

by Imam Zafrullah Domun

By Allah's Grace, once again a new blessed month of Ramadan will be starting soon. According to published information, the birth of the new moon for the month of Ramadan will be at 06:30 am here in Mauritius on Monday 12th April. But it will not be visible on Monday at sunset. So, it will most probably be visible on Tuesday 13th April and we will insha Allah start fasting on Wednesday 14th April. Although this year too, part or the whole of Ramadan might be spent in partial confinement (unlike last year when it was total confinement), as good believing Muslims we should face this situation with calmness and be pleased with the Will of Allah under all circumstances. Believers face difficult times so that they may become stronger in facing the challenges of life. Placing our trust in Allah, let us all **“seek help with patience and prayer”** and fast as best as we can filling our days and nights with greater devotion to Allah and to helping those who are less fortunate and who are facing very hard times because of the Covid-19 pandemic. May Allah help each one amongst us to make the best of the coming days and weeks and may we all spend most of our time in fasting, in praying, in supplications seeking forgiveness for our misdeeds and for escape from hell and admission to paradise insha Allah. In addition, we should also devote our time to reading and meditating on the Holy Quran regularly with a view to understand its message and to do our best to mould our lives according to its teachings insha Allah. May Allah bless us all and may He have mercy on suffering humanity around the world.

I will now share with you some more of the teachings of the Promised Messiah. Speaking about martyrs, he said:

"Bear in mind that a true martyr (*shaheed*) is not only the man who is killed in religious cause but also the man who in trials and difficulties remains firm and faithful to God, and who is ready to suffer any hardship in the path of God. *Shaheed* literally means a witness and, therefore, everyone who has such a living and certain faith in the existence of God that he may be said to have witnessed Him and the glorious manifestation of His power is a *shaheed* or a martyr. He believes in the existence of God and in His mighty power and control over all with such certainty as if he had witnessed them. When the spiritual wayfarer has reached this stage, he finds no difficulty in laying down his life in the path of God: rather he feels supreme pleasure and bliss in it. By laying down life in the path of God it is not meant that a person should seek an occasion to be actually murdered. What is meant is that he should prefer pleasure of God to his own desires and interests, that is to say, whenever his own interests and desires clash with his duty to

God, he should willingly forsake the former. Everyone should reflect whether it is this life that he loves most or the next; whether if he meets with any difficulty or is subjected to any hardship in the path of God, (i.e., for righteousness' sake) he would bear it with heart's joy, and whether if he is required to lay down his life, he is prepared for it. This is a spiritual stage to which it is my objective to lead my disciples." (Vol. IY R. R. 1905)

Preparation for the next world.

"Immediately after death a man finds himself in the other world. At such time the man who has wasted his whole life in the attainment of worldly desires and has not sought any connection with God, finds death a bitter cup and departs from this world in sorrow and grief. This is the beginning of his tortures because he never made any preparation for the afterlife. It is, therefore, necessary that a man should not have the love of this world in his heart, because it is the love of this world which precludes all happiness in the next life. And since the time when death will come is not known to any one, a man should, therefore, always be prepared for that hour. This would keep him in close connection with God for he would know that his true happiness lies in the next life. This life is in fact a kind of preparation for the next, and it is here that everything should be done for comfort there. If a man makes no preparation for the next life, the hour of death will find him entirely involved in the cares and anxieties of this world, and hence he will experience the greatest grief and sorrow in bidding farewell to it and will have nothing but pain and torments in the next, because pain and torments are the result of the cares and anxieties of this world. Death always comes suddenly and the man of the world thinks that it has come prematurely. This is because he is not prepared for the next life, for if he had made any preparation, he would have been ready to receive it as if it were at the door. Hence, all righteous men have taught that a man should always take an account of his own actions, and see whether if death came to him just at that moment, he was prepared for the journey or not." (Vol. IV R. R. 1905).

"He who wishes to become a follower of mine must embrace the religion of Islam and follow the Book of Allah, the Holy Quran, and the ritual of our leader, the best of men, He must believe in Allah the Benevolent and the Merciful and His Holy Prophet (saw). He must believe in the day of Judgment, the day of Resurrection, Heaven and Hell. He must promise and profess that he would never wish for any other religion except Islam and that he would live out in his life this religion which is the religion of nature and that he would stick to the Book of Allah the Omniscient, and that he would mould his life so as to act upon the Sunnat and the Quran and whatever was practiced by a majority of the dignified Sahaba. He who leaves all these three gives himself up to the flames of hell; his end shall be ruin and destruction.

