

by Imam Zafrullah Domun

This year, the birth of the new moon for *Zul Hijja* will be on Saturday 10th July at around 5am in Mauritius. According to the experts, it will not be visible anywhere except in the Americas on Saturday. However, it will be seen almost everywhere around the globe on Sunday 11th July. Therefore, the first day of *Zul Hijja* will be on Monday 12th July 2021. Eventually, Eidul Adha will be celebrated on Wednesday 21st July 2021 in Mauritius. As usual, in Saudi Arabia, the day of Arafat will be on Monday 19th July and they will celebrate Eidul Adha on Tuesday 20th July. This year, only about fifty thousand Saudi residents will perform hajj under strict conditions. The Saudi Authorities have reported that they are ready and insha Allah, all should go according to plan. Here, insha Allah we will read Salat Eid at 9am in Baitul Rahma Mosque.

According to the hadiths, the first ten days of the month of Zul Hijja have plenty of merits. Ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) reported that the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said: **"There are no days in which righteous deeds are more beloved to Allah than these ten days."** The people asked, "Not even Jihad for the sake of Allah?" He said, "Not even Jihad for the sake of Allah, except in the case of a man who went out to fight, giving himself and his wealth up for the cause, and came back with nothing." (Reported by al-Bukhari)

Furthermore, the days of Zulhijjah are so sacred that Allah s.w.t. makes an oath by them in the Quran when He says:

"By the dawn. And [by] ten nights." (Surah Al-Fajr, 89:1–2)

Some scholars refer to the nights as the ten days of Zulhijjah. In the Quran, when Allah swears by or takes an oath upon something, it signifies its importance and demands our attention and reflection.

In addition, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw) said: "There are no days greater in the sight of Allah and in which righteous deeds are more beloved to Him than these ten days, so during this time recite a great deal of *Tahlil* (*La Ilaha Illallah*), *Takbir* (*Allahu Akbar*) and *Tahmid* (*Alhamdulillah*)." (Musnad Imam Ahmad).

Not only do these words of remembrance strengthen our relationship with our Lord but they also connect us in a special way with Prophet Ibrahim (a.s). Hazrat Muhammad (s.a.w) said:

"I met Ibrahim (a.s) on the Night of Ascension (Al-Mi'raj), and he said to me: 'O Muhammad, convey my greetings to your Ummah, and tell them that Jannah has a vast

plain of pure soil and sweet water. It is a plain levelled land. The plants grow there by uttering: Subhanallah, Alhamdulillah, La Ilaha Illallah and Allahu Akbar (Allah is free from imperfection; praise be to Allah; there is no true god except Allah; and Allah is Greatest).” (Sunan At-Tirmizi)

So as good Muslims we should, so to say, revere these days and nights and do our best to fill them with good deeds. Apart from the zikr mentioned above, we may also read and reflect more on the Holy Quran and help those who are in need and who come to seek our help or even those who do not ask for our help but who we know to be in need. Besides, we should even do some *nafil* prayers asking for forgiveness and blessings for us and mankind as a whole. May Allah help us all to practice additional good deeds in the coming ten days and may Allah accept them from us. Now, we will continue to read and reflect upon the words of Hazrat Masih Maood (as). He said:

“Man having arrived in this house of darkness cannot attain salvation unless, being himself honoured by the converse of God, or keeping company with someone who is the recipient of sure revelation and who has witnessed clear signs, he arrives at the certain knowledge that he has a God Who is All-Powerful, Benevolent and Ever Merciful, and that Islam which is his faith is in fact true and the Judgement Day and heaven and hell are realities. As a matter of tradition, all Muslims believe in the existence of God and in the truthfulness of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him), but this faith has no sure foundation. Through such weak faith it is not possible to be deeply affected and to cultivate the true hatred for sin. [Nuzul-ul-Masih, Ruhani Khaza'in, vol. 18, pp. 485-486]

“It is a pity that most people are unaware of the true meaning of salvation. According to the Christians, salvation means deliverance from the punishment of sin. This is not the true meaning of salvation. It is possible that a person may not commit adultery or theft, or bear false witness, or kill anyone, or commit any other sin so far as he knows, and yet be unacquainted with salvation, for salvation means the achievement of that eternal prosperity for which human nature hungers and thirsts. It is achieved only through the personal love of God after His full understanding and the establishment of a perfect relationship with Him and its condition is that love should surge up on both sides....

