

Remembering the Bounties of Allah: Condition of Ba'ait #3

TIME: 15 minutes

ARABIC

‘O ye who believe! bow down and prostrate yourselves in Prayer, and worship your Lord, and do good deeds that you may prosper.’ (The Holy Qur’an, 22:78)

In 1888 Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as) was commanded to accept the Bai’at – the oath of allegiance– from his followers. On January 12, 1889, he penned the purpose to which God now commissioned him:

“I have been commanded that the seekers after truth should enter into a covenant of Bai’at with me for the purpose of learning the way of true faith, true purity and the love of the Lord and of discarding an evil, slothful and disloyal life.

Therefore, those who perceive such strength in themselves should come forward to me. I shall be the sharer of their sorrows and shall try to lighten their burdens. God will bless them through my prayers and my attention towards them provided they are wholeheartedly ready to comply with the conditions of the covenant which are Divinely determined. “

The Third of those foundational conditions – the one related to our worship and inner growth – is what I aim to examine with you today. Namely that

“He/She shall regularly offer the five daily prayers in accordance with the commandments of God and the Holy Prophet (sa); and shall try his/her best to be regular in offering the *tahajjud* and invoking *durood* on the Holy Prophet(sa); and he/she shall make it his/her daily routine to ask forgiveness for his/her sins, to remember the bounties of God and to praise and glorify Him.”

In essence the Third Condition of Bai'at calls us to worship as an act of gratitude, remembering the bounties of Allah.

Let's unpack what is being asked of us here:

- *Salat*, establishing the five daily prayers
- *Tahajjud*; the best supererogatory worship
- *Durood*; sending salutations on Muhammad Rasullah (sa)
- *Istighfar*; seeking forgiveness for our shortcomings
- Shukr: gratitude; remembering the bounties of God
- *Zikr*; to praise and glorify Allah

These elements of Islamic worship are meant to bring about transformative progress in our lives.

SALAT: a most perfect way of worship

Hazrat Anas bin Malik(ra) reports that the Holy Prophet(sa) stated, “Salat is the delight and comfort of my eye.” (Tirmidhi)

Hazrat Ayesha (ra) observed that in salat the Holy Prophet (sa) would stand in qiyam for so long that his blessed feet would swell. She asked, “Why do you do this when Allah has already assured you salvation?”

The Prophet of Allah (sa) replied, “Should I not be a grateful servant of Allah?” (Bukhari)

Elaborating on the importance of prayer the Promised Messiah (as) states: “..prayer is that sovereign remedy which converts a handful of dust into precious metal. It is the water which washes out inner impurities. With such prayer the soul melts and, flowing like water, falls at the threshold of the Divine— standing before God, bowing down before God, and prostrating before Him. Indeed the Salat that Islam teaches is a reflection of such prayer.” (*Lecture Sialkot, Essence of Islam*, Vol.2, p.227)

(TAHAJJUD)

Once the obligatory prayers are given due priority, the third condition of Bai'at turns our attention to the best voluntary worship mentioned in Surah Bani Isra'il (17;80)

And offer tahajjud with the recitation of the Qur'an in a part of the night as a supererogatory service for thee. Very soon thy Lord will raise thee to an exalted station.

Hadrat Bilal (ra) narrates that the Prophet of Allah (sa) said, 'You should be very regular in tahajjud. That has been the practice of the righteous ones in the past and is a means of attaining nearness to God. This is a habit that protects against sin, removes weaknesses, and safeguards from illness.' (Sunan-ut-Tirmadhi)

The Promised Messiah admonishes us:

Our Jama'at should make it incumbent upon itself to offer tahajjud. Anyone who cannot do more should make at a minimum two rak'at because he will get an opportunity to make some supplications. Supplications made at this time have a very special characteristic because they are offered with true pain and eagerness. Until there is a special pain and heartfelt agony, how can one wake up from comfortable sleep? To wake up at this time creates a heartfelt pain, which creates a condition of devotion and distress, which in turn become the means of acceptance of supplication. (Malfuzat; ne edition; Vol.2, p.182)

Hazrat Rabia of Basra, the sufi saint and poet, used to offer the following prayer at night on her roof top:

"O my Lord! The stars are shining and the eyes of men are closed and the kings have shut their doors and every lover is alone with his beloved and here I am alone with Thee."

(DUROOD: increasing our connection with the Mercy for Mankind)

The third condition also requires us to send durood on the Holy Prophet (sa) as instructed by the Holy Quran in Surah Al-Ahzab 33:57 Allah and His angels send blessings on the Prophet. O ye who believe! You also should invoke blessings on him and salute him with abundant salutations of peace.

The sending of Durood is an expression of gratitude to the Prophet (sa) who made his entire life a sacrifice, and whose nights were spent in prayers for the guidance of his ummah and all humanity. Durood not only increases our connection to the Mercy for all Mankind, but also becomes a means of attracting Allah's beneficence. Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV (ra) gave a beautiful example of the blessings of Durood that just as a beggar begs by invoking the loved one of the person from whom he is begging— in the same way a seeker of nearness to Allah invokes the beloved of Allah, Muhammad (sa).

Expounding on the blessings of durood the Promised Messiah (as) writes:

“One night this humble one called down blessings on the Holy Prophet (sa) to such a degree that my heart and soul were filled with its fragrance. That night I saw in a vision that angels poured water skins of Divine light upon my dwelling. They said to me: *hazaa bi maa salaita ala Muhammadan*”

This is due to your invoking Allah's blessings on Muhammad (Haqiqat-ul-Wahyi, p. 128, footnote, Ruhani Khaza'in, vol. 22, p. 131, footnote)

(ISTIGHFAR: the antidote to sin)

If sin is the root of man's moral and spiritual malaise, then Istighfar is its potent antidote.

