

by Imam Zafrullah Domun

We are in the third week of March and as has been the tradition most Ahmadi Muslims gather to celebrate what has come to be known as the Masih Maood (as) day. For all young ones we remind that on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1889 Hazrat Masih Maood (as) took the first *bai'at* of the members of the Jamaat at a place called Ludhiana which is situated about 150 miles from Delhi. Within Jamaat Ahmadiyya mainstream this date is celebrated annually as the day on which the Jamaat was formally established. Speaking about this Jamaat and its aims Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad(as) said:

“Today, after a long interval, I wish to draw your attention to an important matter concerning the Divine scheme that God Almighty has entrusted to me for the support of Islam. I wish to expound before you the greatness of this Movement and the need for helping this scheme, as far as God Almighty has bestowed upon me the power of speech so that I should discharge the responsibility of propagation that is upon me. In this endeavor I am not concerned with the effect it might produce on the minds of the readers. My only purpose is to discharge adequately the duty that lies upon me and to convey the message, which is an obligation upon me, whether people listen to it with pleasure or look upon it with disdain, and whether they should think well of me in their hearts or otherwise. *“Wa ofawwezo amri ellallah wallaho basiroum bil ibaad”* which we translate as “I commit my affair to Allah, and Allah is well-aware of His servants.”

So we see that he deeply felt the sense of his mission. He established the Jamaat to support Islam and not to create division within Muslims as he was accused of by his opponents. Allah entrusted him with a task and he felt that he would strive to accomplish this task whatever people thought of him. And by the Grace of Allah he did his best in this endeavour and he achieved a lot before his death in 1908. Further he said:

“O seekers of truth and true lovers of Islam! You are well-aware that the time through which we are passing is so dark that all matters of faith and conduct have become corrupted and a strong wind of error and misguidance is blowing from every direction. Mere words have taken the place of faith. The term

‘righteous action’ is applied to a few ceremonies, extravagances and vain displays, and there is complete ignorance of true virtue. The philosophy and sciences of this age are also set against spiritual wellbeing. They have an ill-effect upon their votaries and are proven to pull them towards darkness. They stir up poisonous matters and awaken the sleeping Satan. Those connected with such philosophy and such sciences suffer so much from lack of faith that they ridicule Divinely promulgated principles and the prescribed forms of worship like Prayer and Fasting. Their hearts are devoid of any sense of God’s greatness. Most of them are dyed in heresy and steeped in atheism, and though they are descended from Muslims, they are the enemies of the faith. Most students of colleges withdraw from their allegiance to faith and lose all sympathy for it before they have completed their studies. Here I have only mentioned one branch which, in this age, is loaded with the fruits of misguidance, but there are hundreds of other branches which are no less harmful. Honesty and integrity have departed from the world as if they never existed. Fraudulent and deceptive schemes for earning worldly benefits have multiplied enormously. The most mischievous person is accounted the ablest. All manner of unrighteousness, dishonesty, illegitimacy, deceit, falsehood, cunning and greed are on the increase. Merciless rancour and disputes are multiplying and beastly sentiments and emotions are raging wherever you may look. As people get more and more proficient and cunning with regard to the current sciences and laws, to the same degree, their natural qualities of goodness, modesty, decency, fear of God and honesty are on the decline.”

It is true that some time back I had mentioned this extract. But it is so important that we digest its contents that I have chosen to repeat them on this occasion. What he said then is still valid today. People have forgotten what is virtue and they think that by following some ceremonies they are acquitting themselves of their responsibilities as a Muslim. The type of Muslim that Hazrat Masih Maood (as) was raised to create and the type of Muslim that one generally knows is not at all similar. Being a member of the Jamaat of the Promised Messiah means that one is ready to forsake the world in order to find God. It means a Muslim who is ever watchful that he never gives more importance or equivalent importance to anything or anyone as much as he gives to Allah. Such a Muslim worships no one besides Allah. Being a member of the Jamaat of the Promised Messiah means being a Muslim who is committed to purify his self in order to win the pleasure of Allah. It means that one is ready to make the necessary sacrifice to stay in prostration (sajdah) just to praise Allah and make entreaties to Him with tears overflowing from one’s eyes. It means being a Muslim who avoids all

types of sins, small ones and big ones, and doing once best to practice all types of virtues. Since new people join the Jamaat through birth and through conversions, therefore the effort for the creation of such Ahmadi Muslims would be constant always. At no time can the effort to create such good Ahmadi Muslims be ever relaxed.

