

FRIDAY SERMON OF IMAM ZAFRULLAH DOMUN

23 December 2011

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

As an Ahmadi Muslim we have a moral duty to uphold the teachings that we have received from Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}. If we ask the question what has he taught us? The reply is quite simple. He has taught us what our relationship with Allah should be and how we should behave with our fellow human beings whether they share or do not share our religious opinions. Hence as an Ahmadi we should see to it that we live up to the ideals that have been spelled out for us by Hazrat Ahmad^{as}. We always say and we maintain that through his God-given light he came to teach all Muslims the true teachings of Islam as was taught by the Holy Prophet Mohammad^{saw}. That is why I have been saying to all members of Jamaat Ahmadiyya Al Mouslemeen and to all those who might read our sermons that we should pay particular attention to what Hazrat Masih Maood^{as} has said and we should do our best to inculcate his teachings and practice them in our daily life.

What is expected of a follower of Hazrat Ahmad^{as} has been summarized in his booklet commonly known as Noah's Ark (*Kishti Nuh*). Many times we have read large extracts from this book for members of the Jamaat so that they might never forget these fundamental teachings. Similarly Hazrat Ahmad has told his followers that they should also read his book "the story of two Martyrs" (*Tazkeratoush Shahaadatein*) where he has spoken particularly about the martyrdom of Sahibzada Syed Abdul Latiff and Molvi Abdul rahman. Sahibzada Syed Abdul Latiff was a man of great standing renowned for his piety in Afghanistan but he maintained his faith in Hazrat Ahmad^{as} in the face of death. These two books which are also available in English are enough to irrigate our faith when it starts drying up. So as a good follower of Hazrat Ahmad^{as} each one of us should make it our duty to read these books often so that we might never forget what Ahmadiyyat really stands for. It is not just an association of individuals who happen to be born in it. Those who claim to be Ahmadi are those who have made a commitment to follow the teachings of the Holy Quran in all aspects of their life as explained by Hazrat Ahmad^{as}. They have made a commitment to become ambassadors of the Islamic teachings wherever they are. They are determined to live Islam rather than just profess a formal faith in it because they have been born as a Muslim. An Ahmadi is someone who tries to understand and put into practice what Hazrat Ahmad has taught in his famous speech "The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam". He makes

it his life mission to move his soul from that of a sinner to that of someone who finds peace with Allah. Throughout the history of Islam there have been a few good Muslims who have understood this essence of Islam and have tried to put it in practice. These are the people who have been illumined by Allah's light and they understood that they cannot please Allah by being indifferent or even unsympathetic to His creatures.

It is high time for each Ahmadi man or woman to examine himself or herself and to find out how far he or she is obeying Allah, how far He fears Allah as He should be feared or is he or she just disobeying and thinking that he or she will be forgiven. Since we have a tendency to forget and we ignore the main teachings due to our daily preoccupations, I have chosen to briefly relate to you that famous hadith about actions that appear to be quite pious but that are rejected in front of Allah because of some fundamental sin that was quite obnoxious in the sight of Allah. Allah says in the Holy Quran "*fazakkir inna fa'ataz zikra*" which we translate as "keep on reminding because definitely reminding is useful". In our daily preoccupation we have a tendency to forget what is really essential. So let us pray and hope that what we remind ourselves about will really profit all of us insha Allah. I have chosen to speak about this hadith again because I think that it will help all of us to focus on what is most important, namely that we should learn to lead our life in such a way that we please Allah with full sincerity. Remember that we are not speaking about people who would not be sinning but rather those who are conscious of their sins and strive to wash them with shame and tears and *astaghfar* and constantly turning towards Allah for help. If we do so little by little we will shed our sinful life and start living only for Allah. Let us hope and pray that Allah will make each one of us such a person before we die.

The hadith of which we spoke about twenty two months ago is as follows:

"Ibn Al Mubarak related with a chain of authorities going back to a certain man that this man said to Mu'adh, "O Mu'adh tell me about a tradition you heard from the Messenger of God^{saw}. The man continued: "Mu'adh wept until I thought he would never cease, but at length he ceased; then he said: "I heard the Messenger of Allah saying to me:"I am going to tell you of a tradition Mu'adh; if you remember it, it will benefit you before Allah; but if you forget it and do not remember it, your plea of defense before God on the day of resurrection will be removed.

O Mu'adh, God (May He be blessed and exalted) before creating the heavens and the earth created seven angels, and to each of the heavens He appointed one of these seven angels as keeper. Now the guardian angels are ascending with man's work from morning to evening; and the work has the light like the light of the sun. When they bring it up to the lowest heaven, they increase and multiply it and the angel at the gate says to the guardian with this work strike the face of the doer of it; I am in charge

of back biting; my Lord has commanded me not to allow the work of anyone guilty of backbiting to pass beyond me.'

