

EID SERMON

11th April 2024

By Imam Zafrullah Domun

By Allah's Grace, we are, once again, assembled here on the blessed occasion of Eidul Fitr. In Islam, Muslims celebrate this day because they have just finished fasting for some 29 or 30 days. Although most Muslims and even children feel very enthusiastic about the month of Ramadan in the beginning, we cannot deny their feelings of happiness in the heart when this period of fasting is over. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw) is reported to have said "The fasting person has two moments of joy: one when he breaks his fast and one when he meets his Lord and rejoices over his fasting." (Muslim). There is no denying the fact that everyday when we break the fast it is a moment of intense happiness and we hope and pray that when we will meet our Lord also it will be a great moment of happiness for each one among us who has fasted, Incha Allah. May Allah guide each one among us in the ever-widening expanse of knowledge about Him and practices with which He is well pleased. Ameen. I take this opportunity to say to you all who are present here and those who are elsewhere listening or those who might read this sermon later on "Eid Mubarak". May Allah accept all the days of fasting and other devotions that we have been doing during this blessed month. May He also help us to carry all our Farz duties in the rest of our sojourn on this earth and may we be among those who continue to uphold His Cause in the world. Ameen.

During the month of Ramadan, each one among us had the opportunity to fast. Since we had to fast except if we had valid excuses like being ill or being on a journey or being too weak to fast, we were subjected to 30 days of a regimen that helped us to implement Allah's instructions in a better

way than we usually do in other months of the year. First of all, we stopped eating as much as we used to. There was control on how much we ate and drank. In itself it is good that we eat less. You will recall a hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ (saw) where he said “A human being fills no worse vessel than his stomach. It is sufficient for a human being to eat a few mouthfuls to keep his spine straight. But if he must (fill it), then one third of food, one third for drink and one third for air.” *Sunan Ibn Majah 3349, Book 29, Hadith 99.*

The second advantage, we may say, of fasting is that we should wake up before Fajr prayer for the morning meal. We should not try to do without it because the Holy Prophet (saw) has told us that there are blessings in it. In addition, we have been waking up for Tahajjud prayer. Allah has recommended it for the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw) where He said:

أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذُلُوكِ الشَّمْسِ إِلَى غَسَقِ اللَّيْلِ وَقُرْآنَ الْفَجْرِ ۖ إِنَّ قُرْآنَ الْفَجْرِ كَانَ مَشْهُودًا

Observe Prayer at the declining and paling of the sun on to the darkness of the night, and the recitation *of the Qur'an in Prayer* at dawn. Verily, the recitation *of the Qur'an* at dawn is *especially acceptable to God.*

(17:79)

وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَتَهَجَّدْ بِهِ نَافِلَةً لَّكَ ۖ عَسَىٰ أَنْ يَبْعَثَكَ رَبُّكَ مَقَامًا مَّحْمُودًا ﴿٨٠﴾

And wake up for it (the Qur'an) in *the latter part of the night* as a supererogatory service for thee. It may be that thy Lord will raise thee to an exalted station.

Besides these verses, there are many others to explain the importance of Tahajjud prayer, which I am leaving right now. If you read the Holy Quran regularly you will easily find them. Besides, for us Ahmadi Muslims, the Promised Messiah (as) has spoken a lot about the importance of Tahajjud prayer for our personal reform. So, if we have been doing them during the past thirty days, we should not neglect them in our life. We should strive to wake up and pray and seek Allah's help and consequently we will be witnessing Allah's Help. We have been used to it during thirty days, it should not be difficult for us to carry on even with two *rakaats* before

dawn from now on until by the Grace of Allah it might become our habit to do so.

During fasting we exercised a great control on our senses and our desires. Now that fasting is over should we just return to our previous behaviour where we easily give in to the desires of the soul. No there is still need for us that we control our speech and our reactions to others speech and behaviour. Our fasting has helped us to stay away from foul language and bad behaviour. We should strive to keep it up by not quarrelling with anyone nor swearing at anyone or employing vulgar language or even and above everything backbiting others. The verse against backbiting is as follows in the Holy Quran:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوا كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الظَّنِّ ۖ إِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا وَلَا يَغْتَبَ بَعْضُكُم بَعْضًا ۚ أَيُحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَنْ يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَوَّابٌ رَّحِيمٌ

O ye who believe! avoid most of suspicions; for suspicion in some cases is a sin. And spy not, nor back-bite one another. Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his brother who is dead? Certainly, you would loathe it. And fear Allah, surely, Allah is Oft-Returning *with compassion and* is Merciful.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاهُ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا ۚ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاهُ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ

O mankind, We have created you from a male and a female; and We have made you into tribes and sub-tribes that you may recognize one another. Verily, the most honourable among you, in the sight of Allah, is he who is the most righteous among you. Surely, Allah is All-knowing, All-Aware. (49:14)

People seek honour in the world. Allah tells us elsewhere that honour is in the hands of Allah and in this verse, he says “ ” إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاهُ ۚ ” i.e. “**Verily, the most honourable among you, in the sight of Allah, is he who is the most righteous among you.**” So, we have fasted for Allah’s sake and He is the One who knows best how far we have observed all the conditions of fasting and how well we have strived to win His love

and a measure of righteousness through this fasting. So, it is important that we continue to strive in the same direction by giving to Allah the utmost importance in our lives.

