

by Imam Zafrullah Domun

As you might know, yesterday was the first day of Muharram for the new year 1442AH of the Muslim lunar calendar. There is nothing special about it except that it marks the passage of time in Islamic History. With the expansion of the Muslim Empire in the time of Hazrat Umar (ra), a new system was needed to date official correspondence with the different countries like Egypt and Syria which were using different calendars at that time. So, in 638CE, Hazrat Umar (ra) decided after consultation with the sahabas to initiate a new calendar for the Muslims.

We can read the following from an article written by a professor of history ‘Umar chose as the epoch for the new Muslim calendar the *hijra*, the emigration of the Prophet Muhammad and 70 Muslims from Makkah to Madinah, where Muslims first attained religious and political autonomy. The hijra thus occurred on 1 Muharram of the year 1 according to the Islamic calendar, which was named “hijri” after its epoch. (This date corresponds to July 16, 622 CE, on the Gregorian calendar.) Today in the West, it is customary, when writing hijri dates, to use the abbreviation AH, which stands for the Latin *anno hegirae*, “year of the hijra.” (Aramco World). This is just a page of Islamic History that I wanted to share with you so that our young members may be aware of it.

Now I will continue with reading extracts from the writings of Hazrat Masih Maood (as). He said:

“God be thanked a thousand times, Who has bestowed upon us a religion, which is such a means of attaining to the knowledge of God and to the fear of God, as has had no equal in any age. Thousands of blessings be upon the immaculate Prophet (saw) through whom we have entered this faith and thousands of Divine mercies be bestowed upon his companions who irrigated this garden with their blood.

Islam is such a blessed and God-indicating religion that if a person follows it truly and acts upon the teachings, guidance and admonitions contained in the Holy Word of God Almighty, the Holy Qur’an, he would behold God in this very life. For the recognition of God, Who is hidden from the sight of the world behind thousands of screens, there is no other means except the teachings of the Qur’an. The Holy Qur’an guides towards God Almighty through reason and heavenly signs in a very easy manner. It comprehends a blessing and a magnetic power, which draws a seeker of God every moment towards God and bestows light, comfort and satisfaction. A true believer in the Holy Qur’an does not

merely contemplate like philosophers that there ought to be a Creator of this wonderful universe; he acquires a personal insight and, being honoured with a holy vision, he sees with the eye of certainty that that Creator in fact exists. He who is bestowed the light of this Holy Word does not merely guess like those who rely upon reason alone that God is One, without associate. But through hundreds of shining signs which take him by the hand and lead him out of the darkness, such a person learns for himself that God has no associate in His Being or in His attributes. He is able to demonstrate to the world that he believes God to be such a Unity. The majesty of the Unity of God so fills his heart that in comparison with the Divine will, he regards the whole world as no more than a dead insect and indeed as nothing at all.” [Brahin-e-Ahmadiyya Part V, Ruhani Khaza’in, Vol. 21, pp. 25-26]

This last line calls for reflection. A person who imposes on himself the transformative power of Islamic teachings will become convinced that the world with all its attractions is “like a dead insect and nothing at all”. Unless and until one has not imposed upon oneself the teachings of islam one will never be able to make that paradigm shift, that change of perspective which will give one the insight that there is another “reality” behind what we consider to be real. For this realization to occur, a person should pray with full sincerity and he should read and understand the Holy Quran while engaging himself in reciting astaghfaar and Darood (prayers on the Holy Prophet). Those who have experienced these transformative influences of the Islamic teachings have at least been engaged in the above preoccupation and this is also what we should all consider as priorities in our life. The Promised Messiah (as) says further:

“The God of a true religion should be so much in accord with reason and the light of nature that His existence should be a matter of proof for people who possess reason but who have no heavenly book in which they believe. He should be such as does not savour of coercion or artificiality. Such perfection is characteristic of the God Who is presented by the Holy Qur’an. The followers of other religions have either abandoned the True God, as have the Christians, or have attributed improper and low attributes to Him, as have the Jews, or have deprived Him of His attributes, as have the pagans and the Aryas. **The God of Islam is the same True God Who is seen through the mirror of the law of nature and is visible in the book of nature.** Islam has not presented a new God but has presented the same God Who is presented by the light of man's heart and by man's conscience and **by heavens and earth.**

Another quality of a true religion is that it **should not be a dead creed.** The blessings and greatness which were cultivated in it in the beginning should persist in it till the end of the world for the promotion of the welfare of mankind, so that ever fresh signs should confirm its past signs and should not permit the light of its truth to become an old tale. I have been

writing over a long period that the Prophethood which was claimed by our lord and master Muhammad, **the chosen one** [peace and blessings of Allah be on him] and the **heavenly proofs** in the form of signs which he had set forth, **still continue in Islam** and are bestowed upon his followers so that they should arrive at the state of complete understanding and should **witness the Living God** directly.

