

# FRIDAY SERMON

04 October 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 read verse 103 of Chapter Al Imran (3) of the Holy Quran

The month of *Zul Qada* is coming to a close and the moon for the month of *Zul Hajj* will appear either tomorrow after sunset or on Sunday at latest. It is very unlikely that we might see the moon for the month of *Zul Hajj* tomorrow because we have only about 16 hours from the birth of the moon to its possible visibility. Hence, weather permitting it should be visible on Sunday and the first day of *Zul Hajj* will be on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> October. That being the case, *Eid ul Adha* will be celebrated in Mauritius on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> October. If, however, under exceptional circumstances the moon is visible tomorrow, *Eidul Adha* will be celebrated here on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> of October. We will *insha* Allah announce the time for prayer next week after consultation with the members.

One may ask whether there is any special type of devotion that we should be engaged with prior to *Eid ul Adha*. We can reply to this question by quoting two hadiths where the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw) is reported to have said:

**"There are no days in which righteous deeds done in them are more beloved to Allah than these days, i.e. the ten days (of Zul-Hijjah). They said: O Messenger of Allah, not even *Jihaad* in the path of Allah? He said: Not even *Jihaad* in the Path of Allah, the Most High, except if a man goes out (for *Jihaad*) with his self and his wealth, then he doesn't return with anything from that."** (Al-Bukhaaree, Abu Daawood and others. The exact wording is that of Abu Dawood)

**"There aren't any days greater, nor any days in which deeds done in them are more beloved to Allah Most High, than these ten days (of *zul-Hijjah*). So, increase in them the saying of *Tahleel* (*Laa-ilaaha-ill-Allah*), and *Takbeer* (*Allahu-Akbar*) and *Tahmeed* (*al-hamdu-lillaah*)."**

Those Muslims who have the means will resort to the House of Allah for the ceremonies of Hajj, which as we know is one of the pillars of Islam. As we all know, not all Muslims can go to Mecca for Hajj. It is impractical. Most Muslims stay behind in their own countries. It is precisely for such people that the Holy Prophet (saw) has recommended that they should do the good deeds mentioned above. In the first hadith we understand that good deeds done in these days are most acceptable to Allah. If a believer knows beforehand that the coming days are full of blessings, will he just go after his usual routine or will he or she avail himself or herself of this opportunity and try to accomplish as much good deeds as he can during these days? You will all agree that as good Muslims who are eager to find acceptance in the sight of Allah we

should be most keen to accomplish good deeds in the coming days prior to *Eidul Adha*. In the second hadith the Holy Prophet (saw) has specified what we should be doing, namely repeating *Tahleel* (*Laa-ilaaha-ill-Allah*), and *Takbeer* (*Allahu-Akbar*) and *Tahmeed* (*al-hamdu-lillaah*).

Speaking of good deeds let us remind ourselves of some of them. Let us start with Namaz (salaat). As a Muslim we are expected to understand each word that we pronounce when we pray. We should see to it that we thoroughly understand each of the Arabic words that we pronounce. We should see to it that we engage in making more supplications to Allah during the coming days. If we are not among those who pray *Fajr* prayer in time we should use this occasion to try to make this practice our daily routine. Most people can and should try to pray their *Fajr* and *Esha* prayers in time. It is only for hypocrites that these prayers are difficult according to a hadith. It is Allah's favour upon us that He has kept us alive up to now. We should show some thankfulness by striving to do our duties towards Him in the best possible way. Remember to pray in such a way being conscious that Allah is present in front of you and if you cannot reach such a degree of concentration remember that nonetheless He is seeing you.

Next I will say that besides these obligatory prayers we should also try to do some *nafil* ones. Our *nafil* prayers help to fill the shortcomings that exist in our regular prayers. That is why we should resort to it from time to time. So since good deeds are most pleasing to Allah during the coming days it would be good for all of us to do some more *nafil* prayers during these days.

You will recall what I said during the month of Ramadan or after Eid. I said that each one amongst us should make it our routine to read the Holy Quran almost every day. I do not know how many have started doing so. But if you have not you should. These days specially there is an acute need for each one amongst us to read and deeply understand this great book. It is a book full of wisdom and it will help us to navigate our way through this world and through the next. So let us use the coming days to devote more time to reading and pondering over it. A casual reading will not help anyone at all. What is needed is reading to understand and to put into practice its teachings. Allah has told us “*Inna haazal qur'aana yahdi lillati heya aqwam wa yo bashsheroul mo'meninal lazina ya'malounas swalehaate anna lahoum ajran kabira*” (HQ 17:10) meaning “Surely this Quran guides to what is most right and gives to the believers who do good deeds the glad tidings that they shall have a great reward.” for any problem that we may face in life it has a solution or for every question it has an answer. It is a great mercy from Allah that He has given us this Book through the Holy Prophet (saw). So if up till now you have not yet understood the importance of this great book for the guidance of your life, you can still find time in the coming days to read and ponder over it and to make this part of your daily routine for ever as long as you live.

