

by Imam Zafrullah Domun

When we read the papers and magazines or listen to the news on TV and radio, or even when we see what people write on social media, we find that there is a great sense of unease around the world. Catastrophes are almost everywhere whether they are in the shape of a pandemic or floods, war or fire, famine, unemployment, agitation by civil society, government consolidating power over the people, mass emigration, inability of the most resourceful country in the world to deal with an epidemic and registering 200,000 deaths within 8 months.

These happenings force one to wonder what is happening in the world. Even here in Mauritius things do not seem to be that beautiful. So, one night I was wondering about what is going on and when I went to sleep in the middle of the night, I saw in my dream written at some place in large characters "*Laa taqnatou min rawhilllah*" meaning "do not despair of the Mercy of Allah." So, despite what we see, as good Ahmadi Muslims we should have firm faith that Allah will send His Help and people will find relief by His Grace. Let us all hope and pray that Allah manifests His Mercy upon the world because it is always poor people who suffer most under such circumstances although the rich also are not spared. So, let us all use this opportunity to turn more to our Lord in repentance and prayer and good deeds so that Allah manifests His Mercy to suffering mankind sooner rather than later. Ameen.

We will read more from the writings of the Promised Messiah (as) on prayer. He said:

"The first condition for prayer is that a supplicant should not get tired and become a prey to despair that nothing will happen. Sometimes it is seen that a prayer is carried on till it is about to be accepted and then the supplicant gets tired and the result is failure and frustration. Frustration results in the denial and effectiveness of prayer and gradually culminates in the denial of God. It is said if there is God Who accepts prayer why have not those prayers been accepted which were offered over a long period? If those who think thus and stumble were to reflect upon their lack of perseverance, they would come to know that all their frustration is the result of their own haste and impatience which generated an ill concept of the powers of God and resulted in despair. So, one should never get tired.

Praying is like the sowing of a seed by a farmer. Apparently, he buries the good seed in the soil and who can expect at that time that the grain of seed will grow up in the form of a good tree and bear fruit? Outsiders and even the cultivator himself cannot see that the grain is assuming the form of a plant inside the earth. But the reality is that within a few days the grain undergoes a change and begins to assume the shape of a

plant till its shoot emerges from the earth and becomes visible to everyone. From the moment when the grain was placed in the earth it had started its preparation to become a plant, but an eye that can only perceive the visible was not aware of it till its shoot emerged from the earth and became visible. An ignorant child cannot understand at that stage that it will bear fruit only at its due time. He desires to see it bearing fruit immediately, but an intelligent cultivator will know what is the time of its bearing fruit. He looks after it steadfastly and nurtures it until it bears fruits which also ripens. The same is the case with prayer, which is nurtured in the same way and brings forth fruit. Those who are in haste get tired quickly and give up, and those who are steadfast, persevere and arrive at their objective. It is true that there are many stages in prayer, ignorance of which deprives the supplicants of the fruits of their prayers. They are in a hurry and cannot wait, whereas there is progression in the works of the Almighty. It never happens that a man marries today and a child is born to him the next morning. Though God is All-Powerful and can do whatever He wills, yet compliance with the law and the system that He has appointed is necessary. In the first stages of childbearing nothing is known, like the nurture of vegetation.

For four months there is no certainty. Then a movement begins to be felt and after the expiry of the full period the child is born after great travail. The birth of the child also gives a new life to the mother. It is difficult for a man to form a concept of the troubles and travails which a woman has to endure during her pregnancy, but it is true that the coming of a child is a new life for the mother. She has to accept death so as to have the joy of bearing a child. In the same way, it is necessary for a supplicant that he should discard haste and endure all troubles and should never imagine that prayer is not accepted. At last the time arrives for the result of the prayer to be manifested; the child which is the objective is born. A prayer should be carried on to the limit until it produces a result. You will have observed that a piece of cloth which is placed under a burning glass and the rays of the sun concentrate upon it and their heat arrives at a degree which sets the cloth on fire. In the same way, it is necessary that a prayer should be carried on to a stage where it should develop the power of burning up failures and frustrations and to fulfil the desired purpose. One has to be occupied with prayer for a long time and then God Almighty manifests the result. It is my experience, which is borne out by the experience of the righteous in the past, that if there is silence for a long time, there is hope of success, but if there is a quick reply the purpose is not likely to be achieved. When a beggar goes to someone and begs with humility and earnestness and does not move from his place, even after he is rebuked, and continues his supplication, then in the end the person supplicated is moved and bestows something on the beggar despite his miserliness. Then should not a supplicant have at least so much steadfastness as an ordinary beggar? When God Almighty Who is Benevolent and possesses Majesty sees that His humble servant has been prostrate at His threshold for a long time, He does not lead him to a bad end. If a

