

by Imam Zafrullah Domun

As in previous sermons, we will today continue to read more extracts from the book “Noah’s Ark” of the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as). In fact, we will, *incha* Allah, finish with the book today. Last week, we spoke about the need for an Ahmadi Muslim to be fully convinced of the existence of Allah to get free of the bondage of sin. We will proceed from where we left off. The Promised Messiah said:

“But the most important question is how to win the blessings. To this question God Himself has given the answer, He says: *Wastainou bis sabre wassalaat* i.e., Seek help from God with prayer and perseverance. What is salat? It is a prayer addressed to God in true humility of spirit and the fullest awareness of His purity, His praiseworthiness, His holiness, coupled with a burning desire on the part of the devotee for Divine forgiveness, and for blessing on the Holy Prophet. Therefore, when you stand up for prayer, do not, like ignorant people, confine yourself to the prescribed Arabic text, for the prayers and the *Istighfaar* of many people is only formal, with no reality in it. When you stand up for prayer, do not, like ignorant people, confine yourself to the prescribed Arabic text; over and above the prayers found in the Quran, which is the Word of God, and in the Hadith, which is the word of the Holy Prophet, address your petitions to the Lord in your own language, with heartfelt humility which should leave a lasting effect on the mind. In prayer lies the remedy for coming tribulations. You have no idea what the coming day has in store for you, Therefore, ere the day dawn, pray every time that for you it should be a day of blessings and peace.”

Here we will again pause and reflect. The Promised Messiah (as) has told us that the only way to obtain Allah’s Blessings is through Salaat. The verse that he has quoted to this effect is “seek help with patience and prayer.” I personally think that this is one of the most important verse that we should remember from the Holy Quran. Why? Because it gives us hope. It helps us to understand that in any difficult situation, we should have hope that Allah has the capacity to change conditions in our favour and we might get a way out from the difficult situation in which we find ourselves. But for Allah to intervene in our affairs we should pray with full sincerity and keep Allah present in our mind. It is only such prayers that are offered with full humility and full knowledge of our unimportance that can be accepted by Him. So,

again, we should all be concerned about how we pray. We should ask ourselves whether we are praying as a formality or are we praying with the hope of changing some events courses or for self-improvement. We should all bear this in mind if we want to profit by what the Promised Messiah expects from us. He continues:

“O ye who are rich, who are kings, who are millionaires: among you there are few who fear God and remain truthful and steadfast in all His ways. Most are such that they attach their hearts to the riches of this world, spending all their lives in this preoccupation, without giving any thought to death. Every rich man who does not address himself to God in prayer, whose attitude to God is one of heedlessness, will have on his head the sins of all those who are connected with him. Every rich man who drinks shall have on his head the sin of all those under him who drink with him. O ye wise! This world will not last forever. Take a hold on yourself and be steady. Give up every excess, leave all intoxicants. Wines, and beers, and whiskies, and the like, are not the only harmful drinks. Opium *ganja*, *charas*, *bhang*, *taree*, and all other intoxicants, the use of which with you becomes a matter of habit, have all a deadly effect on the brain, and in the end prove fatal. You should keep away from all such things. In fact we cannot understand at all how and why you take to the use of things which, in front of your own eyes, every year prove to be undoing of thousands of people and bring about their death, while the punishment to come in the world hereafter is something quite apart, over and above the disadvantages which go with these things here. Become righteous and God-fearing, so that you should live longer lives, and be blessed by God. Too much indulgence in luxurious, easy, irresponsible living is a curse, as it is ill mannered, and heartless, to be indifferent to the sufferings of others. ”

Here I may add that whatever the Promised Messiah has said about the ill effects of alcohol and other intoxicants is truer today more than it was in his time. Both alcohol and drugs are wreaking havoc in people’s lives these days. Unfortunately, even Ahmadi Muslims are not immune to these social ills. He continues:

“Every rich man is as much answerable over the due discharge of his obligations to his Creator and his fellowmen, as a poor man is. In fact, a rich man is even more answerable, indeed how unfortunate is he, for the sake of this brief life in this world, who completely turns away from God; who uses forbidden things with such fearlessness as if they were quite lawful; when angry, who raves upon people like a madman, using abusive language, ready to wound and kill; and who, in the pursuit of his lust, becomes shameless in

the extreme. Such a one will never know real prosperity. My dear people! You are in this world only for a few days, of which a large part is already past. Do not displease your Master. Even a temporal government, if displeased with you, can destroy you. Therefore, how much more it behoves you not to displease your Creator. **No one can destroy you if you are held righteous in the eyes of the Lord. He will Himself protect you, and no enemy thirsting for your blood shall be able to harm you.** Otherwise there is no protection for you, and you shall have to live in constant fear of your enemies, uneasy and restless, full of forebodings; and the later days of your lives would pass in great anguish of mind. God Himself becomes the protection of those who stand with Him. Therefore, come to God, and leave off all kinds of opposition to Him. Never be negligent in the discharge of the obligations He has laid on you. **Never oppress His creatures, with hand or word of mouth, and always remain in fear of the wrath of heaven, for herein lies the only way to salvation."**

