

by Imam Zafrullah Domun

These days, almost all people living in the world are affected with the harm that is being caused all around by an invisible virus that has killed more than 46,000 people in the most developed countries around the world and caused more than 1 million infected cases. In the coming weeks and months, it is expected that more people will die after more have been infected and no one can predict accurately how high the human toll will be. In order to contain the virus, as you are all aware, up till now what has been prescribed by most countries are what is known as social distancing and the washing of hands as often as possible. Apart from the loss of life, many people may lose their jobs and the world economy as a whole will be entering what is known as a recession, meaning a reduction in economic activities and some even fear a depression which means a continuous downturn in economic output of many countries for a long period.

As I said, no one can predict how this disaster will end. But around the world there have been many experts who have predicted, according to their experience in eliminating diseases around the world and according to what they knew about the appearance of new viruses around the world since around 2006, that such a disaster was just waiting to happen. On the net, on YouTube and TedTalks, these articles and talks are available and I have even shared one in our WhatsApp group. They advised governments to have disaster preparedness plans but their advice fell as usual on deaf politicians' ears and this is the reason why we are seeing so many deaths in Italy, Spain, France, UK and USA these days.

It saddens our heart to see so many people dying even if they are not Muslims. As Muslims, it is expected of us that we should have sympathy for all human beings and we should do whatever is in our power to help relieve their distress. But we cannot do much because we do not have means but there is something that we can do and that is supplicate Allah to relieve the world of this disaster which might become a calamity and all would be lost. Some might think that I am being very pessimistic. As Muslims, it is part of our belief that Allah controls every atom of this Universe. There was a time in their History when people of the West also believed so. In the Holy Quran Allah has advised Muslims to pray to Him to supplicate Him and He would attend to their requests. Some of these verses are as follows:

وَ إِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ ۖ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ ۚ
فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ

Translation:

“And when My servants ask thee about Me, say: ‘I am near. I answer the prayer of the supplicant when he prays to Me. So, they should hearken to Me and believe in Me, that they may follow the right way.’ (2:187)

This verse encourages us to have recourse to Allah for our needs. He is the Provider. If we believe in Him, in other words, if we show the readiness and determination to shoulder the *amanah* (trust) which He has imposed upon us which is to try to lead a life copying the example of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw), He will listen to our supplications that we make when we are in distress.

This is not just a grand claim. There are millions of people who have experienced the truthfulness of this verse in the Muslim Umma throughout its history. The Umma is never deprived of such people. Let us hope and pray that Allah will listen to their prayers in these dire times as well by His Grace.

Similarly, we have some other verses in the Holy Quran which reminds us of how Allah is ever ready to manifest His Mercy upon mankind. He says:

وَقَالَ ۖ كُمْ اَدْعُونِي اَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ ۚ اِنَّ الدِّينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَاخِرِينَ

And your Lord says, "Call upon Me; I will respond to you." Indeed, those who disdain My worship will enter Hell [rendered] contemptible." meaning “Call upon and I will respond to you”

In another verse He says:

اَمَنْ يُّجِيبُ الْمُسْتَظِرَّ اِذَا دَعَاهُ وَ يَكْشِفُ السُّوْءَ وَ يَجْعَلُكُمْ خُلَفَاءَ الْاَرْضِ ۗ
ءَالِهَ مَعَ اللّٰهِ ۚ قَلِيْلًا مَّا تَذَكَّرُوْنَ

“Or, who listens to the (soul) distressed when it calls on Him, and Who relieves its suffering, and makes you (making) inheritors of the earth? (Can there be another) God besides Him? Little it is that ye heed!” [an-Naml: 62]

Let us also remind ourselves of some hadiths about the need to supplicate to Allah.

“The Prophet, sallallahu alaihi wasalam, said to him while Ibn-Abbas was riding behind him on the same mount; “young man, I shall teach you some words [of advice]: Be mindful of Allah and you will find him in front of you. If you ask, ask only Allah and if you seek help, seek help only from Allah. And know that if all the nations were to gather together to benefit you, they would benefit you only with something that Allah had already prescribed for you, and if they gather together to harm you, they would harm you only with something that Allah had already prescribed for you. The pens have been lifted and the pages are dry.” [at-Tirmidhi]

“Any Muslim who supplicates to Allah in a Du’a which contains no sin breaking of kinship, Allah will give him one of three things: either his Du`a will be immediately answered or, it will be saved for him in the hereafter, or it will turn away an equivalent

amount of evil (from him)” The companions said “so we will ask for more” he replied, “Allah is more [generous].” [at-Tirmidhi, Ahmad]

“There is nothing dearer to Allah Ta’ala than a servant making dua to him.” [at Tirmidhi]

“The person who does not ask from Allah Ta’ala, Allah Ta’ala becomes angry with him.” [at Tirmidhi, Ahmad]

“The dua of a Muslim for his brother (in Islam) in his absence is readily accepted, an angel is appointed to his side, whenever he makes a beneficial dua for his brother the appointed angel says “aameen and may you also be blessed with the same”. [Sahih Muslim]

“Dua is the essence of Ibadah (worship).” [at Tirmidhi, Ahmad]

“If you ask, ask Allah and if you seek help, seek help from Allah.” [at Tirmidhi, Ahmad]

