

by Imam Zafrullah Domun

Today is the last Jummah of this year. Most people think of the end of the year as a time of great festivities and merry making. Although it is not at all forbidden for a Muslim to enjoy earthly pleasures in a legitimate way without exceeding bounds, yet we are not expected to copy the non-Muslims and try to imitate them in ways that they enjoy themselves. As a Muslim, it is expected of us that we cultivate such tastes in us that we find pleasure in what Allah and His Prophet Muhammad (saw) has commanded us to do. The quest for the pleasure of Allah is not achieved in one year or two. That is most probably why Allah has determined that on the average we are given several years to live. Ample time is given to us to strive for the pleasure of Allah. It is imperative for each one amongst us to know how to make the best use of our time and not allow time to go by without having striven as we should have to fulfill our duties to Allah and to our fellow human beings in the best possible way.

Every year, every month, every day and every hour, in brief, every moment that we live is a favour of Allah and the believer should learn to cultivate this perspective in his everyday existence and be thankful for whatever he or she is given. Some people might think that if they feel good and they do not fall ill it is due to their genes or their physical makeup or because they exercise regularly or because they do not eat junk food. Although all these can be contributory to good health yet, for the believer he understands that it is just Allah's favour upon him that he feels good and is not at all hampered in his daily life by what some other people suffer. Hence the Muslim believer is taught that as soon as he opens his eyes in the morning he should start by praising Allah with the following words: "*Al hamdo lillahillazi ahyana ba'da maa amatana wa elyahin noshour*" "which we translate as "All praise is due to Allah who has raised us from our sleep which resembles death and to Him will be the return. As he wakes up, the Muslim believer who has taken the Holy Prophet Mohammad (saw) as a model is taught to be thankful to His Lord who has brought him back to life after he spent some hours in sleep where almost all his connections to this material world were severed. So, the Muslim praises Allah because Allah has given him another chance to live another day. This is a very simple prayer but it helps us to inculcate the true Islamic spirit in us, namely that we live by the permission of Allah. We should be ever grateful to Him for whatever He gives us whether it is something small or

something that may be considered big. Allah makes it quite clear in the Holy Quran “*La in shakartoum la azidannakoum wa la in kafartoum inna azabi la shadid*” which we translate as “If you are grateful I will give you more and if you are ungrateful (remember) My Punishment is very severe.” The Muslim believer is expected to develop in himself the essence of thankfulness. He considers Allah to be the source of every favour that comes his way and he acknowledges this favour in showing thankfulness to Allah in his prayers and through his actions of doing favour to those who are deserving of it. It is this spirit that animates his daily life and so throughout his life he learns to be grateful to His Lord. He does his best to use whatever His Lord has given Him to seek His pleasure and to avoid His displeasure. He reads the Holy Quran regularly and he makes it the book for his personal guidance. So he takes care whenever he reads verses like “ *Innal mobazzereen kaanou ikhwanous shayateen wa kanas shaytaanon le rabbehi kafoura* ” which we translate as “ Verily, the extravagant are brothers of satans, and Satan is ungrateful to his Lord (17:28) or one of the characteristic of the servants of the Merciful(*ebaadur rahmaan*) is that “ *Iza anfaqou lam yousrefou wa lam yaqtorou wa kaana bayna zalika qawama*” meaning “And those who, when they spend, are neither extravagant nor niggardly but moderate between the two (25:68) or even the verse “ *Soumma latous ‘alounna yawma ezin annin na’im*” meaning “ Then on that day you shall be called to account for the favours (that were bestowed upon you”(102:9) So the Muslim who really wants to copy the example of the Holy Prophet (saw) because he understands that his salvation depends on that will be very careful in the way he uses all the favours and gifts that Allah has bestowed upon him. Such a Muslim reflects on the following words of the Holy Quran where Allah says:

“And We have enjoined on man to be good to his parents. His mother bears him with pain, and brings him forth with pain. And the bearing of him and his weaning takes thirty months, till, when he attains his full maturity and reaches the age of forty years, he says, ‘My Lord, grant me the power that I may be grateful for Thy favour which Thou hast bestowed upon me and upon my parents, and that I may do such good works as may please Thee. And make my seed righteous for me. I do turn to Thee; and, truly, I am of those who submit to Thee.’

“Those are they from whom We accept their good works and overlook their ill deeds. They shall be among the inmates of the Garden, in fulfilment of the true promise which was made to them.” (46:16-17).

If anyone amongst us tries to count the favours of Allah upon him, he will easily notice that he cannot count them. In fact, Allah says in the Holy Quran “*Wa aataa*

*koum min koulle maa sa'altomouho Wa in ta'ouddou nematallahi laa touhsouha. Innal insaana la zaloumoune kaffaar"* meaning "And He gave you all that you wanted of Him; and if you try to count the favours of Allah, you will not be able to number them. Verily, man is very unjust, very ungrateful." (14:35) Just take some time and reflect upon the favours of Allah upon you and see how it humbles you and inclines your heart towards Allah and towards doing good. So, let us use this end of year which is only marking the passage of time and reflect on what we have done and be determined not to repeat our mistakes and to do better materially, morally and spiritually. May Allah help each one amongst us to be fully conscious of what is expected on us and may we all rise to the occasion and do what is needed.

