

FRIDAY SERMON

28th June 2024

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Unfortunately, once again there has been tragedy at the Hajj. The Saudis have reported that about 1300 people have died during the Hajj because of heat stress and 83 % of those who died were those who were “unauthorized” Hajis. They had “walked long distances under direct sunlight, without adequate shelter or comfort.” Newspaper report said that the deceased people included “several elderly and chronically ill individuals,”. Most of those who died were from Egypt and the government over there have opened an investigation into the matter. Its sad to hear such news. But what can we do? May Allah help the Saudis to do better even though up till now they have done much.

We will now continue with extracts from Malfuzaat Volume 10 from where we left off last week. Hazrat Masih Maood(as) was speaking about how to recognize Allah. He said further:

“Look, *nafs-e-ammarah* [the self that incites to evil] is always at work in a person. It is—like blood—in every vein and fiber, and every particle. The Christians have contrived an easy and convenient way. They offered up a person on the cross. And now any person who belongs to Christianity can do whatever he likes till the Day of Judgement; he will not be questioned at all—the blood of Christ has already atoned for all their sins.

These ignorant ones do not understand that if someone has a headache and another gets up and smashes his own head with a rock, how is that going to benefit the one who has the headache? I announce to you with full conviction that their atonement and blood of Christ cannot provide them so much as the benefit that chicken soup affords when given to an ailing individual.

The conduct of their own priests who teach others is most precarious and dangerous. The Doctrine of Atonement has emboldened them [to commit sin]. Sin is a lethal poison. However, for a person who believes that the blood of Christ will suffice and belief in the Doctrine of Atonement is sufficient expiation for all his sins, how could he possibly perceive the poison of sin to be a poison?

Once a priest was apprehended for the crime of adultery. When he was asked about it in court, he said with great audacity and impudence that, ‘Hasn’t the blood of Christ sufficed for my sins? In short, their [Doctrine of] Atonement is the root cause of all evil.

In my view, no benefit can be gained until a person makes an effort to try and incline himself to bringing about a pious change in himself. To subdue *nafs-e-ammarah* is a rather weighty

striving. It is due to the influence of this very *nafs-e-ammara* that one is neither able to fulfil his obligations to God nor can he discharge his duties towards his fellow human beings.

The Shariah has just two components. One is the right of God and the second is the right of man.

What is the right of God? It is to worship Him and to not include anyone else in His worship, and to remain occupied in the remembrance of Allah, to obey His commandments and to avoid His prohibitions, and to eschew all that is unlawful, etc. The right of man, in summary, is not to be cruel to anyone, not to transgress against the rights of anyone where no such right exists, not to bear false witness, etc.

Now, both these matters are so difficult that all sins, crimes, and acts of disobedience on the one hand, and the principles of all virtues on the other, are encompassed within them. It is easy for everyone to say that he can safeguard himself against sin with his own strength, but man cannot disconnect himself from his own nature.

Human nature is not like the skirt of a garment that can be cut off if it becomes soiled. One's nature is a part of his being from birth. It is ingrained in human nature that he is afraid of and eschews only those things that he is convinced will harm him or kill him. No one would have seen anyone use strychnine [a bitter and highly poisonous compound] while knowing it is strychnine, or pick up a snake knowing full well that it is a snake, or enter a village heedlessly where the plague is wreaking havoc. What is the reason for this avoidance and caution? It is only that he is convinced that these things are fatal.

Thus, man can attain salvation from the disease of sin and transgression only when he becomes convinced that they pose a greater threat of harm and peril to him than a robber or a snake, and when the majesty, grandeur, and might of God remains in the forefront of his mind at all times. It is quite possible for man to discard his greed, avarice, and desires. For example, if a person suffering from diabetes is told by his physician that he must stop the use of sugar completely, it is seen that, in order to save his life, he does not even go near sweet things. So, this is also the case of spiritual greed and avarice, and selfish passions.

