

by Imam Zafrullah Domun

Last week across many countries in the Muslim world people celebrated *Yaum-un Nabi* which in plain English means “the day of the Prophet”. There is still controversy among Muslims whether this is a date that has to be celebrated or not. This controversy has been going on for centuries. We, Ahmadi Muslims, do not celebrate the day of the birth of the Holy Prophet (saw) just like many other Muslims who do not. But this in no way means that we have less love or reverence for the Holy Prophet of Islam. We believe that he is the greatest of all prophets and that we should all try our best to imitate him in words and actions. This one-day celebration is not at all significant for us. What we should aim for is to develop love for the Holy Prophet (saw) in our heart and do our best in trying to obey him in all that he said or did. Allah clearly tells us in the Holy Quran:

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُوَّةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ
وَالْيَوْمَ ٱلْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًّ

Translation:

Verily you have in the Prophet of Allah an excellent model, for him who fears Allah and the Last Day and who remembers Allah much. (HQ 33:21)

Similarly, we have the other verse:

قُلْ إِن كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحِبُّكُمْ اللَّهُ
وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

Translation:

Say, ‘If you love Allah, follow me: *then* will Allah love you and forgive you your faults. And Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful.’ (HQ 3:32)

Expressing our concern and our love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw) is not for one special day in the year. It should be a lifelong commitment and everyday of the year. This is how those who were close to Allah have expressed their love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw) and this is what is expected of each one of us. There is no better way for us to do so than to make it a habit to recite the *Salatun Nabi*, i.e., the Darood, everyday as much as we can. May Allah help each one amongst us and each Muslim wherever he or she might be to understand this basic truth and do our best to become small Muhammads in our respective circles of influence. May Allah help each one amongst us to progress on the path taken by the Holy Prophet (saw) so that we might lose our identity and that which is manifested in us the “Light of Muhammad” (saw).

Now I will share with you some extracts from the writings of the Promised Messiah (as) which will help us to have an idea of what he really thought of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw) and which is quite contrary to what his opponents said of him. He said:

“For all the children of Adam there is now no Messenger and intercessor other than the Holy Prophet Muhammad, the chosen one, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. So, you should endeavor to cultivate true love for this magnificent and majestic Prophet and not place anyone else above him in any manner so that you may be counted in Heaven among those who have attained salvation. Remember also that salvation is not something which is attainable only after death. Rather true salvation manifests its light in this world. Who is truly delivered? One who believes that God is Truth and that the Holy Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, is the intercessor between God and mankind; he also believes that under God’s command there is no book of the status of the Holy Quran. And for none else God proclaimed that he should live forever with his message and his law, but this Noble Prophet lives forever”. (*Roohani Khazain*, Vol. 19, P. 13, *Kashtee Nuh*)

“The gist of our faith is: *la ilaha illallah Muhammad-ur-rasoolullah* (There is no god but Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.) Our belief, which we hold in this life here on earth and to which we will continue to adhere firmly till the time that we pass on to the next world, is that our spiritual leader and Master, Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, is *khataman-nabiyyeen*, the seal of the prophets and the best of the messengers. At his hands religion has been consummated which guides man on the right path and further on to God Himself. We hold this belief with absolute certainty that the Holy Quran is the *khatamul-kutub*, the seal of all divine books, and not an iota can be added to or subtracted from its prescribed teachings, inhibitions, commands and injunctions. There will be no revelation or word from God which may amend or abrogate or change or alter any of the injunctions of the Holy Quran. If anyone subscribes to such views, in our opinion, he ceases to belong to the body of believers and becomes a heretic and an infidel thereby.” (*Roohani Khazain*, Vol. 3, P. 170: *Izala-e-Auham*)

We are all well aware that Hazrat Masih Maood (as) has a particular status in Islam. We believe him to be the Promised Messiah and Mahdi whose arrival was foretold by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw). He had a deep love for the Holy Prophet (saw) which he expressed in verse form and in prose. Allah has appreciated his love through the revelations that he vouchsafed to him. So the Promised Messiah (as) speaking about the special rank that he enjoyed expressed himself thus:

“It would not have been possible for me to have attained this grace if I had not followed the footsteps of my lord and master, the pride of all prophets, the best of mankind, Muhammad, the chosen one, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. Whatever I have achieved by following him, and I know from my truly verified experience that no man can reach God to obtain a deeper understanding of His ways without following this Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. Now, let me also make it known that the very first thing you are rewarded with, after having completely submitted yourself to the instructions and teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, is that you are granted new heart which is always rightly inclined. Such heart loses all love for this material world and instead it begins to yearn for an everlasting and unending heavenly pleasure. Having achieved this sublime state, your heart is now ready to receive that

perfect and purest love of God. All these blessings are bequeathed to you as a spiritual heritage because of your complete obedience to the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.”