The Holy Prophet^(sa) is reported to have stated: “Allah, Blessed is He and Most High, said: ‘O son of Adam! Verily, as long as you called upon Me and hoped in Me, I forgave you, despite whatever may have occurred from you, and I did not hesitate. O son of Adam! Were your sins to reach the clouds of the sky, then you sought forgiveness from Me, I would forgive you, and I would not hesitate. So, son of Adam! If you came to me with sins nearly as great as the earth, and then you met Me not associating anything with Me, I would come to you with enough forgiveness to fill the earth.’” (FS 3/27/2026)

In another hadith it is stated that when a person repeatedly weeps before Allah, asking forgiveness, ultimately Allah says, “I have forgiven you. You can now do whatever you wish.” How so? Because

our heart has been transformed and now sin is repugnant to us. A person who has been forgiven by God will have developed a natural aversion to anything which creates a distance between them & Allah.

Once a person asked Rabia of Basra (ra), "I have committed many sins; if I turn in penitence towards God, will He turn towards me in mercy?"

Rabia Basri replied, "If He turn towards you in mercy, you will turn towards Him in penitence."

So when we are in the act of istighfar, seeking forgiveness, we can take comfort that Allah has turned towards us in Mercy.

(Worship as an expression of gratitude)

What the Third Condition of Bai'at highlights for us is the complete philosophy of Islamic worship which entails recognizing God as the One Being whose guidance and help we seek in all our affairs and as the best means of showing gratitude during times of trial and times of ease. The trouble is we humans tend to remember hardship far more than the bounties of Allah.

In a group mulaqat/meeting, a waqif-e nau girl asked Huzoor (aba) to share a moment when Huzoor encountered hardship and how Huzoor dealt with it? Huzoor smiled and replied matter-of-factly, "Hardships are a part of your life, why should I mention [them]? If I say that I faced hardships, this means that I did not understand the spirit of my waqf... I never faced any hardship; I always saw Allah's fazal on me.

Meaning: I always kept an eye on Allah's bounties." (17 September 2021)

This is the paradigm shift that Islam asks us to consider and if we do, it becomes a lifeline. Let me give a very banal example of what I mean: I'm sitting in terrible traffic and a driver cuts me off. I feel my grip tighten on the steering wheel and my jaw clench – I'll pay for this with back pain and right now my cortisol level has spiked for sure. I'm inclined to give vent to my annoyance, but no, I decide I am not going to let my brain's negativity bias take over the situation. I take a breath and say "Alhamdolillah". All praise belongs to Allah.

I turn my thoughts towards the blessings of Allah on me. I'm sitting safely and comfortably in my car, the air conditioning is working; I have my wits and my health. This is an opportunity to catch up on the prayers that Huzoor Aqdas has told us to recite— so I begin:
SubhanAllahi wa bi Hamdihi SubhanAllahi hil Azeem

My senses realign. All praise belongs to Allah who has made me an Ahmadi Muslim with khilafat to guide me. Who could be luckier than I?

This is the day the Lord has made. I will rejoice and be glad in it (Psalms 118:24)

While this might be a very, very small example— I tell you Alhamdulillah will get you through much greater hardship and very real grief.

The **blessings of a gratitude mindset reflect our Benevolent Creator.** What is good for me spiritually, is also beneficial to my mental, emotional, and even physical health. Shukr (gratitude) actively rewires the brain by reducing stress hormones, lowering blood pressure, and boosting dopamine and serotonin— the neurotransmitters related to motivation and contentment.

(ZIKR E ELAHI: Remembrance of Allah)

The third condition of bai'at then tells us to make zikr e elahi, remembrance of Allah, a firm habit.

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih Sani (ra) admonishes us:

Emphasize remembrance of God and thereby remove the darkness of your heart,

Become the luminous gem, a lamp in the night, lighting up the world with a shimmering light

The final words of the third condition of bai'at read:

“... and with love in her heart will remember the bounties of Allah Almighty and make His praise and glorification a daily practice.” In fact, Allah's promise to us in the Holy Quran is

لَئِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ

(Surah Al Ibrahim Ch14:7)

If you are grateful, I will surely increase my favors and blessings on you.

Imam Raazi (ra), the renowned theologian, polymath, and scientist, writes in commentary of this verse that remembrance of Allah is an acknowledgment of Divine beneficence which results in spiritual as well as temporal blessings and strengthens love of Allah. URDU (FS 3/7/2003 KMIV)

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih 1st (ra) states:

Muslims have left off praise of Allah, they are never satisfied with their condition. Since gratefulness to God is absent, consequently God's favours are also withheld.

You should praise God in gratitude to a high degree. Our Holy Book begins with Alhamdolillah. Our khutba begins with Alhamd. Seek help in this way.

While each of these forms of worship– salat, tahajjud, durood, shukr & zikr merit a separate jalsa speech at the very least. The good news is that when you increase in any one of these – the other aspects are strengthened as well.

I conclude with the prayer taught to us by our Holy Prophet (sa) that encapsulates the Third Condition of Bai'at and what it demands of us:

اللَّهُمَّ اَعِنِّي عَلَى ذِكْرِكَ وَشُكْرِكَ وَحُسْنِ الْعِبَادَةِ

(Allahumma a'inni 'ala dhikrika, wa shukrika, wa husni 'ibadatik)

"O Allah, help me to remember You, to be grateful to You, and to worship You in the best manner." Ameen.

"And our final prayer is, 'Praise be to Allah, Lord of All the Worlds.'" "wa akhiru da'wana" (وأخر دعوانا). [Surah Yunus:10]

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