

FRIDAY SERMON OF IMAM ZAFRULLAH DOMUN

30 DECEMBER 2011

After reciting the *Tashahhud*, the *Ta'uz* and the first chapter *Al Fatiha* of the Holy Quran Imam Zafrullah Domun read chapter 103 of the Holy Quran in Arabic and then he said:

Today is the last Friday of 2011 and tomorrow the year will end. For us there is nothing special about the beginning or ending of the years. We only take note of the passage of time and within that time events have unfolded which are of particular importance for each one of us at the individual or collective level. Primary school students might have passed their final examinations and secondary school students might have got admission to universities. Some others may have met their husband or wife to be with a view to marriage. Older people might have been graced with grand children. Career men or women might have got a promotion. Some other persons might not meet only good circumstances. They may have to struggle with illness or personal tragedies or even death. At the individual level the passage of time marks all the life events that are significant for us within a life time. We cannot control this onward movement of time. It is totally independent of us. But what we can do and we should do is fill our time with what is good in the sight of Allah.

The translation of the verses that I have just read are as follows:

In the Name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

By the *fleeting* Time,

Surely, man is in a state of loss,

Except those who believe and do good works, and exhort one another to accept truth, and exhort one another to be steadfast.

In this chapter Allah has made it quite clear to all Muslims that they would be in a state of loss unless they exhibit four qualities. What are they? First of all they should believe in the articles of faith as we know them. Secondly they should do good deeds. Thirdly they should exhort one another to accept truth. Fourthly they should exhort one another to be patient. All those who would strive to cultivate these attributes in themselves would not be in a state of loss because they would be those who would be doing what their Lord has asked them to do so that they might avoid such a state. The words that we translate as being in a state of loss are "*la fi khusrin*". From the dictionary we understand that the root meaning of the word has the following meanings: "to deviate from the path, to lose oneself, to be dispossessed, to suffer a loss, to bring loss on oneself, to deceive oneself in a commercial transaction." When one thinks about this plethora of meanings one can easily make out what Allah wants to say when He says that man is in a state of loss.

Now let us say a few words about those who would not be in a state of loss. They are those who believe. When we say belief in Allah we mean the Allah who has described Himself in the Holy Quran. He has created man so that He might be known. We do not know Him by just using our reasoning faculties. Those who have used reason only have denied Him. But we Muslims are told to conceive Him as He has described Himself in the Holy Quran and to seek Him through prayers and steadfastness. Our journey to Allah is a long one. It is our duty to try to understand who He is. But He is the One who would reveal Himself to us so that we might know some glimpses of Him which will consolidate our faith in Him. We truly believe in Him when we have understood that we have to pray to Him five times daily. Once it has dawned upon us that we should be regular in our prayers to Him we should do our best not to miss any of our prayers. At many places in his writings Hazrat Masih Maood^{as} has spoken about this belief in Allah. I have chosen the following extract from his writings to tell you today. He says:

“When a person falls at His threshold with a new spirit and carries out a change in himself, only to win His pleasure, God also makes a change for such a one so that the God Who appears to him is quite a different God from the One known to the average person. God appears weak to a person whose faith is weak, but to him who appears before God with a strong faith, He shows that for his help He too is Strong. Thus in response to changes in man there are changes in Divine attributes. For him who is without any strength in his faith as if he is dead, God also withdraws His help and support and becomes silent, as if, God forbid, He had died. But all these changes He carries out within His law and in accord with His Holiness.....”[*Chashma-e-Ma‘rifat, Ruhani Khaza’in, Vol. 23, pp. 104-105*]

From this and several similar pieces of writings we are privileged to learn from the Promised Messiah what our belief in Allah should be. It is important for each one of us to learn by himself from these writings which are available on the net what these beliefs should be. Others have their own concept of Allah. But what Hazrat Masih Maood^{as} has taught us is unparalleled and hence we must learn to profit by it if we do not want to be in a state of loss while we labour under the delusion that our belief in Allah is the right one. This is a vast subject and we cannot do it any justice by saying a few words in a Friday sermon. That is why I have said that each one of us should make it a duty to learn from the writings directly because they are easily available on the net. Most young people spend much time on the net each day. If they make it a habit to read some portion of what the Promised Messiah has said everyday they would soon see that they would be inclined to these writings and less to whatever else they might be seeing or doing on the net. My task is to advise but it is up to you to take my advices or to leave them.

