

FRIDAY SERMON

16 August 2013

by Imam Zafrullah Domun

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

By the Grace of Allah one week is already gone by since the month of Ramadan has ended for this year. There is no doubt that a Muslim believer makes great sacrifices in the month of Ramadan to try to please Allah. For most Muslims when the month of Ramadan ends there is a sigh of relief which is quite legitimate. Although Allah prescribed fasting for us in order that we might become more righteous, it does not mean that when we are not fasting we should relax our efforts in trying to increase the level of our righteousness. In fact we understand from the teachings of Islam that righteousness is a quality that we should strive to develop within ourselves throughout our life. Whatever the level we might have attained there will always be new vistas for improvement. Under no circumstance should we labour under the delusion that we have attained a degree of righteousness which can allow us to do whatever we wish. So the struggle to give Allah a greater importance in our life and the struggle to dominate our impulses which make us revolt against Allah is one that goes on continuously until our death.

So the importance of reading all our daily prayers in time and improving the quality of these prayers is a struggle that should be with us always and we should do our best to become such persons who are overwhelmed with the presence of Allah in our daily life. Towards this end we should resort to the reading of the Holy Quran daily and we should do our best to reflecting upon its teachings. As good Muslims we should become the embodiment of its teachings and we should be concerned that this is the greatest gift that we could give our children when we are departing from this world. I speak regularly about the quality of our prayers and the need to read the Holy Quran because I think that these are two fundamentals that would help us to stay focused on the purpose of our life.

If we try to improve the way we pray and our understanding of the Holy Quran daily, with the passage of time we will notice marked improvements. Unfortunately however very often we will meet with setbacks and we would have a tendency to be discouraged and to relax our efforts. If we do so we will follow a downward trend. But if we stay focused and determined we will fight our discouragement with more prayers and more reading of the Holy Quran. Consequently we will get that inner peace which will help us to understand that Allah is the source of all goodness that might come to us. With the help of Allah we will get a better control on our own selves and slowly we will start understanding how the mere remembrance of Allah will be our greatest source of bliss. May Allah help us to understand the illusory nature of all worldly pleasures and may He help us to understand how all Favors are in His hands and what He says is the Truth whether we understand it or not.

To facilitate our path to Him , Allah has taught us Sura Al Fatiha. Hazrat Masih Maood^{as} has taught us what he has learnt from this Sura. He has spoken lengthily about the different aspects of Sura Al Fatiha . I will share with you some of these extracts which we have not heard before. He says:

“In short the journey of the seeker after God cannot be accomplished, nor can it lead to salvation except with the help of perfect sincerity, utmost effort and full understanding of guidance. In fact, a person is not fit to be taken as a servant unless he possesses these three qualities. For instance, a servant who is sincere, honest, well meaning and pious, but is indolent , slothful and lazy, dozes off when he should be awake and is neglectful, lacking initiative and all will towards effort, would undoubtedly be a burden on his employer, would not be able to follow his directions and to carry them out. Another one who is loyal and dependable and also hardworking and not an idler like the first one, but is ignorant, fails to grasp the directions of his employer and repeatedly makes mistakes like those who have lost their way, and because of his ignorance is often betrayed into offending against the prohibitions and exposes himself to dangers and gets involved in trouble and, because of his utter stupidity, alienates the good will of his master many a time, through his ignorance and faulty understanding , wastes the precious possessions of his master, like pearls and jewelry, and arranges everything in wrong order out of lack of intelligence. Such alone also cannot win the pleasure of his master. His inanity lowers him in the eyes of his employer every time. He weeps like the destitute and drags on his life in misery and wretchedness. He cannot be counted among the worthy ones. In fact his employer considers him unlucky who never gathers any good out of all his activities and continuously wastes his master's property of every description. The blessed servant and the blissful employee is one who pleases his master and neglects not a syllable of his directions and hears words of approval and praise from his lord. This is the one who combines in his person the three qualities fully and does not offend his master by his dishonesty or unfairness nor injure him through negligence or ignorance and becomes a well-liked servant. These are the three conditions for those who follow the ways of their Lord seeking fully His guidance: We worship Thee; is the first condition, We implore Thy help; is the second, and: Guide us along the straight path, is the third. Felicity is, therefore, for those who combine these three in their person and turn wholly to their God. They observe all the requirements of reverence in their attitude towards their Lord and pursue their way to Him fulfilling all conditions without falling short in any manner. These are the people with whom Allah is pleased and they are pleased with Him. They enter the sanctum of Holiness in peace. Since these conditions are matters of weight for one who takes to the paths of light, Allah the Wise made them ingredients of prayer, so that the spiritual wayfarer may reflect deeply on them like persons of sagacity and so that the way of the dishonest may become manifest (*Karamatus Sadiqeen*,pp. 104-106).