The signs which are attributed to **Jesus** are mere stories, and are nowhere to be seen, and therefore this religion, which teaches the worship of the dead, is itself dead like its god. A verity cannot be confined to old tales. Every people have a store of tales setting forth alleged miracles and wonders. It is a characteristic only of **Islam** that it does not present merely the defective and imperfect comfort of tales and stories, but **satisfies** the seekers with living signs.

A seeker after truth should not be satisfied with senseless worship of the dead and should not be put off with sorry tales. We have come into the market of the world to purchase the best. We should not waste our faith by exchanging it with false things. A living faith is that through which we can find **the Living God. The Living God is He Who can inspire us** directly, or could at least bring us in contact with one who is directly inspired. I convey this **good news** to the whole world that the **God of Islam is such a Living God**. Those with whom no one can now speak are dead and are not God. No one can see their signs today. He whose god is dead would be put to shame in every field and would be humiliated and would not be helped in any way.

My purpose in making this **announcement** is that a religion which is true does not change. As it was in the beginning, so it would be at the end. A true religion would never become a dry tale. **Islam is a true religion** and I call everyone—Christians, Aryas, Jews and Brahmins—to show them the truth of Islam. Is there anyone of them who seeks the Living God? We do not worship the dead. Our God is Living. He helps us through His inspiration and revelation and through heavenly signs. If there is a single **Christian who is truly a seeker after truth, let him make a comparison between our Living God and his dead god. For such a trial, a period of forty days would suffice**". [Majmu'a Ishtiharat, Vol. 2, pp. 310-312]

He further says:

"The Islam whose qualities we have set out is not something for proof of which we have to refer only to the past and have to point only to the ruins of tombs. Islam is not a dead faith so that it may be said that all its blessings have been left behind and there is nothing ahead. The principal quality of Islam is that its blessings always accompany it. It does not speak only of the past but offers present blessings as well. The world is always in need of

blessings and heavenly signs. It is not as if it needed them in the past and does not need them now.

A weak and helpless human being who is born like a blind is in need of knowing something of the heavenly kingdom and needs to see some signs of the existence and power of God in Whom he believes. The signs of a past age cannot suffice for a subsequent age, for hearing is not the same as seeing and, by the passage of time, past events become like stories. Every new century, in a manner of speaking, starts a new world. Therefore, the God of Islam, Who is the True God, manifests new signs for each new world. At the beginning of each century, especially at the beginning of a century which has strayed far away from faith and integrity and is enveloped in many darkness, He raises a substitute Prophet in the mirror of whose nature is exhibited the form of a Prophet. Such a one demonstrates to the world the excellences of the Prophet whose follower he is and convicts all opponents through the truth and the display of reality and the frustration of falsehood. **[A'ina-e-Kamalat-e-Islam, Ruhani Khaza'in, Vol. 5, pp. 245-247]**

“We can furnish conclusive proof to every seeker after truth that from the time of our lord and master the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allah be on him] up to this day, in every century there have appeared men of God through whom God Almighty has guided other people by the display of heavenly signs. Of these were Sayyed ‘Abd-ul-Qadir Jilani, Abu-al-Hasan Kharqani, Abu Yazid Bistami, Junaid Baghdadi, Mohy-ud-Din Ibne-‘ Arabi, Dhunnun Misri, Mu‘in-ud-Din Chishti Ajmeri, Qutb-ud-Din Bakhtiar Kaki, Farid-ud-Din Pakpatni, Nizam-ud-Din Dehlvi, Shah Wali-ullah Dehlvi, and Sheikh Ahmad Sarhandi (Allah is pleased with them, and they are pleased with Him). Their number exceeded thousands. So many extraordinary happenings concerning them are set out in the books of the learned ones that even a very bigoted opponent has to admit that these people manifested extraordinary signs and miracles. I tell you truly that through my research, so far as it is possible for one to discover about the past, I have come to the conclusion that the number of heavenly signs in support of Islam and as a testimony of the truth of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allah be on him] which have been manifested through the *Auliya*’ of this Ummah, is not to be equalled in the history of other religions. Islam is the only religion which has progressed through heavenly signs, and its numberless lights and blessings have ever demonstrated the existence of God Almighty as if He is visible close at hand.”

May Allah help each one among us to have direct experience of such a powerful God so that our heart may be filled with certainty about Him. Incha Allah. Ameen.