

FRIDAY SERMON

07 January 2022

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Today, I will read some more extracts from the writings of Hazrat Masih Maood (as). Let us hope and pray that incha Allah these words will inspire each one amongst us to exert ourselves more in the path of Allah. We may have read these extracts before or we may even have read the whole book from where they have been taken, but whenever we hear these words anew or we reread them, it has an effect on our heart and we try to be more careful. Allah says in the Holy Quran in Sura Al Aa'la (87) فَذَكِّرْ إِنَّ نَفْعَ الذِّكْرِى (So keep on reminding: surely, reminding is profitable). And in Sura 51, Allah says:

وَذَكِّرْ فَإِنَّ الذِّكْرِى تَنْفَعُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ which means “And keep on exhorting; for verily, exhortation benefits those who would believe.” So, bearing these two verses in mind, we remind our own self and our brothers and sisters about the teachings of Hazrat Masih Maood (as), which, over time, we might have forgotten but remember when we hear it again. May Allah help myself and our brothers and sisters to profit by these continuous reminders. Incha Allah. Ameen.

We will be reading mostly from *Kishti Nuh* along with *Tazkeratous shahadatain*, a book which Hazrat Masih Maood (as) recommended his followers to read often. He starts the book as follows:

“Let it be clear that to affirm the covenant of *bai'at* with the tongue alone amounts to nothing unless it is practiced with full, heartfelt resolve...” This sentence is quite explicit. A mere declaration that one is a member of the Jamaat of the Promised Messiah (as) by signing a *baiat form* is nothing unless one takes the firm resolution to abide by all his teachings as best as one can. Allah sees everything – even those things that we do in utmost privacy. So being an Ahmadi Muslim is not just having a membership card, which is quite current these days. Being an Ahmadi Muslim means living one's life according to the best teachings of Islam as has been explained to us by the Promised Messiah (as). We should all try to bear this in mind. The Promised Messiah continues:

“Thus, whosoever **fully acts** upon my teachings enters that house of mine, concerning which God Almighty has promised in His Words “*Inni ohafezo koulla man fid daar*”, that is, ‘I shall protect everyone who is within the four walls of your home’. This should not be taken to mean only such people who dwell in my house made of brick and mortar; rather, this also refers to all those who follow me completely and dwell in my spiritual home.”

Here, we can understand that whoever tries his best to follow the teachings of the Promised Messiah (as), wherever he might be in the world, lives in the spiritual dwelling of the Promised Messiah (as). Being physically attached to the Promised Messiah (as) is of no importance at all. Real distinction in the eyes of Allah is not that one is in the progeny of the Promised Messiah (as). Real distinction will come to whosoever takes to heart the Promised Messiah's teachings and mould his life according to them. Just making a pledge to join the *wassiyat* scheme is nothing unless and until one makes the necessary sacrifices to purify one's *nafs* of all its impurities as Hazrat Masih Maood (as) taught us. From this, we may conclude that someone might be outside the actual mainstream ahmadiyya Jamaat and yet still be a member of the Jamaat ahmadiyya created by Hazrat Masih Maood (as) and still be part of the Promised Messiah's spiritual home.

After explaining briefly the characteristics of the God in whom we should believe, Hazrat Masih Maood (as) said:

“For a person who brings about a change in himself, He becomes a new God for him and deals with him by means of a new manifestation. Thus, such a person experiences a change in God according to the change in himself. Yet no change takes place in God, for He is eternally unchangeable and possesses complete perfection, but when a person undergoes a transformation and begins to move towards virtue, God manifests Himself to such a person in a new way. At the time of every improved condition that manifests itself in a person, the manifestation of God Almighty's power also reveals itself to a greater extent. He manifests His might in an extraordinary way only when an extraordinary change takes place in a person. This is the root of all extraordinary happenings and miracles. The God so described is the fundamental bedrock of my community. Believe in Him and give precedence to Him over your own souls and comforts and over all your relationships; show sincerity and loyalty in His cause by exhibiting courage in your practice. Worldly people do not prefer Him over their means, and their kith and kin, but you ought to, so that you may be counted in heaven as belonging to His community.”