This book “*Karamatus Sadiqeen*” which means “The prodigies of the Truthfuls” was written in Arabic and posted to Arab countries. Those who read the book were impressed

by the ideas expressed in it. Speaking more on the subject of prayer Hazrat Masih Maood (as) said:

“The essence of worship is that the worshiper should feel as if he is in the presence of God, or at least that God sees him. He should be free completely from every diverting and distracting tendency, and keep in view only His greatness and His Providence. He should continue addressing to God prescribed as well as other prayers and have repeated recourse to *tauba* (seeking refuge with God) and *Istighfar* (seeking forgiveness and obliteration of wrongs) and should repeatedly confess his own helplessness, so that his self may be purified and his communion with God may be strengthened and he should be completely absorbed in His love. This is the quintessence of the entire Prayer service and is all comprised in Surah Fatiha. We worship Thee alone and implore only Thy help; is a confession of one's own weaknesses and an appeal addressed to God, the Supreme, alone for His help and succour. Next there is prayer for guidance along the path of the Prophets and Messengers and the grant of favours that the world experienced through Prophets and Messengers and which are attainable only through following them and pursuing their ways. Next, a supplication is made to Allah for protection against treading in the direction taken by those who rejected and behaved arrogantly towards His Prophets and Messengers and were afflicted with Divine wrath in this very world, and against the ways of those who made the world their objective and abandoned the right path (Al-Hakam, Oct. 24, 1907).

In another extract he says:

“Man boasts of worshipping God. But does worship only comprise many prostrations, repeated obeisance and standing at attention or do those who turn their beads over and over deserve to be called worshippers of God? Indeed not. Only he is capable of worship whom the love of God draws so close that his own self is excluded altogether. First, there should be full faith in the Existence of God and then full knowledge of His Beauty and Beneficence and then there should be the attachment of love with Him, constantly aflame in the bosom, radiating itself at all times in the face. The impression of His magnificence on the heart should be so deep that the entire world should appear like dead in contrast with Him; every fear should derive from Him alone and all pleasure should be in His love and all joy in seclusion with Him and no comfort without Him. If and when one's condition is such this is the state of true worship. But this state cannot be achieved without the special help of God, the Most Excellent. Therefore, the Supreme Being taught the prayer: We worship Thee alone and implore Thee alone for help; that is, we cannot carry out worship in the true sense unless there is special help forthcoming from Thee. Worshipping God as the real object of all love is true saintliness, beyond which there is no higher

degree, but this is unattainable except with His help. It is attained when His magnificence is imprinted on the heart and the heart is filled with His love and relies totally on Him and chooses Him alone and prefers Him to all else, making His remembrance its only goal. This is a very narrow door and a very bitter draught. Few enter this door and few quaff this draught “(Haqiqatul Wahi, pp. 51-52).

When we reflect on this extract and at the same time we think about all the devotions that we did during the Holy Month of Ramazan, we cannot fail to understand that whatever was the qualities and quantities of our worship they were still inadequate if they did not reach the level that Hazrat Masih is speaking about in the above extract. If on the one hand the reading of this extract makes us humble for whatever worship we have been offering, on the other hand it helps us to realize that we have still a long way to go. So as good and determined Ahmadi Muslims who understand that the struggle in the path of Allah is not for some hours or some particular days in the year but throughout our lifetime, we should roll our sleeves and continue our struggle against our own selves and against all satanic influences with greater vigor as real man and woman of God have been doing throughout the ages. These days we are claiming that Allah has chosen us to put into practice His teachings. We should first of all be convinced that we are walking on the straight path taught by Allah and we should do our best to bring others to this path. Allah has been kind to us and now it is our duty to share this kindness of being well guided with others.

We will end with another extract from the writings of Hazrat Masih Maood (as). He says:

“God made man and sent down for him a law and prescribed rules and penalties. The primary object of all this is not that he should attain to salvation. Man has been created for perpetual servitude of God. The object of his religious life is eternal serfdom of God; salvation being its necessary concomitant, attainment to which results from the achievement of the true objective. Freedom from sin is also not the object of law and the ordinances. For freedom from sin is also a concomitant of the true objective. Salvation through sincerity and steadfastness. When man takes to worship and obedience he is necessarily freed from sin, being far removed from it. When he is freed from sin he is saved from the fruits of sin. The way to salvation, therefore, is to stand in an attitude of sincerity and steadfastness before the Source of all light whence rays of light descend. That posture has been called *Istiqamat* (uprightness) as Allah, the Sublime, says: Stand upright as thou hast been commanded(11.113). There is no doubt that rays of light will descend on whoso stands before the Source of light and through the descent of light will be dispelled that darkness which is called sinfulness. We know that no darkness is dispelled without the descent of light. God, the Supreme, sends light millions of miles downward to dispel darkness. Darkness cannot stay before light. It may be asked when can man be said to have taken his stand before the Source of all light. The answer is that this would be said when he turns

over to righteousness in all aspects of his life and loves truth and sin is no longer attractive to him, in fact he looks upon it with abhorrence and seeks the help of God to deliver him from it. God, the Gracious, the Compassionate then helps him and sends down His light to deliver him from this darkness. This prayer is taught for this very purpose indeed: We seek Thy help in this affliction. Help us take our stand in the path of the descent of the rays of Thy grace (Al-Hakam, May 17, 1904).”

May Allah help all of us to stay on the right path.

ANNOUNCEMENT:

By the Grace of Allah we have the pleasure to announce that our nephew Wahid Abdullah , son of Mobashir & Hanisha Domun has successfully obtained his Bsc in Banking & Investment from the University of Mauritius. *Alhamdo Lillah Ma sha Allah.* We pray that this success brings him, his parents and the family and the Jamaat lots of blessings *incha* Allah both materially and spiritually. Ameen!