

by Imam Zafrullah Domun

By Allah's Grace, after 71 days of confinement, Covid-free Mauritius lifted the lockdown on Saturday last. Although the ten deaths resulting from the virus are to be deplored, our heart is still grateful to Allah that we have not seen the toll that was initially predicted by some studies according to which Mauritius would be hard hit by the virus. Fortunately for us, and all praise is due to Allah, such dire predictions did not materialize. There is no doubt that on the economic front we are severely hit but we hope and trust that Allah will grant enough wisdom to our leaders to make the right decisions so that the country may be steered back on the path of economic progress even better than it had been doing in the past insha Allah. Of course, we will all have to make sacrifices and we should not hesitate to make them so that there might be enough for all people.

Around the world, it seems that in some places the struggle is still ongoing because the number of infections is still going up. However, the number of deaths compared to the early days is going down, especially in developed countries. We should hope and pray that Allah help all affected human beings around the world. The tasks ahead are very challenging and let us hope all the leaders around the world will take courageous and wise decisions to safeguard the interests of poor people because they are those who are most badly affected by such calamities. No one should think that his or her prayers are of no consequence. On the contrary, we should continue to pray to Allah to beseech Him to look upon us all human beings with kindness and mercy and to take us in His lap especially when there are such disasters as we have been witnessing.

As far as we are concerned, we should continue with our prayers five times daily and we should try to supplicate Allah in such a way that He responds to us. He is the Helper *par excellence* that we have and have known throughout our life. So, let us turn our needs into supplications to Him. The Holy Quran is filled with instructions to that effect. I will just remind us all of one of these. In Al Baqara v. 187, we read:

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ مُّجِيبٌ 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.’”

During the month of Ramadan, we spoke about this verse. We are reminding our brothers and sisters again so that they may memorize it and ponder over it and do their best to absorb its infinite wisdom. If we have faith in Allah, He will eventually guide us to the right way under all circumstances. But we should do our best to follow all the instructions that He has given us in the Holy Quran as best as we can insha Allah. It is true that I keep repeating myself with these words but no one should get bored by them. A *mo'min* should keep examining himself/ herself and wonder how far his/her personal life has become an embodiment of the teachings of Islam. Upon examination, he/she will find that there is still great room, and sometimes even great palaces for progress as we usually say. So, let us learn by what we hear in Jumma sermon so that everyday we find ourselves on the path of self-improvement in as far as our duties to Allah and to others are concerned. Without a conscious and conscientious decision to improve ourselves everyday, we will not achieve much. That is why I keep reminding us that we need to take prayer filled with supplications very seriously because we have much to gain by it.

Recently, I came across an interesting article in the weekly *Al Hakam* that is published by the mainstream Jamaat from London. It was published in the early 1944 in *Al Fazl* newspaper from Qadian. It was written by one of the brothers-in-law of the Promised Messiah (as) whose name was Dr Mir Mohammad Ishaaq, the brother of the Promised Messiah's wife. He was a very knowledgeable and pious person. He speaks in this article about a spiritual experience where he was made to tour Paradise. He is shown how Allah's Forgiveness manifests itself for some people.

So, I thought that it will help each one amongst us to know about such experiences. The reason I am sharing them with you is so that you might know about these instances of forgiveness and that you never despair of Allah's Forgiveness under any circumstances. This is another illustration of how Allah has graced some of the followers of Hazrat Masih Maood (as) with spiritual experiences which strengthen our faith in Him.

Here, I will quote from the article directly. He says:

“Once, I was pondering over the topic of forgiveness of Allah and was enjoying thinking about the different aspects of this topic that a feeling of sluggishness overtook my mind and certain scenes flashed in front of my eyes pertaining to this topic.

Now, it does not matter much whether one considers these matters to be the imagination of the mind or stream of consciousness or a semi-vision. The only difference is that an academic exercise morphed from thoughts into images, otherwise the meaning and the reality is the same.

I saw that just at a little distance from me, there was an enormous door in a vast, open ground, similar to that which one may see erected at wedding occasions etc. When I went close to it, I saw that there was a beautiful inscription on it, which read:

كُلَّ يَوْمٍ بُو فِي شَأْنٍ

“Every day He reveals Himself in a different state.” (Surah al-Rahman, Ch.55: V.30)

And on the other two sides of this big door were also various inscriptions, one of which read:

نَبِّئْ عِبَادِي أَنِّي أَنَا الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ

“Tell My servants that I am surely the One Most Forgiving, the Merciful.” (Surah al-Hijr, Ch.15: V.50)

Another one read:

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ وَاسِعُ الْمَغْفِرَةِ

“Verily, thy Lord is very liberal in forgiving.” (Surah al-Najm, Ch.53: V.33)

At another place, it said:

يَغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ

“He forgives whomsoever He pleases.” (Surah Al-e-Imran, Ch.3: V.130)

One of the places said:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ

“Surely, Allah forgives all sins. Verily He is Most Forgiving, Merciful. (Surah al-Zumar, Ch.39: V.54)

Another said:

يَدْعُوكُمْ لِيَغْفِرَ لَكُمْ مِنْ ذُنُوبِكُمْ

“He calls you that He may forgive you your sins.” (Surah Ibrahim, Ch.14: V.11)

وَمَنْ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

“Who can forgive sins except Allah?” (Surah Al-e-Imran, Ch.3: V.136)

In short, there were dozens of beautiful inscriptions on either side of the door regarding the Forgiveness of Allah.

