

FRIDAY SERMON OF IMAM ZAFRULLAH DOMUN

02 NOVEMBER 2012

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

Alhamdo Lilla one of the greatest if not the greatest religious gathering on earth ended last week without any major problem. In fact after the Hajj the Saudi Minister responsible for Hajj said that overall everything went on smoothly for the Hajj and there were no distressing incidents to report. He also said that they believe that there were about 4 millions pilgrims for the Hajj this year. But almost one million of these were those who did not have the necessary papers to go there. Anyhow they said that they would look into this matter next time carefully. Now let us pray that all pilgrims will return safely to their homes.

In my Eid sermon last week I said that I would speak about the Holy Prophet's speech on the unique occasion that he performed the Hajj in the last year of his life in 632AD. We should note that there are different versions of this hadith. I have taken this one from Muslim. It is part of a long hadith which explains in detail how the Holy prophet^{saw} performed the Hajj. So from the hadith we learn that he said:

“Verily your blood, your property is as sacred and inviolable as the sacredness of this day of yours, in this month of yours, in this town of yours.

Behold! Everything pertaining to the Days of Ignorance is under my feet, and completely abolished. Abolished are also the blood-revenges of the Days of Ignorance. The first claim of ours on blood-revenge which I abolish is that of the son of Rabi 'a ibn al-Harith, who was nursed among the tribe of Sa'd and killed by Hudhail. And the usury of the pre-Islamic period is abolished, and the first of our usury I abolish is that of 'Abbas ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib, for it is all abolished.

Fear Allah concerning women! Verily you have taken them on the security of Allah, and intercourse with them has been made lawful unto you by word of Allah. You too have rights over them, in that they should not allow anyone to sit on your bed that you do not like. But if they do that, you can chastise them but not severely. Their rights upon you are that you should provide them with food and clothing in a fitting manner.

I have left among you the Book of Allah, and if you hold fast to it, you will never go astray. And you will be asked about me (on the Day of Resurrection), (now tell me) what would you say? They (the audience) said: "We will bear witness that you have conveyed (the message), discharged (the ministry of Prophethood) and given wise (sincere) counsel." He (the narrator)

said: "He (the Holy Prophet) then raised his forefinger towards the sky and pointing it at the people (said): 'O Allah, be witness. O Allah be witness,' saying it thrice'."

In some other versions he speaks about the equality of all men as well. Anyhow this is something quite important for all of us to revisit on the occasion of Hajj. It reminds us of the essentials which we should adhere to if we want to be good Muslims who try to tread the path of the Holy Prophet ^{saw}.

Now I will speak about something else. There is no denying the fact that in Islam we should never condemn someone forever. Mistakes, sins are the common lot of all men and women. But in the Holy Quran Allah says that those who repent of their misdeeds would be forgiven. Even from the hadith we learn that those who repent of their sins are like those who have not sinned. That is to say because of their repentance they are washed of the stain of their sins. There is a famous story from the history of Islam which illustrates this point very clearly. I will tell you about this incident shortly because it helps all of us to learn what true repentance meant to some people who were really aware of what it means to fear Allah. These people did not just talk about Taqwa but they practiced it as well. In fact Jamaat Ahmadiyya was created in the first place for people who had a genuine desire to develop the fear of Allah in their heart.

The story is as told by the second caliph of the Jamaat Ahmadiyya is as follows:

“Shiblī was a great saint.(In fact his real name was Abu Bakr and he came from a place known as Shibli but he is better known just as Shibli. He lived from 861 to 946 AD.) He came from an affluent family and was a governor under the king of Baghdad. He came to the capital for consultation concerning some issue. During the same days, a commander-in-chief had been sent to face an enemy who had defeated many armies previously. The commander defeated the enemy and won the lost lands back for the country. On his return, the commander was given a grand reception in Baghdad. The king summoned a special court to reward the commander. The king proposed that a robe of honor be given to the commander to recognize his services. Unfortunately, on his way back from the journey, he had developed a runny nose, and he had also forgotten to bring his handkerchief with him. After the bestowal of the robe, according to the tradition, he was to respond saying, “I am grateful to you that you have been gracious to me, and my generations will be your servant because of these four yards of cloth.” While the commander was getting ready for the speech, suddenly he sneezed, and had a nasal drip. If he had spoken with a runny nose, he might have been killed. He searched in confusion, and not finding the handkerchief, he sneakily cleaned his nose with a portion of the robe. Unfortunately, the king saw the incident. The king roared, “Take away his robe. He has disgraced our robe. He cleaned his nose with our gift.” As the king said this, Shiblī let out a shriek and started crying. As there was piety in the heart, there was righteousness in him; God had kept an opportunity for his guidance. When Shiblī let out a shriek, the king said, “I am angry with the commander. Why are you crying?” Shiblī stood up and said, “O King, I present my resignation.” The king said, “What is this untimely request? What has come over you, and why are you resigning?” Shiblī said, “Oh King, I cannot carry out my responsibility.” The king said, “What is the matter?”