Hence, we understand that if we want to know more of Allah, we should bring about a complete change in our own selves. If we do this by praying regularly, by fasting as we should in the month of Ramadan, by paying our Zakaat if they are due and by performing Hajj if it can be done and also by regularly reading our Holy Quran regularly and by remembering Allah much we will know, so to say, a new God. Hazrat Masih Maood (as) wanted us to get our priorities right and not let us be deceived by the attractions of the world. He continues:

“It has been the practice of God since the remotest ages to manifest signs of His mercy, but you can partake of it only when nothing separates you from Him, His will becomes your will, His desire becomes your desire, and you remain prostrate at His threshold at

all times and in all conditions—whether of success or failure—so that He may do whatever He wills. If you do so, then God, who has for so long kept His countenance hidden, will manifest Himself in you. Is there anyone from among you who will implement this and seek His pleasure, without being dissatisfied by His will and decree? So when you encounter misfortune, you should step forth even more eagerly, for this is the means of your success. Exert all your power to spread the Oneness of God on earth. Show mercy to His servants and do not wrong them by your tongue or your hand or by any other means, and strive for the welfare of God's creation. Behave not arrogantly towards anyone even if he is your subordinate, and revile not anyone even if he should revile you. Become humble, tolerant, well-intentioned and compassionate towards God's creation so that you may be accepted by God.”

He says further “Be not afraid of the curses of the world, for they shall vanish before your eyes like smoke and cannot turn day into night. Fear instead the curse of God which descends from heaven and uproots its victims in both worlds. You cannot save yourselves with hypocrisy, for your God is He who sees the innermost depth of man. Can you then deceive Him? So become straightforward, clean, pure and truthful. If even a particle of darkness is left within you, it will dispel all your light. And if you possess even the slightest arrogance, hypocrisy, self-conceit or sloth, you are not worthy of being accepted. Be careful lest a few accomplishments delude you to think that you have sufficiently fulfilled your purpose. For God desires a complete transformation in your being and He demands from you a death whereafter He should revive you. Hasten to make peace with one another and forgive your brethren their sins. For he who is not inclined to make peace with his brother is wicked and will be cut off, because he is the cause of dissension. Part with your ego in every way and do away with mutual grievances. Be humble like the guilty, though truth be on your side, so that you may be forgiven. Do not feed your vanity, for those who are bloated cannot enter the gate to which you have been called. How unfortunate is the one who does not believe in that which has come from the mouth of God and which I have set forth. If you desire that God should be pleased with you in heaven, unite with one another as though you were brothers from the same womb. The one who most forgives the transgressions of his brother is the more honourable among you. Unfortunate is the one who is obstinate and does not forgive. Such a person has no part in me. Be very fearful of God's curse, for He is Holy and Jealous. An evildoer cannot attain nearness to God. One who is arrogant cannot attain nearness to God. A wrongdoer cannot attain nearness to God. He who is unfaithful cannot attain nearness to God. Every such person who is not jealously protective for the sake of God's name cannot attain His nearness. Those who fall upon the world like dogs, ants and vultures, and find their comfort in the world, cannot attain nearness to God. Every impure eye is far from Him; every impure heart is unaware of Him. He who burns for His sake will be delivered from the fire; he who weeps for His sake will laugh; and he who cuts asunder from the world for His sake will find Him.

Befriend God with a true heart, full sincerity and complete eagerness, so that He too may befriend you. Have mercy on your subordinates and your wives and your less fortunate brethren so that you too may be shown mercy in heaven. Become truly His, so that He too may become yours. The world is home to a thousand evils, one of which is also the plague. So hold fast to God with sincerity so that He should safeguard you against all calamities. No calamity visits the earth until there is a command from heaven, and no affliction is alleviated until mercy descends from heaven. So, you would be wise to take hold of the root rather than the branch. You are not prohibited from having recourse to the necessary means and appropriate remedies, but you are forbidden to rely upon them. Ultimately, the will of God will prevail. Complete trust in God, if one has the strength for it, is greater than all else.”

These are indeed very precious words. It is our duty to take them to heart, to read and reread them so that we might absorb their meanings in our whole being to prevent us from going off the path that will lead us directly to Allah.

These days, we see that the Covid pandemic has spread havoc in the world. Despite all the best efforts of the scientists and the governments around the world, this pandemic is still not under control. It keeps changing and bigger doses of vaccines are needed to cope with it. According to a very influential weekly magazine, the real number of deaths is far above what has been officially reported. We are living in difficult times and we should pray for Allah to decree that this pandemic stops affecting us. Hazrat Masih Maood (as) says “**No calamity visits the earth until there is a command from heaven, and no affliction is alleviated until mercy descends from heaven.**”. So, we should keep praying until Allah decides to put an end to this great distress that we have witnessed in our own times. May Allah help us to realize our duties and our responsibilities and may we all rise up to the occasion and do what is expected from us. Incha Allah.