

FRIDAY SERMON OF IMAM ZAFRULLAH DOMUN

07 SEPTEMBER 2012

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

From Hazrat Masih Maood^{as} we learn that it is most important for each one amongst us to continuously work towards improving our good morals throughout our lifetime. He has said that we should first of all be determined to lead a life of piety that is away from sins and then we should make the necessary effort to avoid sinning .Lastly we should engage ourselves into constantly invoking Allah's Help to protect us from sinning. In the book "the Philosophy of the teachings of Islam" Hazrat Masih Maood^{as} has exposed in a concise way how Islam teaches man to rise from a state where he is like animals to one where he even surpasses the angel. This struggle for self improvement that Hazrat Masih Maood^{as} has taught us resembles almost to the letter what other great Muslim reformers have taught before.

We will recall that besides studying the Holy Quran and the Books of Hadiths Hazrat Masih Maood^{as} also studied the books of Mawlana Rumi , of Syed Abdul Qadir Jilani and of Ibn Arabi and Hazrat al-Imam ar-Rabbânî Ahmad as-Sirhindi, that is of India. By the Grace of Allah since a long time now I had the opportunity of reading the writings of the three first mentioned saints in English or French. Until recently I could had not read much of the writings of Syed Ahmad Sirhindi although I knew quite well that Hazrat Masih Maood as quoted mostly from him to justify his claim of being a prophet and the kind of prophet that he was. By the grace of Allah I recently saw on the net some books translated into English from Turkey and in those books they quote profusely from the writings of Hazrat Imam Rabbani especially from his *Maktubaat*, namely his letters. Allah gave the Imam a great insight into spiritual lore and he spoke and explained what he had understood in his writings. So I came across an extract which I think will be useful for all of us to help us to understand what we should aim for and not be content with just going through the motions with our worship. He says:

“Islam has a surface and a real, inner essence. The surface of Islam is firstly to believe and then to obey the orders and prohibitions of Allah, the Great. The *nafs al-ammara* (the headstrong, unregenerate self) of a person who has attained the surface of Islam is in denial and disobedience. The belief (îmân) of this person is on the surface of belief. The salât he performs is the appearance of salât. His fast and other kinds of worship (’ibâda) are also of that grade. The reason is that the basis of the existence of man is the *nafs al ammâra*. When he says ‘I,’ he refers to his *nafs*. So his *nafs* has not attained îmân, has not believed. Could the belief and worship of such people be real and right? Since Allah is very merciful, He accepts the attainment of the façade. He announces the good news that He will put into Paradise those with whom He is pleased. It is a great benevolence of His that He accepts the belief of the heart and does not lay down a condition that the *nafs* also should believe. However, there are the surface and also the real essence of the blessings of Paradise. Those who attain the surface of Islam will get a share from what is the façade of Paradise, and those who attain the reality of Islam in this world will get the reality of Paradise. Both the one who attains the façade and the one who attains the reality of Islam will eat the same fruit of Paradise, but each will get a different taste. Rasûlulâh’s (sall-Allâhu ta’âlâ ’alaihi wa sallam) blessed wives (radî-Allâhu ta’âlâ ’anhunna) will be with him in Paradise and eat the same fruit, but the taste they will get will be different. If it would not be different, then these blessed wives should have necessarily been higher than all human beings, and, since a wife will be with her husband in Paradise, the wife of every superior person should have been superior like him.

“The one who attains the surface of Islam, if he obeys it, will be saved in the next world. In other words, he has attained the status of common wilâya, that is, the pleasure and love of Allâhu ta’âlâ. The one who has been honored with this status is the one who can join the way of tasawwuf and reach the special wilâya called “**Wilâyat khâssa.**” He can make his *nafs ammâra* develop into *an-nafs al-mutma’inna* (the tranquil self). It should be known for certain that, in order to make progress in this wilâya, or in the reality of Islam, the surface of Islam should not be abandoned.

“It is the very frequent remembrance of Allâhu ta’âlâ’s Name that makes one progress on the way of tasawwuf. The remembrance(zikr), too, is an ’ibâda ordered in the religion of Islam. It is commended and ordered in âyats and hadîths. It is essential to avoid the prohibitions of Islam to make progress on the way of tasawwuf.

Performing the *fard* (those kinds of worship ordered in the Qur’ân al karîm) enables one to make progress on this way. It is an order of Islam, too, that one should look for a guide who knows tasawwuf and who is able to guide the sâlik (wayfarer). It is declared in the thirty-eighth âyat of Sûrat al-Mâ’ida, ‘**Look for a wasîla to approach Him.**’[1] Both the surface and the real essence of Islam are necessary for winning the approval of Allâhu ta’âlâ, because all the excellences of wilâya can be attained by obeying the surface of Islam. And the excellences of prophethood (nubuwwa) are the fruits of the reality of Islam.

“The way leading to wilâya is tasawwuf. It is necessary to extract from the heart the love for everything except Allâhu ta’âlâ to make progress on the way of tasawwuf. If the heart becomes oblivious of everything by the benevolence of Allâhu ta’âlâ, **fanâ’** results, and the **sair-i ila’llâh**(journey to Allah) is completed. Then the journey called **‘sair-i fi ’illâh’**(journey in Allah) begins, at the end of which occurs the desired status of baqâ’(permanence). Thus the reality of Islam is attained. The noble person who attains this status is called **‘walî,’** which means the person whom Allahu ta’âlâ is pleased with and loves. **An-nafs al-ammâra** becomes *mutma’inna* (tranquil, subdued) at this stage. The *nafs* gives up disbelief (*kufr*) and resigns itself to the decree (*qadâ’ and qadar*) of Allâhu ta’âlâ and pleases Him. It begins to comprehend itself. It gets redeemed from the illness of haughtiness and arrogance. Most of the superiors of tasawwuf said that the *nafs* could not become free of disobedience to Allâhu ta’âlâ even after attaining tranquillity.

