

by Imam Zafrullah Domun

After reciting the *Tashahhud*, the *Ta'uz* and the first chapter *Al Fatiha* of the Holy Quran, Imam Zafrullah Domun said:

We will continue from where we left off last time. We were speaking about faith (*iman*). Hazrat Masih Maood (as) said:

“Be it known, therefore, that faith means a sincere declaration of the acceptance of the message of a Prophet, out of righteousness and as a matter of wise precaution, purely on the basis of goodwill. That is to say, to proclaim acceptance whole-heartedly, finding that certain reliable factors point in that direction, without waiting for perfect and conclusive proof. The stage when perfect reasons and conclusive arguments become available in support of the truth is designated the stage of certainty through knowledge. When God Almighty, out of His special bounty, should in an extraordinary manner bestow the lights of guidance, and should acquaint a creature of His with His favours and bounties, and should bestow reason and knowledge from Himself, and opening the doors of visions and revelation should disclose the wonders of Divinity, and should reveal His beauty as the Beloved, that stage is designated understanding, or in other words, certainty by sight and is also called guidance and insight. When, in consequence of the profound effect of all these experiences, the heart of a lover of God is surcharged with love and devotion to a degree where his whole being is saturated with delight, and heavenly light totally envelops his heart and excludes all darkness and constraint, so that, on account of the perfection of his love and devotion and the climax of his sincerity and loyalty, misfortunes and calamities become a source of delight and sweetness for him, that stage is designated as the stage of being at rest. It is also called salvation, deliverance or certainty by realization. All these ranks are granted after arriving at the stage of faith. One who is firm in one’s faith progressively achieves these ranks. But one who does not adopt the way of faith and demands conclusive, certain, and patent proof of every verity before accepting it, has no relationship with the way of faith and can never become the recipient of the grace of that Almighty and Self-Sufficient Being. It has ever been the way of Allah—and this is a fine point of the appreciation of the Divine over which the fortunate ones should reflect—that merit and heavenly grace follow only upon faith. The true philosophy of this way is that in the primary stage of faith a person should avoid a long series of doubts and denials regarding the acceptance of the Absolute Self-Sufficient One, and His power and His promise, and His warning, and His revelations, and His mysteries. For the maintenance of the condition of faith, on which all merit depends, it is necessary that God Almighty should not display all matters of faith as plainly as other realities become apparent to everyone.[*Surmah Chashm-e-Arya, Ruhani Khaza’in, vol. 2, pp. 70-80*]

Elaborating on this matter further he said:

“Faith means acceptance at a stage when knowledge is not yet complete, and the struggle with doubts and suspicions is still in progress. He who believes, that is to say, has faith, on the basis of probability and likelihood and despite weakness and the lack of perfect means of certainty, is accounted righteous in the estimation of the Supreme One. Thereafter, perfect understanding is bestowed on him as a bounty, and he is given to drink of the cup of

understanding after partaking of faith. When a pious one, on hearing the call of a Messenger, a Prophet or a commissioned one of God, does not just go about criticizing, but takes that portion which he can recognize and understand on the basis of clear proof the means of acceptance and faith, and considers that which he is unable to understand as metaphorical or allegorical, and thus removing all contradiction out of the way, believes simply and sincerely, then God Almighty, having pity on him and being pleased with his faith, and hearing his supplications, opens the gates of perfect understanding for him and leads him to perfect certainty through visions, revelation and other heavenly signs.”[Ayyam-us-Sulh, **Ruhani Khaza’in**, vol. 14, p. 261]

In the light of these extracts, we understand that people of faith are those who examine the partial evidence that they have received and decide to accept the claims of a claimant and they dig further through prayers and study and eventually Allah will help them with knowledge and understanding. The fruits of faith are kept hidden. Once you have believed and want to make further progress through prayers and further study Allah will open the doors of His Grace for you and you will be enlightened with greater understanding. So we understand that in this field each one should work for his or her own self. No one can give you an increase of faith but Allah. To get that increase in faith which will help you to bear all the trials of this world and to walk the path to Allah you need to develop your relationship with Allah. This relationship is not done overnight. It is done through time and through companionship with someone who is among the chosen ones so that you might form part of that group. That is why Hazrat Masih Maood (as) said that joining Jamaat Ahmadiyya was only a first step. Putting all the conditions of bait in practice in your daily life is the work of a lifetime. Once someone joins Jamaat Ahmadiyya that person makes a firm decision that from then on in his life the demands of Allah will have a greater priority in his life than the demand of his self. Armed with patience and a great determination that person starts ridding his self of all that is bad and starts practicing virtue. In the struggle with his self which is known in Islam as the great jihad (*Jihad Akbar*), that person strives day and night to give the commandments of Allah a priority in his life whilst at the same time engaging himself with the world. Only those who have strived on such a path can really say how hard it is to get rid of what is bad in one’s self and practice virtue. It is a task so difficult that without the help of Allah no one can get a real mastery over his or her self. No one should be deluded into thinking that by just being a member of the Jamaat Ahmadiyya or for that matter by just being a Muslim one will be saved or one will get salvation. One has to strive for one’s salvation and for that one has to struggle every day and against great odds. The only thing that keeps one struggling is one’s faith. The greater it is the greater will be our determination and our desire to move forward. I say it again no human being can give you salvation. A human being can only guide with his advices. You are the one who should make all the efforts, you are the one who will have to face deprivation, you are the one who will fail and have to accept defeat to start the whole process again. The fact that Allah sends someone from himself to help the people is a manifestation of Allah’s Grace. What you make of that person’s coming is for you to answer to Allah through your own conduct.

