

by Imam Zafrullah Domun

When we look around us we see that people do not appear to behave in a better way in society in general. Muslims should have been an exception had they really understood what are their duties and responsibilities as a member of the Muslim Umma irrespective of the country where they are living. In the Holy Quran Allah says:

بِاللَّهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ الْمُنْكَرِ عَنِ وَنَهَوْنَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَأْمُرُونَ لِلنَّاسِ أَخْرَجَتْ أُمَّةً خَيْرَ كُنْتُمْ

The translation of this verse is “**You are the best people raised for the guidance of mankind; you enjoin what is good and you forbid what is wrong and you believe in Allah.** (3:110)

Hazrat Masih Maood(as) said in one extract:

“Countless prophets and messengers appeared in the world, and tirelessly toiled and strove to establish the Oneness of Allah, but today a dark veil has been drawn over it. Further, the people have fallen victim to various forms of polytheism. The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, enjoined that one ought not to love the world, but today, the love of the world dominates every heart and everyone seems immersed in this very love. When asked, some are averse to undertaking even an iota of work for the sake of religion; reluctance holds them back and they begin to invent thousands of excuses. Every form of misconduct and immorality is considered permissible and every possible transgression is brazenly committed. Religion has become fatally weak and stands helpless like an orphan.

In this state, if Islam had not been helped and supported, when else was it to confront such circumstances as would lend reason for its support? Islam remains only in name. If even now it were not afforded protection, it would undoubtedly perish. I truthfully say that only a lack of understanding prompts the question as to whether there is any difference between our community and other Muslims. If only one such matter existed, what need was there for such effort and why establish an entire community?

I am aware that Allah Almighty has repeatedly disclosed that darkness has fallen and nothing can be seen. The Oneness of God which was once our

crown and the pride of Islam has now been reduced to mere lip service. Otherwise, there are perhaps very few who really profess the Oneness of God in terms of practice and belief. The Holy Prophet<sup>saw</sup> advised that one ought not to love the world, but now every heart is engrossed therein. Religion has become helpless as though it were an orphan. The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, clearly said: ‘Love of the world is the root cause of all vice.’”

There are many verses of the Holy Quran which, in the first place, has expressed this same idea that we should not get enamoured with this world. This place is like a tavern where people come and go. Our place is not here but with our Lord. We have been placed here where we face lots of trials and we are tested. Our objective should be to successfully pass all tests and be ever ready to meet Allah washed of all our sins. Once we understand why we are here and we do our best to do what is expected from us, Allah will purify us and lead us to Him. He has emphatically said in the Holy Quran “*Wallazina Jaahadou fina lanahdiyannahoum sobolana*” meaning “Those who strive in our path we will lead them to our ways. To help us in this task Allah has graciously given us the Al Fatiha. It is a prayer that should be read with full concentration and not perfunctorily in negligence. I keep repeating these words of advice with the hope that our members will remember and internalize them and profit by them. The Ahmadi Muslim should strive daily to improve his relationship with Allah. If you remember only this sentence after this Jummah sermon it will bring you many material and spiritual benefits. There is nothing other than making supplications to Allah that can benefit a person enormously. We pray to Allah to ease our journey in this world and to grant us a better life in the hereafter. The habit to pray is not an easy one to cultivate. But if one perseveres eventually one will reap its benefits by Allah’s Grace. An Ahmadi Muslim is invited to partake of this special Grace of Allah by following instructions and guidance laid down by the Promised Messiah (as). Supplications to Allah can make what seems impossible to happen. One understands this only through experience and anyone can experience it if he or she wants. Remember also to recite *Astaghfaar* and *Darood* each day.

Speaking further on this matter the Promised Messiah tells us in his book “The philosophy of the teachings of Islam”:

“The means which the Holy Qur’an has taught us of establishing a spiritual and perfect relationship with God is *Islam*, and the recitation of the prayer set out in *Surah Fatihah* [opening Chapter of Holy Qur’an]. This means that one must first devote one’s life to the cause of God, and then should be occupied with the prayer that Muslims have been taught in *Surah Fatihah*. This is the essence of Islam. This is the only means of reaching God and drinking of the water of true salvation. This is the only means which the law of nature has appointed for man’s higher progress and his meeting with God. Only those find God who enter into the spiritual fire, which is the essence of Islam. They occupy themselves with the supplication taught in the *Surah Fatihah*.

