

by Imam Zafrullah Domun

The new moon for Zul Hajj this year (1439AH) will be born tomorrow Saturday 11th August at 09:57 UT, which means around 2 pm Mauritian time. Hence, it will not be visible in Mauritius tomorrow night but it is expected to be visible around the world on Sunday 12th August. Therefore, the first day of Zul Hajj will be on Monday 13th and in all likelihood Eidul Adha will be celebrated on Wednesday 22nd August. The days of the Hajj will be announced by the Saudis once the moon is visible. As you are all aware, being Ahmadi Muslims we are not allowed to go for Hajj because the Saudis and other Muslims think that we not Muslims. But by Allah's Grace, we are Muslims and proud to be and we do not stand in need of any earthly authority to confirm or infirm our faith. We believe in all articles of faith and we do our best to practice the pillars of our religion. We declare Allah to be our Lord and Muhammad to be His Servant and messenger. We do our best to pray five times daily and we fast during the month of Ramadan and we pay *Zakaat* whenever it is due. Unfortunately, we cannot go for hajj. Were it possible for us to go we would most surely have made the necessary provisions to visit that most sacred place where the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw) was born. If Allah so wishes maybe one day such a noble wish of ours will be filled for each one amongst us. We should always be hopeful because even our beloved prophet had the opportunity to perform Hajj only the last year he lived although he had the opportunity to do a few Umra.

I will now share with you some hadith about the Hajj and the first ten days of Zul hajj. The Holy Prophet (saw) said: “ Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased

with him) narrated that one day the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) addressed people saying:

“O people! Allah has prescribed Hajj upon you, so perform it.”

A man asked, ‘Every year, O Messenger of Allah?’

The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) kept silent. When the man repeated his question thrice, the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said:

“Had I answered in the affirmative, it would have become a (yearly) obligation, and this would have been beyond your capacity.”

Then he added:

“Leave me alone so long as I leave you alone (i.e. do not ask questions about things I didn’t mention). What caused the destruction of the people before you was that they used to ask so many questions and disagree with their Prophets.

So, when I command you to do something, do it to the extent of your ability, and if I forbid you from doing something, avoid it.” (Muslim)

In another hadith we read “Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Prophet was asked, “Which deed is the best?”

The Prophet said, **“Belief in Allah and His Messenger.”**

He was asked again, “What is next?”

The Prophet said, **“Jihad [striving] in the cause of Allah.”**

He was further asked, “And what is next?”

He said, **“Hajj *mabroor* [i.e. Hajj accepted by Almighty Allah]”** (Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

In yet another hadith we read “Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that he heard Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) say,

“Whoever performs Hajj and does not commit any obscenity or transgression will return [free from sins] as he was on the day his mother gave birth to him.” (Al-Bukhari)

The Holy Prophet (saw) also said **“There is no day on which Allah frees servants of His from Fire more than [those freed on] the Day of `Arafat.**

And, verily, He draws near and then proudly speaks about them [i.e. the pilgrims] before the angels, saying, ‘What do these seek?’” (Muslim)

Ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) reported that the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said:

“There are no days in which righteous deeds are more beloved to Allah than these ten days.”

The people asked, “Not even Jihad for the sake of Allah?”

He said,

“Not even Jihad for the sake of Allah, except in the case of a man who went out, giving himself and his wealth up for the cause (of Allah), and came back with nothing.” (Al-Bukhari)

Speaking about the special status of the pilgrims in the sight of Allah, `Abdullah ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said,

“The one striving in the cause of Allah and the one performing Hajj and the one performing `Umrah are all the delegation of Allah. He calls them and they respond to His call, and they ask Him and He answers their supplication.” (*Ibn Majah*).

Speaking about good deeds in the first ten days of Zul Hajj, the Holy Prophet (saw) said **“There are no days on which good deeds are greater or more beloved to Allah than on these ten days, so recite much Tahleel (saying Laa ilaaha ill-Allah), Takbeer (saying Allahu Akbar) and Tahmeed (saying Alhamdu Lillaah).”** (Ahmad -Saheeh).

This is something that we can all do if we are not used to do it already. No one can know what the benefits of such repetitions are unless he starts making them. So, in order to know, one should start practicing.

Since this hadith reminds us that good deeds are appreciated more by Allah in these blessed days, I suggest that we strive to do more of good deeds than in other days. So, we should try to read and understand more of the Holy Quran and if possible increase our knowledge by reading more hadiths. In addition, we can regularly recite Astaghfaar and Darood Sharif as it is expected from us. If we have means, we can give more in charity and do our best to participate in Qurbani. Above everything we can strive to read some additional prayers in which we pray much with our tears flowing. Besides these, one can think of whatever other good deeds which might be pleasing to Allah with the hope that Allah might accept it and reward you with a Hajj even if we are not allowed to go for Hajj.

Lest you think that I might be exaggerating, you are all aware of the incident where someone did not participate in Hajj yet his Hajj was accepted by Allah. From time to time it is good to remind ourselves of this incident:

“It is related that the noted Muslim scholar Abdullah bin Mubarak (lived 736 to 797 AD) had a dream while he was sleeping near the Ka’abah during Hajj. In the dream, bin Mubarak saw two Angels descend from the sky. One asked the other: ‘Do you know how many people have come for Hajj this year?’ The other replied: ‘Six hundred thousand.’ The first Angel then asked: ‘How many

people's Hajj has been accepted?' The second replied: 'I wonder if anyone's Hajj has been accepted at all.' Still in his sleep, bin Mubarak was grieved to hear that. He thought, 'So many people have come from all over the world, crossing so many obstacles and meeting so many expenses. Would their effort be wasted?'

