

Valuable Exhortations to Nigerean Ahmadis

(Friday Sermon delivered on 19-2-1988 at Ahmadiyya
Settlement Ajokoro Nigeria)

Before sermon Hadur said:

During the Juma you'll not be able to laugh or raise your voices. So lets have done with it now before Juma.

An Ahmadi from Nigeria once wrote to me that he has seen in the dream that I was wearing dress like this. He was from Benin City. So to fulfill his dream he sent this dress to me in London and requested that when I come to Nigeria I should bring it along with me and wear it. So I promised with him I would do it. And when I visited Ijebuode an other Ahmadi young man who is I think in construction business he gave me the dress which I'm wearing inside. So I promised him again that I'll wear it and I'll do it in Juma so everybody can see I have fulfilled my promise. ...

*After Tashhud, ta'awwudh and recitation of Surah Al-Fatiha
Hadur said:*

With the grace of Allah my African tour is coming to conclusion now. The first country of Africa which I ever visited was Gambia and on this tour Nigeria is the last. But I hope and pray to Allah that this may

not prove to be my last visit and may Allah give me opportunities to come to you again and again and again to see you with my own eyes and to hear you with my own ears.

To hear from reports is very different from to see with your own eyes. And the impressions of Africa which I had formed before coming here has dramatically changed and fundamentally undergone a complete transformation because of my being here and seeing you from close myself and talking to you and knowing the problems which you are facing. So in this regard I am so grateful to Allah that this tour has been very beneficial.

I have discovered many good things about Africa and African characters. I have discovered many good things about Nigeria and Nigerian character and that discovery has made me very happy but also I have observed with pain some bad things which have left me very worried about the future but not at all hopeless. So I will speak all those things in short to you to remind you of your responsibilities to your country and this continent

The two most important things which I have discovered about Africa are No.1. They have open mind, they are open to conviction they are not prejudicial, they are not narrow minded and as such when you speak to them with logic and wisdom they always accept that and in this regard African countries stand out head and shoulders above the rest of countries which so far I have visited.

So those who have been painting you as people of the dark Continent, as people of smaller intelligence

they have been proved to be totally false. You are an enlighten people enlighten from within. Allah has given you wisdom; Allah has given you capability to judge the right from the wrong. So as such not only you are enlighten from within but you have possibilities to progress in every sphere of human interest *Inshallah* because those who can see things, who can see right from the wrong, who can call a spade a spade when they see one their possibilities for the future rise are unlimited.

The second quality of African character which has impressed me immensely is the African patience. They are such a patient people. All the countries I visited I found patient as their mark of distinction. Young and old, men and women all have this immense quality of suffering in patience and quiet and I assure you that Allah has stated in the Holy Quran that Allah loves the patient people and never leaves them alone.

The third very important quality which you share also with other African countries is your big heartiness towards differences of opinions. I have seen in African countries Christians, Muslims, Pagans and whatever you call them all together in one family living in peace and harmony with each other. They don't disturb the peace of the house or the peace of the area or the country just because some of them hold different opinions about God and how He will treat human beings and about the life to come. They leave these things to God; they leave these things to God to judge. They don't play God; they don't be narrowing minded about it and start

beating other people for holding different opinions. This is a beautiful point, this is a beautiful characteristic of Africa which is seldom found elsewhere in the world or it is found in much less strength and much less intensity.

The forth very important feature of African character is their being grateful. It's very important that one should be grateful to his fellow beings otherwise his claim that he is grateful to Allah is wrong. This is exactly what has been taught to us by the holiest of the Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa (SAW) who declared:

من لم يشكر الناس لم يشكر الله

A man who is not grateful to other men, to his fellow human beings he is not grateful to Allah. That is to say Allah will not accept his gratitude if he does not express that gratitude to his fellow beings as well.

