

FRIDAY SERMON OF IMAM ZAFRULLAH DOMUN

25 November 2011

After reciting the *Tashahhud*, the *Ta'uz* and the first chapter *Al Fatiha* of the Holy Quran Imam Zafrullah Domun said:

“Innallaaha yamoro bil adle wal ihsaane wa itaae zil qurba wa yanha anil fahshaae wal munkare wal baghi yaezokoum la'allakoum tazakkaroune” (16:91)

We usually translate this verse as follows “Verily, Allah enjoins justice, and the doing of good to others; and giving like kindred; and forbids indecency, and manifest evil, and wrongful transgression. He admonishes you that you may take heed.”

So from this verse which almost all Muslims hear every Friday, Allah wants us all to be just and to do good to others and to move to a higher rank in virtue by doing good to one and all as if they form part of our own family members. This type of virtue is an ideal towards which all Muslims whatever his rank in society, whether he is young or old or whether he is a man or a woman should strive towards. Allah has sent us on earth so that He might test us. He wants to see whether we will follow His Instructions or our own ego in deciding our course of action. If on the one hand He has told us what we should aim for in our lives, on the other He has told us to stay away from all sorts of indecency, manifest evil and all sorts of transgression. Just by thinking about this verse a Muslim even if he does not know the whole Quran can easily understand what is expected of him or her because the verse is quite clear-cut and there is nothing which might be considered ambiguous in it.

Despite the simplicity of this message which is repeated every Friday for at least all to hear we see that this ideal is far from being implemented in the Muslim world. Strife has never finished dogging the history of Islam throughout the centuries. But in almost all eras there have been men who were ready to risk their lives in order to uphold the principles that have been expounded in this verse and similar ones in the Holy Quran. In every epoch there have been few men who were ready to uphold truth or to militate for better justice at the peril of their lives. At the same time in every epoch there has been a body of men who thought that their understanding of Islam was a blind and unquestioning submission to authority irrespective of what was being done. Even today in the Muslim world we see these two groups of people at work. There is no need to go into detail. But for all those who have been following what has been going on in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and several other countries in the middle East the people have been clamoring for greater Justice and more concern for their daily needs. But those in power just thought of enriching their own selves, their dear ones and their relatives by stealing the wealth of the people. Consequently we see how much bloodshed; turmoil and riots have had to take place in order to dislodge those in power. Real Muslims are those who peacefully try to

change the circumstances in which they live. But if force is used against them they will not just sit in mosque and pray and allow themselves and their family members and their relatives to be slaughtered like lambs. They need to do something to stop the hands of powers that be who want to maintain the status quo and who do not want any type of change in society. But of course while doing so they should always seek Allah's help or else their efforts will not bring about the necessary results.

Allah wants all Muslims to be free from any type of fear besides His. Once a Muslim starts cultivating this fear of Allah in his heart he or she begins to free himself from fear of others. Allah wants all Muslims to fear Him and no one else. Allah asks us to obey those in authority but He has not told us to fear them. The real Muslim is the one who can talk to a king and a beggar alike. He is not awed by the presence of no one whatever his status. If he sees something is wrong in the administration of affairs he speaks his voice through the proper channel. Just leaders would see to it that under no circumstances should any Muslim's complaints remain unheard or unanswered. If they address the concerns of the people through the proper administration of the affairs of the people there will be no problem at all or just minor problems. But if leaders through their own incompetence pretend that there are no problems sooner or later there will be trouble.

Early Muslims were quite punctilious in telling their leaders their piece of mind. In the literature we read about the case of a goldsmith of Marw whose name was Abu Ishaq Ibrahim ibn Maymun. He was a very pious Muslim. It is reported that when he heard the Azaan for prayer he would throw his hammer behind his back and immediately start preparations for prayer. He was not satisfied with the way Abu Muslim who was the architect of the revolution against the Umayyad was ruling. He used to visit Imam Abu Hanifa and discussed with him about the duty of forbidding evil because he was convince that the ruler of the time was committing evil. But Imam Abu Hanifa counseled prudence. According to him one man acting on his own would merely get himself killed, and achieve nothing for others. He also thought that the right leader, with a sufficient following of good men, might be able to achieve something. During subsequent visits, the goldsmith kept returning to this question, but Imam Abu Hanifa would repeat his view that this duty (unlike others) was not one that a man could undertake alone. Anyone who did so would be throwing his own blood away and asking to be killed. Indeed, it was to be feared that he would become an accomplice in his own death. The effect of his action would be to dishearten others. So one should wait; God is wise, and knows what we do not know. But unfortunately the goldsmith one day presented himself in front of Abu Yusuf in his death clothes and told him 'I see nothing more meritorious I can undertake in God's behalf than to wage holy war against you. Since I lack the strength to do it with my hand, I will do it with my tongue. But God will see me, and in Him I hate you.' Abu Muslim killed him or had him killed. Centuries later, his tomb was still known and visited in the 'inner city' of Marw. In due course the news of the goldsmith's death reached Abu Hanifa. He was beside himself with grief, but he was not surprised.