"He had thought only so far when he heard the other Angel say: 'There is a cobbler in Damascus whose name is Ali bin al-Mufiq. He could not come for Hajj, but Allah has accepted his Hajj. Not only will he get the reward for Hajj but, because of him, all the Hajjis of this year will be rewarded.'

"When bin Mubarak woke, he decided he would have to go to Damascus to meet that cobbler whose Hajj intention carried such a lot of weight.

"On reaching Damascus, bin Mubarak inquired after the cobbler. He was directed to a house. When a man appeared, bin Mubarak greeted him and asked his name. The man replied 'Ali bin al-Mufiq'. Ibn Mubarak asked: 'What do you do for a living?' Ali replied: 'I am a cobbler.' Then Ali asked the stranger's name that had come looking for him.

Abdullah bin Mubarak was a very well-known scholar of Islam, so when he introduced himself, the cobbler was anxious to find out why such a well-known scholar was seeking him out. Then bin Mubarak asked Ali to tell him if he had made any plans to go for Hajj.

"Ali replied: 'For thirty years I have lived in the hope of performing the Hajj. This year I had saved enough to go for Hajj, but Allah did not will it, so I couldn't make my intention translate into action.' Ibn Mubarak was eager to find out how this man's Hajj could be accepted and blessed for all the people when he didn't go for Hajj in the first place. While talking to the cobbler, bin Mubarak could discern a certain purity in the cobbler, as Islam regards

greatness not in wealth or in power, but in civility, good manners and the goodness of heart.

Ibn Mubarak further asked: ‘Why could you not go on Hajj?’ In order not to disclose the reason, Ali again replied: ‘It was Allah’s will.’ When bin Mubarak persisted, Ali revealed: ‘Once I went to see my neighbour. His family was just sitting down for dinner and, although I was not hungry, I expected he would invite me to dinner out of courtesy. But I could see that he was grieved about something and wanted to avoid inviting me. After some hesitation, the neighbour told me: ‘I am sorry I cannot invite you for food. We have been without food for three days and I could not bear to see the pain of hunger in my children. So, I went out looking for food today and found a dead donkey. In my desperation, I cut out some meat from the dead animal and brought it home so that my wife could cook this meat. It is halal (lawful) for us because of our extreme hunger, but I cannot offer it to you.’

Ali continued: ‘On hearing this, my heart bled with tears. I got up and went home, collected the three thousand dinars (gold coins) I had saved for Hajj, and gave my neighbour the whole money. I too had had to go hungry, but that was to save money for Hajj, but I thought helping my neighbour during his difficult times was more important. But I still desire to go for Hajj if Allah wills.’

“Abdullah bin Mubarak was greatly inspired by the cobbler’s story and told the cobbler of his dream.” Not long after, it is narrated, an identical episode happened to bin Mubarak himself.

“It is said bin Mubarak once entered Kufa (in Iraq) on his way to Hajj. There was a woman sitting on a rubbish-heap plucking a duck. It occurred to him that it was carrion. He stopped on his mule and said to her, ‘Woman! Is this duck carrion or sacrificed?’ She said, ‘Carrion.’ He said, ‘Then why are you

plucking it?’ She said, ‘So that my family and I can eat it.’ He said, ‘Woman! Allah Almighty has forbidden you carrion while you are in a land like this!’ She said, ‘Man, go away.’

“They continued to exchange words until he asked her, ‘Where in Kufa do you live?’ And she told him. He left and went to the inn and asked for directions. He said to a man who knew the place, ‘You have a dirham if you take me there.’

“He went until he came to the woman’s house. He said to the man, ‘Go.’ Then he went to the door and knocked. The woman said, ‘Who is it?’ He said to her, ‘Open the door.’ She opened it part way. He said, ‘Open it all the way.’ Then he got off his mule and hit it with a stick and the mule went into the house. Then he said to the woman, ‘This mule and the provision, money and clothes on it are yours, and you will have what is halal from it in this world and the next.’

“Then bin Mubarak remained hidden until people returned from Hajj. Some of the people of his land came to greet him and congratulate him on the Hajj. He turned and said to them, ‘I had an illness and did not go on Hajj this year.’

“Astonishingly, one of the people said, ‘Glory be to Allah! I met you there! Did I not leave my goods with you while we were at Mina and we were going to Arafat?’ And then another said, ‘I also met you, and you bought such and such for me! Bin Mubarak continued to say, ‘I do not know what you are saying. As for myself, I did not go on Hajj this year.’

“Later that night, bin Mubarak dreamt of someone saying to him, ‘O Abdullah, rejoice! Allah has accepted your *sadaqa* and He sent an angel in your form who performed the Hajj for you.’”

May Allah make provisions for us that we are never deprived of the blessings of a Hajj incha Allah even if we cannot perform it. May Allah grant us the opportunity to do such good deeds that are pleasing in His sight not only in the coming days but as long as we live here, incha Allah.