The BANI ISRAIL

and

The MUSLIM UMMAH

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THE BANI ISRA'IL AND
THE MUSLIM UMMAH

LECTURE ON THE OCCASION OF ID
AT DARUL ULUM NADWATUL ULAMAH RENDERED BY:

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My respected brothers and elders, on this occasion I want to make mention of something which I feel is of utmost importance. Therefore, listen very attentively.

Those of you who are briefly acquainted with the subject matter of the Qur‘ân either by studying the translation or by participating in the gatherings of tafsîr of the Qur‘ân will know that from time to time, mention is made of the Bani Isrâîl. The Qur‘ân Majeed is not a book of history, neither is it a story book, but rather it is a book of guidance. Whatever is contained in it is for our guidance. Making mention of the incident of the Bani Isrâîl so often is also for this very purpose.

Who were the Bani Isrâîl? Understand it in this manner that they were the Muslims of their era, who not only believed in the Amiyyâ، but were of their progeny as well. Hadrat Ibrâhîm had a son, Hadrat Ishâq، and Hadrat Ishâq had a son, Hadrat Ya‘qûb whose title was 'Isrâîl'. Ya‘qûb’s progeny are therefore called the 'Bani Isrâîl' (children of Isrâîl).

They were a people who believed in the Amiyyâ. They believed in Ibrâhîm، Ishâq، Ya‘qûb. During the time of Nabî the Bani Isrâîl were divided into two groups, those who did not believe in Isâ، but opposed him although they believed in the Prophets before him. The second group were those who believed in Isâ. When the Qur‘ân speaks of Bani Isrâîl, reference is made to both these groups. In reality they were of one lineage. Understand their condition that they were like today’s Muslims. We know today’s Muslims accept the Qur‘ân as Allâh’s book and Nabî as the final Prophet. Similarly the Bani Isrâîl used to believe in the divine book of their time, and in the Prophets
of their time. However their condition deteriorated more or less like how we Muslims have deteriorated today.

This was their general condition – as is our general condition. It was not such that during the time of Nabî ﷺ, not even one person amongst them was not on the straight path. In many places in the Qur’ân it has been mentioned clearly that amongst the People of the book - the Banî Isrâ’îl also there were many pious and upright individuals also, as it appears in the Qur’ân:

 ذلك بأن منهم قسسين ورهبانا وافهم لا يستكبرون وإذا سمعوا ما أنزل إلي الرسول تري أعينهم تفيض من الدموع مما عرفوا من الحق، يقولون ربا آمنا فاكتينا مع الشاهدين

That is because amongst them are priests and monks, and they are not proud. And when they listen to what has been revealed to the messenger (Nabî ﷺ), you see their eyes overflowing with tears because of the truth they have recognized. They say: "Our Lord! We believe, so write us down among the witnesses".

(Sûrah Mâidah verse 82-83)

In this ãyah mention has been made regarding the Christians of Ethiopia that amongst them there were such upright scholars and pious people in whom there was no pride. Furthermore, Allâh ﷻ mentions their condition that when they listen to the ãyât of the Qur’ân, they immediately recognize the truth and tears flow from their eyes and they supplicate to Allâh ﷻ saying: “O our Lord! We bring Îmân, therefore count us amongst those who testify to the truth.”

Nevertheless, from amongst the People of the book - Banî Isrâ’îl there were also such individuals who were pious, sincere and brought true Îmân but as far as the general masses were concerned, their condition was just as I have mentioned.

In a Hadîth, Nabî ﷺ mentioned:
The gist of this Hadîth is that before the advent of Nabî ﷺ, Allah ﷻ looked at the entire creation from east to west, north to south, Arab and non-Arab. Everyone’s lives were totally disliked by Allah ﷻ, hence making them deserving of Allah’s ﷻ anger except for a few individuals from the people of the book - Banî Isrâîl who were good, upright people, whom Allah ﷻ was pleased with.

