

by Imam Zafrullah Domun

Once again in our life time we see a new blessed month of Ramadan coming. In fact, the new moon for this year's month of Ramadan, which corresponds to 1438 AH of the Islamic calendar, will be born on Thursday 25th May around 23h45 Mauritian time. So, until sunset the next day, that is Friday 26th May, about 18 hours will have already elapsed. If the weather permits, we may see the moon on that evening and start fasting on Saturday next. Since Mauritius is still a country where the physical visibility of the moon is most important, if the moon is not visible on Friday next fasting will start for us on Sunday next. Many countries around the world align themselves with what Saudi Arabia decides but this is not the case in Mauritius. Hence we might see ourselves again in a situation where we will start fasting after the Ramadan moon might have been up in the sky for two nights. Personally, I think that it is quite in line with the spirit of the Sharia to start fasting on Saturday next instead of waiting for Sunday. Let us hope that the moon is visible on Friday next *incha* Allah.

Ramadhan is indeed a special month for the believers. Most people try to do their best to fast and to pray and to give charity in a way that they are not used to do in the other months of the year. So, we should all get ready to try to please our Lord in such a way that after Ramadhan we have all our sins forgiven and we start life anew. May Allah grant each Muslim who starts his fasting with such an intention to get the objectives that he or she might fix for himself or herself. Incha Allah we will have more to say on this blessed month as from next week.

We will continue today with some more extracts from the writings of the Promised Messiah, Hazrat Ahmad (as). He says:

“In an age when a multitude of sins are committed and the people of the world do not understand the true nature of faith – all that remains [of faith] is just the outer shell or bones without any inner kernel or true essence. The force of faith becomes very weak while the domination of satanic forces increases greatly. Moreover, there does not remain any interest or enjoyment in faith. At such times the perpetual rule of God manifests itself, namely, that

God appoints a true and sincere servant of His, a servant who is completely immersed in the true obedience of God. Such a person is appointed and ennobled with the rare distinction of communication with God. In this age and now God has appointed me as the [Messenger of the time to rekindle in mankind the true love of God] because it is a time when the love of God had become totally cold.”

“Even though it may be generally observed that people believe in [the declaration] *La ilaha illallah*, i.e. there is no God but Allah, and they verbally attest to the truth of the Holy Prophet M u h a m m a d (s a) - they perform S a l a t and keep fasts but spirituality is lacking. On the other hand, the prevalence of acts and practices that go against the principles of righteousness bear witness to the fact that performance of the stipulated worship is customary and there is not to be found even a hint of true spirituality. Otherwise, what is the reason that their acts of worship are not accompanied by the blessing [in the form] of righteous deeds and by the light [of faith].”

“Remember this well, unless deeds are done with a true and sincere intention and are accompanied by true spirit u a l i t y, they can be of no benefit and will be of no avail. Deeds can only be referred to as righteous when there is no corruption in them of any kind. The opposite of rectitude is disorder. The pious person is he who is completely free from all forms of disorder and dissension. Salat that is in a state of disorder and is tainted with ulterior motives, is certainly not for God – it does not ‘reach’ up above the ground by as much as even a hand because such people are devoid of sincerity and spirituality”

“There are many people who raise the objection, questioning the need for [the formation] of this Community when according to them they, too, offer Salat and keep fasts. In this way they deceive others and there is no doubt that some people who are unfamiliar with [our teachings and with our Community] may well be deceived and join the others in saying that we, too, offer our Salat and keep fasts and recite the various prayers, why then has this division been created? Remember that such talk is the result of ignorance

and lack of recognition of God. [The creation of division] is not my doing - if there is division, it is God Who has created this division because it is God Who has established this Community. The reason for this is that the spiritual state has become so weakened that it has reached the point where the force of faith has completely disappeared. However, God wishes to give new life to true faith and this He has done through the new Community. Given these circumstances the objections of the people who question the formation of this Community are absurd and without any basis. In short, remember this well that such doubts and suspicions should not enter one's heart and if one were to consider this matter fully, such thoughts should not even arise. It is when careful consideration is not given to these matters that doubts and suspicions arise and some people who look only at the surface, make the objection that there are other people who are also Muslims. Such doubts and suspicions can very quickly lead a person to his destruction. I have seen letters that have been written by people who apparently belong to our Community but say that they are asked by others as to what need there is for a new Community when they too offer Salat, declare the same *Kalima*, and keep fasts? Such people further write in their letters that those who question them appear to be good people, doing good works. Even though the writers of such letters belong to our Community, upon hearing objections and doubts, they write that they do not know the answer [to such objections]. I feel regret and pity for such people that they have failed to understand our true purpose and intention. They only see that other people customarily adhere to the practice of Islam and in this vein, they deem to fulfil their duty to God but their practices lack the spirit of truth. Hence, such objections work like the suspicions created by acts of magic and [those influenced] do not care to think that our intention is to create a true faith that saves a person from the death of a sinful life. Such motives are not to be found in those who follow only the customs and traditions. Their sight is set only upon the apparent – it is not upon the reality. What they have is only the outer skin not the inner kernel.”

“Remember that God looks only upon the soul and upon spirituality. God does not look at the apparent actions – He looks only at the reality and the inner state as to whether the actions are tainted by an element of selfishness and personal desires or whether there is sincerity and true obedience to God. The apparent form of deeds, however, may deceive a person. He may be led

to think highly of a person who is seen with a rosary in hand or if he observes a person to be offering voluntary prayers at night or mid-morning. Similarly, when he sees someone to be performing noble acts of virtue, he may believe him to be a saintly person but God does not like the show of ‘outer layer’ [of deeds]. God is never pleased with [acts that are only] an outer shell, an outer covering – God is not pleased until there is loyalty and true sincerity. A person who is without loyalty [to God] is like a dog - [just like a dog falls upon dead flesh], a disloyal person falls upon the rotten world. Such people may sometimes appear to be good but they will be found to hide their ill-deeds and disgraceful practices. What use is the Salat that is full of ostentation – what possible benefit can there be in such Salat?”