finance who requests that the Nāṣir lists his income on a form to help create a budget for the next year. The Nāṣir feels uncomfortable about sharing his income with other members. The Secretary Finance hands him the paper and asks him again. What would be the best response by this Nāṣir?
- Nāṣir should list his full accurate income as he is requested.
 - He should put down the income according to which he wants to pay Chandah and not his actual income as requested by Secretary Finance.
 - Nāṣir should explain that he does not feel comfortable sharing his income but he will continue to pay the best amount of Chandah he can.
 - He declines and expresses that he feels there needs to be a better way because the current "system" of asking people's income invades their privacy.
 - Any other response?
- 4) A Nāṣir has been blessed by Allāh and through hard work he makes an exceptional income. He struggles very hard to pay every mandatory and voluntary Chandah Jāt as well as Zakāt in addition to helping many, privately. It is a very large amount of money that he gives in Chandah and it is not

very easy for him to balance everything financially. Because of his obvious giving habits, people assume that he has an endless amount of money and therefore he is always approached for money for any new scheme or need. He has given everything he possibly can in a given year creating a balance between his spiritual devotion and the care and future of his family. Suddenly, he is asked in front of many other Aḥmadī brothers to donate for another Jamaat initiative. What should he do?

- A) He should thank the brother for providing him an opportunity to donate but tell him that he will talk to him in a little while. Then upon meeting him in private, he should tell him how fed up he is with these repeated requests
 - B) Offer to meet up with him later and upon meeting, offer whatever he can for the sake of participation.
 - C) Say thanks for asking and promise that he will try to help but then stalls long enough that the brother stops asking.
 - D) Suggests that he can help raise some money but he is not in a position to help at the moment.
 - E) Does something else
- 5) There is a hardworking Nāṣir in who tries to make ends meet. However, he is very punctual in paying his obligatory Chandah Jāt and also try to pay at least \$1 in any other voluntary financial campaigns e.g., a new Mosque fund or Waqf Jadīd and Tahrīk Jadīd whenever asked. At the 1st of each month, he pays his Chandah ‘Ām and Jalsah Sālānah according to the prescribed rates because to his knowledge these are the only obligatory Chandah Jāt. During one general meeting, when Za‘īm reminds all Anṣār to pay their Anṣār and Ijtimā’ Chandah, he pays \$1 for Anṣār and \$1 for Ijtimā’ Chandah according to his habit considering that these Chandah Jāt are voluntary. What should Za‘īm advise to that Nāṣir?
- A) Advise him to increase his Chandah as \$1 is not enough.
 - B) Remind the Nāṣir that Anṣār and Ijtimā’ Chandah are also, in a way, obligatory so he should pay according to the prescribed rate.
 - C) Don’t advise him anything. After all, he is a Chandah participant so he will be counted towards the national and Majlis’ goal of achieving a higher number of Chandah participants.
 - D) Advise something else

Final exercise: Please have the Anṣār and the Secretary Mal discuss their experience and their understanding of how to figure out Zakāt in this day and age. Try to come to a consensus.

Note: Please refer to page 49 for the answers to Tarbiyat scenarios. Participants are encouraged to discuss and come up with their own responses before referring to page 49.

**Topic 10: Let’s get real about ego and self-esteem
(Are we looking into fine traces of ego into ourselves?)**

Introduction:

Usually, self-esteem is considered a noble virtue, but if it grows to the extent that it makes us forget to do justice when we are in the position of authority and makes us disobey a simple instruction which otherwise, we would have simply obeyed, then it becomes a curse. Elevated self-esteem sometimes can make us stubborn and arrogant. Let's review Islāmic teachings on the subject and also we will go over some exercises to better analyze ourselves to avoid even the slightest traces of this vile.