For a seeker after truth, the only question is how to achieve true prosperity which should be the means of eternal joy and happiness. The sign of a true religion is that it should carry one to that prosperity. Through the guidance of the Holy Qur'an, we learn that that eternal prosperity is found in the **true understanding** of God Almighty and His holy and perfect and personal love, and in perfect faith which **should create a lover's restlessness in the heart**. These are a few words and yet even a volume cannot set forth a complete exposition of them. [Chashma-e-Masihi, Ruhani Khaza'in, vol. 20, pp. 359-360]

“What the Holy Qur’an says in this context is summarized below:

O My servants, do not despair of Me. I am Ever Merciful and Benevolent and cover up sins and forgive them and am more Merciful towards you than anyone else. No one will have mercy on you as I have. Love Me more than you love your fathers for I am greater in love than they are. If you come to Me I shall forgive all your sins and if you repent, I shall accept your repentance. If you advance towards Me slowly, I shall run to you. He who seeks Me shall find Me and he who turns to Me shall find My door open. I forgive the sins of a penitent even if they are more than the mountains. My mercy upon you is great and My wrath is little because you are My creatures. I have created you and therefore My mercy comprises all of you. [**Chashma-e-Ma‘rifat, Ruhani Khaza’in, vol. 23, p. 56**]

The Cause of Spiritual Decline

“After deep reflection and the receipt of constant revelation from God, I have come to know that though there are a large number of religious sects in this country and religious differences swell up like a flood, the cause of all these contentions is that most people suffer from a decline of the spiritual faculties and of the fear of God.

The heavenly light by means of which man can distinguish between truth and falsehood has disappeared from most hearts. The world is taking on the colour of atheism and though the tongues utter the words ‘God’ and ‘*Permeshwar*’, the hearts are more and more inclined towards denial. This is testified to in practice by an absence of good actions. I do not question the integrity of anyone who practices righteousness in secret, but the general condition is that the true purpose of religion is ignored. Most people pay little attention to **purity of heart, true love of the Divine**, true sympathy with His creatures, gentleness, mercy, justice, meekness and all other pure moral qualities like righteousness, cleanliness and truth which are the spirit of religion. It is a matter of regret that religious contentions are on the increase, but spirituality is declining.

The real purpose of religion is to recognize God Who has created the universe and to arrive in His love at a stage where the love of everything else is burnt up and to have sympathy with His creatures and to put on the garment of true purity. I observe, however, that this purpose is neglected in this age and most people adhere to some branch of atheism. The recognition of God Almighty has sadly declined and for this reason boldness in committing sin is increasing. It is obvious that that which is not recognized is not followed by the heart, nor is there any love for it or any fear of it. All types of fear and love and appreciation are created by recognition. This shows that the prevalence of sin in today’s world is due to lack of understanding. One of the great signs of a true religion is that it should present many means of acquiring the recognition and understanding of God Almighty so that man might be able to restrain himself from committing sin, and so that becoming aware of Divine beauty he should

partake of perfect love and so that he should regard cutting asunder from God as worse than hell. **To avoid sin and to be devoted to the love of God Almighty is a grand goal for man and is that true comfort which can be described as heavenly life.** All desires that are opposed to the pleasure of God are the fire of hell and to spend one's life in their pursuit is to lead a hellish life.

But the question is how can one be delivered from such a life? The knowledge that God has bestowed upon me in this context is that deliverance from this house of fire depends upon true and perfect understanding of the Divine. Carnal passions that pull people to themselves constitute an irresistible flood which is flowing fiercely to destroy faith, and it is impossible to stem that which is irresistible except through that which is perfect and overwhelming in itself. For this reason, perfect understanding of the Divine is needed for the attainment of salvation. **[Lecture Lahore, Ruhani Khaza'in, vol. 20, pp. 147-149]**

“The root of fear and love and appreciation is perfect understanding. He who is bestowed perfect understanding is bestowed perfect fear and perfect love, and he who is bestowed perfect fear and perfect love is delivered from every sin which arises from fearlessness.

For such deliverance we need no blood and no cross and no atonement. We need a sacrifice of self which need is felt by our nature. This sacrifice is in other words Islam. The meaning of Islam is to stretch forth one's neck for slaughter; that is to say, to place one's soul at the threshold of God with complete willingness. The name Islam is the soul of all law and is the life of all commandments.

To stretch forth one's neck for slaughter willingly and cheerfully demands perfect love and devotion, and perfect love calls for perfect understanding. The word Islam indicates that for true sacrifice perfect understanding and perfect love are needed and nothing else. This is indicated by Allah the Exalted in the verse:

لَنْ يَنَالَ اللَّهَ لُحُومُهَا وَلَا دِمَآؤُهَا وَلَكِنْ يَنَالُهُ التَّقْوَىٰ مِنْكُمْ

Their flesh reaches not Allah, nor does their blood, but it is your righteousness that reaches Him

This means that the sacrificial meat you offer cannot reach Me, nor can its blood. On the contrary, the only sacrifice that reaches Me is that you shall fear Me, and be righteous for My sake.” **[Lecture Lahore, Ruhani Khaza'in, vol. 20, pp. 150-152]**

So, in these days of Zul Hijja, let us keep in mind the example of Hazrat Ibrahim (as) and Hazrat Ismail (as) and Hazrat Hajra (as) who showed the world that they were truly devoted to their Lord and that they were ever ready to sacrifice themselves for His sake. May Allah help each one amongst us to become such that we understand well why we are here and what is our true mission. Ameen.