

FRIDAY SERMON

29 April 2022

By Imam Zafrullah Domun

We are already at the end of the month of Ramadan this year. And today is the last Jummah (*Jummahtul Wida*) for the month of Ramadan. Some people think that this day has a particular significance but in fact it is just another Jummah. So, we will treat it as such.

According to those who study the movement of moons and the planets, the birth of the new moon of Shawwal will be at 00h28 (Mauritian time) on Sunday 1st May. On Sunday, we will not be able to see the moon with the naked eye. It will only be seen with optical aids. However, it is expected to be seen around the world on 2nd May after sunset. This means that, in all likelihood, Eid will be celebrated on Tuesday 3rd May 2022. Eid prayer will be performed here at Baitul Rahma mosque at 9:30AM. We expect that all our members who can come will come.

However, I think that, for the benefit of everyone, we should all wear masks in the mosque and, if you wish, you can bring your prayer mat (*Jaa Namaz*) along. We will avoid embracing and we will content ourselves with just a touching of fists for the benefit of all. We pray that Incha Allah Allah protect everyone. Should Eid fall on Monday 2nd May then, of course we will celebrate it on Monday. But it seems that it is very unlikely to happen. Allah knows best.

As I just said, we are only three days before the end of this blessed month of Ramadan. It is not yet finished. Hence, we should do our best not to lose any remaining minute. As good Muslims we should do our best to complete our fasts in the best possible way. Our time should be filled with reading the Holy Quran and reflecting about its meanings and in praying with full concentration asking forgiveness for our sins without forgetting to give as much charity as we can for those who are poor in our society. Now is also the time to pay *sadaqatul fitr* as we do every year. Let us show our gratefulness to Allah by thanking Him that He has enabled us to fast to the best of our abilities. We still have time to pray that He effaces all our sins and that He helps us to continue to practice virtue throughout our life. So, let us not start to relax and think we have done what we had to do and that now is the time to relax. Remember that our self-improvement program is not just for one month in a year. Once we understand what is expected of us, we should try to improve ourselves in the practice of our *deen*. We should be convinced that we have embraced a task that will go on until our last breath. Every day of our life, as long as we live, we should bear in mind that we should try to do more in Allah's path. Hazrat Masih Maood (as) tells us:

“One should become one who vies with others. Staying put on one station is not a good quality. You see, stagnant water ultimately begins to become dirty. Because of mud it begins to smell and becomes unpalatable. Running water is always clear and tasty even though under it there may be silt but this silt can have no effect on it. The same is the condition of man that he should not be stationary in one place. That is a dangerous position. All the time, the step should be in the forward direction. One should improve in good works because otherwise God Almighty does not help man. In this way, man becomes bereft of light and its ultimate end sometimes is apostasy. Man becomes blind within. God’s succour and help accompanies only him who is always moving forward in good works and does not stand in any one place and it is only these whose end is good.” (Al Hakam, Vol.12 No.16, dated 2 March 1908, p. 6)

The idea is that we should not wait for Ramadan and do our best only during this month in showing our qualities of servanthood to Allah. We should keep on improving even after Ramadan so that what we have gained in this month stays with us and we carry it forward so that when a new Ramadan comes, we start on a higher level of servanthood than the previous Ramadan. That is why we should continue to take the necessary time to improve our relationship with Allah. Hazrat Masih Maood (as) tells us:

“Though different people, on account of their short-sightedness or lack of courage, appoint various types of objectives for their lives and stop short at worldly purposes and desires, the purpose that God Almighty has specified in His Holy Word is:

I have created jinn and men so that they should worship me. (Ch.51:V.57)

According to this verse, the true purpose of human life is the worship and understanding of God Almighty and devotion to Him. It is obvious that it is not open to man that he should himself appoint the purpose of his life by his own authority inasmuch as man does not arrive in the world of his own will, nor will he depart from this world of his own will. He is a created being and He Who created him and bestowed upon him better and higher faculties than those bestowed upon other animates, has appointed a purpose for his life. Whether anyone comprehends that purpose or not, without doubt the purpose of man’s creation is the worship and understanding of God Almighty and to lose himself in Him (*Islami Usul ki Philosophy; Now printed in Ruhani Khaza’in (London, 1984), Vol. 10, p. 100*).

Everything else is subordinate to this grand purpose, we may say. And He who can best help us in our great purpose is Allah Himself. He is the One who can sustain our determination and help us to fight all satanic tendencies and stay on the right path. If we ignore Him, we will never succeed and the struggle should be ongoing. The following incident amply illustrates this point.

