Leader’s Remarks in Affinity with Quran Meeting - 20 /Jun/ 2015

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

I am very thankful to you dear brethren and I really enjoyed [our session] today. The session [is] a very good, diverse, eloquent, beautiful and rich session. Thank God. [The fact] that I see, thank God, that every year the signs of progress in recitation of the Quran are evident among our youth, [and] among our people, gives me profound satisfaction; I thank God. Today also, God be praised, thanks to these very good recitations [of the Quran], [our session] was a rich, and meaningful, and inspiring session, especially with the notice that this creative, and articulate presenter gave us about forwarding the [spiritual] reward of these recitations and what took place today in this session, to the cleansed souls of the recent martyrs whose funeral was held in Tehran.

Recitation of the Quran with a pleasant voice and a pleasant tone and according to rites and customs of recitation is a prelude to the instillation of the Quranic concepts into the hearts [of the people].

If we strip it of this benefit and look upon recitation of the Quran simply as a [performance with] pleasant voice and a musical reading, it will certainly fall from this lofty position. This much emphasis that the Quran must be recited with a pleasant voice and according to [its correct] rites and with pleasant tone, is aimed at [paving the way for] the Quran’s concepts to impact [people’s] hearts; [make us] become intimate with the Quran; [and help us] to assume the color of the Quran and the mood of the Quran and the shape of the Quran. If this is the purpose, then it has [a certain set of] conditions, [and] has [its own] rites. The first of those rites is that the reader of the Quran and the reciter of the Quran must recite [the Quran] by acknowledging [the truth of] the Quran, [and] by believing in the concepts of the Quran; believing in the concepts that he is reciting. If we do not know what we are reading, [if we] do not understand the concept, [and if those concepts] leave no mark on the depth of our souls, [then] the impact of our recitation on others and on ourselves would be insignificant. This is the first condition.

What I ask the esteemed reciters and scholars and readers of the Quran to do is to pay attention to this point.. Those verses [of the Quran] that they want to recite, they [must] review these verses in their minds, think about them, record the depths of these concepts correctly in their hearts and in their minds; [and then] recite [the Quran] with this spirit, with this background [and] with this readiness. Such recitation will influence the depth of souls of the audience.

Of course, you have greatly advanced up to the present day. I have been observing the course of the Quran’s movement in the country for many years; today, our young people have progressed very well; our reciters, [and] our scholars are truly and fairly very good; however, there is still a lot of room to make an even bigger impact.

I have written down two or three points. One [point] is that you aim through your recitation to induce the audience with the Quranic concepts. It is true that most of those listening to you do not understand Arabic and the language of the Quran, but the miracle of the Quran is for you to induce [your audience with] these Quranic verses in this situation – when they do not know [Arabic] – [and] from the depth of your soul and according to [correct] conditions.

Concepts, even in brief, will be transferred to [people’s] minds. Well, this [transfer] has naturally its own conditions. I hear recitations that they air on recitation radio – which is a good opportunity [and] a good facility for listening to recitations – and I hear what our scholars [and] our good reciters read. Well, fairly speaking, in terms of pleasant

voice, our reciters are very good, [and] are very prominent. These reciters have been, and are being, confirmed by foreigners; I have heard from them [foreigners] that they appreciate Iranian voices. Some of your voices are, fairly speaking, of good nature, and of good quality and enjoy good conditions of a prominent voice, which this should be accompanied with [correct] conditions of recitation.

One condition for recitation [of the Quran] is that this verse of the Quran that you recite, you must certainly emphasis those points on which under normal circumstances if you want to make them understood, [you] put emphasis. If I wanted to draw a parallel with these eulogist gentlemen who read Persian poems, you see that every word, every purpose that is desired from a sentence or from a word or from an item, [they] articulate it in such a manner that the concept is infused into the mind of the audience. This applies to normal talking as well. [Even] when you are talking in a normal way, those words whose concepts are prominent from your viewpoint – the words that carry those concepts – [you] articulate them with a special stress. The Quran must be read in this way; stress on special words; articulate sentences and items in such a way that their theme and meaning will be infused into the mind of the audience; good interpretation; good articulation. Sometimes it is necessary for a topic to be absorbed by audience's mind to repeat a sentence; [in that case] do this repetition.

Perhaps a few years ago and in this very session, I criticized those [reciters] that repeat the [Quranic] verses excessively. I want to say that in some places, repetition is certainly necessary, [and] inevitable.