At another juncture in the Qur’ân, Allah ﷻ says:

And (remember) when we took a covenant from the Banî Isrâîl, (saying): Worship none but Allah (alone) and be dutiful and good to parents, and to relatives, and to orphans and the poor, and speak good to people, and perform Salâh and give Zakâh. Then you turned away, except a few of you, while you showing aversion.

(Sûrah Baqarah verse 83)

In this âyah Allah ﷻ makes mention of those major commands which He commanded the Banî Isrâîl with, such as Tauhîd (to belief in the Oneness of Allah ﷻ), to be kind to parents, relatives, orphans, to fulfil the rights of the needy. He also told them to talk kindly to all human kind without exception, to establish Salâh (prayer) and to pay Zakâh.

As you may have already realised, these are the fundamental principles and teachings on which emphasis was placed in the teachings of every Nabî and divine book of Allah ﷻ. The fundamental teachings of the Qur’ân and the Sharî’ah which Nabî ﷺ brought are the very same. The Banî Isrâîl also received these basic teachings, but what happened thereafter? Allah ﷻ says:
Thereafter (after a few days) you turned away from these fundamental teachings except for a few individuals (from amongst you). (Surah Baqarah verse 83)

The Qur’ān did not say that you, in general rejected and became renegades (to leave your religion and opt for another), but the Qur’ān mentions that your general condition became such that you had no connection left with these teachings whilst you did not verbally falsify or reject. This was the condition of your general masses, though amongst you there were those few individuals who were not involved in this general deterioration.

The Qur’ān also emphasised, along with these fundamental principles, that the Bānī Isrā‘īl should not kill one another unjustly, nor should they exile one another from their homes without a good reason. Thereafter the Qur’ān clearly mentions that just as they turned away from the fundamental principles, they in exactly the same manner turned away from the other special commands of Allāh. However they practiced on a small portion of the special commands of Allāh, in which they saw some personal or national benefit and overlooked the vast majority of Allāh’s commands. The Qur’ān has drawn a picture of this misconduct of theirs in the following words:

آفتهمنون بعض الكتاب وتكنرون بعض

Has your condition become such that you obey some of Allāh’s commands and reject others. (Surah Baqarah verse 85)

In other words you treat some commands of Allāh as a Mu‘min (believer) would treat them and with others you treat the commands as a Kāfir (disbeliever) would treat them.
You and I should ponder deeply. Allâh ﷺ regards those commands which are practiced upon as ‘I’mân’ (belief) and those commands which are not practiced upon as Kufr (disbelief). In other words, not practicing upon Allâh’s ﷺ commands is tantamount to Kufr (disbelief) even though a person verbally says he believes. From this we understand what the real I’mân is upon which Allâh’s ﷺ promises are based and what is that actual Kufr upon which Allâh’s ﷺ severe punishments are based in this world and the hereafter.

The Qur’ân informs the Banî Isrâîl of the severe punishment of this behaviour of theirs. Allâh ﷺ says:

فما جزاء من يفعل ذلك منكم الا خزي في الحياة الدنيا و اليوم القيامة يردون الي

اشهد العذاب وما الله يغفل عما تعملون

Then what is the recompense of those who do so among you, except disgrace in the life of this world and on the day of resurrection they shall be condemned to the most grievous torment. And Allâh ﷺ is not unaware of what you do. (Surah Baqarah verse 85)

That nation whose condition is such that majority of its followers practice on some commands of Allâh ﷺ and breaks most commands, what can its end result be except that in this world it will be afflicted with perpetual disgrace. Thereafter their matter will not be completed but rather on the day of resurrection they will face an extremely severe punishment.

Now I wish to tell you that after mentioning the condition of the Banî Isrâîl and being informed of their history, in reality a mirror has been placed in front of us and as if we have been told that keep on assessing your condition in this mirror and understand well that before you there was a nation who like you were the Muslims of their era and believed in the Ambiyâ ﷺ. For a few days they tread on the correct path and Allâh’s ﷺ mercies and blessings enshrouded them.
However, gradually their condition became such that the majority practically turned away from most of the commands of Allâh ﷺ. As a result according to the law of Allâh ﷺ all mercies and blessings were snatched away and disgrace and humiliation took their place.