In a hadith Qudsi, it is reported that Allah said:

“O my servants, were the first of you and last of you, the human of you and jinn of you to rise up in one place and make a request from me, and were I to give everyone what they requested, that would not decrease what I have any more than a needle decreases the sea if put into it.” [Sahih Muslim]

Now let us ponder on some words of the Promised Messiah, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as), about Allah’s Greatness, supplications and prayer in general. We will start with this extract from *Kishti Nuh* where he speaks about his understanding of the Greatness of Allah:

“Relevant to a proper observance of my teaching it is essential that one should firmly believe that there is an all-Powerful, all-Sustaining Supreme Being, the Creator of everything, Changeless, Everlasting and Eternal. He does not beget, nor was He begotten. He is Holy, so that there is no need or occasion for Him to go on the Cross, or suffer in any way, or be subject to death. He is such that being far removed, He is still very near; and being very near, He is still very far. Although He is One, and absolutely unique, His manifestations are diverse and multifarious. Whenever there occurs in man a new change, for the changed man He becomes a new God, dealing with him on the basis of a fresh manifestation, the man witnessing a change in God in proportion to the change in himself — not that there occurs any change in God, He being Eternal, Changeless and most Perfect in Himself; but with every change in man for the better, God also reveals Himself to him in a fresh and clearer manifestation. With every progressive effort on the part of man God also shows Himself with higher and more powerful manifestation. He displays an extraordinary manifestation of His power and glory only, when

man shows an extraordinary change in himself-this being the root and the bedrock basis of the marvels and miracles witnessed at the hands of all servants of God. Belief in this God, with these powers, is the foremost essential condition of our Movement, inculcate this belief in your hearts, giving to its implications and requirements the first and top most priority over all considerations of self, over its comforts and relationships. By means of actions in the field of your daily life, with unflinching courage, show a steadfast loyalty in His way, Others in this world do not give Him preference over material means and the support they hope to get from their friends and relations, But do you give him the first place, so that in heaven you should come to be reckoned His People.

To show signs of grace is the eternal way of God, But you can partake of this blessing only when there remains no difference and no distance between Him and you; only when all your wishes, hopes and desires merge into His will; only when at all times, in success or failure, in hope or disappointment, you remain in humble prostration at His door, so that He should do with you what He wills. If you act like this, in you would appear that God, Who for a long time has kept His face concealed from the world, Is there any among you, then, who would act upon this teaching, seeking only His pleasure, without the slightest sense of dissatisfaction against the way His will works? Even in distress you should put your best foot forward, for this is the secret of your success; and you should strive to the utmost of your power to spread the idea of His singleness and unity all over the earth. Be kind and merciful to humanity, for all are His creatures: do not oppress them with your tongue, or hands, or in any other way. Always work for the good of mankind....”

We will stop here for today. In the early days of the divine manifestation in Mauritius, in the early 2000s, we were taught a prayer during the SARS epidemic (2002-3). It was as follows:

اللَّهُمَّ لَا تَقْتُلْنَا بِغَضَبِكَ وَلَا تُهْلِكْنَا بِعَذَابِكَ وَعَافِنَا قَبْلَ ذَلِكَ

“O Our Lord do not kill us with Thy Anger; do not destroy us with Thy Punishment; Save us before this happens.”

Next, I want to share with our brothers and sisters a prayer of Hazrat Masih Maood (as) asking from protection from all sorts of misfortune. It’s as follows:

“O our Lord, forgive our sins and remove our trials and tribulations. Deliver our hearts from every grief and You Yourself take care of our affairs. And O our Beloved, You Be with us wherever we happen to be. Cover up our frailties and give peace to our fears. We

put our trust in You and entrust our affairs to You. You are our Master in this world and the world hereafter and You are the Most Merciful of all who show mercy. O Lord of the worlds, accept this prayer. (*Tohfa Golarwiyyah, Ruhani Khaza'in*, volume 17, page 182).

Let us use this free time that has been imposed upon us to think more of our Lord, to ask for more forgiveness and to be more drawn towards Him because we have come to know that He is indeed very dear to us. He keeps consoling us with His encouraging and soothing words. During the week I have received the following messages from Allah:

“Lan Yosibona illa maa kataballaho lana howa mawlana wa howa khayroun naasereen”.

Its translation is:

“Nothing shall befall us save that which Allah has ordained for us. He is our Protector. And He is the best of Helpers.”

This message as it is found in the Holy Quran is as follows:

“Qoul Lan Yosibona illa maa kataballaho lana howa mawlana wa alallahe falyatawakkilil mo'menoune”(9:52)

The next message that I received was yesterday:

“Je'naaka bil haqqe bashiran wa nazira” meaning “We have sent you with truth as a giver of good news and as a warner”

And this morning I received ***“Ballillaho Mawlakoum wa howa khayroune Nasereen”***, meaning “Allah is Your Protector and He is the best of Helpers”

So, let us turn in full submission to Allah beseeching Him to protect us to protect all our dear ones. Let us not forget to also pray for the citizens of our country and of the world at large. Many people in other advanced countries are suffering more that we are suffering here. May Allah relieve them because in our heart of heart He is the One who grants relief. We beseech Him to listen to our prayers. Ameen *Yaa Arhamour Rahemeen*.