

by Imam Zafrullah Domun

Today is the second Jummah of the blessed month of Ramadan. According to the oft-repeated hadith of the Holy prophet Mohammad (saw) we have just come out of the 1st ten days of Ramadan where there was a manifestation of Allah's Mercy. Since yesterday we have already entered the second ten-day period where there is a manifestation of Allah's Forgiveness before the last third of the month where Allah will grant protection against Fire. So as good practicing Muslims we should do our best not to let our enthusiasm flag. We should be more determined than ever to make use of each hour, each minute each second available to draw ourselves nearer to our Lord. No one has any guarantee that he or she will witness such days again in his/her lifetime. So we should fast as if it were the last fast that we are having the opportunity to keep. We should pray as if the prayers that we do are the last one in our life. Then we would summon the necessary concentration to pray as if we are seeing Allah. If we can't do that then we should know that Allah is seeing us. May Allah help each one amongst us to offer such prayers to Allah with the hope that *incha* Allah they would be accepted. If for any reason we find it difficult to fast, we should pray to Allah and ask Him to grant us the necessary will and force to keep these fasts. Incha Allah you will notice that if you are really sincere in your desire to fast and you genuinely believe that Allah can help you, you will see that help will come your way and what was difficult will become easy for you.

It should be quite clear in our mind by now that we fast not because we need to lose weight or look beautiful physically. The main purpose of fasting is to attain righteousness (*taqwa*). We fast in order to take Allah as our shield against all the promptings of Satan. We fast so that we may think more about Allah and less about anything else. In fact, we may also say that in the month of Ramadan we are forced to focus our thoughts on Allah because He sent us here with a purpose. He has imposed the fast on us so that we are forced to think about the ultimate purpose of our life and examine ourselves and take stock of how we are faring towards Him or away from Him. Allah is our Creator. He knows how we think, how we act and how we may react as well. In His deep wisdom He has imposed this fast upon us so that we might understand truly how we should live our life in His obedience. If while fasting any one wished to eat something he or she could have done it in secret where no one would have known. But almost no one cheats

on his fast however difficult it might be upon him. He does not do so because he knows in his heart of heart that even if no one would be seeing him taking a drink or eating something, yet Allah would be seeing Him. This is a feeling and there are no proofs for it. Yet almost everyone who fasts would do his best not to cheat whilst fasting. It is the same attitude that we should develop in ourselves in the other days of our life with regard to any sin that we might be likely to commit. We should develop such a level of God-fearingness in ourselves which makes it difficult for us to commit any type of sin whether it is small or big ones. Fasting is for one month but the development of *Taqwa* is for a lifetime. We should bear this well in mind. I will now share with you some extracts from the writings of the Promised Messiah (as) regarding righteousness. Some of these extracts we might have read previously in our sermons but I am repeating them because they are so important for us to remember them.

The Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) said:

'Righteousness is not a small thing. It is through it that we have to fight all those Satans who hold sway over an individual's internal impulses. When a person is in a state of *Nafs-e-Ammara*, that is he is inclined to do evil, all of these impulses are a form of Satan in one's soul.' [This means that the powers or thoughts that compel an individual towards sin and refrains from doing good deeds are a Satan in one's own self.] If these tendencies are not corrected they would enslave the person. When knowledge and wisdom are put to wrong use they manifest themselves as Satan. The task of the *muttaqi* is that he should develop his internal capacities in a balanced way.'

'It is incumbent upon the righteous to spend their lives in meekness and humbleness. This is a branch of righteousness through which we have to battle unwarranted anger. Many highly devout and truthful people find shunning anger the ultimate and most challenging stage. Arrogance and pride is generated from anger and at times anger itself is generated from arrogance and pride.... I do not want people of my Jamaat to consider others higher or lesser than themselves. Or feel pride towards each other or look down on them. God alone knows who is honorable and who is lowly. This is a sort of derision based on contempt and there is danger in this contempt growing as a seed grows and causes ruin of an individual. Some people are most courteous when they meet those who are important and influential but in fact important is that person who listens to the meek with meekness, is gratifying to him, respects what he says and does not say