The Holy Prophet (saw) has advised all of us that we should constantly be saying the *Tahlil* *Takbir* and *Tahmid* during the first ten days of *Zul Hajj*. These three formulas are, according to my understanding, words which will help us to stay away from associating anyone with Allah (Shirk) and from giving importance to our own self and from self praise. The *Tahlil* is the saying “*Laa Ilaha Illal lah*” meaning there is no one to worship, there is no one to obey, there is no one to love and there is no one who is the primary object of our existence but Allah. This

sentence which is part of the credo of Islam draws our mind to our relationship with Allah. In brief we live for His sake. In whatever we do His thought should be uppermost in our mind. Reminding ourselves of this most important fact during the days prior to the *Eid Akbar* helps to focus our mind on the state of mind of the great beloved of Allah who was Hazrat Ibrahim (as). To Ibrahim Allah was everything. For His sake he was ready to do anything, even to sacrifice his son because he understood he was expected to do so. He showed to the world what being loyal to Allah meant. That is why we read in the Holy Quran **“And who will turn away from the religion of Abraham but he who makes a fool of himself. We chose him in this world and in the next he will be amongst the righteous. When his Lord said to him, 'Submit', he said 'I have already submitted to the Lord of the worlds.' And this submission to Allah he did not just do it for himself. Allah says: “The same did Ibrahim enjoin upon his sons, -and Jacob also-saying 'o my sons, truly Allah has chosen this religion for you; so let not death overtake you except when you are in a state of complete submission”**(HQ 2:131-33)

Hazrat Ibrahim was one of the greatest prophets of all times. His submission to Allah was exemplary. He had faith in what Allah said to him. This Hajj is a reminder to all Muslims who would come till the end of days of his example and that of his family members. Through this Eid ul adha Allah has perpetuated his memory for all generations to come. So the individual Muslim is advised do repeat *tahlil* to remind himself or herself of what Allah should mean to him or her in life. He has an idea of what Allah should mean when he reflects upon the example of Hazrat Ibrahim (as).

Next the Holy Prophet (saw) has advised us to repeat “*takbir*”, i.e we declare “that Allah is the greatest”. The Muslim should remind himself through this statement that “there is no one greater than Allah”. In the world many people may be considered great. The leaders of big countries are considered great by common people and so are those who accomplish great things in the world. The Muslim is reminded and he is expected to nail it in his heart and mind that “there is no one greater than Allah”. This should be part of his faith. He might be at pains to help others to understand that. But to him it should be clear that this is truth whether he understands it or not. But if he reads the Holy Quran he would come to understand this well. *Takbir* instills in the heart of the Muslim that whatever his personal accomplishments in the world or whatever the quantity or quality of his devotions, Allah is the greatest. This should help the Muslim to be quite humble in all circumstances of life.

The *Tahmid*, that is the saying of “*Alhamdo lillah*” meaning “All praise belong to Allah” is another formula, another phrase which helps to create humility in us. Under no circumstance should any Muslim think that he or she is praiseworthy. All praise is due for Allah. If any Muslim has any merit, it manifests itself because of what Allah has endowed him in the first place. Hence whatever we have is god given initially. We use what we have been endowed with to achieve other accomplishments. Under all circumstance we should attribute our accomplishments to Allah's Grace. Hence under all circumstances He is the One to whom praise is due and not to us. We become worthy in the sight of Allah only when we do our best to follow the teachings that He has given us and only when we strive to have an increase of His fear in our heart. He says in the Holy Quran: **“O mankind, We have created you from a male and a female; and We have made you into tribes and sub-tribes that you may recognize one another.**

**Verily, the most honourable among you, in the sight of Allah, is he who is the most righteous among you. Surely, Allah is All-knowing, All-Aware.”(49:14).** This verse helps us to understand what we should aim for if we are looking for merit. Such a merit can be guessed by human beings but it is only Allah who knows for sure who is that person who really fears Him. Hence we should strive to get that increase in *taqwallah* which will make us worthy in the sight of Allah.

So let each one amongst us use the blessed first ten days of the sacred month of Zull Hajj to multiply good deeds as best as we can and let us repeatedly engage ourselves in *Tahlil, Takbir and Tahmid* and may these phrases enlighten us all to understand what is really important for us to strive for. May Allah bless you all. Ameen.