

FRIDAY SERMON

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As I said last time, we will be reading selections from Malfuzaat volume 4 of Hazrat Masih Maood(as) which covers the period of September 1901 to December 1901. These extracts are as relevant today as they were in 1901. It will not be an exaggeration if I say they are more relevant today than they were then. If we take the time and effort to study them, we will definitely appreciate the wisdom of the Promised Messiah(as) and we will feel inclined to be guided by them. So, my advice is that our young ones should do their best to profit from a perusal of the volumes of Malfuzaat that are available on alislam.org. May Allah enable each one among us to do so. Ameen.

The extract that we will first read speaks about how time itself is giving a testimony in favour of the Promised Messiah(as). Hazrat Masih Maood(as) said:

“The current state of Islam itself calls for God Almighty to establish a dispensation that would deliver the Faith from these difficulties. Can a wise and prudent individual not appreciate that when there are earthly preparations, there would also be heavenly preparations? Have the opponents left any stone unturned in seeking to destroy and annihilate Islam? Just look towards the Christian priests and see the concerted efforts that they have made in this regard. Their intentions are to see Islam uprooted; only then, in their view, can peace—as they define it—be established. A person who considers the Holy Quran to be from Allah the Exalted and believes in the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, to be a truthful Messenger of God Almighty, must realise that God Almighty has promised:

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)

So, in order to defend and ward off these unjust attacks upon Islam, would God not establish a heavenly dispensation at the head of this century in accordance with His age-old custom? Furthermore, He explicitly states in the Holy Quran:

إِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا

Surely, there is ease after hardship. (94:7)

Was it not then inevitable that the perils surrounding Islam would reach an extreme, which would then herald the coming of ease? Of course, it was. So did God make the events transpire.

These are matters, which if one reflects upon, it becomes evidently clear that in this time of calamity and difficulty, it was necessary that the means be available in heaven and for preparations to be underway from on high. The time is near when Islam will shine forth in its pristine state and true form, and all dead religions will wither away. It has always been the way of God Almighty that He does not manifest matters until the time has arrived. At present, however, we can observe **that the seed is being sown.**

Just observe the internal afflictions alone and the consequences they are bringing. **There is unity no more among the Muslims, which is the fundamental basis of success.** On the one hand, there are the Khawarij and Shias, and on the other hand, there are the Hanbalis(followers of Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal(780-855)), Shafiis (followers of Imam Shafi(767-820)), Malikis (followers of Imam Malik(711-795)) and Hanafis(followers of Imam Abu Hanifa(699-767))”

Let me explain briefly who are the *Khawarij*. They were members of an early Islamic sect that emerged from the First Fitna (civil war) in the mid-7th century CE, named for their "rebellion" or "secession" from the main body of Muslims. They broke from Caliph Ali ibn Abi Talib's camp after the Battle of Siffin, believing that their agreement to arbitration with his rival Mu'awiya was a deviation from the Quran. Shias do not need any introduction. They formed themselves into a group after the murder of Imam Hussein taking Hazrat Ali as their first Imam and rejecting the first three caliphs.

There is separate discord amongst the mystics and sufi leaders, as is evident from the Chishti, Naqshbandi, Suhrawardi and Qadiri sects, among others. Everyone belonging to each of these sects believes—and so they would—that now their sect will become victorious, while all others will vanish completely. The Hanafis would say that everyone will become Hanafi. In the view of the *Rafidis*(a group among Shias), soon their own party will become dominant. The *Wujudis*(those who believe that only Allah exists as a Being) will say that everyone will join them. The truth is that all of them are wrong, because they do not say these things after having received indication from God Almighty; rather, these are their own personal and superficial ideas. No one has understood the will of God Almighty. The will of God Almighty is what is established by the Noble Quran.

At this time, injustice is being perpetrated against the Book of Allah, both internally and externally. The sect that will seek retribution for this injustice, and manifests the glory and grandeur of the Book of Allah, will be the one to receive divine succour and is destined by God to be triumphant. **Those who remedy this wrong, no matter the name of their sect, so long as they possess indignation for the Faith, and sacrifice their honour and esteem for the dignity of the Book of Allah, will be blessed with pleasure and insight that will enlighten them. This is the party that shall be supported by God Almighty.**

Do not ask about the issues that are prevalent in this age. Many thieves and robbers lurk in the dark and there is a dangerous conspiracy against Islam and the Noble Prophet, peace

and blessings of Allah be upon him, and against the Book of Allah. However, the Muslims do not seem bothered at all. Internal disorder has given the opponents an opportunity to brazenly plunder the wealth of Islam.

