

by Imam Zafrullah Domun

We Ahmadi Muslims strive to practice the Islam that was practiced by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw). We do our best not to blindly follow traditions and we try to stay away from all sorts of innovations. It is for such reasons that we do not follow some practices of most Muslims, especially those who say that they are the *Ahle Sunna wal Jamaa'a*. For example, on the 15th of *Shabaan*, that is this month, many Muslims remain awake to observe special prayers at night and some even visit cemeteries. However when we read about the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw) and his *khulafas*, we do not have any record of such practices on any particular night especially not the night of *meraj* (ascension). Furthermore, our understanding of *meraj* is that it was a spiritual ascension to heaven and not a bodily ascension, as many Muslims believe. I am saying this so that our younger generation might know why we refrain from following the majority of Muslims in some practices. I hope they will bear this in mind and that they defend our position whenever anyone makes any objection about us about these practices. Now we will continue to enlighten ourselves with the noble, faith inspiring and life-giving words of the Promised Messiah, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as). He said:

“It simply is not possible to achieve success without following the teachings of the Holy Quran. If somebody thinks otherwise, it is a mere imaginative thinking; the (worldly) people are seeking success of this kind. You should keep the example of the Companions of the Holy Prophet *saliiallaho alaihi wa sallam*, before you. Look at them; they followed the Holy Prophet, *sallallahu alaihi wa sallam*, and gave preference to religion over worldly affairs. The result was that God fulfilled all the promises that He had made with them. At the initial stage, the opponents mocked them saying that they could not come out in the open freely, yet they were claiming to become the kings of the world. But having lost themselves in perfect obedience to the Holy Prophet, *sallallahu alaihi wa sallam*, they were able to achieve what had not been their lot for many centuries. They loved the Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet, *sallallahu alaihi wa sallam*, and they kept themselves busy in following them day and night.

They would not follow the unbelievers even in the matters of their customs. All the time that Islam was passing through these conditions, it was in its supremacy, the reason being that "if you have God with you, you have nothing to worry about."

The key to the successes and victories of the Muslims was also faith. {Malfoozat Vol. II, p. 157)

“I do not mean that the Muslims should become lethargic. Islam does not make anyone lethargic. They should carry on their trades and services as usual. But what I really do not like is that they should have no place for God. They should trade when it is time for them to trade but while trading they must have the fear of God in their hearts so that their trade, too, may become an act of worship. At the time of the daily prayers, they should offer the prayers and they should not ignore them. Whatever the work in hand, they should give preference to religion; their ultimate target should not be the gains of this world; it should be the gains of religion.

That being the case, their worldly affairs will also become matters of religion. Look at the Companions of the Holy Prophet, *sallallahu alaihi wa sallam*. They did not abandon God even at the time of greatest difficulties. You know the battlefield is a difficult place, so much so that the very idea of it frightens people.

To be in the battlefield is to be passing through the time of excitement but even at such times they did not become negligent of God; they did not leave off their prayers; they indulged in supplicating to God. The trouble, now, is that the people try as hard as they can; they make lengthy speeches, they hold open-air meetings; all this, so that Muslims may make progress. But they are so negligent of God that in no case they think of Him. What hopes can they cherish in such circumstances. How can their efforts bear fruits; all what they do is only for this world. You should remember that unless *la ilaha illallah* goes down deep in the hearts and it pervades every particle of the body and the light of Islam and its sovereignty is visible from it, no progress can ever be achieved. If you will follow the example of the European nations and think that since they are making progress, you will also make progress by following them, you must know that it will not materialize. Your own case is quite different. You have been given a Book and the truth has been conclusively brought before you. They (the Europeans) will be dealt with differently. So far as you are concerned, if you will

leave the Book of God you will meet your Hell in this very world. The Societies are being formed and the Conferences are being held in every town for the welfare of Muslims. But it is a pity that nobody says people should make the Holy Quran their leader and act upon the teachings of this Book. Everybody is talking of studying the English language, putting up Colleges, getting Degrees to become Barristers. That clearly shows that people do not have faith in God. Even a *Unani* (physician) changes his prescription after a few days, seeing that it does not work. How strange! People are meeting failure after failure but do not turn back from it. If they think there is no God, let them try all they can to move forward. But God exists, definitely exists. They can never make any progress without Him. (Malfoozat Vol. II, p. 158-159)

He further said:

“My idea is - and the eyes can see and certify that it is true - that there is only one way to make progress: people should recognise God and have a living faith in Him. Were we to talk of these things when the worldly people are assembled, they would laugh these things away. But we pity them. We are sorry that they cannot see what we see. God has given you the opportunity (talking to the people who had gone to be with him for some time) to travel a long distance to be here, and you have suffered the hardship of the journey. I think if it had not been for the strong faith that you have, you would not have been able to bear all these hardships. May God reward you and increase your faith so that you may get the eyes that can see the light, God has sent down in this Age, through His grace. (Malfoozat Vol II, p. 159)

“The mere lip-profession of the Oneness of God does not attract the blessings that are connected with this profession coupled with its other essentials, that is, the appropriate deeds. It is quite true that the belief in the Oneness of God is a strong pillar which a true Muslim and every other person who really and truly fears God should hold fast but there is another aspect of this belief also and that is the love of God; that is, one should love God.

The main aim of the teachings of the Holy Quran is that just as God is One, without any partners, He should also be One without partners in the matter of our love. All the prophets have been teaching the same thing that has been the main subject of their propagation. *La ilaha illallah* teaches us to believe God to be One and at the same time it also teaches that one should be perfect in the love of this

one God. *La ilaha illallah* is so beautiful a sentence, and so meaningful, that the like of it is not to be found in any of the Scriptures, be it Torah or the Gospels or any other Book: no other Book contains so comprehensive teachings.

Ilah means the Beloved who is worshipped. This is the fundamental point of Islam and it denotes complete and perfect love. It should be remembered well that if one believes in the Oneness of God but does not love Him, his belief is faulty and incomplete. (Malfoozat, Vol. III, p. 187)

“What do we mean by saying that one should love God? It means that one should give preference to the Will of God over his parents, wife, children, one's own self, and, in short, everything. The Holy Quran says: *fazkorullaha ka zikrikum abaa-akum au ashaddo zikra* i.e., “you should remember God as you remember your fathers, rather more than that-and you should remember Him with great love and affection”. Here, God has not taught us to call Him father lest like the *Nasara* (the Christians) people may be misled to believe Him as a real father. And to say that the verse might mean the kind of love that is lesser than our love for our father is also not correct, for, the words have been added *au ashaddo zikra* i.e., more than that (more than the love for a father). Had these words not been there in the verse, then, of course, the objection could be tenable. Those who call God father have fallen so low that they have started calling a weak human being their God.

There are certain words which become a trial for people, and God wanted to try the Christians. That is why prophets were given this name in their books. Since God is the Knower of all the things and fully aware of everything, He made the word *Ab* (father) widely used. It was sheer bad luck of the Christians that when it was used by the Messiah they mistook it in its literal form.

The Jews were also tried the same way. They were the people who liked others to be tortured. They asked for *Manna* and *Salwa*; and this is the food that produces bubonic plague. God had destined them to be the victims of bubonic plague and therefore they were made to pass through the required circumstances.

I should like to revert to the subject that in order to establish the Oneness of God, it is of utmost importance that one should love God to one's full capacity. And this love cannot be verified unless it reaches its perfection in a practical form; it cannot be proved with lip profession. You know if somebody just talks of sugar, he cannot find the taste of sweetness in his mouth. Or if somebody expresses the feeling of friendship but does not help his friend in times of need, he cannot be

called a true friend. Likewise, if somebody just talks of the Oneness of God but does not love Him as he should, it cannot be of any avail.

What I really mean is that practice is very important along with the precept. That is why it is necessary that you dedicate your lives in the way of God and this is the real Islam for which I have been sent to the world. Thus, he who does not come near this fountain that God has made to flow is very unfortunate. (Malfoozat, Vol. II, p.188)

These are quite inspiring words for anyone who declares himself to be an Ahmadi Muslim. Being called an Ahmadi Muslim is not a passport for paradise unless and until we show through personal behaviour that we practice what we preach under all circumstances. We do not allow hatred or rancour in our heart to turn us into bigots who believe that blind obedience to our leaders is a sure path to the achievement of our objectives. Hazrat Masih Maood (as) tells us that this is not the case. He tells us that unless our practice is in conformity with our profession of faith we do not amount to anything at all. May Allah open each one's heart to understand the true wisdom that the Promised Messiah has bequeathed us, incha Allah.Ameen.