Hazrat Masih Maood (as) says further:

“Be it known to you, O people, that one has been sent for the support of the faith but you have not recognized him. He is among you and is the one who is now speaking, but your eyes are under heavy veils. If your hearts seek the truth, it is easy to test the claim of a person who says that God Almighty speaks to him. Come to me and stay with me for two or three weeks so that, if God Almighty should so will, you might be able to observe with your own eyes the blessings that are falling upon me like rain and the light of Divine revelations that are descending upon me. He who seeks is the one who finds, and he who knocks is the one for whom the door is opened. If you shut your eyes and hide yourselves in a dark room and then complain that you cannot see the sun, you complain in vain. O ignorant one, open the door of your chamber and lift the veil from your eyes so that you should not only see the sun but should be illumined by its light. Some people say that it is enough support for the faith to form associations and establish schools, but they do not know what faith is or what the true purpose of our lives is or how this purpose might be achieved. Let them understand that the ultimate purpose of this life is to establish such a true and certain relationship with God Almighty as should deliver one from one’s selfish associations and bring one to the fountainhead of salvation. The ways of such perfect faith are not opened by means of human schemes and designs, nor can any man-made philosophy be of any avail. Rather it is God Almighty Who, through His special servants, always sends down this light from heaven at the time of darkness. He who comes from heaven leads to heaven.

So, O ye people who are sunk in the pit of darkness and are prisoners of doubts and misapprehensions and have become slaves of your passions, take no pride in your nominal and ceremonial Islam and do not depend upon your plans of forming associations and establishing schools to bring you true welfare and ultimate success. These devices are only of elementary benefit and can be regarded as the first stage of progress, but they are far removed from the true purpose. It is possible that through these devices intellects may be stimulated, or dispositions might become artistic, or logic might be bandied about, or academic distinctions might be acquired, and, perhaps, after a long period of study, they

might prove of some help in achieving the true purpose, [but that would be a case of “By the time the antidote is brought from Iraq, the snake-bitten one would die.”

Wake up, therefore, and be alert lest you should stumble and be confronted with the last journey in a condition of heresy and faithlessness. Be sure that any hope for prosperity in the hereafter cannot be based on these conventional sciences. What is needed is heavenly light that removes the dirt of doubts and misapprehensions and puts out the fire of lust and passion and draws one to God’s true love, true devotion and true obedience. If you examine your conscience you will recognize that you have not yet achieved the true comfort and satisfaction which in an instant brings about spiritual transformation. It is a matter of utmost regret that you do not entertain for the heavenly dispensation even a fraction of the eagerness that you show in your ceremonial affairs and for spreading the conventional sciences. You are spending your lives mostly in works which have no connection with faith, or have only a slight connection which is nowhere near the true purpose. If you had possessed the faculties of understanding, which lead to the true purpose, you would not rest until you had achieved it. O people, you have been created for the recognition, love and obedience to your True Creator and your True God. So long as this purpose, which is the ultimate aim of your creation, does not manifest itself clearly in you, you are far away from true redemption. Were you to speak justly, you would be a witness to your own inner condition and would confess that instead of worshipping God, you have installed in your heart a mighty idol of world-worship to which you prostrate yourselves a thousand times every moment. All your time is so devoted to idle and vain pursuits that you have no time for anything else. Do you realize what would be the result of such existence? Where is your sense of justice? Where is integrity? Where is the truthfulness, fear of God, honesty and meekness to which the Qur’an calls you? You do not recall even once in a number of years that you have a God, nor do you ever reflect on that which you owe to Him. The truth is that you have no interest and no relationship with the truly Self-Subsisting One. You hardly even think of Him. You will cleverly contend that this is not so, but God’s universal law puts you to shame when it reminds you that you do not possess the signs of the faithful ones. You claim vehemently that you are wise and serious-minded in your worldly affairs, yet your ability, intelligence and far-sightedness terminates within the sphere of the world. With this intelligence of yours, you cannot perceive even a small corner of that other universe wherein your souls have been created to dwell forever. You are content with the life of this world as if it would last

forever; but not once in your lifetime do you recall that other universe whose joys possess true satisfaction and are eternal. How unfortunate it is that you are totally heedless of, and have shut your eyes to, a mighty matter and you run eagerly after passing and temporary things. You are well-aware that you will certainly be overtaken by a moment in which your life and all your desires will instantly come to an end. It is a strange misfortune, however, that despite this knowledge you are wasting the whole of your time in running after the world, and this is not confined to legitimate means but you also resort to all kinds of illegitimate means beginning with falsehood and deceit and extending even to the unlawful shedding of blood. Despite all these shameful offences that are so widespread among you, you assert that you are in no need of heavenly light or a heavenly dispensation. On the contrary, you are set against it. You take the heavenly dispensation of God Almighty very lightly, so much so that you arrogantly and contemptuously find faults with it.”

All the extracts that I have mentioned today come from the Promised Messiah’s booklet “Fatah Islam”. What he said almost 125 years ago can still be applied today. If then he was addressing Muslims in general, today these words apply to Ahmadis as well. May Allah help each one amongst us to understand truly the purpose for which we are in this Jamaat and may Allah help us to fulfill that purpose in our own lifetime *incha* Allah.