

by Imam Zafrullah Domun

Today, incha Allah I will share with you some words of advice from Hazrat Masih Maood (as). The first one is about prayer. He said:

“Of all the obligations of a Muslim, the most important is prayer, and of all the prayers, none is so essential to be recited in congregation as the Jumma (Friday) service prayer. The Jumma is in fact the greatest Muslim festival. The Holy Quran regards it as an Eid. A whole chapter of the holy book entitled *the Jumma* has been devoted to it. In that chapter, Almighty God commands Muslims to quit all their worldly affairs when they are summoned to prayer of Friday, to assemble in mosques and to say the Jumma prayers with due observance of all the requirements of the Law. The person who does not act in obedience to these injunctions is regarded by the Holy Quran as guilty of a deadly sin and almost outside the circle of Islam. Far more stress has been laid upon attendance at the Jumma sermon and prayers than upon Eid. It is on account of this importance of the Jumma in the Muslim faith that Friday has universally been observed as a holiday among the Muslims from the very earliest time that Islam took its rise.”

Unfortunately, these days, due to Covid 19, few people are allowed to assemble in the mosque. We are living under exceptional circumstances. Hence, at present, under these circumstances, we are allowed not to attend Jumma in mosques. But under normal circumstances, we should note how Hazrat Masih Maood (as) conveyed to us its importance and then we should act accordingly.

The second extract is about the true martyr. He said:

“Bear in mind that a true martyr (shaheed) is not only the man who is killed in religious cause but also the man who in all trials and difficulties remains firm and faithful to God, and who is ready to suffer any hardship in the path of God. Shaheed literally means a witness and, therefore, everyone who has such a living and certain faith in the existence of God that he may be said to have witnessed Him and the glorious manifestation of His Power is a shaheed or martyr. He believes in the existence of God and in His mighty power and control over all with such certainty as if he had witnessed them. When the spiritual wayfarer has reached this stage, he finds no difficulty in laying down his life in the path of God: rather he feels supreme pleasure and bliss in it. By laying down life in the path of God is not meant that a person should seek an occasion to be actually murdered. What is meant is that a person should prefer the pleasure of God to his own desires and interests, that is to say, whenever his own interests and desires clash with his duty to God, he should willingly forsake the former.

Everyone should reflect whether it is this life that he loves most or the next; whether if he meets with any difficulty or is subjected to any hardship in the path of God (i.e. for the sake of righteousness) he would bear it with heart's joy, and whether if he is required to lay down his life, he is prepared for it. This is a spiritual stage to which it is my object to lead my disciples.”

In other words, what the Promised Messiah (as) expected from all who accepted to be his disciples was that we should all strive to be so conscious of Allah that it is as if we are seeing Him. But this is a very difficult path and it becomes easy for the one for whom Allah makes it easy. Our supplications should always be that Allah attracts us towards Him and that He purifies us of all our weaknesses and that we may attain true certainty concerning Him, *incha Allah*.

The third extract that I have chosen is as follows:

“It is in the nature of man that he wishes to avoid harm and to enjoy the benefits of whatever he believes to be the case. For example, arsenic is a poison and a person does not wish to taste it, as he knows that even a small amount of this poison can kill.

Why then, having acquired a belief in God, will he not derive the conclusions that relate to that belief? If a person's belief in God were to equal even the belief that he has in arsenic [that it kills] then his selfish emotions and desires would turn cold and a death would come over them. Instead, we have to accept that the [declarations of belief in God] are only utterances — belief has not yet acquired the colour of certainty. Hence, such a person deceives his own self when he states: ‘I believe in God’. The first duty of a human being, therefore, is that he should correct the belief that he has in God. That is, he should prove with his deeds and actions that they are not in conflict with the commandments of God and are not against the glory of God. The deception whereby a person states that he believes in God, despite the fact that there is no testimony of his deeds to that effect, is a kind of ‘illness’ and a very serious ‘illness’ at that.