Therefore understand this well that the day your general condition becomes like the Banî Isrâîl, your end result will be exactly the same as theirs. What was the Banî Isrâîl’s end result? At other junctures in the Qur’ân much more details are mentioned. At one place Allâh ﷺ says:

فَاذَا جاء وعد أولاً هما بعثنا عليك عباداً لنا اولي بأس شديد فجاسوا خلال
الديار وكان وعداً مفعولاً

So, when the promise came for the first of the two, We sent against you slaves of Ours given to terrible warfare. They entered the very innermost parts of your homes. And it was a promise (completely) fulfilled. (Sûrah Isrâ’ verse 5)

In this âyah, Allâh ﷺ clearly states that when the Banî Isrâîl violated the commandments of Allâh ﷺ and chose the path of evil and corruption, we placed over them some of our powerful slaves. Who were these powerful slaves? They were not some pious, Allâh fearing people but rather the worst of the disbelievers and arrogant people. However sometimes when a person wants to punish and disgrace someone, then the bhangis (scavengers) are called to beat him up, in order to disgrace him.

The Qur’ân tells us that when the Banî Isrâîl , who were the children of the Ambiyâs ﷺ broke the commands of Allâh ﷺ and started living according to their desires and passions, Allâh ﷺ placed such disbelievers over them, who were oppressive, unjust, hard hearted and merciless. What did these unjust disbelievers do to the Banî Isrâîl? The Qur’ân tells us that city after city, village after village and town after town was completely and totally destroyed. They looted houses, set fire to them, killed, murdered and
butchered people. Not only that but it is also recorded in the history of the Banî Isrâîl that the oppressors took the copies of the book of Allâh ﷺ (Taurât) and burnt it in front of their eyes. So besides loss of wealth and property, their Din and spirituality was also destroyed.

My respected elders and brothers! Just as was mentioned, you and I need to assess ourselves in front of this mirror of the Banî Isrâîl and take stock of our lives. By means of the final book, the Qur’ân and the final Prophet, Nabî ﷺ those guidelines and commands which we have been given are the very same guidelines and commands which the previous nations use to receive by means of every Nabî, amongst which the very first is Tauhîd. What is Tauhîd? Tauhîd is not only reciting the kalimah with our tongues. Tauhîd is actually a reality; a condition and conviction of the heart. Conviction that Allâh ﷺ, who is alone and has no partners, is the only deity and owner of everything and to worship Him alone, to have hope only in Him and to fear only Him. To have firm belief that in this entire system of the universe, only Allâh’s commands makes everything happen and nothing happens without His command. Death is only in his hands. Life is only in his hands. Sickness is only in his hands. Honour and disgrace is also only in his hands. Hence worship and submission is only for Him and Du’â is to be made only unto Him. To submit only to Him and to love only Him. This is Tauhîd. To deviate even a little from this cannot be tolerated by Allâh ﷺ. In fact, to turn our attention even for one moment away from Allâh ﷺ to some other being will never be tolerated by Allâh ﷺ. Let alone thinking that some pious living saint or some saint who has left the world can help in any way, whether it be in that barakah (blessings) will be received through him in my business, or a court case will be won, or I will receive children. So I swear by Allâh ﷺ, this is clear and open Shirk (ascribing partners) with Allâh ﷺ.