Now I will read some more extracts from the writings of the Promised Messiah, Hazrat Masih Maood (as) which will help us to better understand what is expected of us Ahmadi Muslims. He says:

"It is very essential that to serve religion you should acquire the knowledge of the worldly sciences as well-the latest ones, for that matter. And you should struggle for this purpose. At the same time, I should like to give a warning-and it is based on my personal experience-those who have striven to acquire one sided knowledge and that they do not have time and mind to spend some time with the spiritual people-nor do they have any light of spirituality in themselves-they have stumbled and gone far away from -Islam. Instead of making these sciences sub-servient to Islam, they have tried in vain to make Islam subservient to these sciences and they have started feeling that they are the people responsible for the fulfilment of the needs of the religion.

But you should remember that the religion can be served only by such people as have divine light in them. The truth is that these sciences are being taught like the life of the Padres and in-the form of a philosophy. The result is that the one who tries to acquire these sciences, remains a devout Muslim for a short while-because of the good impression that he had about this religion-but later he starts moving away from it. Then a time comes when he abandons all the rituals of Islam and gets himself cut off from it.

Some of them who have acquired these sciences have become leaders of the nation but they do not understand the secret of this all-important matter. The acquisition of these sciences can be useful only if one is very sincere and wishes to serve religion and has been in the company of somebody who has been granted divine wisdom. (*Malfoozat* Vol. 1, p. 66)

Speaking about moral qualities he says:

“I have seen a lot of people and I have studied them well and I have arrived at the conclusion that some of them are generous but at the same time they are men of quick anger; some are kind but niggardly; some get annoyed and beat others like anything but they are not humble at all. Some are humble and meek but they are not courageous at all, so much so that if they just hear of the bubonic plague or cholera, they get loose motions (that is the height of their fear). I do not say that whoever is not courageous is devoid of faith.

Even among the Companions of the Holy Prophet(saw), there were some who could not stand the battles; the Holy Prophet excused them on this count. There are many aspects of morals. I have expounded them in my speech that was delivered at the Conference of Religions (reference here is to the speech which was later published in a book form under the title: Teachings of Islam).

All the moral qualities are not to be met with in any one person, nor it can be said that there is any one who does not possess any moral quality whatsoever. The perfect example of all the good morals is the life of the Holy Prophet Mohammad, *sallallahu alaihi wa sallam*. That is why God says to him: *innak.a la-alaa kholoqin azeem*. At one time he kept them spell bound with his oratory and at another time he displayed his courage on the battlefield. His generosity awarded the hills of gold to the people; his kindness forgave those who deserved to be put to death. In short, the Holy Prophet, *sallallahu alaihi wa sallam*, was matchless and a perfect example of good morals. He was like a big tree under which thousands of people sit to enjoy its shade and also fulfil their various needs. They take its fruit, flowers, skin, leaves etc. Millions upon millions of people benefit from the Holy Prophet, *sallallahu alaihi wa sallam* and enjoy themselves as the chickens do under the wings of the hen. The bravest man on the battlefield was the person who was nearest to the Holy Prophet, for, he used to be at the most dangerous spot. Glory be to God, how excellent was he. During the battle of Uhud, he was in the thick of it. So much so that the Companions found it beyond their powers. But this courageous man-the Holy Prophet-was facing the enemy. Of course, the fault did not lie with the companions. God, eventually forgave them their shortcoming. It was intended to show how brave the Holy Prophet was. On a certain occasion when the sword was being wielded by the enemy with great force, the Holy Prophet was making proclamation of his prophethood; he was saying at the top of his voice: I am Mohammad, Messenger of Allah. It is said that on this occasion the forehead of the Holy Prophet had no less than seventy wounds; of course, they were not serious. This is how he displayed great morals.

On another occasion, he possessed such a large number of goats and sheep that they exceeded the number possessed by Qaisar and Kisra. The Holy Prophet gave away all these goats and sheep to somebody who begged for something. Had he not owned them, how could he have given them away. If he did not have the authority of a ruler how could he forgive those who deserved to be put to death at the time of the conquest of Mecca; these were the people who had tortured the Holy Prophet and his followers, men and women. When he met them on the occasion of the conquest of Mecca he told them *laa tasreeba alaikumul yauma*, I have pardoned you today. If this occasion had not arisen, how could the Holy Prophet display this splendid moral quality. Tell me of any moral quality that the Holy Prophet did not possess-and for that matter, the good moral in its extreme goodness. (Malfoozat "Vol. 1, p, 127)

May Allah help each one amongst us to do more in His cause and may He write us among His Submissive Servants *incha Allah. Ameen.*