Know ye brothers! that true faith is never realized but with good actions and the fear of God. So, he who leaves such actions intentionally and out of vanity is held faithless in

the sight of the Almighty. Fear God, brothers! and hasten towards good actions and shun the evil deeds before you die. Let not the beauty and freshness of this world delude you and let not the brilliancy and splendour of this house make you vain and proud, for it is a mirage and its end is destruction. Its sweetness is bitterness. Its profit is loss. And those who seek its grandeur are like the target of a lance; and those who wish for its greatness are like one pricked by a thorn. And he who falls upon its wealth, gets himself away from the first principles of goodness. And he who reaches its top, strays from the right path. Surely its light is darkness and its help is tyranny. So, incline ye not towards it body and soul; for it drowns its swimmer and is worse than a flood. And aim ye not at it with the intention of a zealous person, void of religion. Make it but a servant in the cause of religion and not a friend. And covet not much that ye be the wealthiest of men, the richest and the most prosperous. And forget not ye the portion of your religion or ye shall get not a jot of a ray. Of a certainty has the world devoured your fathers and the fathers of your fathers. How can then ye expect that it would leave you and your wives and your children? And out of the grudge of the self, make ye not an enemy of any one as does the foolish.

Prefer religion to the world, and be ye not like those who fear men and not Allah and follow their own passion and forget His will. They seek honour in the eyes of worldly men and that is no honour but disgrace,

Ye are the witness of Allah so hide not the witness. Tell His creatures that the fire is blazing and they should beware of it; countries are being destroyed with pests and they should not approach them. Surely the world is a valley full of trees and its tigers are wild and furious; wander ye not therefore in its ways. And prevent ye your passions from their boldness and impudence. Purge your souls and whiten them like silver and leave them not unless they be washed of all dirt and filth. And verily he who has purified his soul has succeeded, and he who has defiled it has failed. And depend not ye upon the *bai'at* (simple initiation ceremony) without being pure and pious; ye are like a girl who is married too early and possesses nothing except her natural endowment. And seek not ye the fountain of heavenly knowledge from those who are not given the eye of sagacity. And stick ye to me as do the blossoms to a tree that ye may develop from a blossom to a fruit. Purge ye your souls from all sorts of ill-will and bitter hatred. And break ye not your words after ye have made a covenant, and be ye not slaves to your passions after ye have made them your slaves. And be ye of those devotees of Allah who do not perjure when they swear, who do not remain hypocrites when they agree with any one and who do not abuse after having loved anyone. Follow ye not the dictates of Satan the accursed. Disobey ye not your Creator and your Sustainer, the Benevolent though ye die of pain and torment. To Allah be ye more obedient than shadows and purer than pure water. And admonish ye with actions and not with words. Hold your tongues. Purge your hearts. Turn ye to your Imam when ye quarrel with each other, and when he decides your case be satisfied with it and leave off all enmity. And if

ye be not satisfied, ye believe then with tongues and not with hearts. Fear ye, therefore, lest your labors should come to naught on account of your persistence in sin. Wake ye up that ye might not go astray from the right path after being led to it. Live ye for your Creator and Sustainer. (Vol. XVI R. E. 1917.)

To end, I would like to continue reading a paragraph or two from the extract about “certainty in faith” which I started reading last week. Hazrat Masih Maood (as) says:

“It is certainty which releases a man from the bondage of sin, carries him to God and makes him surpass even the angels in his sincerity and perseverance. The religion that has not the means to bring about a certainty, is false. The religion which cannot show the face of the living God with certainty, is false. The religion which has nothing but idle tales of the marvels of the past, is false. The eternal and unchangeable God is even now as He was in the past ages, and his wonderful powers are the same as they were-, ere now, and He has the same might to show His wonderful signs as He had at any previous time. Why then trust in tales and not seek the living manifestations of the power of God? That religion is nothing but the way to perdition whose miracles and prophecies are stories and those people are ruined to whom God has not revealed Himself and who have not been purified by the hand of God through certainty. As a man is drawn to indulgence in his carnal passions on account of the animal gratification which he feels in them, similarly he is attracted to God with a mighty magnetism when he has once tasted the heavenly bliss. His beauty then so enchants him that all else besides Him is naught to him.”

Incha Allah we will remind ourselves of these teachings more next week. May Allah help all among us to have a Ramadan Mubarak by His Grace. Ameen.