Qur'ānic Guidance

<p>[17:38] And walk not in the earth haughtily, for thou canst not rend the earth, nor canst thou reach the mountains in height.</p>	<p>وَلَا تَمْشِ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا ۚ إِنَّكَ لَنْ تَخْرِقَ الْأَرْضَ وَلَنْ تَبْلُغَ الْجِبَالَ طُولًا ﴿٣٨﴾</p>
<p>[31:19] 'And turn not thy cheek away from men in pride nor walk in the earth haughtily; Surely, Allāh loves not any arrogant boaster.</p>	<p>وَلَا تُصَعِّرْ خَدَّكَ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَمْشِ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ ﴿١٩﴾</p>
<p>[12:54] 'And I do not hold my own self to be free from weakness; for, the soul is surely prone to enjoin evil, save that whereon my Lord has mercy. Surely, my Lord is Most Forgiving, Merciful.'</p>	<p>وَمَا أَبْرَأُ نَفْسِي ۚ إِنَّ النَّفْسَ لَأَبْرَأَةٌ لَا مَأْرَةَ بِالسُّوءِ إِلَّا مَا رَحِمَ رَبِّي ۗ إِنَّ رَبِّي غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٥٤﴾</p>

Religious Guidelines

Ḥadīth 1: Abū Hurairah, may Allāh be pleased with him, relates that the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said: One of you sees a mote in his brother's eye while he ignores beam in his own eye (One of you sees a minor defect in his brother while he ignores major defects in himself).
(*Al-Tarḡhib wa Tarḥīb*)

Ḥadīth 2: Abdullah bin Mas'ud, may Allāh be pleased with him, relates that the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said: He who has a jot of arrogance in his heart will not enter Paradise. Someone said, What about a person who likes to have beautiful clothes and beautiful shoes? The Prophet answered, Allāh is Beauty and He loves beauty. (One cannot be called arrogant if one beautifies oneself). Arrogance lies in the rejection of the truth and in looking down upon people.

(*Muslim*)

Excerpts from the books of the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him)

Everyone who looks down upon a brother because he esteems himself more learned, or wiser, or more proficient than him is arrogant, inasmuch as he does not esteem God as the Fountainhead of all intelligence and knowledge and deems himself as something. Has God not the power to afflict him with lunacy and to bestow upon his brother whom he accounts smaller in intelligence and knowledge and higher proficiency than him? So also he who, out of a mistaken conception of his wealth, or status, or dignity, looks down upon his brother, is arrogant because he forgets that his wealth, status and dignity were bestowed upon him by God. He is blind and does not realize that God has power to so afflict him that in a moment he might be reduced to the condition of the lowest of the low, and to bestow upon his brother whom he esteems low greater wealth than him. In the same way he who takes pride in his physical health, or is conceited of his beauty, or good looks, or strength, or might and bestows a scornful designation on his brother making fun of him and proclaims his physical defects is arrogant, for he is unaware of God Who has power to afflict him with such physical defects as to render him worse than his brother and to bless the latter so that his faculties should not suffer decline or be stultified over a long period, for He has power to do all that He wills. So he who is neglectful of Prayer on account of his dependence upon his faculties is arrogant for he has not recognized the Fountainhead of all power and strength and relies upon himself. Therefore, dear ones, keep all these admonitions in mind lest you should be accounted arrogant in the estimation of God Almighty unknowingly.

(*Nuzūlul Masīh, pp. 24-25*)

So shun every type of arrogance, whether generated by learning, wealth, status, caste, family or noble descent. These are the factors that give birth to arrogance. Until a person purifies himself of all such pride he cannot win Divine approval and become a chosen one of God. He is not bestowed such comprehension of the Divine as totally consumes the passions of self. Such pride is the characteristic of Satan and is displeasing to God. Satan manifested such pride, conceived that he was better than Adam and claimed: I am better than he. Thou hast created me of fire and him hast Thou created of clay (38: 77). The result was that he was rejected and was expelled from the presence of God.

