Supreme Leader's Speech at Annual Ramadan Quranic Meeting - 29 /Jun/ 2014

The following is the full text of the speech delivered on June 29, 2014 by Ayatollah Khamenei, the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution, at the annual Ramadan Quranic meeting. The meeting was held on the first day of the holy month of Ramadan.

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds, and peace and greetings be upon His Messenger and his blessed household

I thank Allah the Exalted for giving us the opportunity to live long enough so that we can begin this year's auspicious month of Ramadan in this enlightened meeting. I would like to welcome all you honorable qurra, esteemed memorizers of the Holy Quran and dear Quranic personalities - particularly the brothers who performed a program - and the honorable host. I hope that by Allah's favor, all of you will be among the companions of the Holy Quran in this world and in the hereafter.

In my opinion, what Quranic personalities do in our country today is a strategic and important task. Although it is true that familiarity with the Holy Quran will raise the position and deepen the understanding of those who read it and who are familiar with it - this is important in itself and the blessing that you reciters and qurra receive from the Holy Quran is an important achievement in itself - there is another achievement beyond this, whose scope is broader. This achievement is helping the Islamic community get close to understanding and becoming familiar with the Holy Quran. This is very important.

Today, our Quranic society, qurra, memorizers and reciters of the Holy Quran and those who are making efforts on this path are - in fact - making this strategic move and this is very important. The value of this should be appreciated.

The truth is that our Quranic society has thankfully made great progress in recent years. We have been holding this annual meeting for many years and I am witnessing the visible progress of familiarity with and recitation of the Holy Quran among our people, our youth and those who are interested in the Holy Quran. I am witnessing the increasing progress of this issue. This requires thanking God.

However, we are far away from the ideal. This does not mean that the level of our qurra is personally or generally lower than the ideal level. This is not what I mean. Thankfully, we have good qurra who are at a high level in terms of recitation, tartil, voice, meaning and quality of recitation in a way that they revive Quranic meanings for the audience. Thankfully, our progress is very good in this regard.

But we have not reached the ideal point on a public level and the gap is wide. We should act in a way that all the people in our country and society become familiar with the Holy Quran in some ways, that they understand Quranic meanings and that they refer to the Holy Quran even if they gain a limited understanding of Quranic meanings. We should reach such a point.

The countries who speak Arabic pass through this stage more easily. But in our country, we who do not speak Arabic pass through this stage with more difficulty. Despite this, as I have said many times, Quranic words are thankfully

familiar words for us. Understanding Quranic words are not difficult for our people. By Allah's favor, more familiarity and practice can help our society reach the ideal point.

And you dear brothers should pay attention that the Islamic government and the Islamic community become strong from the inside through familiarity with the Holy Quran on a daily basis. Becoming strong from the inside is what enables societies to take their ideal paths and it gives them the power to face challenges. We should be strong from the inside.

This is achieved in the shade of familiarity with the Holy Quran. Familiarity with the Holy Quran strengthens faith, it increases reliance on God, it increases reliance on divine promises, it reduces one's fear of material problems, it gives people spiritual strength and self-confidence and it shows them the paths to getting close to God. These are the advantages and benefits of familiarity with the Holy Quran.

The Holy Quran is the book of understanding and light: "No one will sit beside this Quran but that when he rises he will achieve one addition or one diminution - addition in his guidance or elimination in his spiritual blindness" [Nahjul Balaghah, Sermon 176]. This narration is attributed to the Commander of the Faithful (a.s.). He said that anyone who sits beside the Holy Quran will achieve one addition or one diminution when he rises. When he rises, he will achieve either an addition or a diminution: addition in guidance and diminution in blindness - that is to say, one's ignorance decreases. When one reads the Holy Quran, one's insight and wisdom increase. Sitting beside the Holy Quran is like this.

Of course, this is achieved through attention and deliberation. The Holy Quran should be read by paying careful attention. We should pay attention that a mere formation of sounds is not enough. We should read the Holy Quran by paying attention to the meaning and to Quranic requests. If this is done, then the Islamic community will find its path: "Allah is the Protector of those who have faith: from the depths of darkness He will lead them forth into light" [The Holy Quran, 2: 257].

If we read the Holy Quran, we will get out of the darkness of superstitions, fear and illusions and we will be guided towards light: the light of guidance, understanding and closeness to God. These are the characteristics that one achieves through sitting beside the Holy Quran and becoming familiar with it.

