

EID-UL-FITR SERMON

29 July 2014

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:

Today is Eid for almost all Muslims around the world with a few exceptions. Words fail us to express our thanks to Allah who has been so Gracious to us that He allowed us to see the month of Ramadan and to fast therein and today to celebrate Eid. From the depth of our heart we say Eid Mubarak to you all and to our friends who are with us although they might be elsewhere in the world. Our Eid Mubarak greetings also go to all Muslims around the world. To us if someone declares himself a Muslim he is considered a brother in faith although he might not like us. Anyhow in our greetings there are no exceptions. May Allah bless the Umma of the Holy Prophet (saw) around the world. May Allah reform the Umma of the Holy Prophet (saw) around the world. May Allah protect and guide and have Mercy on the Umma of the Holy Prophet (saw) around the world.

Unfortunately during this Ramadan particularly and during this Eid there are plenty of Muslims who are living under very difficult circumstances. Here we are thinking particularly of the Palestinians in Gaza who are being butchered by the dozens daily by the Israeli army which under all circumstances have the unqualified backing of the USA. In an area of around 380 square kilometers in Gaza live 1.8 million Palestinians in poverty and during Ramadan they have regularly been pounded by bombs and many of their houses and mosques and schools have been destroyed. At the latest count almost more than 800 of them have been killed and the United Nations has said that 70% of the victims are civilians. Most of the Arab countries have problems of their own and they can't do anything to help their Palestinian brother. Besides Gaza, other places where many Muslims are living in dire conditions are in Syria and Iraq, where thousands have died. To those living in these places there will be little to celebrate on this auspicious occasion of Eid. We, in Mauritius cannot do much for them. But the least we can do is to pray for them that Allah comes to their rescue and change their circumstances of life and help them to enjoy relative peace and security as others are enjoying around the world. Whenever we pray let us remember these people in our prayers. It is our faith and belief that Allah has Power over all things.

Now that Ramadan is gone, what should we do next? Should we understand that as from today we are free to do whatever we wish? If Ramadan is gone should its spirit also be abandoned? From what we have learned from the Holy Quran, from what we have learned from the Holy

Prophet Mohammad (saw) and the Promised Messiah and from what we have learned through experience the Muslim should never relax his efforts in his fight against his self and against all the wiles of Satan. Allah prescribed fasting for us for a limited number of days during a year so that we might get righteousness but all the other instructions of Allah concerning how we should conduct ourselves are to be practiced throughout the whole year, in fact throughout the whole life. So there should be no relaxation. If during Ramadan we were careful to be present in the mosque for the five daily prayers we should see to it that we keep up the same effort after Ramadan and make this a habit with us to pray our five daily prayers on time. For those women who do not go to the mosque they should see to it that they perform their prayers regularly and as much as possible and on time.

If during Ramadan you saw to it that you read one part of the Holy Quran daily you should strive to keep it up. If you cannot you should read at least half part daily. This will not take more than fifteen minutes but you will profit immensely in acquired knowledge. As a good Muslim we should aim to read and understand the Holy Quran and spread its teachings around. Sometimes some young ones are afraid to voice their teachings or their values to others. A Muslim is someone who cultivates the fear of Allah in order to be liberated from the fear of any other besides Allah. It is knowledge that is the weapon. We should make a big effort in order to acquire knowledge of our religion. When people say that Islam is a religion of extremists we should be able to explain why it is not by giving chapter and verse from the Holy Quran. Hence the attempt to understand the Holy Quran is not at all limited to the month of Ramadan once in a year. There is a saying in Arabic "*Koulloul Ilme fil Quran lakin taqasaro anho ifhaam oul rijaal*" meaning "All knowledge is found in the Holy Quran but what is lacking is man's understanding of all this knowledge." Therefore the quest for the treasures of the Holy Quran should be an ongoing quest that should be carried out throughout our lifetime. Nobody will ever exhaust all the knowledge and wisdom that are found in the Holy Quran. We should constantly read it and pray to Allah that He helps us to understand it in the best possible way. So get enamoured with the book and treat it as if it had been sent from Allah to you personally and see what you can make of it. An investment of only thirty minutes per day will help you to reap enormous benefits throughout your lifetime. May Allah help each one amongst us to understand the importance that this book really should have in our life. Speaking about the need to get true knowledge Hazrat Masih tells us:

"Those who say that they do not care for the Promised Messiah, in fact, do not care for their own faith, salvation, and purity. If they had any sense of justice and were to analyze their own inner condition, they would realize that, without the renewed certainty of faith which descends from heaven through the Messengers and Prophets of God, their prayers are but a ritual and their fasting mere starvation. The fact is that no one can attain true deliverance from sin, nor can one

truly love God or fear Him, as He deserves to be feared, until one attains true knowledge and strength through God's own grace and mercy. It is evident that true knowledge is the basis of all fear and love and it is only after one has gained knowledge and recognition of a thing that love, desire, fear or aversion for that particular thing takes root in one's heart. It is of course true that one cannot attain true knowledge until God grants it, and it cannot benefit anyone except through God's grace. This knowledge then opens the door of seeking and recognizing the truth. It is only through repeated acts of Divine grace that this door remains open and is not shut thereafter. Spiritual knowledge, in short, can only be attained through Divine grace, and through it alone can it survive. Divine grace purifies and illuminates knowledge, removes the intervening veils and cleanses the *Nafs-e-Ammarah* of all its impurities. It bestows strength and life upon the soul and releases the baser self from the prison of sin and purges it of its evil passions. Also, this grace salvages one from the flood of carnal passions and a kind of transformation takes place in man and he develops a natural aversion for sin.”(Lecture Sialkot page 30)

