

FRIDAY SERMON

12th May 2023

By Imam Zafrullah Domun

Today, *incha Allah* we will read from a lecture that Hazrat Masih Maood (as) gave on 27th December 1905 on the occasion of Jalsa Salana in Qadian. On the previous day, that is, on 26th December, somebody in a discussion said: ***“As far as I am aware, the only difference between the community of the Promised Messiah, peace be upon him, and other Muslims is that the latter believe in the Messiah son of Mary having ascended to heaven alive, and we believe that he has passed away. Except for this, there is no other matter of difference that is contentious in principle between them and us.”*** Even today there are some Ahmadis who think that this is the case. In his speech of 27th December Hazrat Masih Maood (as) refuted this notion. Let us hope that what he said might help everyone *incha Allah* to better understand the *raison d’être* of Jamaat Ahmadiyya. He said:

“Unfortunately, at present I am feeling unwell and cannot speak for long. However, due to a matter of importance, I deem it essential to say a few words. Yesterday I heard someone say that the only difference between us and those Muslims who oppose us relates to the life and death of the Messiah, peace be upon him; otherwise, we are one and the same. It is further claimed that as far as the practice of our opponents is concerned, they too are in the right. That is to say, their prayer, fasting and other practices are those of Muslims, and they follow all the injunctions of Islam. The only error that had crept into them related to the demise of Jesus, peace be upon him, and in order to remove this, God Almighty established this community. However, it ought to be realized that this view is incorrect.

Although it is true that this error is rampant among the Muslims, if someone were to presume that the purpose of my advent in the world was to rectify this error alone, and there was no other fault among the Muslims that required reformation, rather they are on the right path, then such a notion is false.

In my view, the belief relating to the death or life of the Messiah is not of such importance for which Allah the Exalted would have established a community so significant and sent to the world a particular individual to manifest His magnificent glory at a time when darkness had enveloped the world and the earth had become accursed. The error regarding the life of Jesus, peace be upon him, is not one which has arisen in this age, but emerged a short while after the demise of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him; and despite the coming of distinguished holy personages, righteous people and the elect of Allah, people have remained ensnared in this error. If the purpose was to rectify this error alone, Allah the Exalted

would have done so at that time, but He did not, and to this day, the aforementioned error has persisted. Even now, if this alone were the only issue, Allah the Exalted would not have established a community for this purpose, as the death of the Messiah was not a view that had never been accepted by anyone else in the past. In former times, many of the elect to whom Allah Almighty had disclosed this truth, did believe in the death of Jesus.

However, there is another purpose for which Allah the Exalted has established this community. It is true that the removal of the misconception relating to the life of the Messiah was also one of the great objectives of establishing this community, but God Almighty has not raised me for this task alone. In fact, many errors had arisen such that if Allah Almighty had not established a community and appointed someone to rectify them, the world would have perished and Islam would have been annihilated completely! We can describe this question in another way: what is the purpose of my advent? The death of Jesus and the life of Islam are two issues which are very closely intertwined. The issue relating to the death of the Messiah has, in this age, become vital for the life of Islam. This is because the disorder resulting from the alleged life of the Messiah has become immensely widespread. In order to substantiate that the Messiah is alive, one may perhaps argue as to whether Allah Almighty is powerful enough to have taken him alive to heaven' However, this demonstrates an ignorance concerning the power of God. We, for our part, are foremost in the faith and belief that "*Annallaha ala koulle shay'in qadir*"(2:107)

Undoubtedly, Allah the Exalted has power over all things and we believe that He can invariably do whatsoever He wills. However, He is free and pure from such acts that are at variance with His perfect attributes. He is an enemy to all that which opposes His teachings. In earlier times, the doctrine concerning the life of Jesus was just an error, but today, this error has taken on the form of a serpent intent on devouring Islam. In the previous age, there was no fear of any harm on account of this error, as this was nothing more than an inconsequential mistake. But after Christianity expanded and its followers began to proclaim that the life of the Messiah was a very powerful argument in support of his divinity, this has become a perilous matter. The Christians persistently argue in the most emphatic manner that if the Messiah was not God, how then could he be seated on the divine throne? Moreover, if it is within the ability of a mortal to ascend to heaven alive, why then, until now, has no one ever ascended to heaven since Adam? With the help of such arguments the Christians wish to deify Jesus, peace be upon him, and so they have done, leading a part of the world astray. A large number of Muslims, reportedly exceeding three million, have fallen victim to this trial through their belief in this false doctrine. Now if this had been true and if Jesus, peace be upon him, had actually ascended to heaven alive as the Christians assert—and the Muslims support them out of misconception and ignorance—then this would have been a day of mourning for Islam. For Islam appeared in the world so that the people may inculcate

faith and certainty in the existence of Allah Almighty, and to propagate His Oneness. No flaw can be found in the religion of Islam, for it is free from all deficiency. It declares Allah the Exalted alone to be One and without partner. To believe that any other being shares this quality is an affront to Allah Almighty and Islam does not approve of this. By advocating this ‘distinction’ of the Messiah, the Christians have misguided the world; and the Muslims, without giving thought to it, readily accept this, being unmindful of the harm this has done to Islam.

