

by Imam Zafrullah Domun

By Allah's Grace, the Hajj this year has gone well for the sixty thousand selected residents and expatriates of Saudi Arabia who were fortunate enough to perform the Hajj this year. *Alhamdulillah* that even here in Mauritius as well many Muslims have been able to perform prayers in the mosque or in open grounds and many animals have been slaughtered. Let us hope and pray that Allah accept our prayers and deliver us from this pandemic as soon as possible and that He accepts the sacrifices that have been presented. May Allah accept our *taqwa* and may Allah grant us increase in *taqwa* as long as we live.

I will now share with you some extracts from the writings of Hazrat Masih Maood (as) which might be useful especially for our young ones in the quest for Allah. In his famous speech published in book form under the title "The Philosophy of the teachings of Islam", he writes:

"The better part of a person's life, before the onset of senility, can be measured at approximately eighty years, half of which is forty. Here the number forty correlates with the first four months the foetus spends in the womb prior to its first physical movements. Experience tells us that when man has lived half of his productive life—the first forty years which bear a strong likeness to the first four months of a foetus' existence—his soul awakens and shows nascent signs of spiritual life, provided he is blessed with a pure disposition.

It is no secret that before he is forty a man's life is mostly obscured by ignorance. The first seven or eight years of his existence are passed in infancy, and the following twenty-five or so years are mostly spent in the pursuit of learning or frittered away on libertine pleasures. Afterwards, he is married or is otherwise beguiled into chasing wealth and honour and exceeds all bounds in doing so. At this stage, even if man turns towards God his quest is somewhat tainted with material desires. His prayers are mostly for worldly gains and his cries and supplications are sullied by worldly desires. Thus, what little faith he has in the hereafter is offset by the fact that death appears only as a distant possibility. Just as when a dam bursts its banks and destroys whatever lies in its path, so does the flood of carnal passions imperil human life. In this state, how can he ever believe in the subtleties of the hereafter? Instead, he mocks and

derides religion and parades his own dry logic and sophistry. Of course, if he is good by nature, he may believe in God, but does so without full faith and sincerity and that too is conditional upon his own success. If his desires are fulfilled, he turns to God, if not, he turns to Satan.

In short, youth is a critical period of one's life and without Divine grace one might well land in the pit of hell. The fact is that this part of one's life is the root of all evil. It is at this time that one contracts most physical ailments and some unmentionable diseases. The mistakes made in the callowness of youth often cause man to turn away from the True and Immutable God. Thus, at this age he fears God but little and is driven by carnal passion and dominated by his baser self. He pays little heed to the advice of others and suffers the consequences of this age for the remainder of his life.

As man approaches forty, he starts shedding the vagaries of his youth and ruefully looks back at many of his follies from which his counsellors had failed to dissuade him. The ebullience of his youth naturally begins to subside, for his physical condition declines with advancing age. The rebellious blood is no longer there, nor is there any more physical vitality and recklessness of youth. The time of deterioration and decay approaches fast.

At this stage, he also witnesses the passing away of his elders and even the untimely death of younger people whose loss leaves him stricken with grief. His parents too are probably no more and the world begins to betray its transience in a number of ways. It is as if God places before him a mirror and says, 'Look, this is the reality of life of which you are so fond.' It is then that he recalls his past mistakes with regret and undergoes a radical transformation ushering in a new life, provided he is well-meaning by nature and is one of those whom God has summoned. It is in this context that Allah, the Almighty, says:

“And We have enjoined on man to be good to his parents. His mother bears him with pain, and brings him forth with pain. And the bearing of him and his weaning takes thirty months, till, when he attains his full maturity and reaches the age of forty years, he says, ‘My Lord, grant me the power that I may be grateful for Your favour which You have bestowed upon me and upon my parents, and that I may do such good works as may please You. And make my seed righteous for me. I do turn to You; and, truly, I am of those who submit to You.’” (The Holy Quran, *al-Ahqaf* 46:16)

That is, we enjoined on man [saying to him:] “Be good to your parents. You should realize what agony your mother suffered for you! During your pregnancy she suffered

pain for a long period of time and with pain she brought you forth. For thirty months she remained in discomfort during gestation and breastfeeding you. Again, He says that when a good person reaches forty and matures, he recalls Divine exhortations and says, ‘My Lord, let me be grateful for the favours You have bestowed on me and on my parents and grant me the opportunity to do such good works as may please You, and make my seed righteous for me. That is to say, if I failed in my duty to my parents, let not my children do the same. If ever I strayed from the right path, let them not follow suit. My Lord, I repent and turn to You and am of those who submit.’

