

**FRIDAY SERMON OF IMAM ZAFRULLAH DOMUN**

**19 OCTOBER 2012**

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

Since the moon was visible on Tuesday night in Mauritius, Eid ul Adha will be celebrated *incha* Allah on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> October. Namaz Eid will incha Allah start on time at 9.00 am. In fact if it were practicable we would have prayed even earlier in order to free people to look after their *Qurbani*. All members should see to it that they reach the mosque on time so that we may start on time.

Since we are speaking about coming on time let me say a few words about attending Jummah on time before speaking about matters concerning Eid ul Adha. Members should know that they all have to make a special effort to attend the Jummah sermon on time. Unfortunately not all Muslims are very keen to be that punctual. You will recall that in the Holy Quran Allah says in *Surah Al Jummah* “**O ye who believe! When the call is made for Prayer on Friday, hasten to the remembrance of Allah, and leave off *all* business. That is better for you, if you only knew.**”(62:10). This verse makes it very clear that all Muslims should leave their work and resort to the mosque for the Friday Prayer. We should remember that as a Muslim we should make our best efforts to attend Jummah Prayer and under no circumstance should we be negligent in making efforts to be present. Speaking about the importance of being present in the mosque before the beginning of the sermon the Holy Prophet <sup>saw</sup> is reported to have said:

"On Friday the Angels stand out the door of the mosque and write down the names of the people in the order in which they enter the mosque for Friday prayer. The first group of people who enter the mosque get the reward equivalent to that of sacrificing a camel; the people who enter the mosque after them get the reward equivalent to that of sacrificing a cow. The people who enter the mosque after them get the reward equivalent to that of sacrificing a ram and the people who follow on likewise get this reward of a chicken, egg and so on there is a gradation of rewards for the people as they enter. The angels keep writing the names of the people as they enter the mosque until the Imam sits down to give Khutbah. Then the angels collect their registers and sit and listen to the Khutbah." (Bukhari, Muslim).

Similarly, speaking about the importance of not missing three consecutive Jummah prayers the Holy Prophet <sup>saw</sup> is reported to have said: "A person who leaves 3 Friday prayers consecutively, Allah puts a seal on his heart." (Ahmad, Tirmizi, abu Dawud). We hope that all will take care and be keen to be present on time and to reflect on whatever is said in Jummah sermons.

We now revert to Eidul Adha. We all know that the main feature of Eidul Adha is the Hajj. About two million of the 1.6 billion Muslims living in the world and about 500,000 from Saudi Arabia will be converging on Mecca in the coming days. This Hajj which is also the fifth pillar of Islam is incumbent upon all those who have the means to travel over there. At the time of the Holy Prophet Mohammad <sup>saw</sup> when Hajj was prescribed by Allah people went to Mecca mainly from Medina. They went on foot and on camels. The distance between Mecca and Medina is about 210 miles or 339 Kilometers. These days, by bus, such a journey takes approximately 5 to 6 hours and by plane it is about 30 to 40 minutes. In the early days walking from Medina to Mecca should have been quite an arduous journey. But the Muslims did it. As you all know ceremonies for the Hajj will start on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of Zul Hijja and it will go on until the 12<sup>th</sup>. To be precise from 24<sup>th</sup> October to 28<sup>th</sup>. One can just imagine the commotion that goes on over there. The Saudis have been spending huge amounts of money to facilitate the tasks of the pilgrims but there is still more to be done.

Anyhow we may say that there are two categories of Muslims celebrating Eidul Adha. One is those who go for Hajj and the others are those who stay at their own place. To those who stay at home Hajj in itself is not very significant even if they may follow all the proceedings via television. Such people who stay at home try to engage in additional remembrance of Allah and additional supplications. Above all, if they have means they take part in the sacrifice of an animal or they slaughter a smaller one for themselves and their families after the two *rakaat* Eid prayer. They partake of the meat, but they also distribute amongst the poor and to their own friends and relatives. It is also an occasion, we may say, where the haves give to the have-nots. We understand from the hadith that those who have means should sacrifice an animal that they can afford. A question might crop up in the mind of those who think.. They may ask : is Eid ul Adha just the additional two rakaat prayer done on Eid day and the slaughtering of animals and that's it?' Some people may think that Eid is just for that, eating meat and becoming surfeited. But by the Grace of Allah, we members of Jamaat Ahmadiyya Al Mouslemeen who have been groomed in the school where we have been taught the essence of the religion of Islam by Hazrat Masih Maood<sup>as</sup> know that Allah is asking much more than these rituals from us.

Hazrat Masih Maood <sup>as</sup> taught us to strive to get to the essence of Islam and not only to keep its form. Such ideas have been beautifully expressed by God-fearing Sufis that the kernel is more important than the chaff, the bird is more important than the cage, the jewel is more important than the jewel box. Similarly for us the soul is more important than the body.

Unfortunately a majority of people are more concerned with looking after their perishable body more than their eternal soul. They are keener to embellish themselves with beautiful and elaborate clothes rather than beautifying their souls with good manners and excellent moral qualities. So Allah has wished that the example of a man of faith, a man of courage, and a man who was ever ready to make the ultimate sacrifice for Allah

should come back to the mind of every Muslim every year so that no one should ever forget what it is to be faithful to God and to fulfill His commandments.

