

by Imam Zafrullah Domun

There is no denying the fact that Hazrat Masih Maood (as) left us a comprehensive literature which can cater for all our spiritual needs. If we just follow what he told us, we will insha Allah be set on the path that will eventually lead us to Allah. Hence, we should continue to try to know what he taught us and strive to implement all his instructions if we are really keen to be saved and to join the group of those who are saved, who have received salvation, who are always under the protection of Allah.

Despite our personal weaknesses, that much I can tell you that our salvation does not depend at all on whether we are associated with mainstream Jamaat Ahmadiyya or not. Remember the extract of the Promised Messiah which I read to you some weeks back where he said “*Salaat* [performed by a Muslim] can only be considered to be a true *Salaat* when there is a true and pure relationship with God—when one becomes so immersed in the pleasure and obedience of God that one gives precedence to faith over all worldly matters, to the extent of being prepared to sacrifice even one’s life in the path of God. It is only when such a state is inculcated within a person that his Salat can be considered to be sincere and true. Until such a truthful state develops within a person and until he manifests [signs of] a true and sincere loyalty, his Salat and other deeds are without any effect.”

He is speaking here about the type of *namaz* that we should be offering. Such *namaz* cannot be done quickly or in heedlessness while one is thinking upon one’s worldly matters or even on the probability of one’s team winning the world cup. We are all expected to take our time and concentrate on the words that we are reciting and think about whatever we are saying. This is a task which we should strive to do as long as we live. Then the Promised Messiah (as) said:

“There are many people who are considered to be believers and to be truthful but, in the heavens, they are considered to be non-believers. A true believer who is truthful in every way is he who is considered to be a

truthful person in the heavens even if it is **the case that such a person is considered to be a Kafir or a non-believer by the world.**”

So, what we understand from this extract is that we should not mind at all what others say about us whether what they say is good or bad. If people think well of us, we should always be thankful to Allah that these people do not see our weaknesses and think well of us. If they think ill of us, we should always content ourselves that we strive not to do anything that might displease Allah so that in His sight we know we have some consideration because we repent of our sins and feel regret and we often return to Him and our eyes shed tears when we think of Him. Furthermore, we constantly seek His Nearness and we feel bad when we are far from Him. We do our best not to cause any harm to anyone neither through our tongue nor with our hands. We do our best and leave the rest to Him. Hence our concern should not be what others think of us but rather what we really are in the sight of Allah.

While I was writing this text, I recalled something that I read when I was quite young from *Gulistan* of Sheikh Saadi. He was a very wise person. Saadi was his penname. His real name was Abū-Muhammad Muslih al-Dīn bin Abdallāh. He was born in Shiraz, a well-known town in Iran around 1208 and he died between 1291-94. So, I am speaking of someone who lived about seven hundred years before. He wrote two books which are well known even in the West up till today. One was the *Bustan* which means “the Orchard” and the other is the *Gulistan* meaning the “Rose garden”. Both books advise us about how we should lead our life according to Islam. Hazrat Masih Maood (as) was taught these books and kept quoting from them in his writings. He even received some of the verses of the book as revelation to make him understand some particular situation. So, I read in one of the books the following:

“The divine favor had placed the lamp of grace in the path of a wanderer in forbidden ways, 'till it directed him into the circle of the righteous, and the blessed society of dervishes, and their spiritual co-operation enabled him to convert his wicked propensities into praiseworthy deeds, and to restrain himself in sensual indulgences; yet were the tongues of calumniators questioning his sincerity, and saying, He retains his original habits, and there is no trusting to his piety and goodness.---By the means of repentance thou mayest get delivered from the wrath of God, but there is no escape from the

slanderous tongue of man. He was unable to put up with the virulence of their remarks, and took his complaint to his ghostly father, saying, "I am much troubled by the tongues of mankind." The holy man wept, and answered, "How can you be sufficiently grateful for this blessing, that you are better than they represent you? ---How often wilt thou call aloud, saying, The malignant and envious are calumniating wretched me, that they rise up to shed my blood, and that they sit down to devise me mischief. Be thou good thyself, and let people speak evil of thee; it is better than to be wicked, and that they should consider thee as good."---But, on the other hand, behold me, of whose perfectness all entertain the best opinion, while I am the mirror of imperfection.---Had I done what they have said, I should have been a pious and moral man. Verily, I may conceal myself from the sight of my neighbor, But God knows what is secret and what is open. There is a shut door between me and mankind, that they may not pry into my sins; but what, O Omniscience! can a closed-door avail against thee, who art equally informed of what is manifest or concealed?"

