

by Imam Zafrullah Domun

As we have repeatedly been saying each adult amongst us is responsible for his own salvation. Once a person starts understanding the purpose of his life as it should be understood it is in the interest of that person that he does his best to inculcate righteousness in himself. For that purpose, he or she will give an utmost importance to prayer and supplications to Allah every day that he lives. If he shows negligence in consolidating his relationship with Allah, he will soon notice that his connection with Allah will be loosened and he would be ill at ease. You will recall that Allah says in the Holy Quran “ *Alaa bezikrillahé tatma’innal qoloube*” meaning “ Surely it is in the remembrance of Allah that the heart is at ease.” This does not mean as some people might have concluded that we should shy away from the world and devote ourselves day and night in just the remembrance of Allah. Allah has prescribed five times of prayer for us. We should do our best to leave our worldly concerns and devote some time just to the remembrance of Allah at the time of these prayers. This is what we owe to Allah but in the end, it is for our own benefits. However even if we are not engaged in prayer we should always have in mind that Allah is watching over us. Hence we should not do or say or watch anything which may displease Him. This will be an extension of His remembrance. We should always remember this verse of the Holy Quran among others where Allah says “ *Wa howa ma’akoum ainama kountoum*” meaning “He is with you wherever you are”.

Today I will share with you some important extracts from the writings of the Promised Messiah about righteousness. He says:

“In the Holy Qur’an more emphasis has been laid on virtue and righteousness than on any other commandment. The reason for this is that righteousness bestows the strength to resist all vice and urges progress towards all good. Righteousness is in all circumstances a charm that guarantees security and is a citadel for safeguarding against all harm. A righteous person can avoid many vain and harmful contentions that often lead other people to ruin. They sow the seed of dissension among the people through their hasty actions and suspicions and lay themselves open to objection. [Ayyam-us-Sulh, *Ruhani Khaza’in*, vol. 14, p. 342]

“There are many elements in righteousness. It is righteousness to avoid pride and self-esteem and to refrain from unlawful acquisition and ill manners. A person who displays courtesy and good manners converts his enemies into friends.” [Malfuzat, vol. I, p. 81]

“Blessed is the one who adopts righteousness in a time of success and prosperity and most unfortunate is one who does not turn to righteousness after stumbling.” [Malfuzat, vol. I, p. 157]

“The spiritual beauty of man is to walk along all the finer ways of righteousness. They are the attractive features of spiritual beauty. It is obvious that to be mindful of the trusts of God Almighty, and to fulfil all the covenants of faith, and to employ all faculties and limbs both overt, like eyes and ears and hands and feet and others like them, and those that are covert, like the mind and other faculties and qualities, on their proper occasions and to restrain them from coming into action on improper occasions, and to be warned against the subtle attacks of vice and to be mindful of the rights of one’s fellow beings, is the way of perfecting one’s spiritual beauty. God Almighty has in the Holy Qur’an designated righteousness as a raiment. *Libas-ut-taqwa*(the garment of righteousness) is an expression of the Holy Qur’an(see 7:27). This is an indication that spiritual beauty and spiritual ornament are achieved through righteousness. Righteousness means that one must be mindful even of the smallest details of the Divine trusts and covenants and also of all the trusts and covenants of one’s fellow beings, as far as it may be possible. That is, one must try to fulfil, to the best of one’s ability, all the requirements in their minutest details. [Brahin-e-Ahmadiyya, Part V, *Ruhani Khaza’in*, vol. 21, pp. 209-210]

True righteousness and ignorance cannot subsist together. True righteousness is accompanied by a light, as God the Glorious, has said: “*Yaa ayyohallazina amanou in tattaqoullaha yaj’allakoum fourqanan way o kaffir ankoum sayye aatekoum wa yaj’allakoum nouran tamshouna behi*”(8:30) That is, O ye who believe, if you remain steadfast in righteousness and hold fast to it for the sake of Allah, with firmness and perseverance, He will single you out from among your detractors with marked distinction. That is, you shall be blessed with a light which will accompany you wherever you go. That is to say, that that light would illumine all their actions and words and faculties and senses. Their intellect would be illumined and there

would be light in all that they utter. There would be light in their eyes and in their ears and in their tongues and in their speech and in all their movements. The ways along which they walk would be lit up. All their ways, the ways of their faculties and their senses will be filled with light, and they will walk altogether in light. [*A'ina-e-Kamalat-e-Islam*, Ruhani Khaza'in, vol. 5, pp. 177-178]

