

FRIDAY SERMON

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Today we will continue with Malfuzaat Volume 10 where we are reading entries dated March 1908 onwards. In the following extract the Promised Messiah (as) is speaking about the teachings of the Vedas.

He said:

“Even after the passage of thousands of years, some influence or expression of the original teachings of a religion does survive among its followers by way of a seed. Were there any aspect of monotheistic teaching in the Vedas, its impact would have been evident in its followers at least to some extent. We see tens of millions of forms of idolatry being practiced among them. There are hundreds of thousands of temples that house all kinds of idols. In fact, most of them have vulgar and naked figures providing the world a glimpse into the true nature of their culture and of the Vedic teachings. From the intellectual point of view, the true nature of their teachings is exposed in the books that were written by them in disputation with Islam before the time of Dayanand...”

Pundit Dayanand was a contemporary of the Promised Messiah. He started a reformed movement of Hinduism known as Arya Samaj in 1875. He wrote a book known as *Satyath Prakash* in which he explained his doctrines. He denounced the caste system, the treatment of women and the adoration of idols among other things. It is about him that the Promised Messiah(as) is speaking. The Promised Messiah (as) continued:

“Thus, those people would constantly present their arguments in favour of idolatry against the Muslim Unitarians from the holy books of theirs; i.e., the Vedas. All their striving served to vindicate the worship of different idols. Except for the few men produced by Dayanand, all their

earlier great scholars and learned people believed in the worship of idols. Now, how can we consider these many hundreds of thousands of pundits and earlier elders of the Hindu faith to be wrong as opposed to these few followers of the Dayanand thinking? [Ancestors have preference.]

There can only be two possible explanations. Either this precept of *Tauhid* [the Oneness of God] is an innovation of Pundit Dayanand conceived by him after observing the current thinking and enlightenment of this age, but has no basis in the Vedas which propound the old and fundamental doctrine of idol worship that has been established by the millions upon millions of rishis [sages] and pundits of the Hindus with their practical example over an enormous span of time. Or, if we accept Pundit Dayanand to be true in his claim and we concede that all the predecessors who were the original inheritors and devotees of those scriptures were wrong, then we would have to believe that the Vedas are mute and totally incapable of enunciating their purport.

There is a world of difference between *Tauhid* and idol worship and yet both these concepts are alleged to have originated from the same holy scriptures; i.e., the Vedas. On the one hand, earlier Hindus prove idol worship on the basis of the same Vedas and debate with the believers in the Oneness of God, while on the other hand, people of the current generation who subscribe to Dayanand's thinking—who are the generation far behind the former, both in terms of time and [knowledge of its] language—cull *Tauhid* from the very same books and are averse to idol worship. Regardless, one has to admit that either the esteemed leaders of the past were right or the Vedas are mute, and are incapable and incompetent in articulating their intent.

Has anyone ever seen or heard of a Muslim subscribing to the worship of idols and praying to statues? The Holy Quran has expounded the doctrine of *Tauhid* in such a lucid manner with clear and convincing arguments that the notion or prospect of idol worship has never crossed the mind of any Muslim.”

The Promised Messiah (as) said:

“I have settled all the objections of these people in a comprehensive manner once and for all in my book, *Chashma-e-Ma‘rifat*. I am confident that if any seeker after truth, setting aside prejudice and obstinacy, reads this book of mine from beginning to end for the purpose of finding the truth, would—at the very least—never speak or write against Islam. The prerequisite is that one should read it with full attention from end to end with a fair mind.”

In the next entry the Promised Messiah(as) speaks about Hazrat Ali(ra). He said:

“The Shia allege that there has been some tampering of the Glorious Quran, but they themselves are the first to face the blow of this criticism. Hazrat Ali (ra) did not become the Khalifah to fight with Mu‘awiyah [the first Khalifah of the Umayyad Dynasty]. On the contrary, his duty was to safeguard the Holy Quran which is the foundation of the fundamentals of the Faith. Accordingly, he could have published the original [unadulterated] copy of the Quran during the period of his *Khilafat* [Successorship]. Was any alteration possible in that Glorious Quran which had been continuously disseminated to thousands of people friend and foe alike—under the watch of the Noble Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him? What nonsense!

Then, I ask: ‘Why did Hazrat Ali (ra) continue praying behind the very *Khulafa* [Successors] whom he [allegedly] believed to be usurpers and transgressors?’ Look, my followers will not perform their obligatory Prayers behind others [who are not my followers]. Was Hazrat Ali (ra) even weaker than them in the condition of his faith, causing him to persistently engage in *taqiyyah* [dissimulation under fear]? God Almighty proclaims that the land of Allah is vast. In such circumstances, one should emigrate [to escape oppression]. He did not do this either, from which it is clearly manifest that he had accepted to follow the three *Khulafa* [who preceded his *Khilafat*].