After Tauhîd the most emphasised commands of Allâh ﷺ are Salâh and Zakâh. Those people who know and understand
the tone and language of the Qur’ân and know the status these actions hold which Rasûlullâh  explained to Sahâbah  and which they understood, they will know that without Salâh and Zakâh a person cannot be a true believer. With whatever amount of sincerity and importance a Muslim will practice on these two commands, accordingly the light of  Imân will enter his heart and the effect of Islam will enter his actions. Regarding Salâh understand this also that just to perform Salâh and only read it is insufficient. Rather it is also necessary that effort should be made to perform the best Salâh. The inner and outer aspects of our Salâh should gain some similarity with the Salâh of Nabî  We should find out from the Ulamâ in our towns how Nabî  performed Salâh, how his rukû, sajdah, qirât was etc. What was the condition of his heart, on what should we contemplate whilst reciting Sûrah Fâtihah or whilst reciting tasbîh in rukû and sajdah?

My dear brothers and elders! To make this effort concerning Salâh is Fard (compulsory) upon us. If whilst endeavouring to perform Salâh correctly and perfectly we pass away then whatever deficiency remains in our Salâh, Allâh  will forgive us. If there is no effort at all to correct and perfect our Salâh then we will have to suffer a great loss.

Concerning Zakâh, Nabî  took an oath and said that Zakâh will never ever decrease a person’s wealth. Now, on the one hand is the word of Rasûlullâh  and on the other hand is Shaytân's evil whispering to us that if you give Zakâh you will be losing so much wealth. Now let us think for ourselves; do we have more conviction in the words of Rasûlullâh  or in our greatest enemy Shaytân's lies and deception.

Therefore respected friends, inform those Ulamâ who are close to you regarding your financial condition and ask them whether Zakâh is wâjib (obligatory) on you or not.
Besides Tauhîd, Salah and Zakâh, there are many other actions which Allah has commanded us to fulfil such as fasting, pilgrimage etc and there are many qualities which Allah has made incumbent upon us to inculcate into our lives such as honesty, self sacrifice, kindness, advising politely etc. Similarly, there are many evil actions and qualities which we have been commanded to refrain from. To have concern and to make effort to save oneself from these evil actions and qualities is also necessary. In fact at times these become priority. Due to these evil actions and evil qualities, such rust and dirt comes on the heart of a person that due to it whatever good actions a person does, it does not have an effect on his heart and soul.

When one does plating of an old utensil, firstly one cleans off the dirt and rust, otherwise the plating will not remain intact. That is why I mentioned that to make an effort to abstain from those actions due to which rust comes on the heart is sometimes even more important.

Before me there are thousands of youth sitting. I appeal to you, O Youth! O Reciters of the kalimah of Muhammad! The root of all evils in today's times is the cinema, T.V and V.C.R. Every form of sin is promoted on it and every evil stems from it. For Allâh’s sake, make a resolution to specially shun these evils. I say again, O my beloved youth! I appeal to you, take pity on yourselves, today is a blessed day (day of 'Id). Today, in fact now, make a pact with yourself that you will not even go near these most terrible forms of evil and filth which not only destroys our wealth but also destroys our health and worse than that destroys our spirituality and our Din.

Believe me, I take an oath and say that when you go towards the T.V, V.C.R or cinema, Allâh becomes angry with you, angels curse you, Nabî’s pure soul becomes restless when he receives news about it, that my Ummatî (my follower) who takes my name, where is he going to!
Listen to this also my beloved youth! Whatever sins you have committed, have total regret and ask Allâh to sincerely forgive you but do not lose hope. Allâh is most merciful, most forgiving. Allâh’s mercy overpowers His anger. Never mind forgiving years of sin, a person may be an idolater and disbeliever all his life, yet Allâh forgives him also if he sincerely repents. When a servant of Allâh commits a sin and asks Allâh to forgive him, Allâh forgives him. If he repeatedly commits sins and repeatedly asks Allâh sincerely to forgive him, Allâh forgives him. Allâh doesn’t say: "O my slave! You have disobeyed me for too long, now I will not forgive you". Allâh continues forgiving as long as we continue asking sincerely for forgiveness, and not only does Allâh forgive but He loves the one who seeks repentance.