The lesson is that we should aim to be good in the sight of Allah and not concern ourselves too much with what others think of us. Allah knows what is in our heart of heart; others know only what they see. If we do our best to follow Allah's teachings and the sunnah of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw), we should not mind what others think of us or say of us.

Now I will read you one or two more extracts from the writings of the Promised Messiah (as) which inspire us to improve ourselves. He said:

“I am well experienced in this matter (dedication of life for the cause of God the Almighty). Even if I am told by God that this dedication will bring no reward to me and it will not avail me anything, it simply is not possible that I should stop serving Islam. I therefore take it as a duty of mine that I should urge the members of my Jamaat - and it should be like a will of mine-whether they act according to it, or they don't-that is, if they are looking for salvation, they should dedicate their lives for the cause of God. Let everyone strive hard to reach the stage where he can say that my life, my death, my sacrifices, my prayers are all for the sake of God. His soul should cry out like that of Hazrat Ibrahim, peace be on him: *Aslamto Ii Rabbil Aalameen* (I have submitted myself. to the Lord of the worlds). Unless a man is annihilated in God and

unless he is dead in Him (prepared to die for His cause), he cannot have a new life.

You who are with me can observe and realise that I take the aim of my life to be dedicated for God's sake. You should look into your lives and find out as to how many of you like this act of mine and how many of you like to dedicate your lives. (*Malfoozat* Vol. II, p. 100)

He said further:

“It is very true that one should look to what is said and not to who has said it. If a man looks to who has said it, he might be deprived of the acceptance of the truth, and more than that, the seed of pride would begin to generate within him. If he is the seeker after the truth why should he pick holes in others. The preacher might pick any point for himself; what have you to do with it. Your object is to find out the truth. Of course, sometimes, the preachers talk of irrelevant things and while preaching, they do not restrain themselves to what is expedient nor to what can cure the disease (moral or religious disease) of the listeners. They continue talking about their point from various angles.

If they had looked at the Holy Prophet, *sallallaho alaihiwa sallam*, they would have learnt a very good method of Preaching. A man would come to the Holy Prophet *sallallaho alaihi wa sallam* and ask him what was the best virtue.

The Holy Prophet (saw) would answer him: Charity. Another would come and ask him the same question and he would answer: to serve the parents. A third person would come and ask him the same question and he would tell him of something else.

The question would be the same but the answer would differ. Some people have stumbled at this point. Christians have raised a lot of objections about these things. But ignorant people have not pondered over the blessed method of the Holy Prophet, *sallallaho alaihi wa sallam*;

The point underlying this method is that the answer used to be relevant to the condition of the questioner. The best virtue for the person who is niggardly is that he should get rid of these habits and the best virtue for the one who was not serving his parents was to serve his parents. He needed this kind of teaching to make him a better person-to serve his parents.

Just as it is very essential that the physician should make a good diagnosis of his patient, it is also necessary for a preacher to study people well. But it is a pity that insight and knowledge are not given to anyone except to divine preachers. That is why in spite of the fact that there are thousands of preachers going about, the morals of the country are going down. All sorts of weaknesses - moral and those connected with the faith - are penetrating into the people". (*Malfoozat* Vol. II, p. 105)

A believer's duty and concern should always be how far he is advancing in his obedience and love of Allah. Do not take lightly what we say regularly about praying with concentration, about the need to say *astaghfaar*, and the need to recite Darood on the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw). Keep looking within your heart and see whether you are doing your best for its purification or not. Allah always looks at the heart of men and women and nothing else. If the heart is good, all is good. If it is bad, nothing will be good. May Allah help each one among us to understand what He expects from us and may we all rise up to these standards. Ameen.