He continued: 'then the guardians bring one of man's good works and increase and multiply it, until they reach the second heaven with it. The angel responsible for it says, 'stand and with this work strike the face of the worker for it, for in his work he sought worldly honour; my Lord has commanded me not to allow his work to pass beyond me; he boasted in men's society of his superiority; I am the angel dealing with boastfulness.'

He continued: 'the guardian ascends with a man's work so bright with light and alms and worship and fasting that the guardians were astonished. They passed with it to the third heaven, and there the angel in charge says to them, 'stand and with this work strike the face of the worker of it; I am the angel dealing with arrogance; my Lord has commanded me not to let his work pass beyond me for he had treated people arrogantly in society.'

He continued: 'the guardians ascend with a man's work shining brightly as a star and ringing from the acts of adoration and worship, from fasting and from greater and lesser pilgrimages, and they pass with it to the fourth heaven. Then the angel responsible for that says to them, 'stand and with this work strike the face and back and front of the doer of this work; I am in charge of pride; my Lord has commanded me not to let this act pass beyond me; whenever this man performed any work pride entered into it.'

He continued: 'the guardians ascend with a man's work and pass with it to the fifth heaven; and it is like a bride being conducted to her husband. The angels responsible for it says to the guardians 'stand and with this work strike the face and back and front of the doer of this work and carry him away and place it on his shoulder; I am in charge of envy; this man used to envy whoever studied and performed a work like his and all who were superior to men in some way; he used to envy them and slander them; my Lord has commanded me not to let this act pass beyond me.'

He continued: 'the guardians ascend with a man's work, radiant as the moon from worship and almsgiving and the greater and lesser pilgrimages and the holy war and fasting and they pass with it to the sixth heaven, where the angel responsible for that says to them, 'stand and with this work strike the face of the doer of it; he never had mercy on any of God's servants who had met with misfortune or sickness, but rejoiced at that; I am the angel of mercy; my Lord commanded me not to allow his work to pass beyond me.'

He continued: 'the guardians ascend with a man's work consisting of worship and fasting and the spending of money in good causes and the holy war and continence; it had the sound like that of bees and a radiance like that of the sun; along with it were three thousands angels and they passed with it to the seventh heaven. The angel responsible for that said to them 'stand and with that work strike the face of the doer of it and with it strike his limbs and lock up his heart; I veil from my Lord every work that is not done for the sake of my Lord; this work was done for the sake of something other than God most

high; he did it for the sake of honour among the religious scholars and fame among the intellectuals and renown among the cities; my Lord has commanded me not to allow his work to pass beyond me; every work not done purely for Allah is hypocrisy and Allah does not receive the work of the hypocrite.’

He continued: ‘the guardians ascend with a man’s work consisting of worship, almsgiving, fasting , the greater and lesser pilgrimages , a good character, observance of silence and recollection of God Most High. It is accompanied by angels of the seven heavens until they have passed through the veils to the presence of God Most High. Then they stand before Him and bear witness to the good work performed solely for the sake of God Most High; and God Most High says: “You are the guardians over the work of My servant, but I am the Watcher over his heart; this act was not done for My Sake but for the sake of something else; so My curse is upon him.”

Then the angels all say ‘Thy Curse and our curse be upon him” and the seven heavens and all in them curse him.” At that Mu’adh wept and then continued; “I said: O Messenger of Allah, you are the Messenger of God and I am Mu’adh; how shall I have purity of intention and salvation?” The Holy Prophet said: ‘Imitate me even if you fall short somewhat in what you do. O Mu’adh guard your tongue from slandering your brothers who know the Quran by heart; attribute your sins to yourself and not to them; do not justify yourself and blame them; do not mingle the work of this world with the work of the world to come; do not act arrogantly in society so that men avoid you because of your bad character; do not whisper to one man while another is present; do not magnify your importance over other men so that you lose the good things of both this world and the world to come; do not tear to pieces people’s character so that on the day of resurrection the dogs of hell tear you to pieces in Hell. Allah Most High says: “By those who draw forth” (79:2); do you know what these are , O Mu’adh?’ I said: “what are they, O messenger of Allah?’ He said “The dogs of hell drawing the flesh from the bones”. I said “O Messenger of Allah who is capable to acquire those qualities, and who will escape from these dogs? He said: “O Mu’adh it is indeed easy for him whom Allah makes it easy.’ ” **(The faith and practice of Al Ghazzali by W Montgomery Watt p 147-150)**

My aim in presenting this Hadith again today is to provoke reflection among the people so that they might reflect how far their actions are meeting the Pleasure of Allah or not. Although Allah is very kind and forgiving yet we have been told to beware of some fundamental flaws in our character which might eat away all the good deeds that we might do. May Allah make each of us aware of our own shortcomings and may He help us to overcome them one by one before we meet Him incha Allah.

