

by Imam Zafrullah Domun

As I said before, and I am repeating it again today, it is incumbent upon all Muslim adult males to come for Jummah prayer every week unless they have valid reasons not to be present. Even if you are far from the mosque, an effort should be made to try to be present at least once every month. Those who come regularly should do their best to be present in the mosque before the Imam stands up for the khutbah. We Ahmadi Muslims should do our best to attend the Jummah prayer. Several times we have explained what the Holy Quran says about it and what the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw) said about it and how it is incumbent upon us to listen and to heed advices that we receive. As usual, we will continue with sharing with our members extracts from the writings of the Promised Messiah (as), Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian. He said:

“At this time, I specifically instruct my *Jama‘at* [Community], which accepts me as the Promised Messiah, that they should always stay away from these foul habits.”[Previously he was speaking about some bad habits that some people have developed]. He continued: “God has sent me as the Promised Messiah and has clothed me with the garment of the Messiah, son of Mary. I therefore admonish you: Refrain from evil and be truly compassionate towards mankind. Cleanse your heart of malice and spite, for you will become like angels through this habit. It is a filthy and unholy religion that is devoid of sympathy for humanity, and polluted is the path riddled with the thorns of a rancour based on selfish desires. O those who are with me, do not become like such people. Think about what it is we seek to attain through religion. Is it to constantly oppress others? No, religion exists so that we may obtain the life that lies in God. Such a life has not been, and will never be, attained unless Divine attributes come to abide in you. Be compassionate towards all for the sake of God so that you may be shown mercy in the heavens.

Come, and I will teach you a way that will cause your light to prevail over all other lights. Abandon all lowly spite and jealousy, be compassionate for mankind, and lose yourselves in God. Being with God, achieve the highest levels of purification. This is the path on which miracles are bestowed, prayers

are accepted, and angels descend to one's aid. But it is not a single day's work. Advance and continue advancing. Learn from the example of the washer man, who washes clothes in boiling hot water until the heat causes all dirt and filth to separate from them. Then, rising in the morning, he soaks the clothes in water, and beats the clothes on stone sills. The dirt that had settled in the clothes is thus slowly removed. This process of heating clothes and beating them continues until they are as clean as they were when new. This is the only strategy for cleansing the human soul. Your entire salvation depends on this cleanliness alone.”

Here the Promised Messiah (as) is speaking about a process which was used before the arrival of washing machine for cleaning clothes. Most youngsters living today might not know about it. But what he means is that just as cleaning clothes was a long process in olden days, so is the process of cleansing oneself of sins. It is not something that can be done in one or two days or even weeks. It is a long and difficult process that might take years and unless one keeps trying one might not succeed to rid oneself completely of all sins. But with constancy of purpose and continuously seeking help from Allah eventually help will come and one might become as sinless as on the day of one's birth.

Jamaat Ahmadiyya has been created for this purpose, namely to help its members to purify themselves of all sins. How far this purpose has been achieved can be assessed by the behaviour of its members. If its members do things that are condemned by Islam and yet justify them, then the noble purpose for which this Jamaat was created has not yet been achieved and is far from being achieved. But if all its members do their best to stay away from sins and do their best to lead a life that is in conformity with Islamic teachings then it can be said that the purpose for which this Jamaat was raised in the first place is being achieved. Allah knows best.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as) said further:

“The Sufis have mentioned two ways of spiritual progress – effort and natural aptitude. Effort is to embark upon the way of Allah and His Messenger out of a wise choice. As God says:

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي
يُحِبِّكُمْ اللَّهُ

That is: 'If you wish to become the loved ones of Allah, then follow the Holy Prophet^{sa}.'

That perfect guide is the Messenger^{sa} who endured such calamities as have no equal and did not pass one day in comfort. Only those can be counted his true followers who follow every word and action of his with the utmost effort. God does not love the slothful and those who have no desire to encounter hardship. Such people will only incur the wrath of God Almighty.

In order to carry out this Divine commandment of following the Holy Prophet^{sa}, the seeker must first study the whole life of the Holy Prophet^{sa} and then follow in his footsteps. This is the way of a seeker. It is fraught with calamities and hardships; it is only by enduring them that a person becomes a seeker. The rank of those invested with natural aptitude is higher than that of the other seekers. God Almighty does not treat them as mere seekers but Himself exposes them to calamities and draws them towards Himself through His eternal magnetism.