Among the good deeds that we have been practicing during Ramadan is making supplications to Allah i.e. making *du'a* for our many needs. Ramadan is gone but our dependency on Allah should become more acute. This does not mean in any way that we should abandon means. On the contrary we should use all available means at our disposal under all circumstances but for the results we should pray to Allah so that they might be achieved. Many a time we have seen that all means have been used but the expected results were not achieved. The Holy Quran and the Ahadith are full of advice for making *du'a* and so are the vast writings of the Promised Messiah (as). We will remind ourselves on a few example from each. From the Holy Quran, we read the following:

1. وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ ۖ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ ۚ
2. فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ

“And when My servants ask thee about Me, say: ‘I am near. I answer the prayer of the suppliant when he prays to Me. So, they should hearken to Me and believe in Me, that they may follow the right way.’

3. لَكُمْ أَستَجِبْ اذْعُونِي رَبُّكُمْ وَقَالَ

And your Lord says: ‘Pray unto Me; I will answer your *prayer*.’

4. أَمَّنْ يُجِيبُ الْمُضْطَرَّ إِذَا دَعَاهُ وَيَكْشِفُ السُّوءَ وَيَجْعَلُكُمْ خُلَفَاءَ الْأَرْضِ ۚ
5. ءَالِهَةٌ مَّعَ اللَّهِ ۚ فَلْيَلَا مَا تَذَكَّرُونَ

“Or, Who answers the distressed person when he calls upon Him, and removes the evil, and makes you successors in the earth? Is there a God besides Allah? Little is it that you reflect.” (27:63)

These are just a few verses that I have given which might make us reflect. Now let us read some hadiths about *du'a*.

"الدعاء هو العبادة".

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Du'a (supplication) is worship."

Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said, "A slave becomes nearest to his Rabb when he is in prostration. So, increase supplications in prostrations." [Muslim].

The Messenger of Allah (PBUH), "The supplication of every one of you will be granted if he does not get impatient and say (for example): 'I supplicated my Rabb but my prayer has not been granted'."

[Al-Bukhari and Muslim].

From this hadith, we might understand how important it is not to be impatient. We should understand that Allah will grant our prayer if we do not tire of asking.

The narration of Muslim is: "The supplication of a slave continues to be granted as long as he does not supplicate for a sinful thing or for something that would cut off the ties of kinship and he does not grow impatient." It was said: "O Messenger of Allah! What does growing impatient mean?" He (PBUH) said, "It is one's saying: 'I supplicated again and again but I do not think that my prayer will be answered.' Then he becomes frustrated (in such circumstances) and gives up supplication altogether."

So even if whatever we have been praying for during Ramadan has not yet been accepted, we should not give up. We should keep asking. In fact, in one of his revelations, Hazrat Masih Maood (as) said that Allah has told him: **"I am Allah, then worship Me, [and do not forget Me] and keep striving to reach Me and keep supplicating your Lord and be diligent in supplication"** (Tazkira p. 502/3). That is why after the period of training in Ramadan, the struggle to do what is right should persist and we should not relax till we die.

Now, we will read some extracts about prayer by Hazrat Masih Maood (as). He said: "I say truly that if crying before God Almighty is full of utmost humility, it moves His grace and mercy and draws them (towards the supplicator). I can say out of my own experience that I have felt the grace and mercy of God, which comes in the shape of the acceptance of

prayer, coming towards me. Indeed, I rather say that I have actually seen it. If the dark-minded philosophers of this age cannot feel it or see it, this verity is not going to disappear from the world, more so because I am ready to demonstrate the acceptance of prayer at all times. [**Malfuzat, vol. I, p. 198**]

“Even if we were to concede that the phrase ‘*Call Me*’ means prayer, we would have to affirm that by prayer is meant such prayer as complies with all required conditions and that is not within the power of man unless he is helped by God. Humility alone is not enough for prayer, but righteousness, purity, truthfulness, perfect certainty, perfect love and perfect attention are all needed. It is also necessary that the object prayed for should not be opposed to the Divine design for the welfare in this world and in the hereafter of the supplicant, or of the one on whose behalf supplication is made. Very often, despite all other conditions being fulfilled, the object for which supplication is made is opposed to the Divine design and there is no good in its fulfilment. For instance, if a child should cry that his mother should hand over to him a burning brand, or a serpent, or should feed him a poison, which appears agreeable, the mother would not comply with his wish. Were she to do so, and though the child might escape with his life some limb of his should become useless, then arriving at years of discretion the child would have a grievance against his foolish mother.

There are many other conditions in the absence of which prayer does not deserve that name and so long as a prayer is not inspired by full spirituality and there is not a close connection between him who supplicates and him on whose behalf supplication is made, there is little hope of the acceptance of prayer. Unless there is Divine willingness for the acceptance of prayer all these conditions are not fulfilled and full attention remains lacking.”

In brief, what we should remember on this blessed day of Eid is that the efforts that we deployed during the month of Ramadan should not all be abandoned in the coming days and months and years. Now, we can eat and drink and enjoy ourselves through all legitimate means. But we should never forget the aim of our creation and bear in mind why we have

been created. We are here to recognize our Lord. That is the mission of our lifetime. If we say we will look after that later on when we become old, we would be totally mistaken. We should learn from the Holy Quran what we need to understand and we should do our best to be at peace with Allah and obeying Him before our death. May Allah help each one among us to build upon what we have been doing in Ramadan and may we all meet next Ramadan on a more solid footing and we do not have to start over with our efforts from scratch. May Allah help each one among us to do this as early as possible in our life. In the next Jummah, I will say some words about the practice of reading the Holy Quran in Ramadan and in other non-Ramadan months. Ameen. Eid Mubarak to you all once again.