One must never be deceived by those who argue as to whether or not Allah the Exalted is powerful enough to have taken the Messiah alive to heaven. There is no doubt that He is powerful, but He never permits such things that would become a source of polytheism and which make man a partner with the Creator. And it is clearly evident that attributing certain divine characteristics to a person is clearly a source of associating partners with Allah. Hence, to suggest that the Messiah, peace be upon him, is distinct in that, unlike all others he is still alive and above human limitations, provides the Christians an opportunity to present this argument as proof of his divinity. If by way of allegation, a Christian demanded the Muslims to present any other mortal, who at this time, had ever been endowed with such a distinction, they would have no answer. For these Muslims who oppose us believe that all the Prophets, peace be upon them have died; yet in their estimation, the death of the Messiah is unfounded. The reason being that they interpret *tawaffa* to mean ascension to heaven alive.

Therefore, I too, would have to be interpreted in the same sense; that is to say, ‘when You raised me to heaven alive.’ Furthermore, in their opinion, there is no verse that proves that Jesus would ever die. What then would be the result of this misconception? May Allah the Exalted guide them and may they come to realise their error. I truly say that those who call themselves Muslims, yet do not renounce this doctrine, despite knowing of its flawed and foul nature, are the enemies and traitors of Islam.

Bear in mind that Allah Almighty repeatedly speaks of the death of the Messiah in the Holy Quran, and establishes that like all other Prophets and humans, he too has passed away. Jesus possessed no distinction that was not shared by other Prophets and human beings. The truth is that *tawaffa* means death. No lexicon confirms that *tawaffa* ever means bodily ascension to heaven. The excellence of a language lies in the universal application of its vocabulary. There is no language in the world that makes a distinction between people in the application of a particular term. Of course, such distinction holds with God Almighty, for He is One and without partner. Show me any lexicon which specifically states that *tawaffa* means ‘bodily ascension to heaven alive’ when used for Jesus but ‘death’ when it is used for the rest of the world. Show me any lexicon which makes such a distinction, and if you fail to do so—and surely you will—then fear God Almighty because this is a source of associating partners with God.

As a result of this very error, the Muslims remain subdued by the Christians. The Christians could assert that since you consider the Messiah to be alive in heaven, and believe in his return as well, and also that he would come as an Arbitrator, then what doubt remains as regards his divinity, especially when it is not proven that he will ever die?

What a pity it would be if a Christian poses a question and there is no answer. Therefore, the evil effect of this error has reached great extremes. It is true that in reality the death of the Messiah was not such a grand issue for which such a grand reformer was required! But I see that the condition of the Muslims has weakened considerably. They no longer ponder over the Holy Quran and their character has fallen to ruins. If their character was appropriate and they had paid due attention to the Holy Quran and its lexicons, they would never have subscribed to such an interpretation. It is for this reason that they, of their own accord, invented the aforementioned meaning. For the word *tawaffa* was not something unique or novel. Every Arabic lexicon, by every author, defines it as ‘death’. Why then have they invented, of their own fancy, the meaning of bodily ascension to heaven? I would have no regret if they had applied this word in a similar sense to the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, as well. This is because the very same word has also been used for him in the Holy Quran, as it is stated: ‘

وَأَمَّا نُرِيَنَّكَ بَعْضَ الَّذِي نَعِدُهُمْ أَوْ نَتَوَفَّيَنَّكَ فَإِلَيْنَا مَرْجِعُهُمْ ثُمَّ اللَّهُ شَهِيدٌ عَلَىٰ مَا يَفْعَلُونَ

“And if We show thee in thy lifetime the fulfilment of some of the things with which We have threatened them, thou wilt know it; or if We cause thee to die before that...”
(Younus, 10:47)

Now if this word truly means bodily ascension to heaven, are we not justified in applying the same sense to the Holy Prophet as well? Why is it that when this term is used for a Prophet, who is thousands of times lower in rank than the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, the self-concocted definition of, ‘ascension to heaven alive,’ is applied, but when the word refers to the Chief of All Ages, we take it to mean nothing but death? In fact, it is the Holy Prophet (saw) who is a Living Prophet and his life is established to such a degree as is not the case with any other Prophet. Therefore, we strongly and emphatically claim that if there is a Prophet who lives, it is our Noble Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, and none other. Many prominent scholars have written books on the Prophet being alive and I possess such outstanding proofs of his life that no one can contest in this regard.” (p. 10)

Incha Allah we will continue reading this speech in the following Friday sermons. May Allah help each one among us to understand why the Jamaat created by Hazrat Masih Maood (as) is unique and why we should uphold all its values as best as we can.