

EID SERMON

By Imam Zafrullah Domun

9th August 2013

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

Today is the day of *Eidul Fitr* for this year. From the depth of our hearts thanks pour forth to Allah who has given us the opportunity to be alive on this day once again. We share our joy with you all who are present here at this moment and those who are in other countries who are our sympathizers. We send you all the greetings of Eid Mubarak. It is our prayer and hope that Allah will give you all aplenty all the lasting benefits that fasting in the Holy month of Ramadan can bring along. We also pray that Allah overlooks our faults and yours and that He treats us as His good, believing and well-pleased with Servants. In this moment of joy we cannot forget those Muslims in Egypt, Pakistan, Syria, Gaza and several other places in the world who have difficulty to share the joy of Eid. We pray that Allah comes to their rescue and solve their problems to their satisfaction as speedily as possible.

For a whole month in obedience to our Lord we have all undergone the rigors of being without food and drink and lack of sleep. We should be happy that Allah has limited these days of fasting to only thirty at most. For one month we have trained and disciplined our body to survive on less food and drink and to be preoccupied with devotions to Allah. At night we woke up for additional prayers and for the recitation of the Holy Quran. We did our best to stay away from any action which we thought could displease our Lord. We did our best to be kind with one another and we tried to increase the mutual love that binds us together. We became more conscious of the living conditions of a person who goes without food. Unfortunately in our country we have at least 125,000 persons who are considered to be poor and consequently they do not feed themselves properly. By fasting we are able to step in poor people's shoes for some hours a day and it helped us to feel their pain and their distress and to be concerned to do our best to alleviate their suffering to the limit of our abilities and our means, of course. So during one month every year Allah imposes upon us a limitation on our food and drink and our impulses in order to make us a better person. In Ramadan we learnt to read our Holy Quran almost daily with a view to understanding its meanings and knowing what our Allah wants us to do and from what He expects us to remain aloof from. We resorted to the mosque almost five times daily and we prayed a lot fixing our attention exclusively upon Allah . We did all this to increase our God Consciousness. Allah alone

knows how far we have been able to increase our level of God consciousness. But as far as we are concerned if we just resort to what we did prior to Ramadan and do not strive to make the habits of Ramadan permanent in our lives as far as possible we would not have well understood what Allah expects from us.

Allah wants each one of us to lead our lives in such a way that we win His Pleasure. This is something more easily said than done. All those who have been for some time in this struggle and even those who have recently embarked on this path know how hard it is to follow the Straight path (*Sirata Moustaqeem*) that will lead us to Him. Allah knows that this path is difficult. Knowing how weak we are in sticking to this path, He has shown His Mercy by teaching us a prayer that will eliminate all our difficulties provided we are sincere in our quest. We will speak more about this in a few minutes. Allah does not forbid us at all to engage with the world. We are supposed to play, to study, to work, to marry, to eat and drink within bounds, to engage in the development of our country, in brief to engage in all types of worldly activities. But He wants us not to forget Him for an instant while we are engaged in the world. We should be aware of His Teachings and in whatever we do we should always bear in mind that He is with us and He watches us although we might not be seeing Him. Verses of the Holy Quran abound on this matter. Allah says:

“Dost thou not see that Allah knows all that is in the heavens and the earth? There is no secret counsel of three, but He is the fourth nor of five but He is the sixth, nor of less than that, nor of more, but He is with them wheresoever they may be. Then on the Day of Resurrection He will inform them of what they did. Surely Allah knows all things full well.”(HQ 58:8)

In other verses we read:

And surely we have created man and We know what his mind whispers to him and We are nearer to Him than his jugular vein.
When the two recording angels record everything, sitting on his right and on his left
He utters not a word but there is by him a guardian angel ready to record it.(50:17-19)

So even if we forget Allah He does not stop recording what we say or do. There is a need for each one amongst us to reflect upon these verses. Usually those who meet a Sheik to help them to tread the path to Allah are made to repeat and reflect on these verses or some of them daily for a long period of time so that they might absorb the presence of Allah in their lives. In order to bring home this message there is a moral story which I read a long time ago but which I still remember today. Maybe it is from the Masnavi of Maulana Rumi or from another book. I do not know. But what it helps us

to understand is very illuminating and I will share it with you from memory. It is said that a Sheikh (someone who understood the path to God and who took students to whom he taught this path) had a group of several students. But he had a particular liking for one of them. Consequently the other students resented the fact that someone was the favorite of the master. Sensing their resentment the Sheikh devised a test to prove why he was particularly fond of his favorite. He asked each student to bring a dove the next day or he gave them one, I do not quite well remember. Then he asked them to go and kill it where no one would see them. Each one did his best to try to kill his dove where no one would see him. Some went in caves, others went behind big rocks. They did their best to do this act where no one could see them. Eventually all of them came to the master with a dead dove except the Sheikh's favorite. He brought his live dove to the assembly. So the master asked him what was the matter. He replied that he could not find a place where no one would see him because Allah was everywhere and hence he could not carry out his Sheikh's instructions. Then the Sheikh told all the students that because he had understood this fundamental he was the favorite student. There might be some variations in this story. But the gist is as I have said. So we need to understand this fundamental that Allah is everywhere and He sees all that we are doing. Whether you are in a cinema hall or you are walking in some dark streets or you are alone in your room or elsewhere, wherever you are Allah is aware of what you are doing. Allah expects us to develop this feeling in us that He is ever watchful of all our words and deeds and He expects us to speak the right word at all times and to do the right deeds at all times. This overwhelming feeling of the all pervading presence of Allah is in fact God Consciousness. We should see to it that however much we might have got of this important quality, we do not fritter it away on Eid day itself. We should see to it that we are not of that group of people who start neglecting Allah on Eid day itself. We should see to it that we are not of those who are absent for the Fajr prayer on Eid day. In fact by prescribing the two Rakaats of Eid prayer Allah wants to emphasize that on Eid Day devotion to Allah should not be neglected at all because of rejoicings. We should do our best to say all our prayers. We should eat and drink but with moderation and we should not in any way surfeit ourselves. We should not be like those people who are just waiting for Ramadan to finish so that they might follow the 30 or so episodes of their favorite serials. We should not allow our conversation to be dominated by gossip or by backbiting. We should muster the courage and show in our daily lives that we are coming from Ramadan with a renewed spirit to do good deeds that are pleasing to Allah and we should do our best to shrug off all satanic temptations.

If Allah wants us to tread the path of virtue Allah has not left us to fend off for ourselves alone. He has provided us with His Guidance in the Holy Quran. He has explained clearly to us what are the do's and don't's. But above all, noting our inherent weaknesses He has taught us a prayer which should make our task easy. That prayer is the one found in Sura Alfatiha of the Holy Quran. This prayer will never fail us. Allah has taught it to us because He wants us to be the inheritors of His Grace as others have inherited them in

the past. We all are expected to read this prayer at least 32 times everyday. But we all should ask ourselves how far we are really conscious of what we are asking Allah in this short prayer. Each one amongst us should be able to understand each word of this Sura in Arabic. We should not content ourselves with mere reading. Every time we stand up for prayer we should feel that we are standing in the Presence of Allah. Although we do not see Him, He is present and He sees and hears us. We should recite the words as if we are talking to Him. It is only then that gradually we would see its effect on us, on our behaviour, our actions. In our prayers we should constantly strive to feel the presence of Allah. This presence is not something that we get without any effort on our part. It is something that is achieved after years of practice and even then if you become negligent you may lose it. The teachings of Hazrat Masih Maood (as) on this matter is very edifying. He says:

“So all ye people who are counted as members of my community ! In heaven you shall be counted members of my following only when in all truth you actually begin to advance on the paths of righteousness. Offer your five daily obligatory prayers with such concentration and awe of mind as though you were seeing God in front of you, with your physical eyes. Observe the days of Fasting for the sake of God in full sincerity. All among you who are liable for Zakaat should never fail to discharge this important obligation; and those on whom the pilgrimage to Mecca has become obligatory, without any obstacles standing in the way, should duly undertake that blessed journey. Do all good deeds with the proper care they deserve, forsaking evil from a real repulsion rising from the heart. Be very sure that no action whatsoever can take you to God if it is devoid of righteousness of the heart.....”(Noah's Ark)

Ramadan comes and Ramadan goes away after one month. Eid comes and Eid goes after a day. But the believer's duty on his or her way to Allah never ends. This is the struggle of a lifetime. We should bear this well in mind and we should act accordingly. Although now Ramadan is gone, it does not mean that we should relax our efforts and neglect our duties towards Allah or towards others. We should use the enthusiasm that Ramadan has created in our heart to motivate ourselves to be more inclined towards Allah and not show any negligence in our duties towards Him or His Cause. Furthermore Hazrat Masih Maood (as) advises us:

“Beware of the path of destruction. Fear the Lord, be righteous, do not fall in worship before the creation of God. Turn wholly and solely to Him, so that you lose interest in this world. Become entirely His, living wholly for His will and pleasure, for His sweet sake, hating everything impure and sinful; for indeed He is Holy. Every morning should be a witness for you that you

spent the night with righteousness, and every evening should be a witness that you spent the whole day with the fear of God in your heart.”

I think we should take a moment of reflection and digest what is said in this extract. How many can truly say that as Ahmadis they are doing their best to follow these teachings of Hazrat Ahmad (as) If we are not we should take a resolution that from now on we will do our best to follow these instructions of his.

We are all strugglers in the path of Allah. Let us hope and pray that Allah accepts our humble and weak efforts and that He helps us and makes our path easy by removing the obstacles one by one. Let us hope and pray that Allah helps each one amongst us, whether he is young or old, man or women, girl or boy that we may rise to the occasion to show that we are indeed sincere in our quest for God despite all our weaknesses. Today we are celebrating Eid which has followed one month's of Ramadan sacrifices. May Allah enable each one of us to witness that other greater Eid when we would know from Allah that we have accomplished our mission on earth to His Satisfaction and about whom He says in the Holy Quran “*Razi Allahu anhoum wa razou anho*” meaning “Allah is satisfied with them and they are satisfied with Him. In fact on Wednesday last i.e on 7th August the following verse was revealed to me when I woke up :

Surely, Allah has purchased of the believers their persons and their property in return for the Garden they shall have; they fight in the cause of Allah, and they slay and are slain — a promise *that He has made* incumbent on Himself in the Torah, and the Gospel, and the Qur’an. And who is more faithful to his promise than Allah? Rejoice, then, in your bargain which you have made with Him; and that it is which is the supreme triumph.

To my understanding this verse explains the spirit of Ramadan. We let go of what is lawful in order to train ourselves to keep aloof from what is unlawful. We will have time to speak about the verse in a Friday sermon perhaps. From the Holy Quran the verse that follows throws a flood of light on it. It qualifies these believers as follows:

“*They are the ones who turn to God in repentance, who worship Him, who praise Him, who go about in the land serving Him, who bow down to God, who prostrate themselves in prayer, who enjoin good and forbid evil, and who watch the limits set by Allah. And give glad tidings to those who believe.*”

May Allah write all of us in this category of believers who let go of Ramadan but who keeps its spirit alive throughout their lives. Ameen. Eid Mubarak once again to all.

AN ANNOUNCEMENT

If you reread my Friday sermon of last week you will notice that I read an extract from the writings of Hazrat Ahmad (as) in which he spoke about how angels join the hearts of people who are at a distance and who have not met in the time of the arrival of a

representative from Allah. Last week we received an email from someone who lives in a poor country in East Asia. He is about twenty seven years old. He is active with some people calling others towards Allah. He converted to Islam in 2003. He regularly reads our website. He says he has been guided to us through a dream. He says that he agrees with our views. He has also sent me some of his pictures showing his activities. He wants to join our Jamaat and he has been requesting for additional information and any literature that we may have published. He has also expressed the wish to come over here to learn more of Islam from me. He has also invited me to visit his country in order to teach him and his friends. Personally this has been a very good piece of news for this end of Ramadan, I am informing you so that you might remember him in your prayers and let us hope that a very fruitful collaboration will ensue between us. May Allah enable this friend of ours to embark on this path that leads to Allah and may he become a means for others to be properly guided. Please do remember our friend from Dubai also in your prayers. May Allah bless him and all members of his family and keep them all safe under His Protection. We send our Eid greetings to all of them. May Allah open the way for us to meet face to face in the near future *incha Allah*. Eid Mubarak to All once again.