We need this. The Islamic Ummah needs this today. The Islamic community is faced with serious challenges today. I have said many times that paying attention to challenges does not mean that we should feel the enemy is stronger than us. It does not mean that he will defeat us. This is not the case. The Islamic community is faced with certain challenges. Being faced with challenges is an opportunity for Islam to - by Allah's favor - take one more rung, make one more move and pass through one more stage in the movement of history to the desired transcendence. Today, we are in such conditions.

During the pre-revolutionary era and before the emergence of Islamic Awakening, we used to see that the world of Islam was ignorant. Today, the world of Islam is achieving wisdom. And the events that are taking place in the world of Islam will help the Islamic Ummah to achieve wisdom. These events make us wiser and they will clarify our responsibilities. The enemies of Islam are afraid of the existence of this foresight in believers and the Islamic Ummah. We should strengthen this foresight on a daily basis. The first stage is to know these challenges.

What is witnessed in the world of Islam is that the enemies of Islam are confronting Islam in the name of Islam and in Islam's clothing. This is the same thing that our magnanimous Imam (may God bestow paradise on him) said: American Islam versus the original Islam introduced by the Holy Prophet (s.w.a.).

American Islam is the kind of Islam that compromises with taghut and Zionism and that it is at the service of America's goals. It is Islam on the face of it and it is referred to as Islam. They may observe a number of Islamic

obligations. Of course, according to what we have heard, those who have emerged in some countries - recently in Iraq and before that in other countries - in the name of Islam and by behaving in a biased way are not completely committed to religious obligations and practices. But we do not have precise information in this regard. What is clear is that they definitely move in the opposite direction of Islam.

From the viewpoint of Islam, following and accepting the wilayat of the enemies of religion and arrogant powers are among the things that believers should avoid: "Those who believe fight in the cause of Allah, and those who reject faith fight in the cause of taghut" [The Holy Quran, 4: 76]. If you move on the path of taghut in the name of Islam, you should know that this kind of Islam is fake, that it is not real and that there is a problem. Today, the situation is like this.

Of course, we can see the enemy's hand. We should understand that the evil hand of the intelligence services of the enemies of Islam, play a definite role - either directly or indirectly - in creating these events and uproars for Muslims. As we can see, it is they who are directing the scene. And the signs and reasons for this are clear. If the Islamic Ummah becomes close to Quranic concepts and if it gains a deeper familiarity with it, such events occur less. The relationship of hearts with God and their connection to Him prevents them from betraying the path of God. I hope that this will happen.

You Quranic youth and you who spend your life, your youth and your energy on the path of the Holy Quran should thank Allah the Exalted. If Allah the Exalted helps youth and teenagers to get close to the Holy Quran and to choose the path of the Holy Quran, this is a great blessing. Such a thing did not exist in previous eras. In the past, the Holy Quran was not popular among youth and it was not promoted. Today, the Holy Quran is thankfully being promoted among youth. And you are among the influential elements behind this promotion. You should appreciate the value of this.

The brothers who are active in Quranic areas should try to "Invite people to religion with means other than your [their] tongues" [Bihar al-Anwar, Volume 67, page 309]. They should show that they are among outstanding personalities in terms of commitment to religious obligations and tasks. They should show this so that the influence of the Holy Quran shows itself in their actions, in their public behavior, in their conduct, in those Islamic aspects which are visible or hidden, and in Islamic quality.

They should observe these things: "Believers are those who, when Allah is mentioned, feel a tremor in their hearts, and when they hear His signs rehearsed, find their faith strengthened" [The Holy Quran, 8: 2]. The brothers who are close to the Holy Quran more than other people should show a sign of enjoying these characteristics. What you are doing today - thankfully today, a Quranic sign is a glorious sign - can be a good model for youth, teenagers and your audience. They can learn from you. You should act in a way that they learn those things from you which help them get close to God.

Dear God, by the blessedness of Muhammad (s.w.a.) and his household, keep us alive with the Holy Quran and on the path of the Holy Quran. Make us be the companions of the Holy Quran. Make us die on the path of the Holy Quran. Associate us with the Holy Quran. Make the Holy Quran satisfied and pleased with us.

Dear God, by the blessedness of Muhammad (s.w.a.) and his household and by the blessedness of the immaculate soul of our magnanimous Imam (r.a.) and the pure souls of martyrs, bestow on us today's precious gift from this meeting, these programs and these recitations.

Dear God, by the blessedness of Muhammad (s.w.a.) and his household, make us steadfast on the path of Islam, the Holy Quran, martyrs and soldiers of the path of truth.

Greetings be upon you and Allah's mercy and blessings