

by Imam Zafrullah Domun

A hundred and twenty-nine years ago, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi laid the foundation of Jamaat Ahmadiyya. The year was 1889 and of course the date was 23 March. It was a Saturday. Approximately a year earlier, Hazrat Ahmad had been directed through revelation to lay the foundation of a Community of his followers by inviting them to enter a covenant of spiritual allegiance to him. He waited for some time to do so before making the announcement on 1st December 1888. It is this pamphlet that was published on a green paper and was known in Urdu as *Sabze Ishtehaar* (the green pamphlet). It was written with a view to explain the truth about the first Bashir who was born after the announcement of 20th February 1886 but who died some months later. At the end of the pamphlet, the Promised Messiah added:

“Another message that I wish to convey to the people at large, and to my Muslim brothers in particular, is that I have been commanded to receive **an oath of allegiance (*Bai‘at*) from seekers after truth who wish to acquire true faith and purity, and yearn to find the path to Allah’s love, and want to give up their foul, slothful and false existence.** Whosoever finds in himself the willingness to do this must come to me. I will be their comforter and will do my best to ease their burden. God will bless them through my prayers and my attention, provided they are ready heart and soul to abide by His conditions. This is a Divine command which I have hereby conveyed. The actual words of the revelation in Arabic are as follows: *‘Iza azamta fatawakkal alallah wasnail foulka be ayyonena wa wahyena innallazina yobayeounaka innama yobayeounallah yadoullahe fawqa aydihim’* The translation of these words are as follows:

“When thou hast determined a matter then trust in Allah and build the Ark under Our eyes and according to Our instructions. Those who enter into covenant with thee enter into a covenant with Allah. Allah’s Hand is above their hands.”

After about 40 days of this publication, the Promised Messiah published another pamphlet in which he explained what the conditions that those who wanted to enter his jamaat should fulfill. We should all remind ourselves of

these conditions often if we really want to be Ahmadi Muslims who are different from others in behaviour and not only in declarations. So, I will go through them rapidly at this moment. They are as follows:

A person who desires to make the covenant should make up his mind firmly:

First, that up to the date of his death, he shall abstain altogether from associating anything with Allah in his worship;

Secondly, that he shall keep away altogether from falsehood, adultery, gazing at women outside the prohibited degrees, cruelty, dishonesty, disorder, rebellion and every kind of evil; and shall not allow himself to be carried away by his passions, however strong they may be;

Thirdly, that he shall perform the five daily acts of worship, according to the divine command and the directions of the Holy Prophet, and shall try to the best of his ability to offer the late night voluntary prayers to invoke the blessings of Allah upon the Holy Prophet, to ask forgiveness for his own sins and for supplicating Allah for His help; and that reminding himself of Allah's bounties, shall praise Him continuously;

Fourthly, that he shall in no way do harm to any of Allah's creatures in general and to Muslims in particular by giving way to his passions, neither with his hands, nor with his tongue, nor by any other means;

Fifthly, that in every state whether of joy or of sorrow, of prosperity or adversity, he shall prove himself faithful to Allah and shall be ready to endure every kind of insult and pain, and that in the hour of misfortune he shall not turn away from God but shall rather draw closer to Him;

Sixthly, that he shall not follow vulgar customs and shall guard against all evil inclinations, and shall submit himself completely to the authority of the Holy Quran and shall make the Word of Allah and the practice of the Holy Prophet the guiding principles of his life;

Seventhly, that he shall discard pride and haughtiness and shall pass his days in humility, lowliness, courtesy and meekness;

Eighthly that he shall hold his religion and the dignity and welfare of Islam dearer than his life, wealth and children and everything else;

Ninthly, that he shall, for the sake of Allah, have sympathy for Allah's creatures and shall, to the best of his ability, devote his natural talents towards the promotion of their welfare; and

Tenthly, that he shall establish a relationship of brotherhood with me on condition of obeying me in all good things and adhere to it till the day of his death and that this relationship shall be of such high order that the like of it shall not be found in any worldly relationship either of family or between master and servant.

Some people wrongly think that we are a different type of Muslim. Ahmadi Muslims who take to heart these teachings and who strive to abide by them throughout their lives are different only in this sense that they try to do their utmost to abide by the teachings that are found in the Holy Quran and by the example of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw). These days, even mainstream Ahmadi Muslims should wonder how far they are doing their best to abide by the noble teachings that the Promised Messiah has given us. It is unfortunate that among these mainstream Ahmadis we have seen so many who have flouted these teachings and who have put them behind their backs. Now I will read a long extract from this pamphlet to share with you the thoughts of the Promised Messiah about some important matters. He said:

“Finally, let it be clear that I have complete and absolute trust in my Lord to take care of my affairs, and I am not bothered whether people are with me or against me, whether they accept my claim or reject it, whether they like me or hate me. Disregarding everyone, and considering everything, except God, to be as good as dead, I carry on with my mission. There are some from among our own people and belonging to our own religion who look disdainfully at what I am doing, but I make allowances for them knowing that what has been revealed to me has not been revealed to them, and the thirst that I feel has not been felt by them. *“Koulloun yamalo ala shakilatehi”* i.e. “Everyone acts according to his own way”(17:85). At this juncture, I would also like to mention that I have learned through some articles written by certain scholars that they do not approve of my revealing to other people the spiritual blessings and heavenly signs which I experience and which find their culmination in the acceptance of prayer and in Divine revelations and visions. They argue that all this is based on guesswork and surmise, and proves to be more harmful than beneficial. They also say that these phenomena are more or less common to all human beings, some even going so far as to suggest that they are experienced by all people in equal measure. They tend to think that religion and piety and establishing a relationship with God have nothing

to do with such experiences, and that these are natural abilities common to all people. Whether one is a believer or a disbeliever, pious or impious, one will possess these abilities more or less equally. This is their stated point of view and it clearly betrays the weakness of their intellect, their superficial thinking and their lack of knowledge. But when we go on to analyze their condition with the aid of true insight, we find that negligence and worldliness have completely eroded their ability to understand the matters of faith. Like lepers whose limbs begin to rot in the advanced stage of the disease, their worldliness has caused their spiritual faculties to fall into decay. They do not at all reflect upon religious truths and verities and are given to mockery and ridicule, doubt and suspicion. They are indeed so cut off from the truth, and so averse to seeking true knowledge, that they never once ask themselves why they have come into this world and what is the purpose of their existence. They indulge, night and day, in the pursuit of material things and have lost all consciousness of how far they have strayed from the truth. Even more unfortunate is the fact that they take their own fatal illness for health, and look down upon those who are blessed with true well-being. They do not value the excellences of Sainthood and of nearness to God, and have given in to hopelessness and despondency. Should they continue in this state, they are in danger of losing their faith even in Prophethood. The fact that some ulema have reached this appalling state and consider these spiritual blessings to be impossible or doubtful is not because they have any personal experience in this regard. In fact, they are not even inclined to go through such an experience and have never allowed themselves any opportunity to form an opinion based on a comprehensive analysis, nor do they wish to do so. Their suspicions are based, not on any of their own investigation, but only on the objections my prejudiced opponents have levelled against my two prophecies. Consequently, they have accepted a set of beliefs about the blessings of sainthood and nearness to God that is similar to positivism and naturalism. They should at least have considered whether my opponents had forwarded any proof against me, and if there was no such proof and it was all mere empty talk, then was it in keeping with the norms of reason and faith that they allowed themselves to be influenced by such baseless slander? Even if we suppose, for the sake of argument, that I did make an error in interpreting a Divine revelation and published it in a formal announcement, no reasonable person should consider this objectionable, for even Prophets are not free from making such errors. Let me add that, so far, I have been blessed by God with more than seven thousand true visions and revelations, and it is an ongoing process with spiritual wonders raining down upon me, night and day. Fortunate is he who surrenders himself to this Divine dispensation and avails himself of heavenly bounties, and there is none more unfortunate than he who remains oblivious to these blessings and makes it his habit to level baseless

objections and express uninformed opinions. I warn such people, for the sake of Allah, that they have estranged themselves from the truth and from understanding the truth by giving in to such ideas. If, according to their assertion, it were indeed true that there is nothing special or unique about visions and revelations, and they cannot be considered a criterion for distinguishing between a common man and a chosen one, or between a believer and a non-believer, then those who seek God would surely be devastated. But let me assure them that Islam possesses this wonderful spiritual quality that whoever follows its teaching, truthfully and sincerely, is blessed with special Divine communion, and experiences in his own self the signs of acceptance that other people never can. This is an inescapable reality and countless righteous people become privy to it through their own experience. But only those can attain these heights who truly and sincerely follow the Holy Prophet (saw) and, casting off their earthly garb, don the heavenly robes. In other words, they kill their earthly passions and enter into a new life of Divine servitude. Even Muslims who are weak of faith have no affinity with these godly ones, let alone comparing them to disbelievers and sinners. Their condition is only revealed to those seekers after truth who remain in their company for some time. It was with this in mind that I sent letters and announcements to leaders of various sects inviting them to [come and stay with me and] test my claim. If they had been sincere in their search for truth, they would have come in earnest, but, as it was, none of them responded to my invitation, and whenever any of my prophecies was fulfilled, they tried to make it look dubious. If our own Muslim ulema have such hesitation in accepting this truth, then there is no point in inviting others to it. Let the ulema, who include eminent intellectuals and scholars, come and test my claim first. If they patiently and honestly spend some time in my company, they will surely find the truth. If it turns out that my claim is false, I will repent at their hands, otherwise I am hopeful that God will open for them the door to repentance and forgiveness. Their admonitions to me will only be meaningful if, after the publication of this writing, they put my claim to test and their views are substantiated beyond any shadow of doubt. But at the moment their admonitions carry no meaning. (The green pamphlet p20-26)

May Allah help each one amongst us to truly understand the message of the Promised Messiah and to be as fearless of enemies as he was, incha Allah.