During Ramadan we all tried to beseech Allah for our many needs. I hope and pray that Allah grant all your prayers and ours as well *incha* Allah. Being a Muslim we cannot live without making prayers or do'a to Allah. In one hadith we learn “*Tarakud do'a ma'siyatoune*” not praying to Allah is a sin meaning that for all our needs we should first have recourse to prayer and then start looking for means. We are not saying that means should be abandoned and only do'a should be resorted to. But our teachings are that relying only on means moves you away from Allah. Since the Muslim is expected to become closer to Allah he should resort to prayer quite often. In fact Hazrat Masih Maood (as) has advised us:

“I do not wish to stop you from striving for worldly good, but you should not follow the ways of those who think this present world is all in all. In everything you do, whether it pertains to things of this world or of the next, you should seek help and succour from God alone, and this should remain the guiding principle of your life forever and ever. But this seeking of help should not be from your lips alone: it should be your conviction deep down to the bottom of your being that every blessing comes only from heaven. You shall be really righteous only when, at the time of every difficulty, before sitting down to make your plans, you close your door upon yourself, and fall down before the throne of God Almighty, crying for His grace and help and succour. Then the Holy Spirit will come to your help, and through unseen means a way shall be opened for you. Have mercy on your own souls and be not like those who have cut themselves wholly away from God and fallen on material means

to such an extent that to seek Divine help they do not even formally utter with their lips the words “If God be willing” .“ May God open your eyes, so that you should begin to perceive that your God is the beam on which all plans rest? When the central beam of the roof falls down, can the minor supports maintain their position? Most certainly not. They would all come down in an instant, in all likelihood, with much loss of life. In the same way your plans cannot remain in position without help. If you will not cry for His Help, if you will not make that soliciting the most fundamental principle of your life, you, will have no success, and shall die at last with great regret.”(Noah’s Ark page 13-14)

We should all be more convinced than ever that Allah is the central beam of all our plans and resorting to Him, beseeching His Help in everything that we do should become a characteristic of ours. Others may laugh at you. But you should ignore their ridicule and give Allah more importance in your life. So even when Ramadan is gone we should still continue to develop our relationship with Allah through prayers. We Ahmadis Muslims have been fortunate to learn from Hazrat Masih Maood (as) the power of prayer. He says:

“Thereafter (after you have gained knowledge), the very first urge felt by the soul, through God’s grace, is called *du‘a*[Supplication]. Do not think that we already pray every day, and that the *Salat* we offer is also prayer; for the prayer which follows true knowledge and is born of Divine grace is of an altogether different colour and complexion. Such prayer is a thing that consumes, it is a fire that melts, it is a magnetic force that draws Divine mercy, it is a death but ultimately gives life, it is a raging flood but finally turns into a boat. Through it every wrong is redressed and every poison finally becomes an antidote. Blessed are the prisoners who never tire of supplication, for they shall one day be freed. Blessed are the blind who are not listless in their prayers, for they shall one day see. Blessed are those lying in graves who supplicate to God for help and succour, for one day they shall be taken out of their graves. Blessed are you who never tire of supplication, your soul melts in prayer, your eyes shed tears, and a fire kindles in your breast which takes you to dark closets and wildernesses so that you may taste solitude and drives you to restlessness and near madness, for you shall finally receive Divine bounties. The God to Whom I invite is very Gracious, Merciful, Modest, True, and Faithful. He bestows His mercy on the humble ones. You too should be faithful and pray with all sincerity and faith so that He may bestow His mercy on you. Dissociate yourselves from the commotion of the world and do not give religious complexion to your egoistic disputes. Accept defeat for the sake of God so that you may become heirs to great victories. God will show miracles to those who supplicate and those who

ask will be blessed with extraordinary grace. Prayer comes from God and to Him it returns. Through prayer God becomes as close to you as your very life.”(Lecture Sialkot page 31)

Being a member of the Jamaat of the Promised Messiah confers blessings and imposes responsibilities upon us. We should understand that we are not like others. Our difference should manifest itself in the struggle that we continue to carry out not only in the month of Ramadan but throughout the year and throughout our entire life. Our objective throughout our life should be that we become men and women who are devoted to Allah and with whom Allah is pleased. It is to this struggle of a lifetime that each one amongst us should set our mind to once that the month of Ramadan is over. We should strive to let Ramadan’s blessings spillover throughout the year by not relaxing our efforts in the path of Allah. A Muslim who has understood the spirit of the month of Ramadan will try to reflect on what message Ramadan brought to him. He will do his best to live his life in such a way that the spirit of Ramadan never leaves him or her. Allah is the greatest and if we want to have a true and living relationship with Him we should set ourselves to the task of understanding what He expects from us and do it. May Allah help each one amongst us to understand what should our relationship be with Allah and may we realize it through His Grace *incha* Allah.

Although it was the practice of the Holy Prophet (saw) to wear new clothes on the occasion of Eid and eating good food is not at all forbidden but we should remember his advice “*Zouyyenou eidokoum bit takbir*” meaning “beautify your Eid with takbir. In the midst of all our preoccupation may Allah give time to each one amongst us to recite Takbir as well..

In the end I would like to tell you about a message that I received just before waking up on the 29th night. “*Yaa bani Aadama imma ya’teyannakoum minni Hodan faman tabe’a hodaya falaa khawfoune alayhim wa laa houm yahzanoune*”. Its translation is as follows:

“Oh Children of Adam if Guidance comes to you from me, whoso follows my guidance on them shall come no fear nor shall they grieve.” I think this message is particularly for all members of JAAM. They have accepted guidance that has come from Allah and they should not be afraid of anything and they should not grieve for anything. Incha Allah I will say a few more words on this matter in the coming Friday sermon or some other time. Once again Eid Mubarak to all.