This story is widely reported in the literature to show the courage of one man who carried the instructions of Allah to forbid evil to the extreme even at the cost of his life. Besides him we know that there are many other examples where Muslims have sacrificed their lives so that truth and justice might prevail. These are the people who do not hesitate to sacrifice what is most precious to them, namely their life so that a principle or a value might prevail. Most men and women prefer to cut corners so that they may do what their ego dictates but Muslim men and women who understand the real purpose of their life would go to great pains so that what Allah says might prevail.

In the Muslim world at large many leaders have been enslaving their population so that they might get their total submission even if they murder some principles of the Holy Quran in the process. Those who follow the news know what has been happening. In the process many Muslims have been harming other Muslims whereas they were told that all Muslims are brothers and that they should show mercy and love towards one another. Take stock of the campaign that the Mullahs of Pakistan and Bangladesh and even India have been waging against the mainstream Jamaat Ahmadiyya. Many times many Ahmadis have lost their lives and even today Ahmadis are not safe in those countries. One may say why I have included India in the list. The reason is quite simple. Ahmadiyya Jamaat in Delhi organized an exposition about the Holy Quran in New Delhi. But after one day it had to close because of protests from non ahmadis Muslims. The police closed the exhibition. In Mauritius also there was a Holy Quran Exhibition organized by the mainstream Ahmadiyya Jamaat. Fortunately there has not been any trouble here as far as I know. Whether through fear or through tactics that the name Ahmadiyya did not appear on any posters may be everyone's guess. But the Muslim should be bold and let the world know what he thinks. Moreover he should act according to the teachings of the Holy Quran which he wants others to know. Mere preaching without practice will lead nowhere. We know and it is on record that even Jamaat Ahmadiyya mainstream has not lived up to the teachings of Islam that it apparently holds to heart. So the true Muslim is the one who is not at all afraid to uphold Allah's teachings according to his best understanding while all the time he tries to deepen his knowledge and understanding of these same teachings.

The second part of this verse speaks about the forbidding of all evil acts or words whether they are done in private or in public whether they harm others or only oneself. A good Muslim does not just shun something because he thinks it is evil without properly making a thorough examination of its pros and cons. All new technologies have pros and cons. As a Muslim one should try to avoid the cons and profit by all the pros. But whether we like it or not new technologies will make their way in our house or in our lives. There was a time when we in Mauritius were shocked to learn that some big hats in Rabwah had TVs in their houses. But who does not have a TV set these days? This is how it happens. Something may be forbidden for some time but in the process of time it might become common place. But unfortunately we should also say that it is the young who are most adversely affected by the negative effects of new technology. These days almost every young person has a mobile phone and has access to a computer and internet. If they spend some time chatting with their friends, there is no harm. But if they send 40 sms per day and they spend hours roaming the internet then a major thing is wrong and the issue needs to be addressed. Today pornography and all its evils have invaded young children's rooms and parents have almost no control on them. For those who are in their twenties and even more the habit of watching pornographic films on the net is increasing and they seem to be aware of the perversities of human nature at an early age. In addition there are some women also who befriend other men on the net and they become friends and these friendships threaten their marriages. There are also men who act as predators and they look for younger women to entrap for sexual purposes. All should be aware that in Islam we should try to shun all types of indecencies and everything that is bad. But as a young person because of a lack of the experience of life you may easily fall victim to all these evils and it would be difficult to extricate you from them.

So all Muslims should engage in this battle. Women have to reprimand and counsel their husbands and children if they indulge in these matters. Similarly men should counsel their children and wives if they are also guilty of these same bad behaviors. Let not our ego and our passion prevent us from enjoying all the good things that Allah has kept for us in this world and in the next. When someone is young he thinks that he knows everything better than his elders. It is only when he becomes old that he would come to know that what his elders said were right. So if Allah tells us to obey Him and our own parents He knows that He has told us something which is extremely precious. But the problems of which I am talking do not concern only young people as I have already said. May Allah give us the wisdom to learn to appreciate what we have instead of hankering over things that we will never be able to get.