Thus, God has made it clear that the fortieth year is a blessing for those who are righteous and it is then that the spirit of truth awakens in them. Most of God’s Prophets were raised in the fortieth year of their lives. For instance, our Lord and Master, the Holy Prophet (saw) was also raised for the reformation of mankind in his fortieth year.” (Page13e)

This book “The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam” is one of the most important books of Hazrat Masih Maood (as). It answers many questions that crop up in a young person’s mind. In addition, it offers a blueprint that might help any aspiring young person in his or her path to Allah. It is not a book that can be read as a novel and then put aside to gather dust on a shelf. On the contrary, it’s a book that one should resort to very often because its contents have to be absorbed and casual reading will not help someone to understand it at all. So, I again recommend that our young ones make it a duty to read and reflect upon it. Its contents have been written by inspiration from Allah. It can help a young person a lot by answering many of the questions that come up in his mind while he is growing up.

Now let us hear what Hazrat Masih Maood (as) tells us about the spiritual quest. He says:

“The spiritual quest is to embark upon the path of Allah and His Messenger (saw) as a result of one’s own understanding and sense. For example, Allah the Exalted states:

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ

Meaning, if you desire to become the beloved of God, then follow the Noble Prophet, on whom be peace. It was this Perfect Guide and Messenger who shouldered such afflictions as are unparalleled in the history of the world. He did not rest even a single day in his life. Now, those who truly emulate their Master can only be ones who follow his every word and action with assiduous toil and labour. Only he is a follower who

obeys the Holy Prophet (saw) in all respects. Allah the Exalted does not like those who flock to comfort and flee from hardship. Rather, such a one shall incur the wrath of Allah Almighty. In this verse, Allah the Exalted has commanded obedience to the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. The task of a seeker of God ought to be to first study the entire life of the Holy Prophet (saw) and then follow him. This is called ‘the spiritual quest.’

There are great trials and tribulations in this path. It is only after these difficulties are shouldered that a person becomes a seeker of God.”

He continues:

“The rank of those who are absorbed in God is greater than those who are seekers on the path of God. Allah Almighty does not leave the former group of people to go on as mere seekers; rather, He casts them into adversity Himself and then pulls them towards Himself through his eternally spiritual magnetism. All the Prophets were absorbed in God as such. When the human soul is faced with hardship it is strained and gains experience, and as a result, begins to glow. For example, iron or glass possess the inherent quality to shine but only become clear after repeated polishing to the extent that one is eventually able to see their own face reflected in these materials. Spiritual efforts also serve as a polishing agent. One ought to polish the heart, to such an extent that one is able to see in it a reflection of their own face. What is implied by seeing one’s own face? It means to embody the following: *“Develop within yourselves the attributes of Allah.”*

The heart of a seeker of God is like a mirror, which is polished by trial and tribulation to such extent that the character of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, begins to be reflected in it. This occurs when, after much spiritual effort and purification, no traces of filth and impurity remain. It is then that this rank is conferred upon an individual. Every believer is to a degree in need of such cleansing. No believer can attain salvation until they become a mirror. A seeker of God polishes themselves of his own accord and bears difficulty by virtue of his own effort. But a person absorbed in God is thrown into tribulation. God Himself refines such persons and bestows upon them the qualities of a mirror by subjecting them to countless forms of adversity and affliction. In actuality, the end result of a seeker of God and one who is absorbed in God is the same. (Malfuzaat, Vol 1, p. 27)

In the end I would like to share with you some more revelations that I received during these ten days of Zul Hijja.

The first one was “*Wa alallahe fal yatawakkalil mutawakkeloune*” which is a verse of the Holy Quran and it is translated as: “For those who put their trust should put their trust on Allah.”

The second one is the verse “*Wa in min shay’in illā ‘indanā khazā’inuhu wa mā nunazziluhu illā biqadarin ma’lūm:*

“There is not a thing but that its sources are with Us, and We do not send it down except in a known measure”. (Surat al-Hijr, No.15, Āyat:21)

The third one was مَا عِنْدَكُمْ يَنْفَدُ وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ بَاقٍ which we translate as “That which you have shall pass away, but that which is with Allah is lasting”.

The fourth one is “ *Wa man yatawakkal alallahe fahowa hasbohou*”

مَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ □ “And he who puts his trust in Allah—He is sufficient for him”.

May Allah help us all to become that person who reflects in Himself the attributes of Allah. May we all understand and embark on the spiritual quest and may Allah help us all to accomplish it to the end. Ameen.

And this one was said directly in my ears *Ana rabbokomoul aa’laa- Af’alo maa oreed* meaning “I am your Lord Most High I do what I like”.