Field of reckoning

I saw certain people who were hovering over the doors like guards and I thought that maybe they were angels and so, I asked them if I could go inside. They replied, “Yes, there are great examples of God’s forgiveness on display today. You can go and look at them, but you will be accompanied by an official guard.”

With this, they asked one of their colleagues to accompany me and told me that his name was *Ghufran* (meaning forgiveness) and that he would show me around the vast expanse of the field where judgment was taking place. They also told me to continue to recite *istighfar* and not to *criticize* anything I may see.

After listening [to the instructions], as soon as I turned myself towards the enormous desert where reckoning was taking place, *Ghufran* held me by my arm and it was as if we were flying. It seemed as though we were able to reach wherever we wanted to go in a matter of seconds. I noticed, while traveling, that there were humans for as far as the eye could see and that all of them were naked, except for a selected few who were clothed.

There was a group here and a group there. There were various gatherings in different places and in the middle of every gathering or horde was a scale or balance. Hence, as far as the eye could see, there were only humans, scales or angels. But there was absolutely no ruckus. It seemed as if the dead were made to stand and only those could speak who were given permission. There was a silent murmur of “O *Ghafoor*, O *Sattar*, O *Ghaffar*” [O Forgiving One, O Coverer of shortcomings, O Most Forgiving] and sometimes, when someone’s voice would get inappropriately loud, a trumpet would be blown saying:

وَحْشَعَتِ الْأَصْوَاتُ لِلرَّحْمَنِ فَلَا تَسْمَعُ إِلَّا هَمْسًا

“And [all] voices shall be hushed before the Gracious God and thou shalt not hear but a subdued sound of footsteps. (Surah Ta Ha, Ch.20: V.109)

Upon this, an eerie silence would take over the place like the one that can be observed in graveyards at night.

Throne of Allah

Hence, we kept on traveling and wherever we went, we saw the same scenes until we got tired. At this point, *Ghufran* told me that the throne of Allah was in front of us. When I looked up, I could see nothing but light and *nur* [spiritual light]. But suddenly, I was struck with such fear and awe that I started trembling and my throat tightened. I also realized that the throne seemed equidistant from every location in this infinitely vast

ground and the orders which were being issued from this throne were heard clearly everywhere as if they were being pronounced from somewhere right next to us. Countless angels were circumambulating the throne. Some of them were saying:

Allahumma inna nastaghfiroka lillazina amanu

“O Allah, we seek forgiveness for the believers.”

while others were saying:

رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ مَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ

“O Allah forgive everyone on the earth.”

Some prayed:

Rabbighfir warham

“O Allah forgive and have mercy.” (Surah al-Mominoon, Ch.23: V.119)

Some were chanting the attributes of “*Ya Ghafoor; Ya Raheem*” (O Most Forgiving, Most Merciful) and some were chanting the names of Allah “*Ya Affuwun, Ya Ghafoor, Ya Sattar, Ya Ghaffar*” i.e. “O Effacer of Sins, O Most Forgiving, O Coverer of faults, O Most Forgiving”.

Hence, these angels were reciting various chants and would come from one side and disappear around the other.

Atmosphere of happiness and jubilation

At the same time, there was an atmosphere of happiness and jubilation due to it being the day of forgiveness. Every sinner had a smile of hope and optimism on their face. People’s actions were being measured and their shortcomings and weaknesses were being compensated with the blessings of forgiveness. There was an ease in reckoning today, for today was the day of the manifestation of the attributes of Most Effacing and the Most Forgiving. Even though “*Kiraaman Katibeen*” [angels tasked with recording the actions of humans] were doing their job (of presenting the full record of deeds) and Rizwan [angel of heaven] and Malik [angel of hell] would argue every once in a while ... but above all, today was the day of the Final Judgment and all matters were adjudged in the end by the Most Forgiving and Most Merciful God.

I was busy wandering, when *Ghufran* said to me, “Let’s go; let me show you some people you may recognise and show you some specific incidents of the forgiveness of Allah, which ordinary people may not be familiar with. Otherwise this judgment and reckoning will continue according to the verse:

كُلَّ يَوْمٍ بُو فِي شَأْنٍ

‘Every day He reveals Himself in a different state.’ (Surah al-Rahman, Ch.55: V.30)

“Today is the day of the manifestation of forgiveness. There are other days of God’s reckoning and awe-inspiring wrath and absolute dominion. But all these days are according to the conditions and actions of the people who are deserving of those specific attributes of Allah. There is no limit to the mercy of Allah. Yes, there is [punishment according to] justice, but never injustice.

“Let me show you some detailed signs of the mercy of your Lord so that you may increase in faith and love for your Master and Creator. So that you, who are always in a condition of despair and hopelessness due to the conditions of your actions, may also learn about the noble mercy and forgiveness of your Lord, which is the hope of every sinner and the support of every offender and upon which depends the covering of faults and forgiveness of the worlds.”

The group of the Prophets

After this, we went forth and stood next to a group. All of these people were wearing high quality clothes and were busy in seeking forgiveness. *Ghufran* informed me, “This is the group of the prophets who have come here pure and forgiven from their earthly life.”

We will stop here for today. We will continue insha Allah in the coming weeks because what follows is very interesting and it does help us hear about someone who has had such an experience. May Allah help each one amongst us to be among those that He has forgiven and that He will forgive insha Allah.