Everywhere I visited I found this quality of gratitude expressed not only in words but in actions. When I reached Gambia for an instance the government was extremely kind. The ministers were there at the airport to receive me and they remained with me throughout. They started coming to me and coming and going to me having a constant touch with me and then wherever I visited in Gambia the same thing happened the members of the parliament, the commissioners everybody stood waiting for my arrival. I was surprised I had never seen such a thing. I am a religious leader I am not head of a state. I wondered why this treatment which is offered to the heads of state. Police, the traffic police everybody

was so kind so gracious that it embarrassed me and it surprised me what was happening. So I put this straight forward question to one of the ministers why are you doing it to me? They said you don't know what you have done for us. All these schools, all these hospitals all the goodwill which Ahmadis have brought here the atmosphere of peace, the message of peace, the good conduct. Don't you think we have taken note of these things? We are deeply obliged to you.

So this immense expression of gratitude not only in words but in actions I feel if it is not unique to Africa it is very special with African character at least.

The same thing happened elsewhere to some degree of course with some variations here and there but gratitude was written in bold letters all over I visited.

For instance when I went to Sierra Leone I was surprised to find that the president of Sierra Leone had issued specific instructions that his personal helicopter should be used for my service and he appointed a minister in waiting for me to look after my tour and also appointed an ADC. So this was absolutely overwhelming I couldn't imagine such a thing happening to an ordinary person a humble man as I am a religious leader of course but not belonging to any state. So the minister who was appointed I discussed this matter with him, he was a religious minister also a Muslim but not Ahmadi but he admitted in so many words. He said you do not realize fully yourself what you have done for us 97 primary schools all over the country, 26 higher education schools all over the country and hospitals

and clinics and your schools are of such high quality that we prefer to send our children to your schools rather than to mission schools or to government schools. So we know these things you don't realize. You think you have done a favour but you forget whatever favour you do. But we don't forget the favour. So that is one reason why we have to be kind to you and there is no way out.

The second thing which he told me was and that made me very happy. He said look here if Ahmadiyyat had not come here entire Sierra Leone would have turned Christian and same could be said for the rest of Africa. You remain peaceful, you remain loving you don't create disorder but with the force of your logic with the force of your pursuing with the force of your love you have defeated Christianity and have assured us that Islam is the only and the final religion in the world. So this defeat at the hands of not sword but love that is what has charmed us and we shall always remain grateful to you for that.

What surprised me further was the fact that even the Christians were grateful. They were very kind, very civil very hospitable very generous. They did not mind it all that we were their main adversaries in this continent. They did not care that it were Ahmadies alone from all the Muslims who stopped their own slot of Christianity in Africa and in most places reversed the process. They were fully mindful of the fact that it is Ahmdies today who are winning Christians to Islam and gone of the days when the Christians used to win Muslims to Christianity.

Knowing all this the Christian presidents, the Christian ministers, the Christian public, the Christian religious heads they were all extremely kind and gracious and hospitable because they knew we were doing a service to Africa and they consider themselves as much Africans as a Muslim's work.

When I visited in Sierra Leone the northern diocese that is a northern area of Roman Catholic control I was surprised to see the bishop the highest of religious authority in the northern diocese standing waiting for me to receive me among other Ahmadies and other Muslims who were gathered there to receive me. And not only that he sat all the time when I was addressing people and also saw me off to the car. He did not leave until the car had left. And when I went to southern diocese the same thing happened there. The bishop of the southern diocese also stood in waiting for me to be received like other hosts were standing to receive their guests and also he attended our function and remained throughout very kind and very civil.

So this is the beauty of African character which you must guard. You must not let any enemy of yours destroy this most wonderful African character.

Now I turn to those points which leave me worried and one of those is directly related to the last point I was raising. This peace, this mutual love, this harmony of character that is common to West African countries at least which I witnessed with my own eyes is now being threatened by foreign elements, by some political powers who use religion for exploitation and stir up hatred of one society of

human beings against another society of human beings in the name of love, in the name of God, in the name of truth they spread ugliness, they spread hatred, they spread falsehood and this phenomenon of corruption of human morals is taking place now in Africa; in Nigeria, in Ghana, in Gambia, in Sierra Leone, in Liberia, in Ivorycoast in all the countries I have visited and also from reports I know the same efforts are being made in the eastern part of the Africa too. So what is this you must realize? People coming form outside from one country or an other are trying to create hatred between one sections of Nigerian society against another section of the Nigerian society. They want to disrupt peace. For what? In the name of Allah. Imagine the absurdity of their position. Yet the innocent people are always stared more in the name of Allah than in any other name.