Allâmah Ibnul Qayyim has given a beautiful example to illustrate this. After explaining Allâh’s quality of mercy and his compassion and kindness with his slaves, he mentioned an incident of a person who was totally deviated, doing all sorts of evil. He once passed a street where a mother had opened the door and kicked her child out of the house. When the child was out of the house, the mother closed the door from inside. The child, crying and sobbing, carried on walking quite far. Then after reaching a certain point, stopped and thought to himself, where do I go from here, who will care for me, who will look after me like my mother? With these thoughts in mind, with a broken heart, he returned to his own house. The door was closed. He placed his head on the doorstep and laid down till he fell asleep. The mother came, opened the door, and seeing her beloved child asleep in this condition, took pity on him. Her motherly love overpowered her and she started crying. She picked him up and hugged him, caressed him, kissed him and told him: “O son! you have seen now, who is there for you besides me? You hurt me when you chose to lead a life of evil and disobedience. You angered me against my nature. Now listen! You are mine and I am yours. Whatever I have in my possession is only for you".
My brothers! This eye opening incident which Allâmah Ibnul Qayyim has mentioned is not only a lesson for that one person but it is a great lesson for me, you and all the sinners living in the world. The amount of love and compassion a mother has in her bosom for her children, I swear by Allâh, Allâh has more love and mercy for His bondsmen than that mother.

Therefore I say, don’t become despondent of Allâh’s mercy. Repent to Allâh for all the sins we have committed, show regret, but don’t lose hope of receiving Allâh’s mercy. Return towards Allâh, lower your head at his doorstep and cry over your sins like how a baby cries. Then see how Allâh’s doors of mercy open upon us, then see how Allâh enshrouds us in His compassion, how He gives us courage and expands our hearts, how He guides us, how He shows us the correct path, in fact He holds our hands and takes us, how Allâh delivers us from a life of total disobedience and negligence to salvation.

My respected elders and friends! We should learn a lesson from the incidents of the Banî Isrâîl which Allâh has mentioned to us in the Qur’ân Majîd. As long as the Banî Isrâîl fulfilled the commandments of Allâh, He kept them with prosperity, peace, tranquillity, happiness and honour and he made them examples for others, but when the majority started breaking most of the divine commands, Allâh put a merciless and oppressive enemy to rule over them who appallingly disgraced them.

Now, we should reflect upon our condition in this mirror. Is our condition not exactly the same!? Isn’t there corruption, isn’t our wealth being usurped and looted? Aren’t homes, shops and Masâjid being set alight? This is all a punishment from Allâh, because our majority and in general the Ummah is violating most of the commands of Allâh. Allâh did not have any relationship with the Banî Isrâîl who were the progeny of the Ambiyâ nor has Allâh any relationship with us - the Ummah of the seal of all Prophets,
Nabî س. What really matters to Allâh ع. is our actions and ways and that obedience and worship of ours which is in accordance to the way shown to us by Nabî س. Is it not true that most of our brothers have violated and disobeyed most of the commands of Allâh ع. If it is true and definitely it is true, then poder, what should we do to rectify our present condition?

Whatever happens in the world, ponder, can it happen without the command of Allâh ع؟ Can anything happen in this world because of somebody’s control, somebody’s power or someone’s intention besides Allâh’s ع؟ Thereafter ponder over the fact that if Allâh ع decides something, is there any who can change that decision? No! Never!

لا راد لقضاءه و لامعقب حكمه

Nobody can change the decision made by Allâh ع, nor can anyone even challenge it. May Allâh ع bestow us true Îmân upon this reality that whatever happens to individuals or nations only happens by the decision of Allâh ع. Allâh’s ع treatment neither with individuals nor with nations is without a system. Any nation who obeys the commands of Allâh ع and follows the way of life which is beloved to Allâh ع will be deserving of Allâh’s ع excellent treatment in this world and in the hereafter.