(*Speeches, p. 19*)

Arrogance and mischief are evil. A slight mistake might destroy all the good achieved over many years. It is written of a holy man who dwelt in a mountain where no rain had fallen over a long period, that one day when rain fell over stones and rocks also, he felt that rain was needed by fields and gardens and that much of it which had fallen on stones and rocks had been wasted. It would have been of much greater benefit if it had fallen over cultivated fields. Thereupon God Almighty deprived him of all holiness. He became very sorrowful and sought help from another holy person and was told in the end that he had offended God because of his criticism of God's bounty

(*Malḡūzāt, Vol. VI, p. 57*)

Tarbiyat Exercises

- 1) A Za‘īm Majlis discusses with his ‘Āmilah how to achieve a certain departmental goal provided to him by the national ‘Āmilah. They brainstorm many good ideas and finally, choose the best possible idea as their plan to move forward. Za‘īm shares ‘Āmilah’s decision with all the Anṣār and request all to help out in achieving the goal. After the meeting, one man shares a great idea with the Za‘īm which can really help Anṣār achieve their goal in a much more efficient way. Although, it seems a perfect idea, Za‘īm is reluctant to entertain that idea. He completely tosses down the idea by saying, it is too late for them to change the plan now because the decision has been taken place. Instead of tossing down the idea, is there any other approach he could have adopted, as an example,
- A) Tell the man that he loves the idea and will tell his ‘Āmilah to change their original plan and work according to this new idea.
- B) Say Jazākumullāh to that man and tell him that he will share that with the ‘Āmilah to see if they want to entertain the idea and change their plans
- C) Za‘īm tells the man that he should not have proposed this idea because they have already decided a certain plan.
- D) Some other approach
- 2) During dinner, a high school student seeks his father's permission to attend a particular program offered by the school. Father had a bad day at work rejects the idea quickly. The son feels bad. Later that night, after taking some rest, the father reevaluates his son's proposal and sees no harm in it. But he sticks to his decision thinking that reversing the decision now will make him look weak and undermine his authority in the future. Will you endorse father’s earlier or later decision or both?
- A) Both decisions were wrong. He should not have come up with a decision in haste to begin with but later on, when he realized his mistake, he should have corrected it.
- B) His both decisions were right
- C) Any other answer
- 3) A Nāṣir feels strongly about a certain local initiative but his Za‘īm remains focused on other priorities. One day, after realizing the passion of the Nāṣir, Za‘īm finally allows him to carry out his project. Same night, Za‘īm receives a call from Ṣadr Majlis Ansarullah who asks his Majlis to focus elsewhere due to National priorities. Za‘īm then calls that Nāṣir and asks him to "forget about his project", and help him with the new project assigned to him by Ṣadr Majlis. The Nāṣir becomes angry on Za‘īm’s sudden reversal of decision on his long wished project. He expresses that if he is not allowed to carry out his favorite project, he won’t help the Za‘īm with any Jama‘at work in the future. What would have been a more appropriate course of action for the Za‘īm and the Nāṣir?
- A) Nāṣir’s behavior is not acceptable but Za‘īm could have kept the sensitivity of the Nāṣir in mind and asked him to first help him carry out the project assigned by Ṣadr Majlis before he could start his own project.
- B) Even though the Za‘īm did not handle the situation wisely, the Nāṣir should have obeyed. Threatening to stay on the sidelines in the future is against the spirit of our motto, "We are the helpers of Allah."
- C) Both were right. Za‘īm had no other option and the Nāṣir was hurt so was justified in his reaction.
- D) Any other suggestion?
- 4) Za‘īm Majlis makes an announcement in general Anṣār meeting and invites all Anṣār to think about ideas to achieve a certain departmental goal and share them with him or any of the ‘Āmilah members

by next week. A Nāşir feels very passionate about his idea and communicates very strongly to Za‘īm Şāhib and almost every other ‘Āmilah member about his proposed idea. He is very confident that his plan is a perfect solution. Next week, in the ‘Āmilah meeting, all possible plans are discussed and ‘Āmilah decides to go ahead with a particular plan which is not suggested by that passionate Nāşir. Upon finding about ‘Āmilah’s decision, that Nāşir becomes very disappointed and angry. He stops coming to the Mosque from then on and also starts telling everyone how inefficient their Majlis is which cannot even distinguish what is the right plan to achieve their goal. What would have been an appropriate course of action of that Nāşir?