Hazrat Masih Maood (as) further says:

“The Word of God directs us: Have faith and you will be delivered. It does not tell us: Demand philosophical reasons and conclusive proofs in support of the doctrines that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has presented to you, and do not accept them until they are established like mathematical formulae. It is obvious that if the teaching of a Prophet is to be accepted only after being tested by the canons of current

knowledge, that would not be faith in the Prophet; inasmuch as every verity when it is established clearly, becomes binding, whether it is set forth by a Prophet or by anyone else. Even if expounded by a vicious person it has to be accepted. That which we would accept by putting our trust in a Prophet, and by affirming his righteousness, must be of a nature which possesses a probability of truth in the estimation of reason and yet leaves room for a foolish person to incline towards its rejection as false; so that by taking the side of truth and affirming the righteousness of a Prophet we may be rewarded for our well-thinking, penetrating intelligence, respectfulness and faith. This is the purport of the teaching of the Holy Qur'an that we have set forth. But thinkers and philosophers have never followed this way and have always been heedless of faith. They have always been in search of the kind of knowledge which is demonstrated to them as being immediate, incontrovertible and certain. It should be remembered that God Almighty, by demanding faith in the unseen, does not wish to deprive the believers of certainty of understanding the Divine. Indeed, faith is a ladder for arriving at this certainty of understanding, without which it is in vain to seek true understanding. Those who climb this ladder surely experience for themselves the pure and undefiled spiritual verities. When a sincere believer accepts Divine commands and directions for the only reason that God Almighty has bestowed them upon him through a righteous bearer, he becomes deserving of the bounty of understanding. That is why God Almighty has established a law for His servants that they should first acknowledge Him by believing in the unseen, so that all the problems they face may be resolved through the bounty of true understanding. But it is a pity that a hasty one does not adopt these ways. The Holy Qur'an contains the promise of God Almighty that if a person, who accepts the call of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) on the basis of faith, seeks to comprehend its reality and strives after such comprehension, the reality will be disclosed to him by means of visions and revelations and his faith will be elevated to the stage of the understanding." [A'ina-e-Kamalat-e-Islam, Ruhani Khaza'in, vol. 5, pp. 251-253, footnote].

In the Holy Quran Allah says:

**“The Arabs of the desert say, ‘We believe.’ Say, “You have not believed *yet*; but rather say, ‘We have accepted Islam,’ for **the true** belief has not yet entered into your hearts.”** But if you obey Allah and His Messenger, He will not detract anything from your deeds Surely, Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful.”

This verse makes it quite clear that becoming a Muslim and being a believer is not the same thing. It is only when our heart is full with faith that we become true believers. Our salvation does not at all depend on just being a Muslim. Our salvation depends upon how much faith saturates our heart. Hazrat Masih Maood (as) further tells us:

“Dear brethren, rest assured that salvation depends upon faith, and faith is related to the unseen. If the underlying reality of things had not been concealed, there would have been no faith, and without faith there would be no salvation. It is faith alone which is the means of winning Divine pleasure. It is a ladder for achieving nearness to God, and a spring for washing away the rust of sin. We are dependent upon God Almighty, and it is faith that discloses this dependence. We are dependent on God Almighty for our salvation and our deliverance from every ill. Such deliverance can be achieved only through faith. The remedy for the torments of this life and the hereafter is faith. When, through the power of faith, we find that a difficulty is not impossible of resolution, it is resolved for us. It is through the power of faith that we are able to achieve that which appears to be impossible and contrary to reason. It is through the power of faith that miracles and extraordinary events are witnessed, and what is considered impossible happens. It is through faith that we are convinced of the existence of God. He

remained hidden from philosophers, and thinkers could not discover Him; but faith leads to God even a humble one who is clothed in rags, and enables him to converse with Him. The power of faith is the means of contact between a believer and the True Beloved. This power leads a poor humble one who is rejected of mankind to the palace of holiness, which is the throne of Allah and, gradually removing all intervening obstructions, reveals the countenance of the Eternal Beloved.

Arise then, and seek faith and burn the dry and useless tomes of philosophy; only through faith shall you achieve blessings. One particle of faith is better than a thousand volumes of philosophy. Faith is not only the means of achieving salvation in the hereafter, but also provides deliverance from the torments and curses of this life. We find deliverance from soul-melting sorrows through the blessings of faith. It is faith through which a perfect believer finds comfort and joy in the midst of anxiety, agony, torment and sorrow, and when he is confronted with failure in all directions and all the familiar doors appear locked and barred. Perfect faith removes all feeling of distance and separation. There is no wealth that can be compared to faith. In this world everyone, with the exception of the believer, is overwhelmed with grief. In this world everyone is afflicted with the agony of loss and unfulfilled desires, except a believer. Faith! how sweet are your fruits and how fragrant are your flowers; praise be to Allah, how wonderful are your blessings and what beautiful lights shine in you. No one can reach the Pleiades unless he is inspired by you. It has pleased God Almighty that now you should arrive and philosophy should depart. *Nothing can stop His grace.* [A'ina-e-Kamalat-e-Islam, Ruhani Khaza'in, vol. 5, pp. 270-273, footnote].

I have presented these extracts so that we might study them and be inspired by them. May Allah grant us a faith that is agreeable in His sight. Ameen.