

by Imam Zafrullah Domun

After reciting the *Tashahhud*, the *Ta'uz* and the first chapter *Al Fatiha* of the Holy Quran Imam Zafrullah Domun recited verse 13 of chapter 17 of the Holy Quran in Arabic and then he said:

Today is the last Friday of this year, 2013. One year ends and another begins. In the verse which I have just read Allah says:

“And we have made the night and the day two signs, and the sign of the day we have made sight giving that you may seek the bounty of your Lord, and that you may know the computation of years and the process of reckoning. And everything we have explained with a detailed explanation.”

Today we know that night and days are produced by the rotation of the earth around the sun. Today scientists have very sophisticated instruments to measure time, that is, the computation of years and taking account of events as they happen. In the time of the Holy Prophet (saw) or even before astronomy as a science had not yet developed as we know it today or at the beginning of the seventeenth century in Europe when it started taking its flight. Anyhow that is a long story which is not at all the purpose of our sermon today. The festivities surrounding Christmas and the New Year are relics of Roman culture which have survived in different forms till our time. When the Roman Emperor Constantine embraced Christianity in the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> Century AD, Roman festivals were Christianized. As Christianity spread around the world throughout the century the original festivals associated with the changing of seasons were supplanted and replaced by festivities around the birth of Christ. Through colonization the Christian countries of Europe exported their culture around the world and this is how Christmas and end of year festivities have acquired an importance even in Mauritius throughout the years.

As Muslim believers who follow the teachings of the Holy Quran we are not expected to imitate others in what they do. What Allah has given us is far better than what others have and it is our duty as Muslims to understand that Islam has superior teachings and we should spread these teachings around the world. But we should not ever think that we should ignore new ways of doing things that others might be practicing or innovating and not incorporate them in our own societies for the benefit of the people. We should learn to make the distinction between what is harmless, what is harmful and what is good that non Muslim societies are doing. If we pick from them we should pick what is best and not what might be harmful to us or to our offspring. May Allah always guide us in our choice. Ameen

So at the end of a year what I think we should be concentrating upon as good Muslims are about the Favours of Allah upon us. We should be thankful that only through Allah's Grace that all those who were alive amongst us at the beginning of the year are still alive today. As a Muslim believer we should render thanks to Allah that we are still here and we have not formed part of the 7000 Mauritians or so who have died during the year. In this country we witnessed two major tragedies during the year. The first was when a flash flood killed about 11 persons on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> March. The second one was a bus accident in which about eleven people died and several others were injured. What happened on those fateful days will be vividly remembered by many for many years to come. Those who died on those days were people like you and me who left their house in the morning with the hope of returning at night or in the evening. Unfortunately they did not. But such is life; it is so fragile. Death may come in an instant at any moment specially when we expect it not. We should always be ever prepared to go when the call comes. Most unfortunately not many are really conscious of how vulnerable we are and how we may vanish in a moment. Yet there are many who are not preparing themselves "for the day of return to Allah, for the day when there will be no buying and selling, nor friendship nor intercession". The Holy Quran constantly reminds us of that day when we will stand in front of Allah and where an account of our deeds will be read. It says:

"And every man's deeds have we fastened to his neck; and on the day of resurrection we shall bring out for him a book which he will find wide open. It will be said to him "read your book. Sufficient is thy own soul as reckoner against thee this day." (17:14-5)

According to the commentators we are stuck with our deeds. What has been done cannot be undone. Our deeds might not be visible to others but we are stuck with them and we cannot separate ourselves from them except through repentance and penitence and almsgiving. We should pause for a moment and reflect how serious this matter is for all of us. In this world we do so many things that we would not like others to know about. Yet on the day of resurrection according the Holy Quran all our deeds will be exposed. How terrible should such a moment be for everybody, from the lowest to the highest person? We have been given graphic image of that moment because, I think Allah wants all of us to be very careful and not lead a life of carelessness. Furthermore in that same chapter Allah says:

"He who follows the right way follows it for the good of his own soul; and he who goes astray does so only to his own loss. And no bearer of burden shall bear the burden of another. And we never punish until we have sent a messenger."

Whatever good we do, whatever improvement we bring to our own soul, the benefit will be ours. Anyone who goes astray wrongs his or her own soul. None of us will be responsible for what someone else does. Each person is responsible for himself or herself. No one will bear the burden of another. Each one will be weighed down with his

own burden. Words of the Holy Quran are not to be read and forgotten. Most probably it is because we have a tendency to forget that the word “*qur’an*” is used for the book revealed to our Holy Prophet Mohammad (saw). It is a book that needs to be constantly read so that its teachings may be ever present in our mind and we do not forget it.