Here I would like to say that had mainstream Ahmadi Muslims leaders been a little bit assiduous in their reading of this book of the Promised Messiah, they would have escaped from the error of misunderstanding the clear and simple teachings of Islam. If in Allah's sight, we (members of Jamaat Ahmadiyya Al Mouslemeen) are righteous, no one can destroy us or inflict any pain on us through their ill thought, bigoted, self-harming policies. People of Allah are not afraid at all of those who do not share their understanding of Islam. The Promised Messiah says further:

“O ye learned people among the Muslims! Do not be hasty in rejecting me as false. There are many profound secrets which man cannot comprehend in a hurry, all at once. You should not be ready to reject a thing the moment you hear it, for this is not the way of the righteous. Had there been no errors among you, and if you had not interpreted certain Ahadith in a manner contrary to their real sense, then the advent of the Messiah, as a judge and adjudicator among you, would have been a useless thing. The mission you assign to this advent, namely, that he would join force with the Mahdi, to make war on all in order forcibly to convert them to Islam, is a belief which brings disgrace to Islam. Where at all is it written in the Quran that war is permissible for the sake of spreading one's religion by force? On the contrary we find Allah saying in the Holy Book: “*Laa ikraha fid deen*” i.e., “There is no compulsion in matters connected with religion”. Then wherefrom would the Messiah, son of Mary, get the right to use force for converting people to Islam? The entire Quran is replete to the effect that there can be no coercion in religion; and it is absolutely clear on the point that when the Holy Prophet took up the sword, he did not do so to spread Islam by this means, but (i) as a

due punishment for these who had killed a large number of Muslims, and had driven out many others from their homes. We read in the Holy Book: "Permission has been given to those who fight because they had been oppressed, and Allah indeed has the power to help them (despite the odds against them)". (ii) Or these wars were defensive, fought against people who were leaving no stone unturned to extirpate Islam and to stop its propagation by force of arms. (iii) Or they were fought to assert legitimate freedoms. Apart from campaigns under-taken for these three aims, the Holy Prophet and his blessed *Khalifas* fought no war, whatsoever. In fact, before taking up arms in self-defense, Islam bore oppression with silent fortitude to an extent of which there is no example in the history, of other peoples. Then what kind of a Messiah and Mahdi would these be who would embark on their mission by putting their opponents to the sword right from the start.

Similarly, the hereditary heads of the so-called spiritual orders and the *pirs* of this country, are so far cut off from Islam, engrossed day and night in their pernicious innovations, that they have no idea of the difficult times through which Islam is passing. If you attend their assemblies, instead of the Holy Quran and the Hadith, you will find them bending and swaying over musical instruments and *qawwalis* with numerous innovations (*bid'ats*) in evidence. But despite all this they claim to be religious leaders and followers of the Holy Prophet. Indeed, anybody and everybody can claim that he loves God. But **only he loves God, in reality, to whose love heaven itself should bear witness.** Everyone claims that he is a follower of the true religion, but the religion **of that man alone is true who obtains light in this very life itself. And everybody says that he will get salvation, but only he is justified in making this claim who is given light in this earthly life itself.** My dear people! This is the time for serving the cause of the religion you claim to profess. Realize the value of this rare opportunity, for if you let it slip, it will not offer itself to you a second time. Being the followers of such a great and exalted Prophet, why do you lose heart? Be firm of faith, and set an example that even the angels in heaven should wonder at your strength and steadfastness, and should pray for blessings on you. With this I finish, and pray that this teaching of mine should be fruitful for you, working a change in your hearts which should make you like stars on this earth, filling the globe with the light and life you get from the Lord, Amen! (Noah's Ark P25-30).

So here we end our reading of this most important book of the Promised Messiah (as). But this is not sufficient. Our sisters and brothers should make it a habit to read and reread this book because it will help each one amongst us to better understand what we need to do to improve ourselves every day. May Allah help each one amongst us. May we be the people who live by these teachings every day, every hour of our life *incha* Allah.