So you are being be fooled. You are being made an object of heinous plot against your character and against your peace. If you permit these things to happen the days will not be very far away when Nigerians will be fighting other Nigerians in the name of Islam, in the name of Christianity, in the name of *Malikiat*, in the name of Ahmadiyyat, in the name of this and in the name of that. Lets all make a resolution as an Ahmadi I make it incumbent upon every Ahmadi to fight out this evil, to defend the peace of the country and to promote the harmony with Nigerian and Nigerian of whatever the denomination they belong to. You must stand guard over your most beautiful character which God has

given you. You must save the harmony of your country because without unification without harmony no country can ever progress. So they are enemies of your faith who call you to gather round the flags of hatred. They are enemies of your morals, they are enemies of African character and they are enemies of humanity. Pay no heed to their call, pay heed to the call of Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa

who according to the Holy Quran was a message of love and peace for whole mankind. The Holy Quran tells us:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ (Al-Anbia: 108)

O prophet Muhammad! We have not sent you only as a source of blessing for Muslims but We have sent you as a source of blessing for whole mankind. That is your master follow him and do not permit yourself to deviate from that noble past.

So my message to you is not only this that you should not hate other Muslims, there is no question of that. But my message to you is you should not hate Christians either, you should not hate even pagans; do not hate any human being that is my message to you. How can you hate the creatures of Allah and claim that you love Allah? It is not possible it's a lie, its falsehood. Can you love a mother and hate her children and still expect the mother to accept your love; impossible.

So those who hate the servants of Allah the creatures of Allah even if they in a sense love Allah their love will be rejected by God. You know why Hazrat Aqdas Muhammad Mustafa was made the greatest of all prophets? Why he was raised not only

to the Arabs but to the whole mankind? The secret lies in his love for all without regard to region without regard to geographical differences without regard to color or creed. He loved the whole mankind because he loved God most purely most honestly, most consummately, most perfectly. So he loved all His creatures not only human beings he loved even animals, not only animals he loved the whole nature created by Allah. So that is why he is called "*Rahmat-ul-lilalameen*" not only *Rahmat* for the whole mankind but a *Rahmat* for whatever God has created.

So if you truly love Allah I am quite certain and you know already that you will automatically love the creatures of Allah but I assure you that despite the fact that you are small in number, you are weak in strength if you truly love Allah and truly love mankind you will certainly ultimately emerge victorious because hatred can never over power love. It is always love which is comes out victorious and defeats hatred.

Now I turn to another point. A true believer has to be a true patriot and this is what has been told to us by Hazrat Rasool Akram . His love of mankind does not mean that he is not patriotic. Patriotism is a part of faith this is what Hazrat Rasool Akram has said:

The love of your country is a part of your faith. So never forget this that your country stands in preference to a special services to that country and it's not contrary to your faith it is a part of your faith

So this is the second point which has made me very worried because I have found in Nigeria that Nigerians are rather confused about their sense of patriotism, about their sense of how they should express their love for their country. You will be surprised that I not being a Nigerian. I am being here on a very short cursory visit. How could I say that? You don't yourself know that this is happening here but God has given me that quality of understanding things and it does not take me long to understand the essence of thing with the grace of Allah. So when I came here I discovered that people of Nigeria were rather confused about what patriotism is and I am going to explain to you after this part of translated.

I found that many here believe that to hate the non-Nigerian is true patriotism. All those who are not Nigerian if you hate them, if you shout loudly at them, if you write articles in the papers demanding from the government that all non-Nigerians should be turned out of this land. They think this is true patriotism, it is wrong. This hatred has nothing to do with patriotism or any thing good and the same people unfortunately are those who are sending the hard earned wealth of Nigeria outside in foreign countries. They are involved in smuggling, they are involved in embezzlement and they don't realize that this is not patriotism if they were truly patriotic they would do something positive for the service of Nigeria, they share madness.

