

by Imam Zafrullah Domun

As most people are aware, the pandemic that started in the beginning of the year in China is still affecting many people around the world. According to the latest statistics, provided by a Reuters tally which I read on Wednesday, the number of cases around the world crossed 40 million on Monday. Experts believe the true numbers of both cases and deaths are likely to be much higher, given deficiencies in testing and potential under-reporting by some countries.

The Reuters data shows the pace of the pandemic picking up. It took just 32 days to go from 30 million global cases to 40 million, compared with the 38 days it took to get from 20 million to 30 million and the 44 days between 10 million and 20 million.

The United States, India, and Brazil are the worst affected countries. COVID-19 cases in North, Central, and South America represent about 47% or nearly half of global cases. Record one-day increases in new infections were seen at the end of last week, with global coronavirus cases rising above 400,000 for the first time. Out of these about 1,129,000 people have died.

The situation seems to be quite alarming around the world. *Alhamdulillah*, despite everything, the situation is not so alarming in Mauritius. But we should always be on our guard and follow all precautionary measures that have been given by the authorities and we should also pray that Allah help us and help others to come out of this calamity as soon as possible by His Grace. Although the number of deaths has started to slow down, the havoc that the pandemic has created around the world is not abating.

In addition, fires and floods also are creating havoc at many places in the world. Recently, we heard about the fires in California where as of October 1st, 2020, about 30 people were reported to be dead, 7000 homes and other structures were destroyed and 3.9 million acres of land burned. One can just imagine the situation of the people trying to flee from these places.

Last week I also read about a fire that destroyed the Syrian coastal region in decades. An almost final count of the Lattakia Agriculture Directorate estimated the size of the damage at 7,190 hectares, with around 1.3 million fruit trees that were completely burned, including 1.1 million olive trees, 200,000 citrus trees, 3,000 apple trees, and 44,000 trees of various types. Just imagine what such destruction can do to the lives of the people. It is really unimaginable and very sad. May Allah have mercy upon the inhabitants of these places.

These catastrophes and many others remind us of the words of Hazrat Masih Maood (as) when he said:

*"Remember, God has informed me of many earth-quakes. Rest assured, therefore, that as earth-quakes have shaken America and Europe, so will they shake Asia. Some of*

them will resemble the Day of Doom. So many people shall die that rivulets of blood shall flow. Even the birds and the beasts will not be immune against this death. Havoc shall sweep the surface of the earth which shall be the greatest since the birth of man. Habitations shall be demolished as if no one had ever lived in them. This will be accompanied by many other terrible calamities which the earth and the heavens will send forth, till their extraordinary nature will become evident to every reasonable man. All the literature of science and philosophy shall fail to show their like. Then mankind shall be sore distressed and wonder what is going to happen. Many shall escape and many shall perish. The days are near, in fact. I can see them close at hand, when the world shall witness a terrible sight: not only earthquakes but also many fearsome calamities shall overtake man, some from the skies and some from the earth. This will happen because mankind has stopped worshipping their true God and have become lost in the affairs of the world with all their heart and their effort and intent. If I had not come, these afflictions would perhaps have been delayed a little. But with my coming the secret purposes of an affronted God which were hidden so far, became manifest. Says God: 'We never punish unless We send a Messenger.' Those who repent shall find security and those who fear before calamity overtakes them shall be shown mercy. Do you think you will be immune from these calamities? Or can you save yourselves through artifice or design? Indeed not. That day all human schemes shall fail. Think not that earthquakes visited America and other continents but that your own country shall remain secure. Indeed, you may experience a greater hardship. O Europe, you are not safe and O Asia, you too, are not immune. And O dwellers of Islands, no false gods shall come to your rescue. I see cities fall and settlements laid waste. The One and the Only God kept silent for long. Heinous deeds were done before His eyes and He said nothing. But now He shall reveal His face in majesty and awe. Let him who has ears hear that the time is not far. I have done my best to bring all under the protection of God, but it was destined that what was written should come to pass. Truly do I say that the turn of this land, too is approaching fast. The times of Noah shall reappear before your eyes, and your own eyes will be witnesses to the calamity that overtook the cities of Lot. But God is slow in His wrath. Repent that you may be shown mercy! He who does not fear Him is dead, not alive." (Haqiqatul Wahy, pp.256-57).

Hence, we should all turn in sincere repentance to our Lord and beg Him for Forgiveness and mercy so that we might not have to bear His Punishment. Hazrat Masih Maood (as) tells us:

"I deem it most appropriate, in the best interest of my community, to advise them on righteousness, because a sensible person obviously knows that nothing pleases Allah the Exalted more than piety. Allah Almighty states:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ مُحْسِنُونَ

Verily, Allah is with those who are righteous and those who do good.

It is particularly incumbent upon my community to adopt righteousness, especially in view of the fact that they associate themselves with and swear allegiance to a man who

claims to be divinely commissioned. In this way, they shall be delivered from any of the diverse forms of malice, rancour, associating partners with God, and worldly attachment that may plague them.

