

FRIDAY SERMON

9th February 2024

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We continue reading from Malfuzaat Volume 10. We are reading records of the last month of Hazrat Masih Maood's (as) life i.e., May 1908. We continue from where we left off last week. Hazrat Masih Maood (as) was explaining why we should not run after the world for its own sake but we should avail ourselves of all its opportunities to seek the hereafter. Then he said:

“Look, the world similarly cannot be obtained for free. Those who promise the world also expect you to put forth strenuous efforts and they also test you, and you get something only after being successful in the test and by exhibiting good performance in your work. Likewise, if the same effort—albeit in the context of faith—is made in the way of God, its reward is assured.

You lose neither the faith nor the world. It is like killing two birds with one stone. Double the reward. Nevertheless, there are but few who benefit from this advice. Man should continue to make supplications and try to effect some change in himself. It may be that Allah the Exalted will grant him the ability.

I am not advocating that a farmer should stop farming, a businessman should stop his business, and a craftsman should stop his craft and sit idle like a cripple. On the contrary, I am advising you to exemplify the case of:

لَا تُلْهِهِمْ تِجَارَةٌ وَلَا بَيْعٌ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ

neither trading nor commerce distracts them from God's remembrance

cultivating a state where the hand is engaged in work while the heart is engaged in [the remembrance of] the Beloved. In short, no matter what work you are involved in - a trader in his trade, a farmer in his farming, or a king ruling from his throne of

governance - everyone should keep God as his objective in all his engagements, and may do whatever he desires while keeping His grandeur and awe in his mind, and respecting His commandments and His permissions and prohibitions. Do everything while being fearful of Allah. Where does Islam teach that you should give up work and sit idle like the handicapped and, instead of being of service to others, become a burden upon them? Nay! Laziness is a sin. How then could such an individual serve God or His religion? How would he feed the family of his which God has trusted to his care?

So, remember that Allah does not wish for you to entirely give up this world. His wish is that:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا

He indeed *truly* prospers who purifies it (91:10)

Do business, do farming, be employed, be a craftsman, do whatever you want, but restrain your egos from disobeying God, and purify your selves to such an extent that these worldly occupations fail to make you forgetful of God. Then your mundane worldly works will also become as though the fulfilment of your religious duties.

Man has not been created for the world. If the heart is cleansed and one is constantly keen and anxious to somehow please God, then the world also becomes lawful for him. [Verily, deeds are (judged) by intentions].”

After Friday prayer it was asked, ‘We believe with sincerity of heart in Allah, His Book - the Holy Quran - and His Messenger Muhammad, the Chosen One (saw) and follow all the tenets such as Prayer and Fasting etc. - then what is the need for us to believe in you as well?’

The Promised Messiah (as) said:

“Look, a person who claims to have belief in Allah, His Messenger, and His Book, but does not put into practice the details of their injunctions such as Prayer, Fasting, Hajj [the Pilgrimage], *Zakat* [almsgiving], righteousness and cleanliness etc., and foregoes all the injunctions ordained for self-purification, for eschewing evil and pursuing rectitude, does not deserve to be called a Muslim. And it cannot be said about him that he is adorned with the ornaments of faith. Similarly, a person who does not accept the Promised Messiah or does not realize the need of accepting him, he too, is utterly ignorant of the essence of Islam, the scope of prophethood, and the purpose of Messengership. He does not deserve to be called a true Muslim, or one who is truly obedient and dutiful to God and His Messenger.

Just as Allah the Exalted has given other injunctions in the Holy Quran through the Holy Prophet (saw), similarly He has most emphatically proclaimed the prophecy of the coming of the last Khalifah in the Latter Days and has called those who do not accept him and turn away from him as transgressors.

The only difference in the words of the Holy Quran and the Hadith—which is not a difference [per se] but can be said, in other words, to be the *interpretation* of the words of the Holy Quran - is that in the Quran the word ‘Khalifah’ has been used, whereas in the Hadith this same last Khalifah has been referred to by the title ‘Promised Messiah’. Thus, what kind of a Muslim would he be who asks what need there is for us to believe in him concerning that person about whose coming the Holy Quran uses the word *promise* and has, thereby, in a way bestowed upon the raising of this person a sort of grandeur?

Allah the Exalted has extended the time span for the coming of *Khulafa* [Successors] to the Day of Judgement. Moreover, Islam holds this honour and distinction that for its defense and revival, *Mujaddids* [Reformers] have come at the head of every century and will continue coming.

You see, Allah the Exalted has likened the Holy Prophet (saw) with Moses as is proven by the word كَمَا [*kama* - similar to]. Jesus (as) was the last Khalifah in the Mosaic dispensation as he himself said that he was the last brick. Similarly, *Khulafa* always came and will continue to come for its service and reformation in the dispensation of Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, till the Day of Judgement. And in this way, the last Khalifah [of the dispensation of Muhammad] was named the Promised Messiah by way of similitude [to the Mosaic dispensation] and because of the service he was tasked to carry out.

Yet this is not all; it is not just that he was mentioned in an ordinary manner. On the contrary, He has mentioned the Signs of his coming in detail in all the heavenly scriptures. The Signs of his coming have been given in the Bible, in the New Testament, in the Hadith, and in the Holy Quran itself; and all nations - the Jews, the Christians, and the Muslims - unanimously believe and await his coming. So how can the rejection of such a person be Islam when he has been given such grandeur by Allah the Exalted and whose advent is awaited unanimously by all peoples?

Furthermore, he is an individual of such calibre that Almighty Allah manifested Signs in his support across the heavens and displayed miracles upon the earth. The plague came to support him and the solar and lunar eclipses occurred at their precise appointed time in accordance with the prophecy. So, when the heaven shows the Sign in his support and the earth proclaims ‘This is his time’ - can such a person be an

ordinary individual and would his acceptance or rejection be irrelevant, and would people still remain Muslims and the dear ones of God even after rejecting him? Certainly not!

Know it well that all the Signs of the Promised One (as) have been fulfilled. All types of evils have polluted the world. The Muslim scholars and many saints have themselves identified this very age to be the period of the advent of the Promised Messiah (as) - that he would come in the fourteenth century [of the Islamic calendar]. In *Hijajul-Kiramah* as well, it is this very fourteenth century that has been mentioned. No one has gone beyond the fourteenth century. Even the animals dreaded the thirteenth century. And it has been written that now, the fourteenth would be blessed. If someone still entertains any doubt after such an immense degree of collective testimony of saints and the majority of scholars, he should deliberate over the Holy Quran and carefully study the chapter *an-Nur*.

Look, just as Jesus (as) came fourteen hundred years after Moses (as), similarly, the Promised Messiah has come precisely fourteen hundred years after the Holy Prophet (saw). And just as Jesus (as) was the *Khatamul-Khulafa* [Seal of the Successors] of the Mosaic dispensation, so will the Promised Messiah (as) be the *Khatamul-Khulafa* here as well.

Islam was akin to a sick person whose cup of life was all but filled to the brim. Islam was oppressed. The enemies are brutally attacking it from all sides with all their weapons to destroy and annihilate it. Islam had become lifeless during this time and was barely alive due to internal and external attacks. The flame of Islam was about to be blown out and its throat was being slit with great brutality. For what time then was this promise of Allah the Exalted that:

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ

Verily, We Ourselves have sent down this Exhortation, and most surely, we will be its Guardian. (15:10)

Was there any other calamity left that had yet to befall Islam?

Remember forever! The promise of preservation does not only apply to the written word alone. This has been expounded upon in a hadith in which the Holy Prophet (saw) said that a time would come when the Holy Quran would be lifted from the world. A Companion (ra) asked how would it be lifted from the world when the people would still be reciting the Quran? He replied, 'I considered you to be a wise man but you are very naive. Do the Christians not recite the New Testament? And do the Jews not recite the Torah?'

What is meant by the lifting of the Holy Quran is that the knowledge of the Holy Quran would disappear and guidance would vanish from the world. People would become deprived of the light and cognizance of the Holy Quran, and no one would act upon it. The people would abandon the path the Quran had come to teach and they would come to abide by their own ambitions and passions. When this state of affairs would prevail, a person from among the descendants of Persia would come and he would bring back the Faith anew, and he would revive faith and the Quran. He would again restore to the world the lost grandeur of the Quran, the forgotten guidance, and the faith that had ascended to the Pleiades.

[If faith had ascended to the Pleiades a man from among the children of Persia will find it].

Thus, it is very clearly proven from the Holy Quran and the Hadith of the Holy Prophet (saw) that this ummah has been given the promise of a Khalifah in the Latter Days and his Signs and characteristics have also been told. I hold the claim to be the Promised Messiah (as). Now it is incumbent upon every person who loves God and the Messenger, and who desires to preserve his faith, to ponder whether the claim I have made is true or false. Those who come from God are accompanied by Divine Signs. A mere verbal claim does not merit being accepted.” (p. 336)

This text is rather long. We will stop here for today and we will continue *incha Allah* next time. May Allah help us all to do our best to be faithful to Him. *Ameen*.