(Roohani Khazain, V. 22, P. 64-65: Haqeeqatul Wahee)

From his poems we can read as follows:

Thy boundless blessings of peace
Be upon Mustafa, O God;
Verily through him we receive Thy Light.
My soul is eternally bonded
To the soul of Muhammad,
I made my heart drink deep,
Of the brimful cup of his love.

It was because of you that we
Became the best of all the peoples,
O Prophet of God who
Is the best of all the prophets.
As you marched ahead of all the rest,
We too stepped forward.

Let alone the human beings,
Even all the angels in the Heavens
Follow suit and join me,
As I sing thy praise.

(Roohani Khazain, V. 5, Pp 225-226, A'eena-e-Kamalate Islam).

Our Perfect Leader That leader of ours,
From whom radiates all light,
His name is Muhammad.
He is the one,
Who has captivated my heart.

All prophets are holy,
One better than the other.
From God on high he is,
The crown of all creatures.

Today he is the sovereign,
Of the world of religion,
The crown of all the Messengers.
The healthiest influence;
The purest, the most comely;
The most trustworthy, The most dependable:
Allah this superlative praise, Befits him alone.

Speaking about the concept of forgiveness (*maghfirat*) in Islam the Promised Messiah (as) said:

“Most **Christians, on account of their ignorance** of the reality of *Maghfirat*—forgiveness—imagine that a person who seeks *Maghfirat*, is disobedient and sinful. A deep reflection over the meaning of *Maghfirat* makes it clear that it is the one who does not seek *Maghfirat* of God Almighty who is disobedient and vile. As every true purity is bestowed by Him and He alone safeguards one against the storm of passion, it should be a preoccupation of His righteous servants to constantly seek *Maghfirat* from that True Guardian and Protector.

If we were to seek an illustration of *Maghfirat* in the physical world the best illustration would be that *Maghfirat* is a strong and unbreakable dam which is erected to hold back a flood. As all strength and all power belongs to God Almighty, and a man is weak in his soul as he is in his body and seeks water from the Eternal Being all the time for the nurture of the tree of his being, and cannot keep alive without His grace, *Istighfar*, in its meaning that we have set out, becomes necessary and essential. As a tree puts forth its branches in all directions, as if it spreads its hands towards the surrounding spring of water, pleading for help that its greenness should not decline and that the time of its flowering and putting forth fruit should not be lost, the same is the case with the righteous. To supplicate the Fountain of real life for the water of security to safeguard spiritual life, or to promote it, is described in the Holy Qur'an as *Istighfar*.

Reflect on the Holy Qur'an and read it with care and you will alight upon the reality of *Istighfar*. The dictionary meaning of *Maghfirat* is a covering which is designed to safeguard against a misfortune. For instance, water is an element that covers up the defects of trees and is thus *Maghfirat*. Consider what would be the condition of a garden which receives no water for a year or two. Is it not true that its beauty will be destroyed and there will be no sign left of its greenness? It will produce no fruit and no flowers. Its inside will be burnt up. Its green and soft leaves will dry up and fall down; and dryness overcoming it, all its limbs will fall away from it like the limbs of a leper. Why will all these calamities overtake it? Because the water upon which its life depended was not available. This is referred to in the verse:

“A good word is like a good tree.”

As a good and noble tree cannot flourish without water, in the same way, the good word of a righteous person cannot flourish till a pure spring refreshes its roots by flowing in the stream of *Istighfar*. Thus the **spiritual life** of a person depends upon *Istighfar* through the stream of which the true spring reaches the root of humanness and safeguards it from drying up and dying.

The **religion** which does not set forth this **philosophy** is certainly not from God, and a person who claims to be a Prophet or a Messenger or righteous or pure-natured and turns away from this spring is certainly not from God.

Such a one derives not from God Almighty, but from **Satan**, the root meaning of which is death. He who does not desire to draw that **true spring** to himself and does not fill this spring to its brim from the stream of *Istighfar*, in order to make his spiritual garden flourish, is a Satan, that is to say, he will die for it is not possible that the tree should flourish without water. Every **arrogant** one, who does not desire to make his spiritual tree flourish from this spring of life is a Satan and will be ruined like Satan.

There has been no righteous Prophet in the world who turned away from the reality of *Istighfar* and did not desire to flourish through this real spring. It is true that our lord and master Muhammad, **the chosen one** [peace and blessings of Allah be on him] supplicated more than anyone else for this flourishing and therefore God caused him to flourish and be fragrant more than all other Prophets. [**Nur-ul-Qur'an No. 1, Ruhani Khaza'in, Vol. 9 pp. 356-358**]

So, do not forget about *Darood* and *Istighfaar*. Their recitation with full understanding will help each one among us to become an evergreen Muslim so to say. Through this our bond with the Holy Prophet (saw) and Allah will never break, Incha Allah. Ameen.