“It is said that when one of the Sufi’s disciples was about to leave him at the end of his studies, the Sufi asked him what he would do if Satan or the Evil Spirit appeared in his way and blocked further progress. The disciple said that he would try to overcome him and drive him away. The Sufi thereupon said, “But suppose Satan runs away for a time but comes

back to the attack a little while later, what would you do in that case?” The disciple again answered that he would again fight and try to drive him away. Said the Sufi, “Suppose he runs away a second time, but returns yet again?” “I will fight him again,” said the disciple, “and try to drive him away a third time.” “But,” said the Sufi, “don’t you realise that in this way the whole of your life will be spent in fighting the Devil, and that all your time being taken up by that struggle, you will have no chance of making any progress towards your goal!” The disciple thereupon realized the truth of this remark and humbly begged to be told what he should do.

The Sufi then asked him another question. “What would you do,” he asked, “if, on going to see a friend at his house, you found that his dog would not let you enter?” The disciple said that he would drive away the dog, but if he found that he was unable to do that, he would call out to his friend to hold back the dog, so that he might be able to enter. “Exactly,” said the Sufi, “and the best way to fight the Devil is very much the same. When you find your way blocked by him, call out to the Benefactor and Friend that you are going to see to call the dog away – when that is done you will be able to enter in peace.” (Review of Religion, 1930)

The point that I am trying to emphasize here is that we need to have a good relationship with Allah. Without this relationship, we will not achieve the purpose for which we exist. Hence, the need to continuously strive in the path of Allah in order to rid ourselves of all our evils and develop in our own selves qualities that are really pleasing to Allah.

There are some hadiths which warms our heart when we read them especially during the month of Ramadan or at its end. It is reported that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw) said:

“Every action of the son of Adam is given manifold reward, each good deed receiving ten times its like, up to seven hundred times. Allah the Most High said, **“Except for fasting, for it is for Me and I will give recompense for it, as he leaves off his desires and his food for Me”**. For the fasting person, there are two times of joy; a time when he breaks his fast and a time of joy when he meets his Lord, and the smell coming from the mouth of the fasting person is better with Allah than the smell of musk”. [Bukhari]

We have all experienced at least one of these two joys throughout the month of Ramadan. There is indeed a great joy to break the fast. The other joy will be there after we die, insha Allah.

In another hadith reported by Sahl ibn Sa’d, the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, said, **“Verily, there is a gate in Paradise called al-Rayyan, through which only those who fasted will enter on the Day of Resurrection. No one else will enter it along with them. It will be said: Where are those who fasted? They will stand and no one will enter it along with them. When they enter it, it will be closed and no one else will go through it.”** (Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī 1896, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 1152)

In another Hadith, Abu Huraira reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, **“Anyone who spends a pair in the way of Allah will be called from all**

the gates of Paradise: O servant of Allah, this is good! The people of prayer will be called from the gate of prayer, the people of jihad will be called from the gate of jihad, the people of fasting will be called from the gate of al-Rayyan, and the people of charity will be called from the gate of charity.” Abu Bakr said, “One who is called from all those gates would need nothing. Will anyone be called from all those gates, O Messenger of Allah?” The Prophet said, **“Yes, and I hope you will be among them, O Abu Bakr.”** (Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī 3666, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 1027)

Here is another hadith about charity. Abu Huraira reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, **“Verily, there is an angel at a gate among the gates of Paradise, saying: Whoever offers a good loan today will be rewarded tomorrow! And there is an angel at another door, saying: O Allah, give repayment to one who spends in charity, and give destruction to one who withholds charity!”**

So, all those who have given in charity especially during the month of Ramadan should rejoice that whatever they have given has been noted and it was not at all in vain.

Another hadith about the importance of the month of Ramadan: Abu Huraira reported: The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, ascended the pulpit and he said, **“Amin, amin, amin.”** It was said, “O Messenger of Allah, you ascended the pulpit and said amin, amin, amin.” The Prophet said, **“Verily, Gabriel came to me and he said: Whoever reaches the month of Ramadan and he is not forgiven, then he will enter Hellfire and Allah will cast him far away, so say amin. I said amin. Whoever sees his parents in their old age, one or both of them, and he does not honor them and he dies, then he will enter Hellfire and Allah will cast him far away, so say amin. I said amin. Whoever has your name mentioned in his presence and he does not send blessings upon you and he dies, then he will enter Hellfire and Allah will cast him far away, so say amin. I said amin.”** (Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Hibbān 915)

It will be in our own interest that we think about these hadiths and not forget them. May Allah grant us the rewards of our humble efforts and may we all be among His most obedient servants. Ameen

Incha Allah we will meet again either on Monday or Tuesday next.