

by Imam Zafrullah Domun

As you might well remember, in my past sermons I have tried to read Hazrat Masih Maood's (as) book "*Kishti Nuh*", which has been translated as "Noah's Ark" in its entirety, to the members so that they might know what are the essential teachings that the Promised Messiah has bequeathed us. As far I am concerned, I think that I have done my duty in making our members aware about what is expected of them. But knowledge without practice does not mean much. In fact, if we have knowledge and we preach it but we do not live by it we are guilty in the eyes of Allah as we learn from the following verse of the Holy Quran "*Kabora maqtan indallahi an taqoulou maa laa taf'aloune*" which we translate as "It is hateful in the sight of Allah that you say what you do not do". Hence, we should all try to see to it that our behaviour is in conformity with our teachings or else we would be sinners in the sight of Allah. I recall from memory that our beloved Prophet Muhammad (saw) used to pray also in the following words "*Allahoumma moqallebil qoloube sabbit qalbi ala dineka*" which we translate as "O the Converter of Hearts, make my heart steadfast on Faith." In fact, from the hadith we learn that Hadrat Shahr bin Haushub (ra) asked Hadrat Umm-e-Salamah (ra) to tell him the most often repeated prayer of the Holy Prophet (saw). She told him this prayer. Hadrat Umm-e-Salamah (ra) had enquired from the Holy Prophet (saw) why he repeated this prayer so often. He replied, "God is in total control of a person's heart, as if the heart is held between His two fingers and He can turn it whenever He wants." So if we want to have a successful life, we should try to learn what it is first and then devote all our energy and prayers to its achievement.

Today I will be reading from the promised Messiah's Malfoozaat some words that might inspire us to become better persons. He said:

"This is not at all worth forgetting that the Holy Quran which is the best of the scriptures (and the last law bearing Book) is not a collection of stories. Those who, because of misunderstanding or in an effort to cover the truth, have called this book a collection of stories are devoid of the sense of the truth - realization. The fact is contrary to what these people think, the Holy Quran has given a philosophical touch to the incidents mentioned in it, and it

must be admitted that by so doing it has laid the previous scriptures and the prophets under obligation. Had the Holy Quran not dealt with them as it has, those things would have become a laughing stock in this age. This, too, is the grace of God that in this Age which is the Age of the advancement of knowledge and various facts are being discovered, He has established this Dispensation (Jamaat Ahmadiyya) to disclose the heavenly secrets. What was considered to be nothing more than ordinary stories and were being mocked in this Age of science, has been presented to the world (by this Dispensation) in a philosophical manner. (Malfoozat Vol. III, p. 153)

“I tell you the truth that nobody can attain to salvation through these stories unless he studies the Holy Quran, for there is no other Book except the Holy Quran about which it is said *innahoo la-qaulun faslun wa ma howa bil-hazl*, “it is a Scale, Protector, a Light and Cure and Mercy”. Those who study the Holy Quran and take it as stories, do not really study the Holy Quran (they do not understand it), rather they degrade it. Why are my opponents so strongly opposed to me? Simply because I want to show the Holy Quran according to the command of God-as a light, Wisdom and a means of God realization. On the other hand, they want to show it as no more than ordinary stories. I cannot tolerate this. God, through His Grace, has made it clear to me that the Holy Quran is a living Book and full of light. Why should I mind the opposition? I am repeatedly advising those who are with me that this Dispensation has been started by God to reveal the fact and to make them conspicuous, for, without this, there can be no Light in the practical life. I should like the Beauty of Islam to be shown to the world through practical truth. It is for this that God has commissioned me. You should study the Holy Quran in depth and do so as if you study a philosophy and not just some stories. {Malfoozat, Vol. III, p. 155).

Now take some time and wonder how many Ahmadi Muslims are keen to study the Holy Quran with this objective in mind. Look at what people do these days. They spend much of their time in fruitless pursuits and they are not at all keen to delve into the teachings of the Holy Quran. Most people would read it only in the month of Ramadan without even trying to learn what it says. Reread what the Promised Messiah has told us in the above extract and you will learn that he expected each one amongst us to read directly from the Holy Quran so that we might know what Allah expects from us and that we might be enlightened by the light of the Holy Quran.