Rasûlullâh (sall-Allâhu ta’âlâ ’alaihi wa sallam) said on his return from a expedition, **‘We return from the small jihâd. We begin the great jihâd.’** The ‘great jihâd’ has been interpreted as jihâd against an-nafs al-ammâra. This faqîr, myself [al-Imâm ar-Rabbânî], does not take it in that sense. I say no disobedience or evil is left when the *nafs* attains tranquillity. The *nafs*, too, like the heart, forgets everything, sees nothing but Allâhu ta’âlâ. It becomes indifferent to position, rank, property and even to their sweet and sour tastes. It has been crushed and has become sort of nonexistent. It has sacrificed itself for Allâhu ta’âlâ. The **‘great jihâd’** mentioned in the hadîth sharîf is probably the jihâd against the physical, chemical and biological desires of the substances constituting the body. Both *shahwa*, that is, lust or violent desire, and *ghadab*, that is, fright or scruple, are material passions. Animals do not have *nafs*, but these malignant inclinations exist in animals, too. It is due to the properties of substances in the body that animals have lust, anger and inordinate inclinations [all called natural inclinations or instincts]. Human beings should perform jihad against these inclinations. The tranquility of the *nafs* does not rescue man from these evils. Jihâd against them is very beneficial. It helps the purification of the body.

‘Al-Islâm al-haqîqî (the Real Islam) falls to one’s lot when one’s *nafs* gets subdued. Then real îmân is attained. Any kind of worship performed is real: salât, fast and hajj are all in their real value. “As it is seen, tasawwuf (or ‘way’) or haqîqa (reality) is the passage between the surface and the inner part of Islam. The one who has not attained **Wilâyat khâssa** cannot get redeemed from being a metaphoric Muslim, cannot attain the Real Islam.

“The one who has attained the reality of Islam and has been honored with the Real Islam begins to take shares from the excellences of prophethood. He becomes an object of the good news declared in the hadîth; **‘The Ulamâ’ are the Prophets’ heirs.’** The excellences of prophethood are the fruits of the reality of Islam as the excellences of wilâya are the fruits of the surface of Islam. The excellences of wilâya are the appearances of the excellences of prophethood. “The difference between the surface

and the reality of Islam, consequently, arises from the *nafs*. And the difference between the excellences of wilâya and those of prophethood comes from the substances in the body. In the excellences of wilâya, substances obey what their physical, chemical and biological properties dictate; extra energy causes excessiveness, and substances long for food. For obtaining these needs, insolent absurdities are committed. In the excellences of prophethood, such absurdities come to an end. In the hadîth ash-sharîf, **'My devil became Muslim,'** probably this state of consciousness is expressed, for there is a devil in man as there is one outside of him. Excess energy leads man astray and makes him arrogant, and this is the worst of the bad habits. By getting rid of these evils, *nafs* becomes Muslim. In the excellences of prophethood, there is belief both by heart and by *nafs*, and also regularity and equilibrium of the substances present in the body. It is after the establishment of the equilibrium of matter and energy in the body that *nafs* gets subdued completely. After tranquility, it cannot return to malignity. All these superior qualities are based on Islam. A tree cannot be without roots no matter how much it branches out or how fruitful it is. Obedience to Allâhu ta'âlâ's orders and prohibitions is essential in every excellence."

As members might appreciate this excellent extract about outer Islam and inner Islam is not at all new. In fact Imam Ahmad lived in India from 1564 to 1624. He speaks about how we should make the journey from being in a state of *nafs ammara* to the soul at rest (*nafs mutmainna*). He also speaks about the necessity to observe all the prohibitions and allowances of Islam. You will notice that he speaks of those people who move to the state of *mutmainna* partaking of the excellences of prophethood. For those who are familiar with the writings of the promised Messiah Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad ^{as}, you will note that he also has said almost the same thing. Ordinary believers who take the straight path (*sirat mustaqim*) may be given the excellences of prophethood. Unfortunately present day leadership of Jamaat Ahmadiyya seems to have forgotten these teachings or they just want to hide it from the people. According to Hazrat Masih Maood ^{as} there will be some among his followers who will be given the excellences that are given to the prophets.

As far as members of Jamaat Ahmadiyya al Mouslemeen are concerned my advice to them is that we all should individually and collectively strive to be included into the excellent ones namely the prophets, the truthful the shaheeds and the pious ones as Allah says in the Holy Quran: "And whoso obeys Allah and this Messenger of His shall be among those on whom Allah has bestowed His blessings, namely, the Prophets, the Truthful, the Martyrs, and the Righteous. And excellent companions are these." (HQ 4:70)

Those who think that they can flout the basic teachings of Islam with impunity are only deluding themselves. Those who think that they can ignore Allah's teachings in the name of a certain type of obedience have misunderstood the teachings of Islam and they will have to get

prepared to be questioned about their misdeeds which they thought were virtues. May Allah help us all to understand and practice inner Islam and outer Islam as well.