Islam is the burning fire which by consuming our lower life and by burning up our false deities, offers the sacrifice of our lives and properties and honour before our Holy God. We drink the water of a new life from this spring, and all our spiritual faculties establish a relationship with God. Like lightning, a fire emerges from inside us, and another fire descends upon us from above. By their meeting all our passions and the love of anything besides God are consumed, and we become dead to our previous life. This condition is called *Islam* by the Holy Qur’an. Through Islam our passions suffer a death, and through prayer we are revived again.

For this second life revelation is necessary. Arrival at this stage is called meeting with God, that is to say, beholding God. Arriving at this stage a person establishes a relationship with God, as if he sees Him with his eyes. He is bestowed strength and all his senses and inner faculties are illuminated, and the attraction of a pure life is generated with great force. On arriving at this stage God becomes the eye of a person with which he sees, the tongue with which he speaks, the hand with which he grips, the ear with which he hears and the feet with which he walks. This is the stage to which Allah the Exalted refers by saying:

...*The hand of God is above their hands...* [Ch.48:V.11]

and also;

...*It was not thou who didst throw but it was God Who threw...* [Ch.8:V.18]

At this stage complete unification ensues with Allah Almighty. His Holy Will saturates the human soul and moral faculties that were weak become firm like

mountains, and reason and intellect acquire a high degree of delicacy. This is the meaning of the verse:

*...He strengthened them with a spirit from Himself...* [Ch.58:V.23]

At this stage the streams of love and devotion well up in such a manner that to die for Allah Almighty, and to endure thousands of hardships for Him, and to be disgraced for His sake, become as easy as breaking a straw. A person is pulled towards Allah Almighty and does not know who is pulling him. A hidden hand uplifts him, and to do God's Will becomes the purpose of his life. At this stage Allah Almighty appears very near as He has declared:

*...We are closer to him than his jugular vein.* [Ch.50:V.17]

In this condition a person is like ripe fruit which falls of itself from a tree. In the same way, all the shallow relationships of such a person come to an end, and his relationship with God becomes so strong that he draws away from creation and is honoured with the converse of Allah Almighty. For achieving this level, the doors are still open as they were open before, and God's Grace bestows this bounty upon the seekers today as He bestowed it before. But this path is not found through mere words and this door is not opened by useless talk and boasts. There are many who desire but there are few who find. The reason is that this rank depends upon true endeavor and true sacrifice. You can go on talking till Judgement Day without avail. To sincerely step out into the fire of which people are afraid, is the first condition of this path. If there is not practical eagerness, it is vain to talk of it. In this connection Allah Almighty says:

*When My servants inquire from thee concerning Me, tell them I am close. I respond to the call of the supplicant when he calls Me. So they should seek to attain my nearness through prayers and be guided* [Ch.2:V.187]

[*Islami Usul ki Philosophy, Ruhani Khaza'in*, vol.10, pp.394-396]

Hence to be that Ahmadi Muslim of whom the Promised Messiah (as) speaks is not easy at all. It demands great determination and great persistence to weather through all types of difficulties. An Ahmadi Muslim is someone who is not at all afraid of any difficulty. When he finds himself face to face with a difficult situation, he confronts it and relies on Allah alone for any relief.

To end, I will read another extract about repentance. The Promised Messiah (as) said:

“To reject repentance and forgiveness is to shut the door of human progress. It is obvious to everyone that man is not perfect in himself, but in fact he stands in need of perfection. As after his birth he gradually widens his knowledge and is not born learned and well informed, in the same way, when after his birth he begins to be sensible of his surroundings, his moral condition is at a very low ebb. Observation of the condition of small children would show that most children are inclined to beat others on the slightest provocation and many of them are given to telling lies and using foul language with other children. Some steal and carry tales and are envious and miserly. When they grow up, they fall into the grip of the self that incites to vice and are guilty of diverse types of evil and wickedness.

Thus, for most people the first stage of life is impure, but when a fortunate person emerges from the fierce flood of youth, he turns towards God and withdraws from undesirable activities through sincere repentance and occupies himself with purifying the garment of his nature. These are stages of human life which a person has commonly to traverse. This shows that were it true that repentance is not accepted, it would mean that God does not desire to bestow salvation on anyone. [*Chashmah-e-Ma'rifat, Ruhani Khaza'in*, vol.23, pp.192-193]

May Allah help each one amongst to understand and realize the aim of our existence, incha Allah.