

FRIDAY SERMON

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We continue reading from Malfuzaat Volume 3 from where we left off last week.

Speaking about death, the Promised Messiah (as) said:

“How does a person know if after the *Zuhr* Prayer, they will live until *Asr*. On certain occasions, blood circulation is cut off suddenly and a person meets his death.

Sometimes, perfectly healthy individuals die unexpectedly. Wazir Muhammad Hasan Khan returned after he had gone out for some fresh air. He happily began to climb the stairs to his home when after a couple of steps, he felt dizzy and sat down. His servant asked him whether he required assistance, but he responded in the negative. Then, he ascended two or three more steps, but felt dizzy again and died. Similarly, Ghulam Muhy-ud-Din, a member of Kotli, Kashmir, was met with a sudden death as well. In short, we have no idea when death will come and this is why it is crucial that we do not lose sight of it.

Sympathy for the cause of religion is a great thing, which confers honour on a man in his agony of death. It is stated in the Holy Quran:

إِنَّ زَلْزَلَةَ السَّاعَةِ شَيْءٌ عَظِيمٌ

Verily, the earthquake of the Hour is a tremendous thing. (22:2)

The ‘hour’ also refers to the Day of Resurrection; I do not deny this, but here, it is the agony of death that is being alluded to in reality. For death is a time where a man’s relations are severed completely. An individual is suddenly separated from his pleasures and attachments, and a strange tremor shakes the person, as though he is gripped from within. Therefore, the sum total of man’s good fortune is for him to be mindful of death, and not be too attached to the world and its pleasures so that when the final hour arrives, it is painful to part from these attachments. A poet has said in relation to the world and its comforts:

They all seek to murder you;

at times they kill you with harmony, and at times with war.

The Holy Quran has encapsulated this subject in the following verse:

إِنَّمَا أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَأَوْلَادُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ

Your wealth and your children are but a trial.

In this verse, the word *amwalukum* (your wealth) refers to wives as well. Since women cover and veil themselves, they have been veiled, as it were, in the aforementioned verse, and not mentioned explicitly by name. This word also refers to women because man spends his wealth to bring home a wife. The word *mal*, which means ‘wealth’, refers to that which naturally attracts and inclines a person to itself, and therefore, this word is derived from *ma’il* (to be naturally inclined or fond of something). Since the male is naturally attracted to the female, the word *mal*, refers to women as well. In this instance, the word *mal* has been used so that other pleasures more general in nature are not excluded. Otherwise, in this verse, if only the word *nisa* (women) had been used, the statement would refer only to two things: one’s wife and children. Now, in addition to this, if man’s other pleasures had been enumerated individually, the list would have no end, even after many, many pages had been exhausted. Therefore, *mal*, refers to:

Koulla maa yameelo behil qalb

All that to which the heart is inclined.

In this instance, children have been mentioned because one considers them to be a piece of one’s heart; an heir. In summary, Allah the Exalted and the worldly pleasures of man are two things that are diametrically opposed to one another. Both cannot coexist simultaneously.

Now, do not surmise from this that women are possessions of low and insignificant standing. Not at all! Our Perfect Guide, the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, has said:

khayrokoum khayrokoum le ahlehi

This means, the best among you is the one who is excellent in the treatment of his wife. How can one who does not treat and consort with his wife in a kind and noble manner be righteous? A person can only be good and virtuous in the matter of other people when he treats his wife benevolently and lives with her amicably; not if over petty matters he abuses and beats her. There have been examples of certain cases where an angered man became enraged with his wife on a trivial issue and hit her, and as a result, his wife sustained an injury at a sensitive spot, which caused her death. Therefore, in favour of women, Allah the Exalted states:

عَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ

And consort with them in kindness.

Of course, if someone’s wife does something inappropriate, it is necessary to strongly advise her. The duty of a husband is to firmly ingrain into the heart of his wife that he can never be pleased with any action that is against the teachings of religion, but also, he must demonstrate that he is not so cruel and oppressive that he cannot overlook her faults.

A husband is, to his wife, a reflection of Allah the Exalted. It is narrated in a Hadith that if Allah Almighty had permitted one to prostrate before anyone other than God, He would have

ordered a wife to prostrate before her husband. A husband must possess both a nature of strength and tenderness. If a husband tells his wife to move a heap of bricks from one place to another, she does not have the right to object.