While weeping, Shiblī submitted, “This commander left this place two years ago. He was sent to a war which many great generals had lost. He was sent to an area which could not be retaken. He stayed away for two years. He went to the forests, mountains, and continuously fought with the enemy. He died every day, every morning, every evening. Every night his wife thought that she would wake up as a widow in the morning. Every morning, as she woke up, she thought that the evening will come and she will be a widow. Every evening as his children went to sleep, they thought that they would wake up orphans. Every morning when they woke up, they imagined that they would be orphans by the evening. He conquered that country after a persistent sacrifice, and brought it back under your rule. In return you gave him a few yards of cloth, which did not have much value. Just because he was compelled to wipe off his nose with the robe, you became so angry with him. Then, how will I respond to that God who gave me a body which cannot be built by any king? Who has given me this robe and I am dirtying it for your sake. What answer will I give to my Lord?”

Shiblī said this and left the court. But he was such a cruel and merciless person that when he went to a mosque and wanted to repent, everyone responded the same: “Get out of here. Can the repentance of a Devil be accepted?” He started visiting all of the places nearby but no one had the courage to accept his repentance. Finally he visited Junaid of Baghdad (who was one of the greatest living saints of the time) and told him of his improprieties and that he wanted to repent. “Can my repentance be accepted?” he asked. Junaid said, “Yes, but with a condition. First you will have to accept that condition.”

Shiblī said, “Tell me what it is, for I am ready to accept any condition.”

Junaid said, “Go back to the city where you were the governor. Knock at every door and ask for their forgiveness. Ask for the forgiveness of the excesses you have committed.”

Shiblī said, “I accept.”

So, he went to the city. He knocked at every door. When the people responded, he said, “I am Shiblī who was the governor here. I have made mistakes, and I have committed excesses against you. I ask for your forgiveness.” The people said, “We forgive you.”

The seed of piety always grows and bears fruit. After he had passed by a dozen or so homes, the news spread through the town like fire that the governor, who was known to be cruel, was going door to door today, and was asking for forgiveness. Spiritual fountains erupted out of people’s hearts. They said, “Our Lord is so great that He provides opportunities for piety and repentance and righteousness even to such an aggressor.”

So it passed, that Shiblī, following the instructions of Junaid, knocked door to door, bare-foot, but rather than having the doors opening with complaints and disenchantments, people came out weeping, saying, “Do not embarrass us, you are an honorable person to us. You are our spiritual leader. Do not embarrass us like this.”

In short, Shiblī asked the whole town for forgiveness, and then he returned to Junaid. Junaid accepted his repentance and included him among his students.

Now, Shiblī is considered among the greatest saints of Islam.” (Points to Ponder p16-20)

This story can mean many different things to many people. But we cannot deny that it illustrates what kind of repentance is accepted in Islam. Once someone is aware of his mistakes he has to repair them and in order to

repair he has to ask forgiveness from those he has wronged. There is no forgiveness in the true sense of the word when people play politics and they try to impose their crooked understanding of the teachings of Islam on others. If someone has been in authority, in a position of trust and he abused that trust he has to make a lot of amends before he can reassume a position of trust again or before he comes to lecture others about any aspect of Islam. His evil actions speak volumes about his ignorance of Islam or Ahmadiyyat and he cannot in any way come forward to lecture to others. Before such a person can really be eligible to talk to others he should go about in all the Jamaats, FOR EXAMPLE AS in Mauritius and ask forgiveness to all the members for all the evils that he might have done and for which he was removed in disgrace as the Amir Jamaat of Mauritius by the caliph himself. But in Jamaat Ahmadiyya here or elsewhere who cares about saving people's souls? Had there been a concern for saving people's souls the leaders would have known that giving prominence to an unreformed chief is to lull him into a false sense of security. In Islam forgiveness for wrongdoing comes only from Allah. No caliph and even less a simple Amir can ever think that they have any capacity to absolve anyone of his sins. If someone wants to be absolved of his sins he should make amends, correct the wrongs that he had done and weep in front of Allah for all his wrongdoings. It is to such people that Allah has promised that he would turn to them with His Forgiveness.

Unfortunately the leaders of mainstream Jamaat Ahmadiyyat are more adept in playing politics than in caring for people's souls. They understand figures well but what is salvation and how to achieve it as explained by Hazrat Masih Maood^{as} is beyond their ken. They are keen to maintain their influence and power but they do not care to study and practice what Hazrat Masih Maood^{as} demands from us. In his Eid ul Adha speech the caliph was lamenting that the Muslims in general are bereft of guidance because their learned people are corrupt. Unfortunately he does not see how corruption has permeated the administration of Jamaat Ahmadiyyat in many countries including Mauritius. Fortunately for us Allah has removed us from those who do wrong and they are not at all keen to correct themselves.

From the book *Rise of Mohammedan power in India* we read of an interesting incident which should be a lesson for all those who come to lecture others in mosques. We read:

“Ala uddin Shah Bahmani was a person of eloquence and wit. He would sometimes ascend the pulpit of the Grand Mosque on Fridays and in the Khutbah would describe himself as “the monarch just, merciful, patient and liberal.”

One day an Arabian merchant who had sold horses to the King's use but did not till then get the price, was present when the king in his Khutbah was giving him those titles. Roused by the ill treatment he had experienced and indignation at the cruel massacre of innocent Sayyed which had just taken place, the merchant cried out:

“Thou art neither the just, the merciful, the patient, nor the liberal king, but the cruel and the false yet darest to assume such vaunting titles in the pulpit of the true believers.”

The king, struck with remorse, commanded the merchant to be paid on the spot and retired to the palace. He never entered the mosque again.”

This is the example that those who have a conscience should follow. May Allah have mercy on us all.