The next characteristic that a Muslim should cultivate if he wants to avoid being in a state of loss is that he should practice doing good deeds. As I have said previously he should be regular in his

prayers. The five daily prayers should be performed with the regularity of a clock throughout one's lifetime. Secondly he should fast in Ramadan and pay Zakaat and perform Hajj if he has the means to do so. Besides that the Muslim man or woman should do his best to behave properly within society. A Muslim husband or wife is not behaving properly if they are cheating on each other. Hazrat Masih Maood^{as} has told us that such people have no place in Jamaat Ahmadiyya. Liars, cheaters and robbers, swindlers have no place in Jamaat Ahmadiyya according to Hazrat Masih Maood^{as}. Those who exhibit unislamic behavior in public have no place at all in Jamaat Ahmadiyya although they have swelled the ranks. Under no circumstance did Hazrat Masih Maood^{as} want such people to be in his Jamaat because by being in it they help to bring disrepute on it rather than contribute to the attainment of his mission. Those who through, their limited or distorted understanding of Islam and the teachings of Hazrat Masih Maood^{as} think that they are practicing virtue when they refuse to say salaam to members of Jamaat Ahmadiyya Al almouslemeen are dishonoring the memory of Hazrat Masih Maood^{as} by their behavior. Such people have no place in Jamaat Ahmadiyya whatever the rank that they temporarily occupy within the Jamaat. Such people may find their names in the Jamaat's register in this world but definitely not in Allah's register. In short all those whose behavior falls short of the standard established by Hazrat Masih Maood^{as} are in a state of loss because they are ignoring Allah's teachings and they are creating disorder on earth. They have become past masters in double speak. Unfortunately these days Jamaat Ahmadiyya has been hijacked by such people. Anyhow as far as doing good deeds are concerned, there is a vast range of deeds that are concerned. One need to be on the lookout lest one fails in any one.

The third characteristic of those who would not be in a state of loss is that they exhort one another to truth. In the religious context when we speak about truth we speak about the teachings of God as embodied in the Holy Quran. Hazrat Masih Maood^{as} has given us understanding of the Holy Quran that has stood the test of time. We have maintained that the caliphs who have followed him starting from the second one have started deviating from his teachings around 1956. The institution of khilafat was not prescribed by Hazrat Masih Maood^{as}. Now if there are disagreement on this matter, members have to talk it out if they truly say that they follow the Holy Quran and particularly as per the verse under discussion. But no one dares to talk or to reason with us because they know they do not have any arguments. Regarding them Allah has several times revealed to me "*sayouh zamoul jam'a wa yowallounad dobor*" meaning "the hosts will be routed and they would turn on their heels". Argument-wise mainstream Ahmadiyya Jamaat in Mauritius have been completely routed and they have never been able to muster the courage to confront us despite the clear instructions of Hazrat Masih Maood^{as} to the contrary. Anyhow this is not the purpose of our sermon today. What I want to say is that if a group says that it has a superior understanding of the Holy Quran, it should be bold enough to confront others' ideas and make them understand its viewpoint. But unfortunately such is not the case with mainstream Ahmadiyya whereas the Promised Messiah has said:

"Every step that is taken in search of truth is a virtuous act that carries a great reward. However the realm of virtue and its rewards is a realm that is concealed from the eyes of the worldly. The fact is that just as God is hidden and deeply concealed despite being manifest – one of His names being al- *Ghaib*, the Unseen – so belief in the unseen is also something that is hidden but is made manifest through deeds. These days the condition of belief in the 'Unseen' is in a very weak state. If true belief in God existed, there would be a greater thirst and search for truth which is a special characteristic of such belief." (Review of Religion, April 1999 page 22.)

Hence the search for truth and exhorting others to accept it should be the pursuit of every Ahmadi who claims to be a true follower of Hazrat Ahmad ^{as}. Those who do not do so are just paying lip service to their declarations of belief.

Lastly according to this verse Muslims should counsel each other to be patient. We all know how difficult it is to be patient. But yet it is a quality that can help us to confront all types of adversities that may come our way during our sojourn in this world. Whenever we meet people who are in adversity we should counsel patience and at the same time we should try to relieve their distress with all material means at our disposal. But if we do not have means we should rely exclusively on making sincere pleas to Allah to relieve others distress.

So as a good Muslim who wants and is eager to follow the teachings of Islam we should bear well in mind the content of this small chapter of the Holy Quran which is full of meanings. While we are at the end of this year let us not do like others by staying up till midnight to light fire crackers and to revel. Our behavior as good Muslim should be quite different. Whatever whoever says, lighting fire crackers is a waste of money and is against the spirit of Islam and it should be avoided. Allah has created us for a great purpose. It is our duty to find that purpose and to strive to lead a life that will help us to win the pleasure of Allah. We cannot undo whatever wrong we might have done in the past except through regrets and asking for forgiveness and making amends. But we can still determine to make good use of the time that Allah will give us in the coming years to strengthen our faith in Allah, to do better deeds and to exhort one another to truth and to be steadfast. May Allah give us the opportunity and strength to do whatever will please Him incha Allah.