The Promised Messiah said further:

“A true Muslim is he who devotes the whole of himself (all aspects of his life) for the pleasure of God and hands himself over to Him. His beliefs and his actions, his target and his ambitions are all directed towards the achievement of His pleasure. All the good deeds that he performs are a matter of pleasure for him and he feels a sort of sweetness in doing them; he finds no difficulty in those good and virtuous deeds. These good deeds turn every difficulty into comfort.

A true Muslim loves God the Almighty taking Him to be his beloved and his Master who is all benevolence. It is for this reason that he puts down his head at His doorstep. If a true Muslim is told that he would get no reward for these good deeds of his-and also that there is no Paradise and no Hell, nor is there any comfort or pleasure, he would never abandon his good deeds and he would never do away with his love for God, for he does not worship God nor he obeys Him in the hope of any rewards from Him. He does all these things because he thinks that his very existence is aimed at the recognition of God and His love and obedience, and that there is no other aim of his life than this. When he uses his powers in doing good and appropriate deeds, he sees God before his eyes and he does not mind paradise or hell. If I were told that I would be severely punished for my love for God and my obedience to Him I would bear all the hardships and I would take the pains of the punishment as a great pleasure and I would never leave loving or obeying Him. Even one step away from obedience to God is tantamount to a thousand rather innumerable deaths and collection of all the difficulties and hardships. It is as if a king were to announce that a mother who would give no suck to her baby would be rewarded; no mother would abandon giving suck to her baby in the hope of the reward from the king. Likewise, a true Muslim, whatever the promises of reward and comforts for him, would never go even one step away from obedience to God; he would deem it a destruction for himself. (Malfoozat Vol. III, p.182)

Being an Ahmadi Muslim is definitely a plus compared to many other Muslims. However, what should distinguish us is that by Allah's Grace, we strive to consolidate our relationship with Allah. How do we do this? We do our best every day to read our five daily prayers and that too by feeling the presence of Allah. Furthermore, we remain constantly aware that we are all

sinners and we seek Allah's Forgiveness as much as we can during the day and night by repeating plenty of *Istighfaar*. Similarly, we think about the beneficence of the Holy Prophet Mohammad (saw) on this Ummah and we pray for his elevation by repeating Darood as much as we can. In addition, we do our best to remember Allah in the morning and in the evening. And we make it a habit to ask Allah for all our needs whatever they might be. Hazrat Masih Maood (as) tells us:

“I tell you the truth that God has afforded an opportunity to the good-natured people. Blessed are those who try to be benefited by it. You who have joined me should not exult in the fact that you have attained to all that you had to.

Of course, it is a fact that you are better than those who have disbelieved and belittled me and thus attracted the wrath of God. This also is true that you thought well of me and thus saved yourself from the anger of God. But still, this remains a fact that you have only reached the fountain the spring, which God has now made to flow for eternal life; you have yet to drink from this spring. You should pray to God that He may enable you to drink to your fill; nothing can be obtained without the help of God. I know for certain that whoever drinks from this spring will not perish, for this water is life-giving and it safeguards against destruction and protects from the attacks of the Satan. How can you drink from this spring to your fill? You can do so by performing the two duties that God has assigned to you: one, your duty towards your God, and two, your duty towards His creatures.

You should take your God to be One and without any partner as you declare through the words: *Ash hado alla ilaha illallah* i.e. “I bear witness that there is none other than Allah who is our beloved and whom we are seeking and whom we must obey”. It is so lovely a phrase that if the Jews and Christians or other idol worshippers had been taught this thing and if they had understood it properly, they would have never perished. The reason why they have perished is that they did not have this *Kalima*; that is what made their soul leprous and that is what caused destruction. (Malfoozat, Vol. III, p.184)

Now even if you are an Ahmadi Muslim and you neglect showing through your behaviour that you follow the teachings that Hazrat Ahmad (as) gave then you are being negligent and you are not the productive Muslim that you should have been by joining this Jamaat. We should all bear this well in mind that we are in Jamaat Ahmadiyya to exemplify the noble teachings of Islam

and not to behave contrary to the teachings of Islam even if the leaders of the community ask you to do so. Remember that Hazrat Masih Maood (as) told us that even if we ignore one of the approximately 700 injunctions of the Holy Quran we would be closing the door of salvation on our own selves. Then what will be the situation of those who say that they have followed their leaders in ignoring the teachings of Islam. There is no doubt that the leaders would receive double punishment but the followers also would be guilty. May Allah help each Ahmadi Muslim to better understand and put into practice the noble teachings that Hazrat Masih Maood (as) gave us. Ameen.