It is a well-known fact that irrespective of whether an individual is suffering from a minor illness or a more serious one, they cannot be cured until remedy is sought and trouble is taken to find a cure. Even if a small black blemish appears on a person's face, this causes serious apprehension, lest the mark should spread to cover the entire face. Similarly, sin is a blemish that blackens a person's heart. Disregard for minor trespasses steer an individual to greater evil. A minor sin is like the small blemish which spreads to disfigure a person's entire face. Just as Allah the Exalted is Merciful and Munificent, He is also Mighty and punishes those who do wrong. When He observes a community boasting and making tall claims while their practical state is quite the opposite, His fury and wrath are provoked. God decides to punish such a community at the hands of disbelievers. Those who are familiar with history know that Muslims have on many an occasion been defeated by disbelievers. Genghis Khan and Hulagu Khan devastated the Muslims, and even though Allah the Exalted had promised to protect and support the Muslims, they were still overpowered. Instances like these have often transpired and the very reason for this is that the might of Allah Almighty manifests its power when He sees that although a group of people recite: *Laa Ilaha Illallah (There is none worthy of worship except Allah)*, their hearts are disposed to other interests and their deeds are of worldly bent.

True fear of Allah demands that a person examine the degree to which his words and actions accord with one another. A person whose words and actions are at odds with one another should know that they shall incur the wrath of Allah. If one's heart is impure, it will never find favour in the sight of God no matter how pure one's words may be; in fact, this arouses the wrath of God. My community ought to realise that they have come to me so that I may sow the seed which transforms them into a fruitful tree. So, everyone ought to examine their selves to become cognizant of their inner and outwardly state. If, God-forbid, the hearts of my followers are not in harmony with their words, they shall not be met with a blessed end. Allah the Exalted does not care for a community with hollow hearts who make empty claims, for He is Self-Sufficient. The victory at Badr had already been prophesied and there was every reason to believe that the Muslims would triumph. But the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, continued to weep and pray to his Lord. Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq (ra) inquired as to the need for such fervent supplication when victory had already been promised. The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, said, 'God is Self-Sufficient.' That is to say, perhaps hidden conditions lay beneath the surface of this divine promise."

We should all do our best to ponder on these words of the Promised Messiah (as) and be constantly fearful lest we fail in our commitment to follow his teachings. We will speak more about this in the coming sermons, incha Allah.

Now I would like to say a few words about my sister Salima, may Allah illumine her tomb (*nawwarallaho marqadaha*), who passed away last Sunday. *Inna lillahe wa inna elayhe rajeoune*: “To Allah we belong and to Him is the return”. She was about 22 months older than I am and we have been quite close since we were children. I will never forget her kindness since we were children. Whenever my brother and I had done some mischief and were afraid of entering the kitchen to take our lunch for fear of our mother, she used to give it to us surreptitiously outside the house so that we did not go without food. By Allah’s Grace, she had since her young age developed a very close relationship with Allah due to the upbringing of our mother. I still remember how, when I was about 17 years old, we used to wake up for Tahajjud prayer and prayed a lot. Throughout her life, she went through several types of trials and by the Grace of Allah she faced all with great patience and resignation. Her relationship with Allah was such that nothing could shake it. Her trust in Allah was exemplary. When she lost her sight, she kept praying that Allah restore her sight. Eventually her sight was restored after about 5 years, she was very happy that Allah had listened to her prayers. Very often, she used to receive messages from Allah about particular situations. These messages came to her in the form of words flowing on her lips or even in dreams. Unfortunately, she did not write them or have them written. She had a prodigious memory and she was like a family historian. She learnt homeopathy from the courses that were given on MTA. Very often, she gave homeopathic medicines that even saved some people from undergoing minor operations. Her relationship with my mother was a unique one. They lived close to one another throughout her life and they cared for each other with great love and devotion. Her passing away is a great loss for all members of our family but particularly for my mother, her son Kaleemuddin and my sisters and brothers and myself. We pray that Allah forgives her and forgives us and that He grants her an elevated status in Jannat incha Allah. We pray that Allah grants all family members, especially her son Kaleemuddin, *Sabran Jameel* (exemplary patience). He cared for her mother and looked after her in an exemplary way for which I am sure Allah will reward him, incha Allah.

When the Holy Prophet (saw) saw his son Ibrahim dying he started weeping. His companion Abdur Rahman bin Awf said to him “O Allah's Apostle, even you are weeping!” He said, "O Ibn 'Auf, this is mercy." Then he wept more and said, "The eyes are shedding tears and the heart is grieved, and we will not say except what pleases our Lord, O Ibrahim! Indeed, we are grieved by your separation."

And I say “O Bou Sal we are grieved by your separation” but we say also as Hazrat Masih Maood (as) said on the occasion of the death of his son Mubarak Ahmad: *Bulane wala hay sab se pyara Oussi pe eh dil tou Jaan fida kar*: “That Caller is the Dearest of all; O heart, thou sacrifice thyself for Him”.