

by Imam Zafrullah Domun

We will continue our reading of extracts from the book of the Promised Messiah (as), Buraheen Ahmadiyya Volume 5. The Promised Messiah (as) started by telling us that Islam is a religion that can lead us to a living God and it is the duty of every Muslim to find this Living God in his lifetime. However, in order to find Allah, it is not sufficient to just say that we have converted to Islam or that Islam is the religion to which we belong. What is most important is that we put into practice the teachings of this great religion in our daily life. Without practice through a sincere search of Allah, we will not get much. We will not reach the stage of true certainty (*Haqqoul Yaqeen*).

Explaining the need for Allah to reveal Himself to us, the Promised Messiah gives us the example of the sun. He says:

“It should be borne in mind that just as the sun rises afresh each day to give us light, and we could not attain any benefit nor any satisfaction through a story if we were sitting in complete darkness with no sign of any light anywhere, and we were told that though the sun does exist, it only used to rise in some past ages and is now hidden forever. The same is the case with the True Sun which illumines the hearts: it rises afresh every day vouchsafing to man a share of its divine manifestations of word and deed. Only that God is true and only that religion is true which give the good news of the existence of such a God and demonstrate the existence of such a God; it is only through such a Living God that the soul is purified.

Do not carry the hope that any other design can purify the human self. As darkness can only be dispelled by light—in the same way—the only remedy for the darkness of sin are the divine manifestations of word and deed, which descend upon a fortunate heart in a miraculous manner from God with powerful rays, show him that God exists, remove the foulness of all doubts, and bring satisfaction and contentment. So, by the mighty attraction of that Supreme Power, that fortunate one is raised to heaven. Other than this, all other remedies that are put forward are fake spectacles. But for complete purification, divine cognizance alone is not enough; rather, this must be accompanied simultaneously by persistent ongoing prayers filled with anguish because God Almighty is Self-Sufficient and Independent, and to attract His grace there is an acute necessity of such prayers that are accompanied by weeping and sincerity and the painful anguish of the heart.

You see that though a suckling infant fully recognizes its mother and loves her and the mother also loves it, yet its crying has a great deal to do with the release of the mother's milk. On the one side the infant cries bitterly out of hunger and on the other side the mother is so affected by its crying and weeping that milk is released from her breasts. In the same way, every seeker should prove his spiritual hunger and thirst by his weeping and crying so that the spiritual milk might be released to satiate him.”

Hence, we understand that we need to improve the way we pray. If we pray as a formality without feeling or being conscious of Allah's presence and without an anguish in our heart to know Him, to obey Him, to develop a relationship with Him our prayers will not benefit us much. We should bear this in mind and try our best to pray as if we are seeing Allah or at least that Allah is seeing us. The Promised Messiah (as) continues:

“Thus, divine cognizance alone is not enough to cleanse and purify oneself. Rather, grief-stricken weeping and crying like children is also necessary. Do not lose hope and do not be discouraged by the thought: ‘Our souls are so defiled with sin; of what value are our supplications and what impact would they have?’ The human soul has, in fact, been created for the love of God and although the fire of sin may intensely excite it, even then it possesses such power of repentance that it can extinguish that fire. Just as you observe that however much water is heated, when it is poured over a fire it still extinguishes the fire. Ever since God Almighty created people, their hearts have always been cleansed and purified through this means alone. In other words, man cannot be purified from sin through any means besides the Living God Himself—through His own manifestations of word and deed—revealing His existence, His power, and His Godhood, and displaying His shining awe.

Even by way of reason this very fact is clear and proven that man only values—and his heart is only awe-inspired by—such an object whose greatness and power he learns through the means of complete cognition. For instance, it is evident that man will never insert his hand into a hole wherein he is certain that a snake lies, nor will he ever eat a thing that he knows to be poison. How is it then, that he does not fear God Almighty in the same way and brazenly commits thousands of sins and transgressions, and remains fearless even after reaching old age? The reason for this is simply that he is totally unaware of the existence and entity of the True Requirer who can punish sin. It is a pity that most people have not paid attention to this principle out of their misfortune, and such absurd means of being delivered from sin have been hewn out of their imaginary whims, which only increase their audacity in committing even more sin. Take for example, the belief that asserts that having faith in the crucifixion of Hadrat ‘Isa [Jesus], may peace be upon him, and considering him to be God is obligatory for the forgiveness of all mankind's sins. Can such a notion be expected to engender true hatred of sin? It is obvious that each and every thing can only be countered by its opposite: Heat drives away cold, and the remedy for removing darkness is light. Then what kind of remedy is it [to propose] that X is cleansed from sin through Y's being crucified? Such doctrines are nothing but man-made fallacies that find their way into people's hearts in times of heedlessness and material worship. The same selfish and base motives that led to the prevalence of idol worship in the world are responsible for the prevalence of the doctrines of Crucifixion and Atonement among the Christians. The essential fact is that the human self is somewhat designed to give greater preference to the path in which there is no effort and struggle.

