

FRIDAY SERMON

11 November 2022

By Imam Zafrullah Domun

Today, we will incha Allah read about what Hazrat Masih Maood (as) said about dreams, visions and revelations. This is an entry from April 1901. He said:

“Generally, in an elementary state, dreams, visions and revelations are experienced by everyone. However, one should not be deceived into thinking that one have reached their final destination. The fact of the matter is that human nature is fashioned in a way so that all people can experience dreams, visions and revelations. As such, it has been observed that on certain occasions, even disbelievers, Hindus, and in fact, even sinners and transgressors experience dreams—and sometimes they even prove to be true. The reason for this is because God Almighty Himself bestows upon such people a share of the state that is experienced in the perfect sense by His saints and Prophets, so that these people do not outright reject the Prophets, and so they do not say that they know nothing of such matters divine. People are given a taste of such experience so that the message of God may be conveyed to them fully without ambiguity, and so that an opponent is able to accept when he hears the claims of the Prophets, because he will know first-hand that such experiences can and are experienced by human beings like him. This is because humans tend to show haste in rejecting that of which they themselves have no experience at all.

There is mention of a blind man in the *Mathnawi* of Rumi, who began to say that there was actually no such thing as the sun and that everyone was lying. ‘If there was a sun,’ he said, ‘then I ought to have seen it as well.’

The sun said: ‘O blind man! You ask for evidence of my existence? First pray to God so that He may grant you eyes.’

Allah the Exalted is Merciful and Generous. If He had not instilled this quality in human nature, how would mankind ever grasp the concept of prophethood? Through initial dreams and revelations, God seeks to invite man towards Himself, but this elementary state does not by any means grant fulfilment. As such, *Bal'aam* used to receive revelation, however, Allah the Exalted states in regarding him:

وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَرَفَعْنَاهُ بِهَا

If We had pleased, We could have exalted him.

And this demonstrates that he was not raised spiritually. In other words, he had not, until that time, become a spiritually elevated or beloved man in the sight of Allah Almighty; and ultimately, he fell low. One does not become special simply by receiving revelations and the like. One cannot be wholly devoted to God until one experiences a thousand deaths and hatches from the egg of one's weak human nature. The people who tread this path are of three categories.

Firstly, there are those who adhere to what is known in Arabic as *din-ul-aja'iz*, which literally means ‘the religion of old women.’ What this implies is that such people offer the obligatory Prayer, they fast, they recite the Holy Quran and will repent and seek forgiveness from God; they strictly adhere to the basic, traditional aspect of religion, and are firm in this respect.

Secondly, there are those who seek to advance beyond this level to attain divine insight. They make an effort in every possible way; they show loyalty, they demonstrate steadfastness, and finally, upon reaching their pinnacle in divine insight, they attain success and triumph.

Thirdly, there are those who are not content with mere adherence to an elementary level of faith (*din-ul-aja'iz*) and so they progress to an extent

and begin to tread the path of divine insight, but they are unable to complete their quest; they stumble and fall down on the way. This class of people is neither here, nor there. The example of such people is like a thirsty man in the possession of some water, albeit, dirty water. In any case, drinking the water would have saved the man from death, but someone told him that there was a fountain of fresh water some ten or fifteen miles away. As a result, the man threw away the little water he had and began walking towards the fountain in search of clean water. However, due to his own impatience, ill-fortune and deviation from the right path, the man was unable to reach the fountain. Ultimately, what was his fate? The man perished and he was met with a dreadful end.

Or the state of affairs of such people can be understood in light of another example. Let us presume that a well is being dug. In the initial stages it is nothing more than a pit, which serves no benefit, and in fact, it is a danger to those who pass by as someone could fall into it and injure himself. Then, when further digging is undertaken, we reach the stage where mud and dirty water becomes visible, but even this is of no benefit yet. Finally, when the digging is complete and the well begins to provide clean water, it becomes a source of life for thousands upon thousands. These people who sit around as *faqirs* and custodians of shrines all suffer from a defective state.

Prophets appear as possessors of pure water, as it were. Until one brings with himself a bestowal from God, there can be no benefit. If Ilahi Bakhsh Sahib poses himself to be Moses, one ought to ask him what is the fundamental objective in his being Moses? Those who appear as appointees of God are like labourers, and they move forward to benefit mankind; they disseminate knowledge, they are never miserly, nor do they show indolence and sit on their hands, as it were.”

