

by Imam Zafrullah Domun

As most members might know, yesterday in Mauritius many Muslims celebrated Eid Miladun Nabi. We, Ahmadi Muslims, do not and never have recognized that there is any need for such a celebration on any specific date. We argue that it was never celebrated by the Holy Prophet Mohammad (saw) nor by any of the righteous caliphs and hence it is not an event that has to be celebrated. In fact, some people celebrate the Eid on the day which they presume is the birthday of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw). But even historians are of the opinion that we cannot pinpoint with accuracy on which particular date the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw) was born. Anyhow, as I said in one of my previous sermons, the practice of celebrating the birthday of the Holy Prophet (saw) started almost 300 years after his death and since then it has been celebrated in some parts of the Islamic world especially in South Asia, meaning India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and some other Muslim countries. The Saudis and many others do not celebrate the birthday of the Holy Prophet (saw) because they think it is an innovation (*bid'a*). The hadith quoted for this purpose is:

“Jabir ibn Abdullah reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, would praise Allah in his sermon, as He deserves to be praised, and then he would say, **“Whomsoever Allah guides, no one can lead him astray. Whomsoever Allah sends astray, no one can guide him. The truest word is the Book of Allah and the best guidance is the guidance of Muhammad. The most evil matters are those that are newly invented, for every newly invented matter is an innovation. Every innovation is misguidance, and every misguidance is in the Hellfire.”** Source: Sunan al-Nasā’ī 1578

This is a clear matter. So, we should not invent new practices or new types of worship. Allah has made it quite clear for us who we should follow. He says in the Holy Quran:

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا

“Verily you have in the Prophet of Allah an excellent model, for him who hopes (in the meeting with) Allah and the Last Day and who remembers Allah much.” (33:22)

So, in this verse, Allah tells us the perfect example for us to follow is the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw). As Muslims, we should do our best to copy him, follow in his footsteps and not in the footsteps of others. He is the model *par excellence* (*ouswatoun hasanatoune*). No one has ever or will ever do better than Him in obeying Allah’s commandments. His status is above all those who came before or will come after. Such is the perfect exemplar which Allah has commanded us to follow. And Allah tells the Holy Prophet (saw) to tell us:

قُلْ إِن كُنتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

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

These are not verses that should just be read and forgotten. On the contrary they are verses that should be meditated upon as they invite us to examine our life and take stock of how much we are trying to imitate the Holy Prophet (saw) not once a year, nor once a month, nor once a week but daily. If we say that we love the Holy Prophet (saw) and we have great love for him and he has a great importance in our life, then we should make it our duty to do our best to know about how he led his life so that we might hold him as the model and imitate him. That is why Hazrat Masih Maood (as) made it clear in the third condition of allegiance (*bait*) that as an Ahmadi Muslim we should regularly offer the five daily Prayers in accordance with the commandments of God and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw) and that we shall try our best to be regular in offering the *tahajjud* prayer and in invoking *durud* on the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw). Furthermore, we shall make it our daily routine to ask forgiveness for our sins, to remember the bounties of God and to praise and glorify Him.

So, we should ask ourselves whether we are engaging ourselves in developing the mindset that is spelled out in the conditions of *bait* or if we are just an Ahmadi Muslim in name. Our relationship with the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw) demands of us that we do our best to manifest in our daily life the qualities of the Holy Prophet (saw). Because this is what will endear us to Allah here and in the hereafter. We celebrate the life of the Holy Prophet (saw) by doing our best to imitate him everyday in our life and not by fixing a date to talk about him.

And that which will help us to establish a solid relationship with the Holy Prophet (saw) is the invocation of blessings upon him because this as well is a direct command of Allah. He says in the Holy Quran:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا

Allah and His angels send blessings on the Prophet. O ye who believe! you *also* should invoke blessings on him and salute *him* with the salutation of peace. (33:57)

According to the Promised Messiah (as), invoking blessings on the Holy Prophet (saw) is the source of immense spiritual blessings. We will know about these blessings when we make it a duty, out of love for the Holy Prophet (saw) to invoke blessings upon him. Hence, we should be ready to find time to offer Darood and we will never regret the time spent on such prayers. May Allah help each one amongst us to become a habitual invoker of Darood. Incha Allah then we will be near and dear to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw).