True purity, however, requires much pain and striving, and that pure life cannot be attained until man drinks the cup of death. Therefore, just as it is the propensity of mankind to avoid difficult and narrow paths and to seek ways that are easy and simple, in

this very manner these people, too, have chosen the way of the Cross that requires only verbal confession and places no hardship upon the soul. This is the reason why the love of God has grown cold [in their hearts] and they do not desire to develop a loathing for sin in order to bring about a pure transformation within themselves. In reality, belief in the Cross is the kind of doctrine which pleases those who do not wish to attain true purity and are constantly searching for a formula in which a filthy life may coexist with the forgiveness of sins. Consequently, in spite of [their indulgence in] excessive impurity, they imagine that they are cleansed from sin merely through believing in the blood of Christ. Such purity is actually like a boil that is full of pus, even though it appears shining on the surface. Should there be discerning minds, the falsity of the prescription of the Cross can be made clear from the condition of the devotees of the Cross themselves—to what extent have they become absorbed in the love of God Almighty, abandoning the desires and passions of the world? Anyone who tours European countries will see for himself the extent to which the most ardent defenders of the [Christian] faith—not just the ignorant people but also the educated and refined among them—indulge in carnal pleasures, licentiousness, drunkenness, self-indulgence, and other sins. Many among the clergy, who exceed all others in stressing the blood of Messiah, are given to alcoholism which is the mother of all evils, with the result that such shameful and outrageous stories regarding them are frequently published in the newspapers that the less is said about them, the better.....”

Remember that this book was written in 1905, that is about 114 years ago. Recently the Catholic Church has been rocked with such scandals that will shame the most inveterate sinner. The Holy Quran tells us that Allah never imposed celibacy for catholic priests or nuns. They invented this practice but they “could not observe it as it should be.” Throughout church history, volumes have been written about the misbehavior of priests and nuns in the church because they tried to repress their sexual urges but could not do it and indulged in unnatural sexual acts such as the innumerable cases of pedophilia that have come to light in many parishes around the world.

The Promised Messiah continues:

“Now it is obvious that if this is the state of the so-called great ‘Holy Fathers’ who are in the first [and foremost] position to benefit from the blood of Christ, then what good would the other poor folks derive from this prescription [of salvation]? So, remember well that this is certainly not the way to attain true purity. The time is approaching— nay rather, it is near at hand—when people will awaken themselves to the error of this path. The true path is only the one which I have already stated. Every single person who came to God Almighty entered through this very door. Yes, this door is very narrow and those who enter through it are very few in number, for death is its threshold and, having seen God, remaining steadfast in His path with all their power and all their being, is its frame. So very few indeed are those who wish to enter through this door. Alas, that in our country the notion of the blood of Christ has led the Christians astray from this door, while the Aryas have been deprived of this door on account of their belief in reincarnation and their denial of the acceptance of repentance; for, in their view there is no other way to be

cleansed from sin during this life except through undergoing diverse cycles of rebirth. Repentance—meaning, to turn oneself to God with total sincerity and inflicting upon oneself a state of death, and, having inflicted this death-like state, to willingly offer one's own sacrifice—is, in their eyes, an absurd idea. Thus, both these groups are deprived of the true path.”

We will stop here today. However, we have to constantly bear in mind that as good Muslims we are not expected to go through life being content that we are Muslims. It is our duty to learn and practice Islam in such a way that Allah is pleased with us. In this book, Hazrat Masih Maood (as) wants to make us realize this great aim so that we might profit spiritually in this very life. May Allah grant us the necessary knowledge, wisdom and enthusiasm in practice that He gave to all His good servants who preceded us incha Allah. Ameen.