Islam teaches us personal responsibility. Our salvation will depend upon our own efforts and Allah’s Grace. If we obey Allah’s teachings He will amply reward us from Himself. It is indeed quite wrong to believe that just because we have a caliph or *nizam* we will be saved. There is nothing that could be further from the truth. We will be saved by the good intentions that underlie all our deeds. We may do good deeds with bad intentions but such good deeds will not bring us any kind of benefit. On the contrary it will be the cause of our loss.

Many Ahmadis wrongly believe that just because they have a caliph they will be saved. Nothing can be further from the truth. There is a generation of Ahmadis who today are in their fifties and above and who wrongly entertain such beliefs and spread them around through their ignorance. In fact Hazrat Masih Maood (as) has explicitly taught us that salvation will depend upon our correct beliefs and appropriate good deeds. Anyone who thinks that there is another way not only deludes himself but deludes all those whom he would like to embrace his beliefs. Jamaat Ahmadiyya mainstream is totally wrong in believing that it can grant people salvation. For centuries Roman Catholic Church believed as such until they have had to change their beliefs or admit that others also may be saved. Such change in belief came through the Second Vatican council that took place in mid 1960s. Sooner or later Jamaat Ahmadiyya mainstream also will have to admit that by neglecting self reformation at all levels of the Jamaat and by not practicing what it preaches it has done lots of harm to the cause of the Hazrat Masih Maood (as). I have maintained since a long time now that Jamaat Ahmadiyya mainstream has been practicing some aspects of Islam which are completely against the real spirit of Islam as taught to us by Hazrat Masih Maood (as). For the past thirteen years in Mauritius the mainstream Ahmadiyya Jamaat has been violating the basic principles of Islam with regard to the relationship of leaders and followers, with regard to family relationship with regard to the basic human rights of some individuals. Allah is watching. Sooner or later the leaders will have to get prepared to see their book of deeds and that day will be terrible for he who ignored it. At least so says the Holy Quran.

Last week I saw in a dream that I was leading prayer in the Darus Salaam mosque at the mainstream Jamaat’s headquarters. Many members of the Jamaat were praying behind me. In the second *rakaat* I read the last verse of *Sura Baqara*. I remember reading only the prayers which are translated as follows:

“Our Lord do not punish us if we forget or fall into error and our Lord lay not on us a responsibility as thou didst lay upon those before us. Our Lord burden us not with what we have not the strength to bear ;efface our sins ,

grant us forgiveness and have mercy upon us ; Thou art our Master ; so help us against the disbelieving people.”

We all know quite well how important these prayers are and the Holy Prophet Mohammad (saw) has asked us to repeatedly read these prayers. First of all we ask Allah to forgive us if we forget or we fall into error. Some things might be forgotten for example we might forget to say Salaam on entering the house. We might forget to bring something for someone who is in need of it. These are small matters and we ask Allah to forgive them if we forget or fall into error. But we cannot forget to pray our five daily prayers. Such duties cannot and should not be forgotten. Secondly we ask Allah not to burden us with a responsibility as previous people were burdened with. The previous people spoken of here are principally the Jews and the Christian. They received the message of *Tauheed* but with time they distorted it. So the *umma* of the Holy Prophet (saw) has been favoured so much that they have been taught to pray so that they might not become like those people who preceded them. Thirdly we pray so that we may shoulder whatever responsibility Allah chooses to lay upon us. Then we ask Allah to efface our sins, to forgive us and to have mercy upon us and to grant us victory over those who do not believe.

What is the exact meaning of this dream, Allah has not told me. But from what I can gather is that I am leading a whole Jamaat making these prayers. These prayers are for self purification, for the granting of the necessary capacity to do what needs to be done, for the obliteration of all sins, for forgiveness for mercy and for victory over the disbelieving people. Allah sends an Imam as a mercy for the people. The people in question are those who are best equipped to understand the purpose of such an imam. But the people's leadership chooses to ignore what Allah does to prefer what their fathers accepted. Whoever from mainstream Jamaat reads this sermon should take time to reflect on what I am saying and wonder whether they are really following the path that leads to Allah or the one that leads away from Him. Each member of Jamaat Ahmadiyya Al Mouslemeen also should examine himself or herself and wonder whether he or she is following the teachings that has been received or not. My prayer and hope is that Allah helps each one amongst us to really come to know and understand that Allah is our greatest treasure and that we should value Him as such. We do not need anyone for our salvation. Allah has made better provision for us and for members of the Jamaat provided we accept Allah's guidance. May Allah open people's heart to this wisdom. Ameen!