

EID UL ADHA SERMON

Of Imam Zafrullah Domun

16th October 2013

After reading the *Tashahhud*, the *Tauz* and Sura Al *Fatiha* Imam Zafrullah Domun said:

By Allah's Grace once again we are assembled here to pray on this auspicious occasion of Eid ul Adha. I am quite pleased to offer my Eid greetings of Eid Mubarak to all our brothers and sisters who are here and those who might be reading this sermon later on. May Allah help each one amongst us to understand the true meaning of this Eid in such way that its lessons remain with us throughout our lifetime and that our children also will imbibe the same teachings and they will transmit the same to their own descendants and so on and so forth. May Allah help each one amongst us that we might be able to understand the spirit that animated Hazrat Ibrahim's soul and Hazrat Ismail's soul and Hazrat Hajra's soul. May the example of these noble and exalted beings be forever an inspiration for all those who strive to tread the path leading to Allah and who want to purify their souls of all its evils. These were the people who received great blessings from Allah and so did some of their descendants and they are held in high esteem in the eyes of Allah and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw). This esteem is such that till the end of time members of the umma of the Holy Prophet (saw) have been commanded to pray that Allah favors the umma of the Holy Prophet (saw) as He favoured the umma of Hazrat Ibrahim (as) and his descendants.

Whenever we speak about *Eid ul adha* we cannot fail to mention the sacrifices that Hazrat Ibrahim and his family endured for the sake of Allah. He was rather young when he was called to make a Jihad against *Shirk* (association of others with Allah). From the bible we understand that initially his name was Abram. But later Allah gave him the name Abraham (father of a multitude). Allah told him that many people will believe in him. He was even told that his descendents will be like the stars in the sky. He had faith in Allah's words. He did what he was told to do. But as time went on he did not get any child. But he continued to pray to Allah to grace him with a child. Eventually that child came when he was around 86 years old. That child was not born from his first wife but her maid whom he had taken into wedlock. When the child was still a baby he understood from Allah that he should leave him and her mother in the valley of Mecca which at that time was a desert place where there was no water at all. When they had used all the water that they brought along, Hazrat Hajra was in a desperate state and she ran on the hill of *Safa* and then on the opposite one namely *Marwa* to see if she could see someone to come to her rescue and that of her child. She met no one. She did this several times. Eventually on one of her rounds she saw a

spring at the feet of her son Ismail which we know today as the *Zamzam*. After sometime caravans in the desert passed by and they asked for permission to use the water. Some of these people settled by and Hazrat Ismail grew among them. He married and settled down. This tribe of his became the original people of Mecca. Ismail's father Hazrat Ibrahim (as) used to visit them from time to time and under instructions from Allah they would together rebuild the House of Allah which had been in ruins. We learn from the Holy Quran about this phase of the life in the following verses:

And *remember* when his Lord tried Abraham with certain commands which he fulfilled. He said, 'I will make thee a Leader of men.' *Abraham* asked, 'And from among my offspring?' He said, 'My covenant does not embrace the transgressors.'

Prior to this verse the discussion was about the Jews and how they have been breaking their covenant with Allah. In this verse Allah reminds us of what was the covenant of Allah with Hazrat Ibrahim (as). He was someone who fulfilled the covenant of Allah. There have been many among his descendants who have been fulfilling the covenant with Allah. But eventually some of them broke it when they killed prophets and practiced injustice and treated prophets as liars. The best reference we know about this behavior of the Jews was the way they treated Hazrat Yahya and Hazrat Isa (as). They denied these prophets of Allah and eventually they denied the Holy Prophet saw as well. Allah told Hazrat Ibrahim that if his offspring are transgressors they would lose the privileged position that they had in Allah's sight. The promise of Allah that He made with Hazrat Ibrahim would not apply to them. From this verse we understand that such a situation may apply to any group of people. May Allah protect us from such evils.

Then Allah says: *And remember the time* when We made the House a resort for mankind and *a place of security*; and take ye the station of Abraham as a place of Prayer. And We commanded Abraham and Ishmael, *saying*, 'Purify My House for those who perform the circuit and those who remain *therein* for devotion and those who bow down and fall prostrate *in Prayer*.'

And *remember* when Abraham said, 'My Lord, make this a town of peace and provide with fruits such of its dwellers as believe in Allah and the Last Day,' He said, 'And on him too who believes not will I bestow benefits for a little while; then will I drive him to the punishment of the Fire, and an evil destination it is.'

Then Allah speaks about how both Hazrat Ibrahim and Hazrat Ismail worked together to put the foundations of the house of Allah in place:

And *remember the time* when Abraham and Ishmael raised the foundations of the House, *praying*, 'Our Lord, accept *this* from us; for Thou art All-Hearing, All-Knowing.'