Similarly, we learn from the Holy Quran and Hadith that the relationship of a disciple with their spiritual guide ought to be like the relationship of a wife with her husband. A follower must not refuse any command given to them by their spiritual guide, nor ask for any justifications. This is why the Holy Quran states:

إِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ

*Guide us in the right path—the path of those on
whom Thou hast bestowed Thy blessings.*

This means that one must commit oneself to the path of those upon whom Allah has bestowed His blessings. Since man naturally desires freedom, this verse instructs man to follow the path of those alluded to in this verse. Even if an experienced physician makes an error, that is better than being treated by someone who is ignorant. High quality sharp instruments in the possession of an ignorant man, without the hand of an experienced surgeon, would be useless. A poet has said:

Without the hand of Solomon;

What power can the ring of Solomon wield?

Hence, the Holy Quran is a sharp instrument, but a highly skilled doctor, who is blessed with the succour of God Almighty, is required to make proper use of it.

One must possess a pure heart. However, since this treasure is not possessed by all, Allah the Exalted created the Prophets—everyone cannot be a Prophet and this class of people is limited in number.

Speaking about the reason why he has been called Adam in his revelations, the Promised Messiah (as) said:

aradto an astakhlefa fakhalaqto adam

“[...] In this relation, there is a revelation of mine which is as follows:

I decided to appoint a vicegerent in this age and so, I created this Adam.

This hints to the fact that he would have no need to swear an oath of allegiance to anyone else or follow some other spiritual guide. On the contrary, just as God created Adam with His hand of beauty and majesty, this Vicegerent of Allah would be taught by Him and would swear allegiance to Him, as it were. This is why Allah Almighty has kept me away from such paths that are opposed to the precepts of prophethood. Now, it is true that one must develop a pure heart, but this cannot be achieved until one remains in the company of a holy individual who has come on the precepts of prophethood; and one cannot benefit from the company of

such an individual until one first realizes with certainty that he is mortal. This realization alone gives one an opportunity to benefit from the company of a truthful man of God. It is narrated in a Hadith that when Allah the Exalted desires righteousness for a person, He raises an admonisher, as it were, in his heart. The greatest admonisher a person can have within themselves is one which moves them to understand the deeper essence of:

كُونُوا مَعَ الصَّادِقِينَ

Be with the truthful.

Observe the state of the noble companions: what did they not do to benefit from the company of the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him? It is incumbent upon our community to follow in the footsteps of the companions and develop a similar nature within themselves. Without this, they cannot attain the true objective for which I have been sent. Do the members of our community have needs and requirements which the companions did not have? Do you not see how ardently desirous the companions were to offer the Prayer with the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, and listen to his words?

Allah the Exalted has conferred upon this community that is with the Promised Messiah, the rank that it will join the community of the companions.

وَأَخْرَيْنَ مِنْهُمْ لَمَّا يَلْحَقُوا بِهِمْ

And among others from among them who have not yet joined them.

Commentators have agreed that this verse refers to the community of the Promised Messiah, which will, as if, be the community of the companions. This community will not belong to the Promised Messiah, but rather, it will actually belong to the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, because the Promised Messiah will appear as a manifestation of the Holy Prophet (saw), embodying his attribute of beauty. This Promised Messiah will be commissioned to bring to completion the propagation of the message of the Holy Prophet (saw).

For this reason, my heart throbs with pain so that Allah the Exalted bestows upon our community the favours that were conferred upon the companions; and so that my community develops within themselves the truth, loyalty, sincerity and obedience that was the hallmark of the companions. May this community fear no one but God; may they be righteous, because the love of God embraces the righteous. Allah the Exalted states:

أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الْمُتَّقِينَ

Allah is with the righteous.

Since Allah the Exalted accompanies the righteous, even an enemy is struck by awe in the face of a righteous person. However, it must be borne in mind that true righteousness can never be attained until one benefits from the company of the truthful and holy men of God,

and until one annihilates themselves completely in obedience to the chosen ones of God. It is for this very reason that Allah the Exalted states:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَكُونُوا مَعَ الصَّادِقِينَ

Meaning, O ye who believe! Be righteous, remain in the company of the truthful and gain strength from their company. This clearly demonstrates that the deeper reality of faith is revealed only after one becomes righteous. The true essence of fear of Allah cannot be grasped until one benefit from the holy company of a man who is himself lost in God. It ought to be remembered also that to merely remain in the company of such a person is not the least beneficial and effective either. In reality, to remain in the company of the truthful is an indication of the fact that one must obey them. As such, in another instance, Allah the Exalted states:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ

In other words, obey Allah and His Messenger, and obey your rulers. Obedience is a quality, which if practiced wholeheartedly, bestows a spiritual radiance to the heart and illuminates the soul, granting it a pleasure.” (P33-39)