On 19 April 1901, two priests of the Forman College (American Mission) came to Qadian from Lahore along with an Indian Christian. They met the

Promised Messiah (as), on whom be peace and blessings, and posed certain questions to him as well, which he continued to answer. He said:

“There have been many who have demanded signs from the Prophets, and they have always responded by saying that the wise do not demand signs of this nature. In fact, on such occasions, the Messiah, peace be upon him, used very harsh language to respond to such demands, as we find from the Gospel. It is clear that a man who is sent by God comes with signs; in fact, I would say that such a person himself is a sign. There are but few who benefit from these signs and recognise them. But it is not long before the world witnesses the magnificent signs that such a man brings. Know for certain that death does not touch such a one until it is proven to the world that he was a man accompanied by heavenly signs.”

Question: In your understanding, what is the Word of God? That is to say, will you also leave behind scriptures similar to the Gospel or Torah?

Answer of the Promised Messiah (as): The fact of the matter is that those divinely appointed individuals who come to the world from Allah Almighty for its reformation are of two classes of people. Firstly, there are those who come as law-bearers and who establish a new divine law. For example, Moses, peace be upon him, was blessed with divine converse and was commissioned by God. He was given a divine law, which you refer to as the Torah—you also accept that a religious law was given through Moses (as).

There are, however, a class of people who do converse with God Almighty, and they too come for the reformation of mankind just as the law-bearing Prophets do, and they appear in their own time in accordance with the needs of the age, but they do not bring a divine law. An example of this would be Jesus, peace be upon him, who did not bring a new law, but rather adhered to the Mosaic law. The truth is, God Almighty does not do anything in vain. When a living Word of God is present and an independent divine law exists to address the needs of the present time, a new religious law is not sent down. However, on the contrary, it is possible—and we do observe—that

when the hearts of the people on earth turn cold to the love of God, and when a few customs remain in the place of good deeds, and when righteousness and lofty morals disappear, at such a time, God Almighty raises a man who guides people to act upon the same law that was divinely prescribed for that era; and through his own practical example, he restores the lost greatness and magnificence of that true divine law in the hearts of the people once again. This man possesses all the characteristics that are required. He is blessed with the honour of conversing with God Almighty. He is bestowed the essence of God's Word. The secrets of the divine law are disclosed to him. He comes with countless miracles and signs. As such, this man is honourable and esteemed in every sense, but the world does not recognise him. As people are blessed with eyes, they continue to recognise him accordingly.

It is human nature that when someone sees an unknown person, the eyes will examine them to determine their height, their skin colour, their eyes and their facial features. In short, humans will examine someone they have not met before from head to toe, to the extent that when that individual's characteristics are fully encompassed by their observing eyes, finally the awe that once surrounded that person diminishes. This is the state of affairs with the Prophets also. When the Prophets appear, they come as ordinary people. They are bound by human needs and necessities. It is for this reason that the extraordinary claims that they make appear strange in the estimation of society at large. This is why the Prophets are rejected, derided, mocked and subjected to all forms of pain and injury. I can assure you that no matter how greatly you respect Moses and Isa (as), if they had both been here today, and sat in my place, they would have been viewed in the same manner that I am looked upon today. The underlying secret is that every Prophet is given grief. It is an inevitable fact that all those who come from God as His appointees and Messengers are rejected as soon as they make their claim, irrespective of how honourable, trustworthy, and truthful they are among

their nation. The people denigrate them and conspire to bring about their end.

However, just as it is inevitable that these men of God will be rejected and given grief, it is also true and certain that a time comes when their communities become firmly established. They establish truth in the world and propagate virtue to such an extent that after them, a time comes when the world rushes towards them desperately and embraces the teachings which they brought to the world.

And this is despite the fact that in their era, no stone was left unturned in causing them grief—for this is always the case. Of course, the question is, were those who rejected these holy men wise? Nay, not at all. It is only due to the nature of the people in that specific era that such people are deemed wise. For who could be more foolish and superficial than those who deny the truth and pose as the wise. It is due to crookedness of nature that people make efforts to denigrate the Prophets in some way or other. Then, such people begin to proclaim, based on their own fancy, that they have won and that they have prevailed in their contest against the pious ones of God, even though it is they who have been disgraced, frustrated and defeated. Ultimately, the final outcome becomes manifest and a shining verdict comes to light, which establishes on whose side lies the truth. The success of the pious is a seal on the ignorance and foolishness of their opponents; for this establishes that the allegations raised by the opponents were due to their own lack of understanding.”

We will stop here for today. May Allah help each one among us to make the necessary efforts to try to know Him and may He grant us such knowledge. Ameen.