In addition, each one among us should see to it that our behaviour in general is in conformity with the model of the Holy Prophet (saw). We are just be paying lip service to his teachings.

Now I will share with you an extract from the Promised Messiah's book "*A'ina-e-Kamalat-e-Islam, Ruhani Khaza'in*, Vol. 5, pp. 186-197"

"At the stage of perfect understanding, Islam does not remain a mere phrase, but all its reality that we have described is achieved and the human soul prostrates itself humbly before Divine Unity. Thereupon, from both sides it is announced: Whatever is mine is thine. That is to say, the human soul cries out and confesses: Lord whatever is mine is Thine; and God also speaks and conveys the good news: O My servant, the heaven and earth etc. that are with Me are with thee also. This stage is indicated in the verse:

قُلْ يَا عِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِن رَّحْمَةِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا إِنَّهُ هُوَ
الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ

"Say: O my servants who have committed excesses against your own selves despair not of the mercy of Allah, surely Allah will forgive all sins". (al-Zumar, 39:54)

In this verse instead of: *O servants of Allah*; the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allah be on him] was commanded to say: *O my servants*. This verse was revealed in this form so that God Almighty might convey the good news of limitless mercies and might comfort those who are broken-hearted in consequence of their sins. Thus, Allah the Glorious desired to exhibit a sample of His mercies and to make it manifest to what extent He honours His faithful servant with special favours. By adopting the form: *Say: O my servants*; God in effect said: Look at My beloved Messenger and see at what high rank he has arrived through his perfect obedience to Me that now all that is Mine is his. He who desires salvation should become his servant. That is to say, he should obey him so perfectly as if he was his slave. Then whatever sins he might have committed will be forgiven him. The word '*abd*' in Arabic idiom also means slave as it is said: **وَلَعَبْدٌ مُّؤْمِنٌ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ مُّشَدٍّ**

In the verse to which we have drawn attention, it is indicated that he who desires salvation should establish the relationship of a slave with this Prophet. That is to say, he should not step outside his commandment and should consider himself bound to his obedience as a slave is bound and he would then obtain salvation. One pities those benighted souls who bear such rancour towards the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allah be on him] that they consider that names like Ghulam Nabi, Ghulam Rasul, Ghulam Mustafa, Ghulam Ahmad and Ghulam Muhammad, amount to associating the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allah be on him] with God, whereas the verse indicates that these names are a means of salvation.

As '*abd*' implies that a person so named should refrain from every kind of freedom and self-direction and should be completely obedient to his master, therefore, the seekers after

truth have been urged that if they wish to attain salvation they should adapt themselves to this condition. This verse has the same connotation as the verse:

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

Perfect following demands that devotion and full obedience which is conveyed in the expression ‘abd. The verse: *Say: O my servants*; means in effect: *Say: O my followers*, who are involved in sins, despair not of mercy of Allah; for Allah, through the blessing of your following me, will forgive all your sins. If the word servants in this verse is construed as meaning the servants of Allah, the meaning of the verse is perverted for it cannot be true that God Almighty would forgive all idol worshippers and disbelievers without their believing in and following the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allah be on him]. Such an interpretation would be contrary to the express directions of the Holy Qur’an. It should be remembered that the purport of the verse is that those who become the sincere servants of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allah be on him] will be bestowed the light, the faith, the love and the passion which will deliver them from all that is beside Allah, and they will be freed from sins and will be bestowed a pure life in this world and they will be delivered from the narrow and dark graves of human passions....

The Holy Qur’an is full of the idiom that the world had died and that God Almighty revived it through sending the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allah be on him] as is said: “Know that Allah revives the earth after its death.”

This means that God helped them with the Holy Spirit. The help of the Holy Spirit is that it revives the hearts, delivers from spiritual death, bestows pure faculties, pure senses and pure knowledge, and carries a person to the station of nearness to God through certain knowledge and conclusive arguments.... This knowledge on which salvation depends cannot be obtained without that life which is bestowed through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Qur’an affirms it emphatically that that spiritual life is obtained only through following the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allah be on him] and that all those who repudiate obedience to him are dead and do not possess that life. Spiritual life means the intellectual and active faculties which are brought to life by the Holy Spirit....”

We will stop here for today. May Allah help each one amongst us to be a true and sincere follower of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw).