

FRIDAY SERMON OF IMAM ZAFRULLAH DOMUN

8 FEBRUARY 2013

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

We are already in the month of February and Ahmadis around the world will participate in another of their rituals. Mousleh Maood week will be held in mosques, speeches will be made, and refreshments will be served to celebrate the fulfillment of the grand prophecy made by Hazrat Ahmad^{as} concerning the coming of a promised son. The masses will be given the usual dose about what was the prophecy and how it was fulfilled in the person of the second caliph, and how he embodied all the qualities mentioned in the prophecy.

Since 1944 we have been fed with this diet that the prophecy of Mousleh Maood was fulfilled in the person of the second caliph of Jamaat Ahmadiyya. Within Jamaat Ahmadiyya mainstream this belief is strongly held and no one dares to question it or revisit it. As far as the masses are concerned, they are ignorant and they do not even bother to try to know more than they are told in mosques. Among those who can read and write many feel very uncomfortable to question the beliefs they hold and which have been held by their parents and perhaps grandparents as well. As far as the caliph is concerned, he adamantly refuses to take a fresh look at the prophecy to try to understand it in the light of new developments. He is puffed up with his own importance and feels that he and his predecessors are right and all others are wrong. By so doing the present caliph is guilty of dividing the Jamaat of Hazrat Masih into groups and to weaken it instead of fulfilling his pledge to uphold and consolidate it. In this he is guilty in the sight of Allah together with all those scholars who are in his pay and who remain silent and hide the truth. They have sacrificed truth for the world. They prefer to let Ahmadis believe in what might not be true rather than open their mouths or use their pen to tell the world what the truth is. Unfortunately for them one day they will have to answer for their deeds.

Throughout the course of Islamic history it is the scholars who have preserved the teachings of Islam and not the caliphs. Caliphs have always been political figures and Scholars have

been those who tried their best to make the real teachings known and understood by others. Imam Abu Hanifa, Imam Malik, Imam Shafi and Imam Hanbal and many others like them sacrificed their personal wellbeing in order to speak the truth to those in authority. Unfortunately these days we have scholars who sacrifice truth in order to please those in authority and deceive the masses. Scholars within Jamaat Ahmadiyya seem to have forgotten the teaching of the Holy Prophet Mohammad ^{saw}. Once a companion asked him “What is the best form of Jihad?” He replied “A word of truth to the wrongdoing leader.” Caliphs within Jamaat Ahmadiyya think that they are Allah’s representative on earth and they do not make mistakes. If ever they commit a wrong, Allah will set it right for them. Such reasoning may be palatable to the Pakistanis but definitely not for those Ahmadis who have been schooled by Hazrat Masih Maood ^{as}. The pope also is believed to be God’s representative on earth and in Christian dogma he is infallible and he cannot be questioned. The similarity between what Jamaat Ahmadiyya wants to do and what the popes have been doing is quite striking.

In his past sermons the Ahmadiyya caliph has been quoting several companions of the Promised Messiah who learnt about his truthfulness through dreams. Hazrat Masih Maood ^{as} has told us that Allah will continue to send people within his Jamaat who are going to walk in his footsteps. These days there are several such people within the Jamaat. But some of them have been thrown out of the Jamaat because their dreams or revelations have gone beyond the expectations of the caliph. The caliphs should have had the humility to know that they are not the distributors of Allah’s Favour. Instead of arrogantly thinking that they are the chosen ones they should have sought Allah’s guidance to understand who the chosen ones are.

As I have said it in the past and repeating myself now, the leadership of Jamaat Ahmadiyya has been committing many wrongs in the way they want the people to practice Islam. They want the world to believe that they are quite open-minded compared to other Muslims but for those who know them from the inside they are a bigoted lot when it concerns putting what they profess into practice. Jamaat Ahmadiyya in its entirety is guilty of gross violations of Islamic teachings as others are guilty of gross violations of human rights in their countries. I have said Jamaat Ahmadiyya in its entirety because good Ahmadis know quite well that the leadership is wrong in some of its policies, yet they prefer to remain silent rather than raise their voice for fear of being expelled from the Jamaat. As far as I am concerned anyone who is expelled because he raises his voice against injustice is a god fearing person who will be honoured by Allah but not necessarily by men. But the one who knows that injustice is being practiced and yet he remains silent and participates in this injustice for fear of another one but Allah is a person who associates another one with Allah. He is guilty in the sight of Allah although he

may be adulated by men and women alike. All those who see injustice being practiced within the Jamaat and yet do not dare to raise their voice or write against it are in this category of people.

Despite our 124 year old history we are still lagging behind in fundamentals. A majority of Ahmadis have still not made God-fearingness a priory in their life. People still defer to their leaders to tell them what is good and what is bad. The members refuse to take the necessary responsibility to know for themselves what is good and what is bad. People are not interested to make their own study of what the Promised Messiah said. These days we have plenty of his writings which have been translated into English and yet not many are making the best use of it. There is more time devoted to frivolous pursuits rather than to serious study and reflection. As long as this situation remains as it is, the leading elite will be just too happy. They would be just too happy that the masses are ignorant and are not interested to know more. This gives them more power on them and they can continue doing what they think is best. Had they been righteous, they would have cared more for others or for truth rather than for themselves and the propagation of what is untrue.

There was a time when Europe was in such a situation. That was prior to the reformation brought about by Martin Luther in 1520. Until that time the Catholic Church was the Supreme authority in the Christendom. Martin Luther knew of their abuses and he denounced them. His movement which started in Germany changed the Christian world for ever. Countries became divided and civil wars erupted almost everywhere in Europe. The Catholic Church responded by the Inquisition where many innocent people were killed because they had changed their faith. Anyhow this is a long history. There are very interesting documentaries or lectures about these matters on YouTube. Those who are interested may watch them. Eventually some intellectuals came forward and they changed the people's thinking about the world in a radical way. People gradually understood that there was still life outside the church. The ideas of these intellectuals ushered in Europe an era known as the Enlightenment. It is the Enlightenment that eventually brought about the industrial revolution which changed people's life forever. There is a lot that we can learn from the History of this era which can help us to understand what might be needed within Jamaat Ahmadiyya and within the Islamic world at large.

There was a philosopher whose name was Emmanuel Kant and who lived from 1724 to 1804. He said something very interesting about the enlightenment which I want to share again with you today. You will recall that I briefly quoted from him last week in our *Jalsa*. But I want to repeat this quotation today so that others may know about it and they might be enlightened hopefully. In an essay written in 1784 entitled "What is enlightenment" he writes:

“Enlightenment is man's emergence from his self-imposed nonage. Nonage is the inability to use one's own understanding without another's guidance. This nonage is self-imposed if its cause lies not in lack of understanding but in indecision and lack of courage to use one's own mind without another's guidance. *Dare to know!* (*Sapere aude.*) "Have the courage to use your own understanding," is therefore the motto of the enlightenment.

Laziness and cowardice are the reasons why such a large part of mankind gladly remain minors all their lives, long after nature has freed them from external guidance. They are the reasons why it is so easy for others to set themselves up as guardians. It is so comfortable to be a minor. If I have a book that thinks for me, a pastor who acts as my conscience, a physician who prescribes my diet, and so on--then I have no need to exert myself. I have no need to think, if only I can pay; others will take care of that disagreeable business for me. Those guardians who have kindly taken supervision upon themselves see to it that the overwhelming majority of mankind--among them the entire fair sex--should consider the step to maturity, not only as hard, but as extremely dangerous. First, these guardians make their domestic cattle stupid and carefully prevent the docile creatures from taking a single step without the leading-strings to which they have fastened them. Then they show them the danger that would threaten them if they should try to walk by themselves. Now this danger is really not very great; after stumbling a few times they would, at last, learn to walk. However, examples of such failures intimidate and generally discourage all further attempts.....”

Some might say what is the point in quoting philosophers in Friday sermons. The fact is that the Holy Prophet ^{saw} has said that “A word of wisdom is the lost property of a Muslim; he has more right to it wherever he finds it.” Here we see a quotation by someone who loves wisdom and who has expressed himself on why people like to remain in the tutelage of others throughout their life. Several times I have said that people should learn to think for themselves. Reflection helps to liberate the individual from all sorts of yokes. Hazrat Masih Maood^{as} himself has said that we should not be forward to reject a new idea and we should make our own researches. Unfortunately most people prefer to defer to others rather than try to make the effort to think.

Kant says that there are two weaknesses that prevent us from thinking for ourselves. One is ignorance and the other is cowardice. These are two weaknesses among others from which the Holy Prophet^{saw} used to seek Allah’s protection from. In fact in order not to be a victim of the

first weakness we know from the Holy Quran that Allah taught the Holy Prophet to "say Oh my Lord increase my knowledge." Concerning the second he used to pray against it together along with some other things. He used to say “ *Allahoumma inni a’ouzobeka minal hamme wal houzne wa aouzo beka minal ajze wal kasle wa aouzobeka minal jubne wal bukhle wa aouzobeka min ghalabatid dayne wa qahril rijaal*”. We translate as “Oh My Lord I seek thy Protection against trouble and grief, against weakness and laziness, against cowardice and avarice against being overcome by debt and against the worst of men”. That man who was himself enlightened and a light to the world has taught us that we should not become either ignorant or a coward. In all circumstance we should try to understand truth per se and without any fear we should spread it around. This is the school from which every Ahmadi Muslim should learn from. We should be ready to invest the necessary amount of time to pursue what is true and we should be bold enough to publish or make known what we have understood. From the feedback that we might get from others we might also reconsider our understanding and deepen it. From Hazrat Masih Maood^{as} we learn that we should never be afraid to debate our ideas where there are people who are keen to know more. Now you may just imagine how far the leadership of Jamaat Ahmadiyya today has strayed from the right path as shown by both the Holy Prophet and Hazrat Masih Maood^{as}. As far as we are concerned we can claim that we are seekers after truth. We are ready to debate with anyone our ideas. Through debate and the exchange of views we know that we will learn more. What is most unfortunate is that there is no one from especially the Ahmadiyya mainstream Jamaat who are bold enough to debate with us. We pray that Allah always keeps us on the right path. Ameen.