All prophets were so drawn towards God. When confronted with calamities, the human soul is illumined by undergoing such hardship, just like iron and glass, which, though they have the quality to shine, but become capable of reflection only after being polished to the extent that they begin to reflect the features of anyone who stands before them. Spiritual exertion and toil act like polish. The heart too should be polished until it develops the quality of reflection; which in other words means:

The heart of the seeker is a mirror which is so polished by calamities and hardships that he begins to reflect the qualities of the Prophet^{sa}. This stage is reached when, through striving and repeated efforts at purification, all impurities are washed away. Every believer is in need of such cleansing.

تَخَلَّقُوا بِأَخْلَاقِ اللَّهِ

(Embellish yourselves with the attributes of Allah)

No believer will attain salvation without becoming a polished mirror. The seeker carries out this polish himself and endures hardships by virtue of his

own pursuits, but the one with a natural aptitude is subjected to hardships. God Himself becomes his Polisher and, polishing him with diverse types of calamities and hardships, bestows upon him the qualities of a mirror. The end result of a seeker and one possessing natural aptitude is the same. Hence, righteousness has two aspects: effort, and natural aptitude. [*Malfuzat*, vol. 1, pp. 29-28]

There is an interesting anecdote concerning what polishing can do in the *Masnavi* of Maulana Rumi. Translated into English here is the version that I have found on the internet:

“The Prophet said,

“There are some who see me by the same light in which I am seeing them.

Our natures are one. Without reference to any strands of lineage, without reference to texts or traditions, we drink the life-water together.”

Here’s a story about that hidden mystery:

The Chinese and the Greeks were arguing as to who were the better artists.

The King said “We’ll settle this matter with a debate.”

The Chinese began talking, but the Greeks wouldn’t say anything.

They left.

The Chinese suggested then that they each be given a room to work on with their artistry, two rooms facing each other and divided by a curtain.

The Chinese asked the King for a hundred colors, all the variations, and each morning they came to where the dyes were kept and took them all.

The Greeks took no colors. “They’re not part of our work.”

They went to their room and began cleaning and polishing the walls. All day every day they made those walls as pure and clear as an open sky.

There is a way that leads from all-colors to colorlessness. Know that the magnificent variety of the clouds and the weather comes from the total simplicity of the sun and the moon.

The Chinese finished, and they were so happy. They beat the drums in the joy of completion.

The King entered their room, astonished by the gorgeous color and detail.

The Greeks then pulled the curtain dividing the rooms.

The Chinese figures and images shimmeringly reflected on the clear Greek walls.

They lived there, even more beautifully, and always changing in the light.

The Greek art is the Sufi way. They don't study books of philosophical thought.

They make their loving clearer and clearer. No wantings, no anger.

In that purity they receive and reflect the images of every moment, from here, from the stars, from the void.

They take them in as though they were seeing with the Lighted Clarity that sees them.

Engaging ourselves in polishing our heart will help us to make it so clear that within it will reflect the truth of all things. This is what we should be engaged in everyday of our life. We should try to understand better the purpose of our existence and not live our life in vain pursuits.

Speaking further about the purpose of his coming, Hazrat Masih Maood (as) tells us:

‘I firmly believe that whoso follows me with steadfastness and sincerity of heart will not perish but will partake of the life which is immortal.’

“The main purpose of the advent of prophets^{as} in this world and the grand objective of their teaching and preaching is that mankind should recognize God Almighty and should be delivered from the life which leads to hell and ruin and which is known as the life of sin. In fact, this is the most important objective before them. Now that God Almighty has established a dispensation and has raised me, the same purpose which is common to all prophets^{as} is also the purpose of my coming; namely, that I wish not only to tell the world what God is, but I actually want them to see Him, and to show them the way of desisting from sin. [*Malfuzat*, vol. 3, p.11]

“I have been sent to strengthen the faith and to prove the existence of God Almighty to the people, for their faith has become weak, and they take life after death no more seriously than a fable. The conduct of every person proclaims that he has not the faith and trust in God and in the hereafter as he has in the world and its ranks and its resources. Tongues profess a lot but the hearts are suffused with the love of the world. It is the same condition in which the Messiah (as) had found the Jews. As a characteristic of the weakness of

their faith, the moral condition of the Jews had deteriorated greatly, and love of God had become cold in their hearts. The same is true in my time. I have been sent so that truth and faith may be revived and righteousness may inspire the hearts. This is the purpose of my advent. I have been told that heaven will once more come near the earth after it had moved far away. These are the reforms that I have to bring about and these are the tasks for which I have been sent.”

[*Kitab-ul-Bariyyah, Ruhani Khaza'in*, vol. 13, pp. 291-294, footnote]

May Allah help each one amongst us to hold dear to these teachings and to do our best in living them, incha Allah. Ameen.