

**FRIDAY SERMON OF IMAM ZAFRULLAH DOMUN**

**24 AUGUST 2012**

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

By the Grace of Allah we were all able to witness another month of Ramadan and most of us were able to fast and we celebrated Eid. There is no denying that during the first days there is a great determination and enthusiasm amongst all Muslims including the children to fast. All are very eager to fast and to carry the obligations that Allah has imposed upon us. Now that Ramadan is gone some might feel that the restrictions that we lived with whilst we were fasting are gone. Definitely there are no restrictions on us regarding eating and drinking or having sex during the day. But we all know that we imposed upon ourselves some other restrictions as well. For example we forbade ourselves not to indulge in anything haram during Ramadan. For example we did not gamble if we used to do so; we refrained from going to movie theatres if we used to go; we stopped drinking alcohol if we used to; we did not watch television at night if we used to. In addition we became quite tolerant of one another. We refrained from picking fights just because we were fasting. Similarly there are plenty of things forbidden that we used to do before Ramadan but which we stopped doing during Ramadan.

Now that Ramadan is gone we need to preserve our virtues and let go of all our vices. Although members of your inner circle might give you feedback about your personal behavior, no one knows better than you what you are doing well and what you do wrong. Allah gave us an opportunity for accelerated training during Ramadan. But it would be foolish on our part to think that this struggle should stop with Ramadan. The disciplining of our self is a continuous process. Most probably it ends late in life if ever it ends. This is an important point that we should all remember and do our best to live up to it. As a Muslim our life mission is worship Allah to the best of our abilities. Fasting was an accelerated means that Allah has imposed upon us to achieve our purpose once in a year. The rest of the year we should continue to behave and act in such a way that we seek to improve our self in order to see more of the Greatness of Allah. One should identify all the habits that we should not rush into now that Ramadan is gone. In addition

we should pay a very careful attention to our prayers and our understanding of the Holy Quran in order not to deviate from the straight path that Allah wants us to walk upon. May Allah help each one amongst us to become the true servants of Allah by breaking all our bonds with Satan.

Ramadan is the occasion that Allah gives us each year to renew our commitment to show our faithfulness to obey Him. It is also an occasion to purify our body, mind and soul of all that is bad for us. So we should exercise due care with what we eat, with what we think about and what we nourish our soul with. By going through Ramadan we have committed ourselves to stay away from anything that will bring us even nearer to disobedience of Allah. So we should now see to it that we stay far from this disobedience. If we have understood through the reading of the Holy Quran that Allah demands of us that we should not break our family ties we should see to it that we do not disobey Allah and obey “others besides Him” and continue to break our family ties. Similarly we should see to it that we avoid all unislamic behaviors that we continue to do to please those who we think wrongly to be invested with authority to lord over us. Anyhow I think that now is the time for each one amongst us to pursue our commitment to do what needs to be done in order to draw nearer to Allah. We should not say as most probably most of us usually say that now that Ramadan is gone we may revert to our bad behaviors of old. Each one amongst us should make the necessary efforts to understand what Allah wants from us and strive to do everything to please Allah.. Ramadan is only a step on the way. In the language of Sports which most young ones understand, Ramadan is a sprint but life is a marathon. There are many Muslims who make a lot of efforts during Ramadan and relax in the ensuing eleven months. They are keen to pray on time, to give in charity, to read the Holy Quran and to be kind with their kith and kin. But they forget all these good deeds after Ramadan. These people unfortunately fail to understand what Allah wants from us. They give a great importance to Ramadan but not to Allah. But as a dear friend told me the other day “those who worshipped Ramadan should know that Ramadan is gone but those who worship Allah should know that Allah is here and is Everlasting”. This is a point of wisdom on which all should reflect.

In the very beginning of the Holy Quran Allah says that the Holy Quran is a book for the *Muttaqeen* meaning those who observe *Taqwa*. Usually we translate *Taqwa* as Godfearingness or God-consciousness or even righteousness. But this word is derived from the root “*wa qa ya*” which has several shades of meanings. Some of these meanings are as follows “to protect oneself, to safeguard oneself, to fear Allah, to avoid something out of fear, to be on one’s guard, to allow oneself to be protected.” Hence the *Muttaqi* is the one who protects himself from sins because of his fear of Allah and he remains ever on his guard lest he falls into sin. It may also

have the meaning that a person takes Allah as a protector against sin. He commits himself to Allah lest he falls into sin. The *Muttaqi* is that person who is really afraid of Allah's punishment either in this world or in the next. If on the one hand he is afraid because he may have sinned, on the other hand he does not lose heart and hopes for Allah's Mercy. He knows that Allah has said in the Holy Quran that He will return to the repentant sinner with mercy. In fact there are many verses in the Holy Quran which speaks about how Allah's Mercy is greater than His Punishment. For example "My Mercy encompasses everything" or Allah forgives all sins except Shirk. Also there is this verse in Sura Al Zumar (39) where Allah says:

قُلْ يُعْبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ  
 لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِن رَّحْمَةِ اللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ  
 يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا ۚ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ  
 الرَّحِيمُ ﴿٥٥﴾

Say, "O My servants who have committed excesses against their own souls! despair not of the mercy of Allah, surely Allah forgives all sins. Verily He is Most Forgiving, Merciful. [39:54]

Yet there are also some other verses which strike real fear in people's hearts. For example when Allah tells the Holy Prophet say " *Inni akhaooafo in asaito rabbi azaba yawmin azim*". We translate as "Indeed I fear if a disobey my Lord the punishment of a terrible day." Or such verses where Allah says that when people will see the punishment reserved for them they would give all that is on earth if they could to avoid that punishment.

Many persons just say Allah is very merciful and forgiving and He will forgive us. It is good to have such faith in Allah. But there is also a great need to obey Allah's instructions. In the Holy Quran Allah says:

"O ye who believe! Fear Allah as He should be feared; and let not death overtake you except when you are in a state of submission."(3:103)

This verse makes it quite clear that we have to make an effort on our part to avoid sins. If that were not the case what would have been the point of giving us so many instructions in the Holy Quran. It is our responsibility to try to develop the fear of Allah and the last day in our heart. How far we will be able to do it will be in proportion to our efforts and Allah's Grace upon us. But we cannot say that we will follow all our evil inclinations and just expect that Allah will

forgive us. If we think like that we are utterly wrong and we will have to pay a heavy price for our failure to understand a quite simple message.

I have read on the internet about how a sheikh helped someone to understand what is the fear of Allah and how we should go about living our life in this world. It is written that a young man came to a *sheikh* and said, “I am a young man with strong desires. I cannot help looking at people when I am in the bazaar. What do I do?” The *sheikh* handed him a cup of milk that was full to the brim, and told him to deliver it to an address that would take the young man directly through the bazaar. He then instructed the young man that the milk should not spill, and the man said that it would not. The *sheikh* then summoned one of his students and told him to accompany the man through the bazaar to the destination, and to severely beat him if any milk were to spill.

This man successfully took the milk to the destination and returned to give the good news to the *sheikh*. The *sheikh* asked, “Tell me, how many sights and faces you saw in the bazaar?” The man replied incredulously, “Hazrat, I didn’t even realize what was going on around me. I was only fearful of the beating and disgrace that I would have to endure in public if a drop of milk were to spill.” The *sheikh* smiled and said, “It is the same with a believer. The believer fears that Allah ﷻ may disgrace him in front of the entire creation on the Day of Judgment if his faith were to spill over from his heart. Such people save themselves from sin because they constantly remain focused on the Day of Judgment.”

This story helps us to understand that we should be focused on our duties and consequently we will avoid sins.

In fact Hazrat Masih Maood <sup>as</sup> also has laid great stress on what will happen to us on the Day of Judgment. He said that because we do not have full conviction that Allah may punish us for our sins that we continue to commit them. It is high time for all Muslims to wake up and care for how we should live our life to win Allah’s Pleasure. I have also read that once somebody came to Hadrat Hasan Basri <sup>ra</sup> and said, “Hadrat, I do not know what is the matter with us. It seems that our hearts are asleep.” Hadrat Hasan Basri <sup>ra</sup> asked what was the matter. The man replied, “Our hearts are not affected when you recite the Holy Quran and Hadith to us.” Hadrat Hasan Basri <sup>ra</sup> said to him, “If reading of the Holy Quran and Hadith do not affect your hearts, do not say that your hearts are asleep. Instead say that your hearts are dead. Even a sleeping person awakes when shaken awake. If someone sleeping does not awaken when shaken, he is not asleep but dead.”

Hasan Basri <sup>ra</sup> is considered in some sources to be the first Sufi. He lived an exemplary life of piety. If we reflect on these words and examine our own selves and wonder how far words of the Holy Quran or the hadith or even the words of Hazrat Masih Maood <sup>as</sup> are affecting us, we will have to agree that there is still much to be done. We may be alive and have beautiful houses, wives and children but how far do we really care for what Allah has said if we flout His teachings? Each Muslim should see to it that he takes care for what Allah and His Prophet saw has said before it is too late and the day arrives about which Allah has warned and said

*Beware of the Day when every soul shall find itself confronted with all the good it has done and all the evil it has done. It will wish there were a great distance between it and that evil. And Allah cautions you against His punishment. And Allah is Most Compassionate to His servants. [3:31]*

Let us hope and pray that Allah will instill in our hearts true love and fear for Him and that He looks favorably on us in this world and in the next. Ameen!