Therefore friends! Today, during this blessed day, make this decision, make this promise to Allâh ع, that Inshâ Allâh, I will inculcate every command of Allâh ع in my life and I will make a concerted effort to revive and establish every command of Allâh ع in the entire Ummah.

I do not want to go into intricacies. The basic commands which were given to the Banî Isrâîl are the foundation of that way of life which is pleasing to Allâh ع. Tauhîd, Salâh, Zakâh, kindness to parents, relatives, orphans and the needy and speaking kindly and being kind to all human kind, these are the basic commands which, if practised upon, the
temperament of practicing on the whole of Dîn will be inculcated. Therefore make a firm intention to fulfill these commands and make an effort and give sacrifice to establish the entire Dîn in the entire Ummah using this umûmi (general) effort.

Alhamdulillâh, we are in a time when this umûmi (general) effort is taking place in the entire world. If it is done in the correct way, according to the proper principles, keeping in mind the importance of Du'â, then Inshâ Allâh, by means of this effort once again, the direction of the minds, hearts and temperaments of this Ummah will be rectified and the inclination to discard Allâh’s commands will be terminated. Then Allâh will make decisions of good conditions prevailing and then whatever effort will be made, it's results will turn out positive and effective.

My brothers! What I intended to say, Allâh made me say. May Allâh enable me, you and all the Muslims to practice, so that on the day of Qiyâmah I am not taken to task due to the sin of not practicing on what I preach and so that you do not become from amongst those who will be taken to task for listening to the talks of Dîn, yet not changing your lives.

Now, let us from our hearts, turn our attention to Allâh, and make Du'â with this firm conviction that Allâh is All-Seeing and Omnipresent. Allâh’s countless angels are present. The Masjid’s atmosphere is filled with these angels. We would be able to see them if we possessed the 'real eyes'. Now in the presence of these angels, make them bear witness that we are making a pact with Allâh.
Oh Allâh! We are Your slaves, present in front of you. We bear witness with our hearts and tongues that there is none worthy of worship besides You, everything is only in your hands and we bear witness that Muhammad ☪ is your true Nabî. We have accepted his Dîn. We believe in You and in Your Nabî ☪. O Allâh! Enlighten our hearts with the nûr (light) of Îmân. Do not deprive anyone of us. O Allâh! Grant all those present here the reality of Îmân, these elders, these youth, these beloved ones, these brothers. Bless each one of us with perfect Îmân. O Allâh! We confess that our lives until now, most of it has passed in disobeying your commandments. From head to toe, outwardly and inwardly, our entire bodies were used in disobeying your commands. O Allâh! We are seeking forgiveness, forgive us, we are repenting, accept our repentance.

On this auspicious day, in this auspicious gathering we all make a firm intention to shun sin and not to disobey You anymore. O Allâh! Accept our intentions, and make it firm and sincere. Shaytân and our carnal desires are the ones who drive us to sin. Help us against these two enemies. Without Your help we cannot overpower them. O Allâh!
Make Dîn prevalent. Whoever is involved in the effort of Dîn in whichever way, they are concerned about Deen, O Allâh, accept their efforts and concern. O Allâh! Help them, enable them to work in the correct way, protect them from all types of trials, and protect them from Shaytân and their carnal desires.

O Allâh! Take pity on us, make a decision for mercy to descend upon us, nobody can alter Your decision. Save us from the fire of Jahannam and merely out of Your kindness grant us Jannah (paradise). O Allâh! Protect us from negligence. Make us not unmindful of our Âkhirah, Jannah, Jahannam (hell), the grave, the day of resurrection. Have mercy upon us during every stage of the hereafter.

O Allâh! Do not deal with us according to what we deserve due to our evil actions. O Allâh! Deal with us according to Your kindness and mercy.

ربنا تقبل منا انك انت السميع العليم وتب علينا انك انت التواب الرحيم وصولى اللهم وسلم علي سيدينا محمد وعلى اله واصحابه اجمعين برحمتك يا ارحم الراحمين