- A) The Nāşir was right in his attitude because his solution was not selected. After all, he took time to communicate to the Respected Za‘īm and many ‘Āmilah members.
 - B) The Nāşir should have endorsed whatever plan was selected by ‘Āmilah and he should have shown obedience even though, he thought highly about his plan.
 - C) He was justified in not coming to the Mosque but should have avoided bad talk about ‘Āmilah.
 - D) He should not have thought so strongly about any plan to begin with as no one knows better than Allāh, and should have followed up with the plan decided by the ‘Āmilah.
 - E) Any other suggestion for the Nāşir?
- 5) During a wedding party, Za‘īm and few Anşār are enjoying a nice meal. A discussion starts on politics and upcoming elections. Everybody shares his viewpoints and a lively discussion takes place. During the discussion, a heated argument takes place between two Anşār because both of them are so passionate about their viewpoints which happen to be conflicting. The Za‘īm and some other Anşār try to calm them both and finally after the dessert, everyone leaves for home. After that incidence, they notice that one of those two Anşār stopped coming to the meetings. After the meeting, Za‘īm called that Nasir to find out the reason. He told the Za‘īm that he was angry and hurt because he felt insulted at the wedding ceremony when everyone tried to stop him from sharing his viewpoint. The Za‘īm tries to console him that it was nothing and he should forget about that incidence and should come to the next meeting. What should that Nāşir do?
- A) He should not attend the meetings unless Za‘īm and all other Anşār sitting on that wedding table apologize him and plead him to come to the meeting
 - B) He should not have missed the meeting to begin with and certainly he should come to the next meeting and never mention about that incidence again
 - C) He should come to the next meeting but should argue with the other Nāşir and make sure that he agrees with his viewpoint
 - D) Any other suggestion?

Note: Please refer to page 49 for the answers to Tarbiyat scenarios. Participants are encouraged to discuss and come up with their own responses before referring to page 49.

An Explanatory Note Regarding Interactive Tarbiyat Exercises

The Tarbiyat exercises have been designed to give Anṣār an opportunity to self-analyze and collectively learn from each other to be prepared to keep their everyday life decisions and actions according to the teachings of the Holy Qur’ān and Aḥādīth. It is important to note that the scenarios in the Tarbiyat exercises are not taken personally, however, living in America, some of our brothers are likely to face similar situations at some point in their life. Furthermore, the sole purpose of multiple responses given at the end of each scenario is to invoke healthy discussion. Some of the responses are according to the Islāmic teachings and some are not. In the following Table 1 those responses in each scenario which are according to the Islāmic teachings and instructions of Khulafā’ are listed. Please note that during the discussion, it is possible that some other responses can surface which could also be according to the Islāmic teachings depending upon a particular situation. In such situations, if there is a conflict of opinion arises during the discussion, it is advised that Za’īm can get clarification from the Ṣadr Majlis or respected missionaries.

Table 1: Valid Responses to the Tarbiyat Exercises

Topic	Scenarios	Responses according Islāmic Teachings
Topic 1: Let's get real about chastity and fidelity	1	B
	2	A and B
	3	C
	4	D
	5	B
Topic 2: Let's get real about Congregational Salat	1	B and C
	2	A and B
	3	A and C
	4	A, B, C and D
	5	A, B, C and D
Topic 3: Let's get real with our children	1	Quiz
	2	B
	3	A
	4	C
	5	B
Topic 4: Let's get real about domestic harmony	1	C
	2	B
	3	A, B
	4	A and D
	5	B and C
Topic 5: Let's get real about treating our elders	1	A, B and C
	2	A, B and C
	3	B and C
	4	A, B and C
	5	A, B and C
Topic 6: Let's get real about speaking Urdu in the Mosque	1	B
	2	A, B and C
	3	A
Topic 7: Let's Get Real about Honesty	1	A
	2	A and C
	3	A,
	4	B and C
	5	A and C
Topic 8: Let's get real about Marriage of our children	1	B
	2	A
	3	A and C
	4	B
	5	C
Topic 9: Let's get real about our Financial Obligations	1	A and B
	2	B and C
	3	A
	4	B
	5	A and B
Topic 10: Let's get real about ego and self-esteem	1	B
	2	A
	3	A and B
	4	B and D
	5	B