pregnant woman should become impatient after four or five months and should take some abortive medicine, the child would not be born, but she herself would be involved in despair. In the same way, he who is in a hurry before the due time only suffers loss and puts his faith in danger. In this condition some people become atheists. There was a carpenter in our village whose wife fell ill and then died. He said that if there had been a God, his multiple prayers would have been accepted and his wife would not have died. In this way he became an atheist.

If a righteous person practices fidelity and sincerity, his faith is fostered and he achieves his purpose. The riches of this world have no value in the estimation of God Almighty. He can do everything in a single moment. Have you not seen that He bestowed sovereignty on a people who were entirely unknown and made great kingdoms obedient to them and made kings out of slaves? If a person is righteous and becomes wholly God's, he would lead an excellent life, but the condition is that he should be sincere and possess resolve. His heart should never be shaken and there should be no showing off and *shirk* in it. What was there in Abraham which made him the father of his people and the father of those who are devoted to God, and God Almighty bestowed numberless great blessings on him? It was his righteousness and his sincerity. Abraham had offered a prayer that a Prophet should appear in Arabia from among his progeny. Was it accepted at once? For a long time after Abraham no one paid any attention to that prayer, yet it was fulfilled in the advent of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) and how grand was its fulfilment. [Al-Hakm, vol. 7, Number. 8, 28 February 1903, pp. 1-3]

He said further:

“He who supplicates God at the time of difficulty and distress and seeks the resolution of his difficulties from Him achieves satisfaction and **true prosperity** from God Almighty provided he carries his supplication to its limit. Even if he does not achieve the purpose of his supplication, he is bestowed some other kind of satisfaction and contentment by God Almighty and does not experience frustration. In addition, his faith is strengthened and his certainty increases. But the one who in his supplication does not turn towards God Almighty remains blind all the time and dies blind....

He who supplicates with the sincerity of his soul is never truly frustrated. That prosperity which cannot be achieved through riches and authority and health, but which is in the hand of God and He bestows it in whatever shape He wills, is bestowed through perfect prayer. If God Almighty so wills, a **sincere and righteous person** in the midst of his distress achieves such delight after supplication which an emperor cannot enjoy on the imperial throne. This is true success which is bestowed in the end on those who pray. [Ayyam-us-Sulh, Ruhani Khaza'in, vol. 14, p. 237]

“A foolish one thinks that prayer is a vain and useless thing, but he does not know that it is prayer in consequence of which God, the Glorious, manifests Himself to His seekers and conveys to their hearts the revelation: ***“I am the All-Powerful One.”*** Everyone who is hungry and thirsty for certainty should remember that for the seeker of spiritual light in this world, prayer is the only means which bestows certainty with regard to the existence of God Almighty and removes all doubts and suspicions. [Ayyam-us-Sulh, *Ruhani Khaza’in*, vol. 14, pp. 239-240]

“It is also worthy of note that the prayer which has been made obligatory upon Muslims in the Holy Word of God has been prescribed for four reasons. (1) The first is, so that by turning to God Almighty at every time and in every condition, one should be firmly established on the Unity of God, inasmuch as supplicating Him is to acknowledge that God alone bestows one’s objective upon one. (2) The second is, that faith might be strengthened by the acceptance of prayer and the achievement of the objective. (3) The third is, that if Divine favour is bestowed in any other way, knowledge and wisdom might be increased. (4) The fourth is, that if one is informed of the acceptance of prayer through a vision or revelation which is fulfilled, the understanding of the Divine might be promoted and understanding might grow into certainty and certainty into love and through love there might be deliverance from every sin and a cutting asunder from everything beside God, which is the fruit of true salvation. [Ayyam-us-Sulh, *Ruhani Khaza’in*, vol. 14, p. 242]

May Allah grant each one amongst us the understanding that we need to make our life a success in His Sight. Ameen.