something mocking to him which could be hurtful. Allah the Exalted states: '...Do not slander your own people, nor taunt each other with nicknames. It is bad indeed to earn foul reputation after *professing* the faith; and those who do not repent are the wrongdoers.' (49:12) Do not call each other by taunting names, this is a practice of the wicked. One who taunts others will not die until he himself suffers in a similar way. Do not be contemptuous of your brothers. You drink from the same fountain, who is to know in whose fate it is to drink more. No one attains respectability through worldly principles. In the eyes of God Almighty one who is righteous is the most honorable: '...Verily, the most honorable among you, in the sight of Allah, is he who is the most righteous among you. Surely, Allah is All-knowing, All-Aware.' (49:14) (Malfoozat, Vol. I, p. 36)

“All the faculties granted by Allah the Exalted are not to be wasted, they are developed through right and proper use...It is stated: 'Surely, success does come to the believers.' (23:2) And after illustrating the life of the righteous it is stated in conclusion: '...And it is they who shall prosper.' (3:105) That is, those who practice righteousness, believe in the unseen. They lose concentration in *Salat*, but then they recover and they spend out of which God has bestowed them. In spite of possible personal hazards, they impulsively believe in the past and current Books of God and ultimately they reach the stage of certain belief. These are the people who are on the way of guidance. They are on a road which stretches right ahead and which takes man to the station of *Falah* success/prosperity. These are the successful people who will reach their destination and they have been delivered from the perils of the journey. This is why Allah the Exalted gave us the teaching of righteousness at the outset and granted us a Book which carries commandments regarding righteousness. Thus, our Jamaat should be intensely concerned and be more concerned than any other concern of the world, whether they have righteousness or not!' (Malfoozat, Vol. I, p. 35)

This last sentence should be a cause of concern for each one amongst us especially for mainstream Ahmadis. As far as we are concerned we should examine our thoughts and our actions and wonder how far they do not contradict each other. If we say something and do its contrary, we cannot be considered righteous. If someone goes around the world to tell the people that he does not hate anyone and yet he forces his missionary in charge and his Amir in Mauritius to maintain a social boycott against a group of Ahmadi Muslims how far righteous can such an Ahmadi be? To the best of my knowledge such a person and those who follow him in doing his bidding are far off the course of

righteousness that we have been taught by Allah and His noble prophet Mohammad (saw) through the Holy Quran. Such people should make amends and weep while making *Istighfaar* because knowingly they have trampled under their feet the teachings of the Holy Quran, the teachings of the Holy Prophet Mohammad (saw) and the teachings of the Promised Messiah (as). They may make a hue and cry that they are the true Muslims but their actions belie their declarations. Out of sympathy for them I tell them to desist from their misbehavior of the past fifteen years and develop some fear of Allah in their hearts.

Hazrat Masih Maood (as) said further:

“The spiritual beauty of man is to walk along all the finer ways of righteousness. They are the attractive features of spiritual beauty. It is obvious that to be mindful of the trusts of God Almighty, and to fulfil all the covenants of faith, and to employ all faculties and limbs both overt, like eyes and ears and hands and feet and others like them, and those that are covert, like the mind and other faculties and qualities, on their proper occasions and to restrain them from coming into action on improper occasions, and to be warned against the subtle attacks of vice and to be mindful of the rights of one’s fellow beings, is the way of perfecting one’s spiritual beauty. God Almighty has in the Holy Qur’an designated righteousness as a raiment. *Libas-ut-taqwa* is an expression of the Holy Qur’an. This is an indication that spiritual beauty and spiritual ornament are achieved through righteousness. Righteousness means that one must be mindful even of the smallest details of the Divine trusts and covenants and also of all the trusts and covenants of one’s fellow beings, as far as it may be possible. That is, one must try to fulfil, to the best of one’s ability, all the requirements in their minutest details. **[Brahin-e-Ahmadiyya, Part V, Ruhani Khaza’in, vol. 21, pp. 209-210]**

May Allah help us to reflect in our daily lives the characteristics of truly righteous people and endear us in His Sight incha Allah . Ameen.