In my view, a greater part of this internal disorder is owed to the scholars, while some is also due to the errors of those who call themselves Muwahhids (believers in the Oneness of God)—those who have equated Islam to nothing more than empty words and who do not make any progress at all. They are, as if, determined to believe as the Christians and others who are enamoured by falsehood have believed, that God's powers are buried in times gone by and now God is powerless. They have nothing but mere tales and fables on which to cling, which are devoid of all signs of the spirit of truth and life. In other words, one could say that the essence and sum total of Islam which these people have presented to the world is nothing more than to follow old stories. This injustice which has been committed against Islam is something of which very few examples can be found anywhere else. For Islam was the only religion that could be deemed a living Faith in all eras; in that respect, it still is, because its signs have not been lost away in some previous age in the manner of other lifeless Faiths. In fact, Islam is always accompanied by signs. However, these dull *Muwahhids* have sought to turn Islam into a dead religion as well, by confining its light and blessings to a single era of the past. Initially when this sect was introduced, many wise people were drawn to it as well, but no one thought to examine their baggage, as it were, to see what they possessed. When they were searched closely and carefully, ultimately, it was discovered that except for raising the hands during the Prayer (*rafa yadayn*), saying *ameen* aloud after the Imam finishes reciting Surah Fatihah (*amin bil-jahr*), or folding one's hands over the chest, and other such matters of secondary importance, they possessed nothing. All they stressed upon, for example, was the importance of reciting Surah Fatihah behind the Imam in congregational Prayer, whether or not one understands the meaning of the actual chapter itself. Muhammad Husain (of Batalvi) emphasized these sorts of issues for twenty years in his periodicals, but ultimately all of these useless discussions led to nothing of spirituality. In the end, the force of these sharp tongues moves the sorts of people aforementioned to dishonour and insult the Four Imams.

In my view, the Four Imams were a symbol of blessings and they were possessed of spirituality. For spirituality begins with righteousness, and truly, these men were righteous and feared God, and their hearts had no relationship whatsoever with the dogs of this world.

Bear in mind that righteousness is a great quality. Miracles also stem from righteousness, and even in the absence of miracles, righteousness brings greatness.

Righteousness is a treasure by which a person can become annihilated in the love of God Almighty and efface his very being completely. The pinnacle of righteousness is when a person's own being ceases to exist. As the adage goes:

‘I polished the mirror so much so that nothing of the mirror remained’

In reality, it was this very concept of Unity and Oneness of Being (*wahdat-e-wujud*) in relation to which people fell into error and have invented strange ideologies. Is it faith and righteousness for a feeble man and a helpless servant to claim divinity? What could be more

disrespectful and insolent than for a man to afford themselves the station of God, and to claim that they are privy to the mysteries and secrets of God?

The *Wujudis* act in the manner of a physician who expounds the condition of a human being, and reaches the inner workings of their heart, kidney and liver.

In the same manner, the *Wujudis* claim to have discovered the secrets of God, although this is utterly false and disrespectful. If these people were awe-inspired by the grandeur and omnipotence of God Almighty, and if there was fear of God in their hearts, it would suffice them that:

لَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ

Eyes cannot reach Him. (6:104)

And then, they would need nothing more than to realise that:

لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ

There is nothing whatever like unto Him(42:12)

However, an individual who probes into the being of God without any limits demonstrates a lack of modesty. What have the people of the *Wujudi* sect achieved? What have they discovered that we did not know already? How have they benefited humanity at large? One will have to respond in the negative to all these things. If one is not stubborn and obstinate, they would realise that God instructs one to follow a course of love and obedience. As such, the Holy Quran itself states:

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ

But those who believe are stronger in their love for Allah. (2:166)

It further states:

فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَذِكْرِكُمْ آبَاءَكُمْ

Celebrate the praises of Allah as you celebrated the praises of your fathers. (2:201)

Now, do we ever observe that when a son becomes absorbed completely in the love of his father, he becomes the father himself? A son can indeed become absorbed in love for his father, but he cannot actually become his own father. It ought to be borne in mind that annihilation of perception (*fana-e-nadhari*) is indeed a phenomenon which springs from love, but such a form of annihilation (*fana*) which in actuality is nothing more than pretence, suggesting that a new entity has come into existence, where a person says that they have actually become someone else, is not right.”(P10).

We will stop here for today. May Allah guide us to Him and may we all strive to develop the appropriate concept of Allah in our mind and may we become of those who love him as He should be loved. Ameen.