“There is a great distinction between the acquisition of worldly knowledge and knowledge of the Holy Qur'an. Righteousness is not needed for the study of grammar, physics, philosophy, astronomy, medicine, etc. It is not necessary that a student of these subjects should observe *Salat* and the fast and should be mindful of Divine commandments and prohibitions and should subordinate his every action and word to Divine directions. Indeed, it often happens that the seekers of such knowledge become atheistic and are involved in every kind of vice. Today the world presents a remarkable spectacle. Though the people of Europe and America acquire high proficiency in worldly arts and sciences and daily make new inventions, their moral and spiritual condition is deplorable. We cannot even mention some of the scenes that are witnessed in the parks of London and the hotels of Paris and are published in the daily press. On the other hand, righteousness is an essential condition for heavenly learning and for acquiring knowledge of the mysteries of the Holy Qur'an. For this purpose, sincere repentance is needed. For the door of Qur'anic knowledge is not opened until a seeker of it carries the burden of Divine commands with perfect humility and meekness and turns to Him humbly, trembling before His glory and His might. Without these he cannot obtain from the Holy Qur'an the means of fostering those qualities and faculties which generate delight and comfort for the soul. The Holy Qur'an is the Book of God and its knowledge is in the hand of God; thus righteousness is the ladder for the acquisition of such knowledge. Then how can it be possible that the faithless wicked who are evil-minded and are held prisoner by their earthly passions should achieve such knowledge? A Muslim who does not purify his soul is not bestowed knowledge of the Holy Qur'an, however high may be his proficiency in grammar and literary subjects, and however much he might enjoy the esteem of the worldly. At this time the attention of the world is centered upon worldly knowledge and the light of Western learning continues to astonish mankind with new inventions

and manufactures. Unfortunately, the Muslims also have chosen to follow the West for the purpose of fostering their own welfare and they take pride in copying Europe and America. That is the attitude of the Muslims who follow the new light. Those who are known as old fashioned Muslims and deem themselves the guardians of the faith are caught in the niceties of points of grammar and in determining the correct manner of the pronunciation of *Dallin*. They pay no attention to the true meaning of the Holy Qur'an, nor are they capable of doing so as they do not address themselves to the purification of their souls. [Malfuzat, vol. I, pp. 425-427]

Speaking on the qualities of righteousness he says:

“To become truly righteous it is necessary that a person abandoning utterly such outstanding vices as adultery, theft, trespass, hypocrisy, self-esteem, scorn of fellow beings, miserliness, should eschew all low morals and should make progress in high moral values. He should behave towards his fellow beings with politeness, courtesy and sympathy and should cultivate true fidelity and sincerity towards God Almighty. He should constantly seek occasions of beneficent service. He who combines all these qualities in himself is alone righteous. The possession of any one of these qualities would not entitle a person to be accounted righteous unless he possesses collectively all of them. It is only these concerning whom it is said: “*Laa khawfoune alayhim wa laahoum yahzanoune*” meaning “‘On them shall come no fear, nor shall they grieve.’(7:36) What more would they need? God Almighty become their guardian as it is said: “*Wa howa yatawallas swaleheen*” meaning ‘And He protects the righteous’ (7:197).

In another Hadith it is stated that God Almighty becomes their hands with which they grasp, and becomes their eyes with which they see, and becomes their ears with which they hear and becomes their feet with which they walk. In another Hadith it is stated that God has proclaimed that he who bears enmity towards a friend of Mine should become ready to contend with Me. Still another Hadith declares that when anyone attacks a friend of God, He pounces upon him with the fierceness with which a tigress pounces upon one who seeks to deprive it of its young. [Malfuzat, vol. IV, pp. 400-401]

In a poem Hazrat Masih Maood (as) has expressed his thoughts about righteousness (*taqwa*) in the following words:

We have been granted righteousness by that Friend;

It is not from us; for it is a gift of God.

Strive hard if you are truthful and sincere;

So that you attain righteousness, which is the prerequisite
to communion with the Beloved (*Liqā*).

This is the mirror which reflects the Creator;

This alone sharpens the sword of prayer.

The root of every virtue is the fear of God (*Ittiqā*);

If this root is intact, everything will remain intact.

This alone is the hallmark of the lofty status of saints;

What more do they have, except righteousness?

Fear Him O friends! He is the All-Seeing God;

If you ponder over it, even this world is the place of reward and punishment.

He granted me this reward because of righteousness

Glory be to Him, Who put my enemies to shame.

What a wonderful gem is *Taqwa*!

Blessed is he who practices *Taqwa*.

Listen! The essence of Islam is *Taqwa*!

Love of God is the wine and *Taqwa* is the goblet.

Muslims! Live *Taqwa* in full;

Where is faith, if one is deficient in *Taqwa*?

This wealth, O God, You have granted me;

Glory be to Him, Who put my enemies to shame.

[Durr-e-Thamin Urdu]

In another poem he says :

“They alone are alive who are close to God;

Being accepted, they are the darling and beloved of God.

Those who are far from *Taqwa* are far from God;
They are perpetual prisoners of their pride, haughtiness and arrogance.
Friends! *Taqwa* means that you give up self-conceit;
Give up the habit of pride, arrogance and miserliness.
Renounce the love of this transient abode;
For that Beloved, give up the ways of luxury.
This way is the cursed way, give it up;
Or forget about (attaining closeness to) the Exalted God.
Accept the life of hardship with utmost sincerity;
So that angels of heaven may descend upon you.

[Brahin-e-Ahmadiyya, Part. V, Ruhani Khaza'in, vol. 21, pp. 17-18)

May Allah beautify each one amongst us with *taqwa* and may He put all of us among His best Friends *incha Allah*.