Illnesses are of two types. In one type of illness, pain is felt, such as a pain in the forehead or pain in the kidneys. The other type of illness is one in which pain is not felt and as a result, through ignorance, the patient does not attend to the illness. For instance, there is the mark of leukoderma, which apparently does not give rise to any sensation of pain, but ultimately may produce dangerous consequences. Hence, a belief in God that is not attested through actual practice is an ‘illness’ of the second type. Belief, in this case, is merely customary based on whatever has been heard from fathers and forefathers about the existence of some God. Such a belief is not that of a person who has felt it within him and tasted of it. When belief is created by such heartfelt declaration, it is sure to cleanse away all the impurities of sin and the true signs of belief will begin to manifest themselves. Until such signs are manifested, it is all the same whether one believes or not. The reason for this is that [without signs]

there is not the certainty of belief and without certainty there are no fruits of belief. A person will not tread near dangers of which he is certain. For example, if there were a danger that a pillar holding up the roof of the house is broken, one would not live in it or even go near it. Similarly, if one knows that a snake lives at a certain place and moves around at night, one would never go near that place at night. A person acts like this because he has firm knowledge about those dangers. Hence, if one's belief in God, does not produce the slightest effect, not even one equivalent to the effect and certainty produced by a penny's worth of arsenic, then know that such a person does not believe in God. Reality is that the root of all evil is the careless attitude towards spiritual knowledge. [*Malfoozat*, Vol.4, pp.312—313]

“What is the true sign of faith and what is its meaning? It is to believe, and then to have certainty about that belief. When a person believes something truly with his heart, he has a sense of certainty about it and his actions are then in accordance with that belief. For instance, if a person knows that arsenic is a poison and that one dies as a result of taking it, or that a snake is a deadly enemy and whosoever is bitten by it has to fight for his life, he would never eat arsenic nor attempt to put as much as a finger inside a hole that is occupied by a snake because he has firm ‘faith’ or knowledge of these matters. Nowadays [given the spread of the plague] people believe that contact with the plague is fatal and that is why people abandon and run miles from the house that is visited by the plague. In short, actions follow in accordance with in whatever it is that one has complete faith. The question then arises as to why any sins should remain when there is belief in the existence of God and there is mindfulness of reckoning? Is the belief in God weaker than even the belief in a snake? People claim to be believers and yet there is no difference to the level of theft, lies, adultery, alcoholism and general sinfulness and impiety — there is no lessening of hypocrisy and ostentation. There is only a verbal declaration of faith — other than that faith and religion are nothing in practice [as far as the majority of people are concerned].

We already observe that a person never wastes anything that he believes to be beneficial. We have never seen a rich man or a poor man dispose of his wealth and possessions by throwing them away. On the contrary, we have not seen anyone throw away even a single penny. What is more, a person regrets the loss of even a small item of use such as a needle should it break and he has to throw it away. However, in people's view, belief in God is not even equal to a needle and its value for them does not equal even the value of a needle then, accordingly, no benefit accrues to them.” [*Malfoozat*, Vol.5, pp.329—330]

“God Almighty is greater than all else; He has the most knowledge; He is the true Creator of man and of every particle that exists. It is He Who is also the Creator of man's nature and He is All-Wise. If it is the case that with His complete wisdom and complete knowledge, He suggests that something is harmful for you that indulging in it

would not benefit you at all, then it is not for a wise person to go against this. We see that when a doctor advises a patient to abstain from something, the patient acts on that advice without any argument. Why does he act in this way? He does so because he considers the doctor to be in possession of much greater knowledge than he possesses himself. Similarly, there are things that are harmful for man's body or spirit whether man himself understands that or not. There are some things that would be harmful even if God had not given a ruling about them. In medicine also there are some things that are considered to be 'sins' [that is, they prove very harmful for a human being] and lack of medical knowledge is no excuse for the person who goes against the medical principles. [He would still suffer the harmful consequences were he to indulge in such things]. If someone chooses not to believe this, they can check this with doctors and physicians. The point to remember is simply this: the root of sin is those actions that lead man away from purity and righteousness. The true love of God and union with God is the true pleasure and real comfort. Thus, moving away from God and being distant from Him is also sin and is the source of pain, sorrow and hardship. All that God dislikes because of His own sanctity is 'sin'. There are some matters on which people may not agree but majority is commonly agreed that lying, stealing, adultery and cruelty are such acts that all nations and religions jointly consider them to be sins. Remember, however, that the root of sin is precisely those acts that distance man from God, that are against His sanctity, against His wishes and against man's nature."

Let us all reflect on these words of wisdom of Hazrat Masih Maood (as) and let us be determined to create a harmony between what Allah tells us to do and what we really do. May Allah help each one among us to understand that He is the greatest treasure and our life mission above everything else is to discover this great treasure. Incha Allah.