If the grandeur of God and His glory are firmly established in a man's heart, he will consider disobedience of God to be worse than eating fire or facing death. The degree to which a man's knowledge of the power and authority of God increases, and the degree to which he becomes convinced that the punishment of disobeying Him is severe, it is to that same degree that he will eschew sin, disobedience, and insubordination. Look, some people bring a death upon themselves long before their actual death. Who are the *Akhyar*, *Abdal* and *Aqtab* [titles for saintly people]? What extra things are there within them that set them apart? It is this same certainty of conviction! Certain and definitive knowledge compels one, necessarily and naturally, to do something. Conjectural knowledge with regard to God cannot suffice. Uncertainty cannot be of any benefit. It is only certainty of conviction that has effect.

Certainty of knowledge about the attributes of God has greater impact than even fearsome lightening. It is only the impact of this certainty that makes such people [the *Akhyar*, *Abdal* and *Aqtab*] yield and surrender. Remember! The greater one's conviction, the greater the likelihood he eschews sin.

There are many who appear to be avoiding sins or making such claims, but their case is like a boil filled with pus: it appears shiny and its shine and lustre seems to be even greater than the

rest of the body, but its core is filled with pus and foul matter. Surely, the signs of being protected against sins must needs accompany their claims also.

Light, sunshine, and warmth testify to the fact that the sun is shining. With regard to a person who says that the sun is shining during the night, when the signs of the sun are not evident, would anyone consider such an individual's statement to be trustworthy? Absolutely not—never! Thus, the same is the condition of those people who claim that they believe in Allah while they show no effect of this belief—in other words, the total aversion to sin—and the effects of this belief in the form of blessings, bounties, and support of God or true piety, righteousness, and purity are absent in them.

For man to totally shun all such deeds that are in contravention to the pleasure of God, that sin and disobedience to God should appear to him worse than eating fire, that the awe of any worldly glory and glamour in opposition to God should have no impact upon him, that he should consider everything besides God to be no more capable than a dead insect to benefit or harm anyone without the will of God, that all his movements and pauses and all his deeds should become subordinate to the will of God, that he should lose himself and become one with God—all these things are beyond the capability of man.

Man does not have the power to attain all these excellences, and to become completely free from all the ignoble traits. Therefore, it has been the practice of Allah the Exalted from the very beginning that He sends a human being as His appointee and manifests the wonders of His might at his hands. God accepts his prayers and informs him of it. God opens up the bounty of His converse and dialogue upon him. God manifests such extraordinary miracles and secrets of the unseen through him which people with base desires are incapable of. God manifests such lustrous and awe-inspiring events in his support that the hearts of the people, becoming filled with the light of cognizance and the pleasure of conviction, become as if they have seen God. Thus—by witnessing the majesty, might, dominion and awe of God—idolatry and all the foul and base desires, which give rise to all sins, are destroyed, and the majesty and grandeur of God comes to dominate their hearts. And in this way, He prepares a community of people with pious hearts. The condition that destroys sin comes into being only thus, when God manifests His glory and awe to the world, and a dreadful manifestation visits the world showing His grandeur and dominion. Just as a terrifying thunderstorm that unleashes frightening thunder and blinding flashes [of lightning] in it, overwhelms and overawes the hearts, similarly, brandishing the awe-inspiring attributes of God during the time of His appointee succeeds in triggering a pious transformation in the world. Look, if a person comes to you in a very ragged and wretched condition, you would not be swayed by him, even if, in reality, he was a king, and you would not give his coming any importance. In fact, if he tries to say something, you would not pay attention to him out of contempt. But if the same person comes with all his royal pomp and show, and kingly might and majesty, you would be compelled to receive him with honour.

You would have to show respect and obeisance. And you would be obliged to pay attention to him and be prepared to carry out his commands. So, the same is the case with the cognizance of God. When one does not even have the cognizance of God Almighty, how can he bring about the humility and submissiveness that is the very essence of worship? How true it is: [‘The most knowledgeable are the most fearful’].

I have not told you all this in vain. On the contrary. God is present even now as He was in the times of the Vedas, the Torah, and the New Testament. And He still hears even now as He used

to hear in the past ages, and He still speaks now as He used to speak in those ages. And it is to prove exactly this that I have come into the world.” (P411)

We will stop here for today. May Allah help each one among us to value the teachings of the Promised Messiah (as) because he is the best among those who have explained the teachings of the Holy Prophet Mohammad(saw) and may Allah give us the *tawfiq* to implement these teachings in our daily life. Ameen!