He said further:

“ *Sharrul foqaraa man ala baabil omaraaa*”[The worst of the poor are those who sit at the door of the rich.] These people [Prophets, saints, ascetics, etc.] attain bounty from God Almighty. So, what need do they have to go to the rich? Verily, the rich are in dire need of them.”

The next entry is as follows:

“A gentleman from the Province of Balochistan wrote to the Promised Messiah (as) on 17 March 1908:

“One of your followers, Noor Muhammad, is a dear friend of mine. He is very devout in Prayers and is a pious man. He is well respected by all. He is a polite man endowed with every good quality. He is religious. I came to know about your particulars from him and it has, therefore, become my firm belief that Your Holiness is fiercely loyal to *Ummat-e-Muhammadiyah* [followers of the Holy Prophet (saw)] and is an ardent advocate of the Chosen Messenger [Muhammad (saw)] and the Noble Companions. Those who revile you are themselves reviled, but in spite of this belief and opinion of mine, the aforementioned Noor Muhammad does not pray with us in congregation nor does he perform the Friday Prayer [with us]. The reason he states is that ‘Our Prayer is not performed behind a non-Ahmadi [imam].’ Please urge him to pray behind us so that schisms do not arise, for we do not speak ill on your behalf.”

In reply to it, the Promised Messiah (as) wrote the following instruction upon that very letter addressing the name of this humble one:

“Write in reply that since the *mullahs* [Muslim clergymen] of this country have publicly declared me a *kafir* [disbeliever] out of their religious bigotry and have promulgated religious verdicts [to that effect], and [since] the rest of the people are their followers; therefore, if there are such people who would tender a public announcement to evidence their good faith that they do not follow those *maulawis* [Muslim clergymen] who have declared me a disbeliever, it would be acceptable to pray with

them. Otherwise, the one who declares Muslims to be *kafir* becomes a *kafir* himself, so how can we offer our Prayer behind him? Verily, this is not permissible according to the Noble Law [of Islam]”.

The next entry concerns photography which in those days was a new technology:

“A person had asked the Promised Messiah; peace be upon him: ‘Is it permitted to take pictures according to the Shariah?’

He replied:

“This is a new invention. There is no mention of it in the earlier Scriptures. Some materials have the God-given quality that allows a picture to be taken. If this technique is harnessed for the service of the Shariah, then it is permissible.”

The next one is about salaah which have been missed.

A person asked the question: ‘For six months I had abandoned *Salat* [obligatory Prayers]. Now that I have repented, should I perform all of those Prayers now?’

He replied: ‘There is no *qaza* [expiation] for *Salat*. Now, *taubah* [repentance] alone suffices as its remedy.”

In the next entry the Promised Messiah(as) said:

“The Shias exaggerate without reason. In confrontations, the Kharijites are the ones who leave them confuted. The fact is that even if any dispute ever occurred among the Companions (ra), it should not be a cause for concern. Disputes and disagreements always occur where people have deep relationships and this is not anything unusual. Allah the Exalted has given His verdict in all such matters by saying:

“We shall remove whatever of rancour may be in their breasts *so that they will become* as brothers reclining on couches, facing one another (*Surah al-Hijr*)

Thus, to argue in those matters where God has delivered a verdict is not indicative of possessing faith. If the Shias raise objections against the Companions ra, the Kharijites raise objections against Hazrat Ali (ra). Thus, it is reported that Hazrat Ali (ra), may Allah be pleased with him,

wanted to marry the daughter of Abu Jahl. However, when the Holy Prophet (saw) learned about this, he was very displeased and said it would never be possible for the daughter of the Messenger of God and the daughter of the Enemy of God to be united in one household, and if that is what he still wanted to do, then Fatimah ra should be divorced. The Kharijis, in fact, go to the extent of saying that Hazrat Ali (ra) himself—God forbid—deliberately killed Hazrat Fatimah (ra) by poisoning her in order to fulfil this wish of his, and did indeed fulfil this desire. The wives of the Holy Prophet (saw) have been called the mothers of the believers in the Holy Quran. Thus, it is as if Hazrat Ali (ra) has kept arguing with his ‘mother’ [i.e., Hazrat Aishah] for a long time. Hazrat Hasan (ra) gave up his homeland due to the conflict with Hazrat Mu’awiyah, but Hazrat Ali ra did not give up quarrelling with his ‘mother’. Indeed, it is established that Hazrat Ali, may Allah honour and exalt him, had even deferred making the pledge of allegiance with Hazrat Abu Bakr (ra) in the very beginning. Then, after reaching his home, something that only God knows caused such a sudden change of heart that he immediately rushed back, wearing just his cap and not waiting even to put on his turban which he had brought to him later on—to take the pledge of allegiance. It seems that it occurred to him that it was a grave sin and, for this reason, he showed so much haste that he could not wait even to put on his turban. The fact of the matter is that all these issues arise as a result of not pondering over the Holy Quran.”(P225)

We will stop here for today. May Allah help us with the wisdom found in these words. Ameen