Today we can only imagine what it was like when these two servants of Allah were repairing this place of worship. Most probably they did not have any tools. They did

not have a wheelbarrow to carry the rocks from the surrounding place. They did not have any of the material means that became available through history, yet their humble work is still more important than however great history will make that place in the eyes of men. In the heat of the desert they worked to rebuild Allah's house of worship and they asked Allah to accept whatever they were presenting to him. They also asked Allah thus:

'Our Lord, make us submissive to Thee and make of our offspring a people submissive to Thee. And show us our ways of worship, and turn to us with mercy; for Thou art Oft-Returning with compassion and Merciful.'

This was an excellent prayer. Both Hazrat Ibrahim and his son Ismail submitted themselves to Allah and they prayed that such submission should prevail amongst their descendants. Their descendants cared for their heritage and they looked after that place of worship and they tried to be submissive and they offered sacrifices in the way of Allah for a long time. But eventually people reverted to associating partners with Allah and they abandoned the religion of Abraham. But Allah is always true to His promise. In answer to the following prayer of Hazrat Ibrahim and Ismail (as): **'And, our Lord, raise up among them a Messenger from among themselves, who may recite to them Thy Signs and teach them the Book and Wisdom and may purify them; surely, Thou art the Mighty, the Wise.'**, Allah raised the Holy Prophet (saw). Consequently since his time the House of Allah has been playing an important role in eradicating Shirk from the surface of the earth. With the arrival of the Holy Prophet (saw) through the Holy Quran we have come to know more of the grandeur of Hazrat Ibrahim and his son Ismail and the esteem that they have in the eyes of Allah. There are many verses of the holy Quran where Allah speaks eulogiously about them. I suggest that each one amongst us should read these verses and marvel at who these people were.

Now let us say a few words about the sacrifice that is usually performed on these days. Speaking about this matter Allah says in the Holy Quran:

'My Lord, grant me a righteous son.' So We gave him the glad tidings of a forbearing son.

"And when he was old enough to run along with him, he said "O my dear son I have seen in a dream that I offer thee in sacrifice. So consider what thou thinkest of it" He replied "O my father do as thou art commanded; you will find me if Allah pleases among those who are patient."(37:103).

And when they both submitted to the Will of God, and he had thrown him down on his forehead, We called to him: 'O Abraham, Thou hast indeed fulfilled the dream.' Thus indeed do We reward those who do good. That surely was a manifest trial. And We ransomed him with a great sacrifice. And We left for him a good name among the following generations — (37:101-108)

Hazrat Ibrahim was a prophet of God. Allah used to speak to him. Those who have a relationship with Allah and who experience revelations from Allah know quite well that besides these revelations, sometimes one may see things in a vision and sometimes one may see some matters in dreams. The words “*Inni Jaaeloka linnaase immama*”, that is “I will make you a leader of men” was a revelation. But concerning the sacrificing of his son Ismail, it was a dream. He understood that he had to realize that dream. This was what he understood. And he was ready to sacrifice his beloved son. Both he and his son Ismail were ready to obey what they understood to be the will of Allah. Allah says it was a manifest trial. Allah knows best what he was testing him for. Anyhow Allah appreciated his readiness to kill his son because he understood it to be an instruction from Allah. This readiness to abandon all is the spirit of Abraham. Allah says “*wa fadaynaho be zibhin Azim*” meaning and “and we ransomed him with a great sacrifice”. Asking Allah for a son and getting that son in old age and be ready to sacrifice him was a really great sacrifice. In other words Allah appreciated what Abraham was ready to do and rewarded him the equivalent of a great sacrifice which was not to stop with him. In remembrance of him the Holy Prophet (saw) re instituted the Hajj and sacrifices are made on the tenth day of *Zul Hijja* and the two days that follow.

However these sacrifices of animals are not per se anything great if through it one does not show preparedness or a readiness to make the ultimate sacrifice for the pleasure of Allah. Through animal sacrifices those who offer sacrifices should show through their everyday actions that they are ready at any moment to accept death or to kill all those desires and evil inclinations that displease their lord Allah. Abraham was ready to sacrifice what was most dear to him for the sake of His Lord. So should we be to sacrifice all our animalistic inclinations for the sake of Allah. Allah has made it clear to us that none of the meat nor the blood of sacrificial animals reach Him. What reaches Him is only His fear and love that animates our heart. So we see that all Islamic worship is geared to Allah, to His Satisfaction. We say *Laa ilaha illallah* to eradicate all else from our heart. We pray to develop a relationship with Allah. We fast to become more pious, to develop Allah’s fear and love in our heart. We pay *Zakaat* to purify our money for Allah’s sake. We go for Hajj to manifest our Love for Allah and those who cannot go for Hajj have to content themselves with making sacrifices of animals as best as they can in their respective countries. In brief, the true Muslim who understands Allah’s purpose tries to find Him in everything that He does. May Allah help each one amongst us to develop such a spirit within us and may we be able to bequeath the same to our progeny. May Allah accept whatever little sacrifice that we make in His Path. Ameen