With one time reading, the meaning is not transferred and it must be repeated. Sometimes a verse must be repeated two times, [or] three times. Sometimes two verses and three verses must be repeated. I don't mean that extreme measures [must] be taken in this regard. I have seen some Egyptian reciters who go to extremes in this regard; it produces a negative impact. I do not mean extremes. That we repeat something ten times or eight times, this is not desirable. Now, perhaps this is usual in Arabic songs, but this is not desirable when reading the Quran. However, repetition to the extent that [it will help] this concept to be infused into the mind of the audience, is necessary. Sometimes you feel that a reciter as if has chosen a book without a purpose and is reading it; is reading the phrase and follows up on it; this is not good; [this] is not desirable. You must transfer the concept and reflect it on the mind of the audience; this [task] is sometimes [carried out] through repetition, sometimes through stress, sometimes through emphasis on a sentence, [and] sometimes through stress on a word; this step must be taken.

Another point that must be taken into account is to observe the standards of tone. Of course, these Arabic tones, [and] these Quranic tones are not familiar for our people [and] for our reciters; these are not familiar tones.

Therefore, you see when they read Persian poems, they read [those poems] with a proper rhythm; [however,] if the same person wants to read an Arabic poem or an Arabic sentence, they may not be able to select a correct rhythm [because] these tones are unfamiliar for us; are not familiar and known tones; [they] are not like Persian tones and Persian rhythms. However, the Quranic tones, due to being repeated among the people of the Quran and the people of recitation, have by and by become familiar and [people] have come to know them; these tones must be expressed correctly. I sometimes hear a reciter, with a pleasant voice, with very good voice, a voice that is both of good quality and good strength, [which] also enjoys good effect and writing power; [such a reciter] recites a [Quranic] verse, but does not observe the tone; to observe the tone, which means [observing] the order of rhythm, the thing your recitation is based on [is necessary]; you do not read the Quran in an ordinary way; [but you] read it with a rhythm. Perhaps in all religions – now as far as I have seen in some monotheistic and even non-monotheistic religions – they read the sacred scriptures with a rhythm; I have seen this up-close. Therefore, you do the recitation with rhythm; this rhythm should be expressed correctly.

The tone must be expressed according to its own standards; otherwise, if it [the standard] is not observed, it will certainly not have a desirable effect; [and] sometimes it has [even] the opposite effect.

I have to say a point. Almost all of you are reciters [of the Quran] who have come here; one of those things, which

has become rife among Arab reciters – these Egyptians and others – and has been reflected in our country from there, is the importance attached to the long breath. I don't understand what the point is; it is not necessary for us to connect the words of the Quran, sometimes the [whole] verses together because we want to read in a long breath; in my opinion, there is no necessity for this. Sometimes, it is necessary and expressing the concept of a verse depends on that it be recited in a single breath. Well, [in such cases] they [can] do that; otherwise, the beauty of recitation and the effectiveness of recitation is by no means dependent on the long breath, which now it is the art of some famous Egyptian reciters to [recite the Quran] with a long breath; [and] their audience, when they recite with a long breath, simplistically applaud longer and say Allah, Allah.

In my opinion both what this [reciter] does is wrong, and what that audience does is wrong. Among good Egyptian reciters, prominent Egyptian reciters, we have one person or few persons whose breath is short, and whose recitation is very good, and whose impact is good; including Abdul Fattah Shashaay. You know his breath is short, but at the same time, one of the best and most effective recitations [of the Quran] –which God willing, the Almighty God would bestow his mercy and forgiveness upon him and all reciters of the Quran – is heard from this man. Therefore, I ask the gentlemen not to bother themselves with regard to the issue of [the length of the] breath.

The same is true about addition; repetition of [Quranic] words and verses in tandem is by no means necessary.

Now since the time is over and they are apparently going to say the prayers call, I want to say this word as well. I ask you to set limits for applause and saying "Allah, Allah" – which is an imitation of Arabs. Some people, as soon as the reciter starts recitation, they start following him by chanting "Allah," as if one of the necessary sequels to his recitation is that this side must say "Allah!" It is by no means necessary. Sometimes you are greatly impressed or [the reciter] recites [the Quran] extremely beautifully or extremely effectively, now you involuntarily want to applaud – the applause for the Quran [recitation] according to what is customary among Arabs is saying "Allah, Allah;" of course, they are not special to the Quran; even when they sing an ordinary song, they say "Allah, Allah" – now, this is not a problem. However, as soon as reciter starts reading [the Quran] and we start from this point to say "Allah, Allah," is not necessary.

I ask both yourselves and in sessions where you are heading those sessions or take part in them, recommend [the participants] not to go to extremes in saying "Allah, Allah;" when the reciter is reading [the Quran] very well, is reading very beautifully, there, well, it is no problem to applaud. However, [expecting] that [applause must start] from the very beginning [so that] one expects [the audience] to say "Allahu Akbar [God is Great]" as soon has he says, "I take refuge with God from the driven Satan," [this is not correct].

I hope that God would, God willing, resurrect all of you with the Quran and build your world and the Afterworld with the blessing of the Quran.

Peace be unto you and so may the mercy of Allah and His blessings.