Remember that corruption and patriotism cannot go hand in hand together. Remember that embezzlement of money and patriotism cannot go hand in hand

together. Remember that smuggling and patriotism cannot go hand in hand together. Remember that use of public money and patriotism cannot go hand in hand together. Patriotism means you be service minded to your countrymen, to your country, to being standing guard over the wealth of the country not one of those who rob your country. So this distorted concept of patriotism is doing you such immense damage that no foreign country, no foreign power can do you that damage today than you can do to yourself. Realize, wake up understand what is happening to your country. Mostly it is a Nigerian today which is responsible for doing wrong turns to his own country. You have to change this totally transform your attitudes and for that I particularly instruct the Ahmadies to stand up as a model for the whole of Nigeria. They should be first in being honest, they should be first in helping the government in every attempt which they are doing to raise the standard of the living in Nigeria. They must stand on the side of all those who try to serve the cause of Nigeria. They must not be one of those who rob the country who embezzle their money out of the country but they must be those who sacrifice their money, their power their strength for the sake of their country and the countrymen. This is true patriotism which Allah loves and I hope if you want to be loved by Allah you must be truly patriotic as He wants to see you. Words are not going to satisfy people. It is the action which people demand. There are many people who say we are patriotic. You will

have to demonstrate to them that true patriotism lies in two services: in selflessness, in altruism.

So all Ahmadies should launch a countrywide campaign to raise this real positive patriotism which is true with your country needs so much today, ever more than before.

You must realize that you are very specially gifted people and a very specially gifted country in this region of Africa. You are the biggest country in whole of Africa in terms of population, in the entire continent. There is no other country which can boast of such big population of yours and also remember that God has gifted you with immense wealth both potentially agriculture wealth and also the mineral wealth. Also God has gifted you with great brains, great strength of character and potential to put to proper use all that Allah has given you. So you have all the resources of minerals available at your foot steps. To harness for the greatness of your country and for the greatness of the future generations of Nigeria but that is not all. I expect you to rise even higher and further. If you harness all your resources properly and generate enough wealth, you will be surprised to realize that you have generated so much of wealth and power in Nigeria that instead of being dependent on foreign powers you can help other neighborly countries and be their patron and help them physically as well materially and spiritually and you can lead them in all walks of life like big brothers do to their small brothers. So take up the role of big brother for poor neighboring countries. They are much poorer than you are. I have seen these

countries some of them and I was overwhelmed with grief at saying the party an hunger desolation which prevails there. Here in Nigeria God has given you so much (do not be miserly) wealth not only for the sake of Nigerian but also for the sake of African who live around you and in this regard you can do a lot to help the humanity and please Allah.

This is one of those points which made me worried because I noticed in a section of Nigerian society a sense of arrogance towards their less fortunate neighbors. It appeared that if they have become proud of what they had and look down upon those neighbors who had much little compare to them. They talk of their greatness, their pride, their wealth, their industry, their roads, their cars, their patrol as if that they have done this by their own hands. Nothing of these things I have talked about was achieved by Nigerian themselves. Allah gave you wealth in the form of oil you could not even exploit that natural resources. Foreign countries came and shared this wealth with you they drilled the oil wells, they extracted the oil, they established the system of export and import and robbed you a lot in that process. Whatever was left with you who started spending on cars giving foreign companies contracts for building your roads and enjoying the life of luxury apart from the general run of the people of the country.