Whether we participate in *Qurbani* or not, a Muslim who does not go for Hajj can make his Eidul Adha significant by reflecting on what has been prescribed for the occasion and by thinking about the sincerity of Hazrat Ibrahim vis a vis Allah. You will recall that once Hazrat Masih Maood<sup>as</sup> spoke about the significance of the sacrificial animals in his revealed sermon on 13<sup>th</sup> April 1900. On that day Hazrat Ahmad<sup>as</sup> spoke words of great wisdom for generations to come. We will read an extract from this sermon so that people might benefit more from whatever sacrifice they might be doing on Eid Day. Even if they will not be doing any animal sacrifice they might think about what really Allah wishes that all of us should do, namely killing of our *nafs ammara*, our propensity to sin. Hazrat Ahmad said:

'O! Servants of Allah, ponder over this day of yours, the day of *Adha* (lambs sacrificed in the morning); for in it are put secrets for the intelligent;...And, certainly, in our religion, this action is counted as one of those that draw one near to Allah, to Whom be praise. And this is understood to be the riding beast which resembles the lightning in its speed and brightness. And it is for this reason that the animals to be sacrificed are called *Qurbani* (from *Qurb* meaning nearness); as it has been said that all those who perform it sincerely and devotedly and faithfully see more of Allah and become nearer to Him. And, surely, this is one of the greatest virtues (*Nusuk*) of the Shariah; and that is why it has been called *Nasikat* (sacrifice). And *Nusuk* in the Arabic language means obedience and worship and this word is also used in the sense of slaughtering these animals. So this community of meaning proves conclusively that the true worshipper is he who kills his self and its faculties and all his beloved ones simply to please his Lord, the Creator and Sustainer. And the strong winds of nothingness blow over him and his very atoms are carried away by the violent gusts of this storm. And he who ponders over these two common meanings of the word *Nusuk* and studies this point with a thoughtful mind and with his eyes open, will not have the least doubt and hesitation to admit that it points to the fact that the worship which saves one from eternal loss is the killing of the *Nafs-e-Ammara* (the uncontrollable spirit or the spirit prone to evil). It should be stabbed at the throat with the spears of *Inqita'* (cutting away of all connections and turning towards God)towards Allah, the Benefactor, the Governor and the Powerful. And the various kinds of bitterness involved therein should be borne patiently so that the soul be saved from the death of inexperience, negligence and forgetfulness. And this is what Islam really means and herein lies the true realization of complete submission and obedience. And a Muslim is he who bows down his neck before Allah, the Creator and Sustainer of all the worlds. And for Him he sacrifices the she camel of his self and throws her down on her forehead, and he does not forget his own death at any moment. In short, the sacrifices and immolations in Islam are meant only to remind us of this purpose...

Our Creator and Sustainer, the Ever-lasting God, has also pointed to this hidden secret in His word. He says to His Prophet (and He is the most Truthful): "Say, certainly my prayers and my sacrifices and my life and my death are all for the sake of Allah, the Creator and Sustainer of all the worlds."

See how He has explained the word *Nusuk* by the words *Mahya* and *Mamat* (life and death). He has in this way pointed towards the reality which underlies the sacrifices. So ponder over it, ye wise people. And he who offers his sacrifice with knowledge of the reality, a true heart, and a sincere intention has certainly sacrificed his self and soul, his children and his grandchildren. And for him is a great reward like the reward of Abraham<sup>as</sup> granted to him by the Creator, the Sustainer, the Glorious. And towards it has pointed our Master the chosen, and our Prophet <sup>saw</sup>, the elected, and the leader of the God fearing, and the seal of the Prophets. He says (and he is the most truthful after Allah): "Verily, the sacrifices are those riding beasts which carry one to the Lord of the universe. They efface sins and keep off calamities". This is what has reached us from the best of creation, on him be peace and the choicest blessings of Allah. He has pointed here to the philosophy of these offerings in words which are like beautiful pearls....(Life of Ahmad by AR Dard page 724-26)

This extract helps to focus the attention on what is essential for a Muslim. On the day of Eid he should be happy because Eid means a happiness that returns but at the same time he should offer sacrifice. If he has means he offers an animal as sacrifice as a symbol of his own readiness to sacrifice his self to Allah. But if he does not have the means he concentrates on offering his own self itself and no symbol. Allah knows best. Anyhow I hope that this small extract from the writings of the Promised Messiah helps us all to understand what is most important that we should do in our life, namely, as I said before getting rid of our animal self. May Allah grant all of us success in this endeavour.

Since we still have some days before Eid, let us use our time to remember Allah as much as we can as we said in the previous Jummah. Starting on the day of Arafat, that is on the 9<sup>th</sup> Zul Hajj after Fajr prayer until the 13<sup>th</sup> after *Asr* we should be doing *takbiraat* after each *Farz* prayer. May Allah be with you insha Allah.