So two societies were born in Africa because of that; one rather richer and prouder the other humble and belonging to the grass roots common people of Africa. Nothing in this is to be proud of, all that

demand for you is to be grateful to Allah and to seek His forgiveness for the immense waste of national wealth for which you are responsible in process of buying all these foreign goods without any care of what are you doing? How are you spending your wealth? You could have put it to much better you sieges but I am not here as critic of what you have done. I am only reminding you that all this is not the doing of Nigerian labor all this is surely grace of Allah, He gifted you with these opportunities and some of those opportunities you utilized. So what is there for you to be proud of in comparison to those poor countries who live around you? Allah did not bless them with this so they remain poor. So be kindly to them, be service minded to them. Show grace of character and nobility and magnanimity. Only in this way you will please Allah and when you please Allah, He will shower upon you unlimited showers of His mercy.

As a hard of time and already I have some very important appointments after this sermon so I should like to bring this sermon to close but before that I want to point out to you that gratitude is not a quality which ends after the expression of gratitude. But it is an unlimited process of a chain of events follow the expression gratitude because when you express your gratitude to someone if he is refined if he truly is a grateful person in himself he will overwhelmed with your gratitude and wants to do something for you in return and then he express his gratitude not only in words but in terms of good deeds and favours towards you. Then you are again overwhelmed with

gratitude in term of words and good deeds to him and he repeats the same process. So ultimate gratitude is undying wealth, it never ends. It goes on improving the human quality and it is so unlimited, it can never end at all. This is exactly Allah has said about it. He says:

لَا زِيَادَ تَكْفُرٍ لِيْنَ شُكْرِيْكُمْ (Ibrahim: 8)

You express my gratitude to me and I will show more favours to you. And what could happen if Allah shower greater favours upon you. You will be no grateful and Allah says all right My servants are grateful to Me so I must shower greater bless upon them. And then you all well with the mercy of Allah and you say all right we must be more grateful and then Allah says if My servants are more grateful why should I not be more Gracious and He goes on showering His blessings. This is how the great Prophets of Allah are created. They are grateful people to behave with. They express gratitude to Allah for the small things, the very minute's things which Allah has done to them and Allah goes on showering His blessings because of their gratitude and of course they increase in their gratitude and Allah increases His mercy.

So never ending phenomenon of improvement begins and this is exactly what happened to the greatest of prophets of Allah Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa He was most grateful person ever born on Earth. And as such Allah was most Merciful to him. So there was no injustice in Allah choosing him. He was most grateful and Allah has to most Merciful to him. So that was an unending process

hereby we are told that Muhammad Mustafa never stays at one point. Every second moment his status with Allah is rising and rising and still rising. This is the meaning of the verse.

(Al-Zoha:5) *وَلَلْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لَّكَ مِنَ الْأُولَى*

O My beloved Muhammad! Every second moment of your life is better than the previous moment. This is all the fruit of gratitude. Remembering this, realizing this the Ahmadies must be grateful to those governments who have been grateful to them and express that gratitude not in words but in deeds, by cooperating with them, by serving them. Making the people realize their duty to establish government of the country as such you will enter in an unending chain of receiving favours from Allah not only from people here but Allah will shower his Mercy more and more and more upon you.

May Allah that you behave in a manner that He is always please with you. He never abandones you. You never give Him cause for displeasure. So that with blessing of Allah Ahmadiat may spread all around, all over the countries of Africa and of even date Africa with beauty and love of Ahmadiat. May Allah it be so.

The Satan was about to make me forget something very important of which Allah has reminded me. So I Stood up again to say few last words to you. I was about to forget that I must thank particularly the Ahmadies of Nigeria for what they have done for me, for what they have done to make this tour very successful. Your old and your young; your men and your women, your children all have worked

immensely day and night to make this tour a great success. And they have always been praying all along with it. And love that they have shown towards me has overwhelming at moments. I can't express in words how much I love you for that, of course I loved you before I came here, but I ensure you I love you the more, much more than ever before and I hope and pray that this mutual feeling of love, this purely Godly love between you and me may ever prosper and no one should ever be able to interfere with this most beautiful, most Godly phenomenon of exaltation which you get only through love which is based on love of Allah. So this pure love is the best reward which I have got from this tour of Africa. This is the most noble trophy which I am carrying back and I ensure you that

I shall never forget you in my prayer. May Allah accept all my prayers for you.