

FRIDAY SERMON

10 October 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:

In today's sermon I will *incha* Allah speak about a few different subject matters and not on anyone in particular. We will start by the Hajj for this year. According to published reports we understand that about 1.4 million pilgrims from 163 countries were present for the hajj in addition to approximately six to seven hundred thousand Saudis. By Allah's Grace all went well. Precautions were taken because of the Ebola virus and all pilgrims from the three African countries affected namely Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia was banned. Pilgrims were warned not to engage in political speech making and no incident has been reported. More than eighty thousand security people were deployed for the safety of pilgrims. Army helicopters were in the air to intervene in case there were any terrorist attacks. Year by year the Saudis have been improving all the facilities to make it easy for the pilgrims to perform all the rites of the Hajj. People who have participated in previous Hajj and who are participating anew speak quite eulogiously of the difference in the ease with which Hajj is being performed these days. As an example they say that part of the journey for the particular rites which previously took several hours are taking only fifteen minutes due to the new railway system that has been put in place. With a grand plan that has been recently put into action as from around 2011 the Saudis have expanded the space for the pilgrims and namazis in Ramadan as well. However all these developments have come at the cost of historical sites. Many have been erased. For example in the place of the house of Abu-Bakr today we have the Hotel Hilton. At the place of the house of Hazrat Khadija there is a parking lot. Similarly many historical buildings that have been in place since a long time have been erased because the Arabs of the desert are afraid of the Shirk that might be associated with all these remnant buildings. But of course they do not understand at all its historical value. Anyhow this is another story. There are many voices that have been raised against this obliteration of Mecca's historical heritage. But the Saudis insist that colossal expansion of both Mecca and Medina is essential to make a way for the growing numbers of pilgrims. Both Mecca and Medina host 12 million visiting pilgrims each year and this number is expected to increase to 17 million by 2025. They also intend to displace the prophet's tomb in Medina to expand the Prophet's mosque to make it accommodate about 1.6 million people. For the time being we will stop here for the Hajj.

Now we will talk about ISIS. The ideology of these people comes from the puritanical version of Islam that is propagated by the Saudi clerics. There is a bond between the clergy and the government in Saudi Arabia. In the beginning the agreement was that they will support the Saudi family and in return they will not be bothered to propagate their version of Islam. But unfortunately the world is changing and the government has to adapt especially because of pressure from abroad especially its allies. It is their ideology that created Bin Laden and Al Qaeda which the government rejected when it began calling for

their removal and the establishment of an Islamic caliphate. Eventually Bin Laden was killed and Al Qaeda was no longer the threat that it was. From Al Qaeda ISIS was created especially through the chaos that was created through the civil war in Syria and the Shia-leaning government in Iraq. According to published reports it was the Saudis and the Qataris that have helped ISIS to grow. However like al Qaeda ISIS also is speaking about the overthrow of the kingdoms. Hence the reason why the Saudi government has turned against ISIS. Their top clerical council, the only body in the country authorised to issue fatwas or Islamic legal opinions, declared a few weeks ago that “terrorism is a heinous crime” under Sharia, and perpetrators should be made an example of. Eventually on 19th September a group of 126 Islamic scholars from several countries including many in the Middle East and even Pakistan and India issued a signed letter addressed to Caliph Al Baghdadi in which they reminded him of some basic Islamic beliefs and principles. This document’s executive summary is as follows:

1. It is forbidden in Islam to issue *fatwas* without all the necessary learning requirements. Even then *fatwas* must follow Islamic legal theory as defined in the Classical texts. It is also forbidden to cite a portion of a verse from the Qur’an—or part of a verse—to derive a ruling without looking at everything that the Qur’an and *Hadith* teach related to that matter. In other words, there are strict subjective and objective prerequisites for *fatwas*, and one cannot ‘cherry-pick’ Qur’anic verses for legal arguments without considering the entire Qur’an and *Hadith*.
1. It is forbidden in Islam to issue legal rulings about anything without mastery of the Arabic language.
2. It is forbidden in Islam to oversimplify *Shari’ah* matters and ignore established Islamic sciences.
3. It is permissible in Islam [for scholars] to differ on any matter, except those fundamentals of religion that all Muslims must know.
4. It is forbidden in Islam to ignore the reality of contemporary times when deriving legal rulings.
5. It is forbidden in Islam to kill the innocent.
6. It is forbidden in Islam to kill emissaries, ambassadors, and diplomats; hence it is forbidden to kill journalists and aid workers.
7. Jihad in Islam is defensive war. It is not permissible without the right cause, the right purpose and without the right rules of conduct.
8. It is forbidden in Islam to declare people non-Muslim unless he (or she) openly declares disbelief.
9. It is forbidden in Islam to harm or mistreat—in any way—Christians or any ‘People of the Scripture’.
10. It is obligatory to consider Yazidis as People of the Scripture.
11. The re-introduction of slavery is forbidden in Islam. It was abolished by universal consensus.

12. It is forbidden in Islam to force people to convert.
13. It is forbidden in Islam to deny women their rights.
14. It is forbidden in Islam to deny children their rights.
15. It is forbidden in Islam to enact legal punishments (*hudud*) without following the correct procedures that ensure justice and mercy.
16. It is forbidden in Islam to torture people.
17. It is forbidden in Islam to disfigure the dead.
18. It is forbidden in Islam to attribute evil acts to God □.
19. It is forbidden in Islam to destroy the graves and shrines of Prophets and Companions.
20. Armed insurrection is forbidden in Islam for any reason other than clear disbelief by the ruler and not allowing people to pray.
21. It is forbidden in Islam to declare a caliphate without consensus from all Muslims.
22. Loyalty to one's nation is permissible in Islam.
23. After the death of the Prophet, Islam does not require anyone to emigrate anywhere.

As an Ahmadi Muslim we should be quite happy that such a document has been published. Whatever has been said in it are the true teachings of Islam as we have learned them from Hazrat Ahmad (as), The Promised Messiah and Mahdi. For more than hundred years Jamaat Ahmadiyya has been preaching that no one has the right to declare a Muslim to be a non Muslim because this is forbidden in the Holy Book. Unfortunately Muslims of all hues banded together to declare the Ahmadi Jamaat as non Muslim and that we form part of deviant groups within Islam. But today in view of the danger that their own views have produced they have been forced to put forward the true Islamic teachings namely that "It is forbidden in Islam to declare people non-Muslim unless he (or she) openly declares disbelief"

If these people who have signed this document are true to themselves they would have sent their letter to Rabitat Al Islamia which is an Islamic organization in Saudi Arabia and they would have told them that they made a mistake declaring Ahmadis non Muslims in 1974. Now is the time for them to see the folly of their actions even after forty years. It is never too late to do good and to correct an injustice. Let us hope and pray that they will put into practice true Islamic tolerance of which they are so well aware as per the declaration that they have signed. May Allah grant to all these countries especially Saudi Arabia to do what is right and just. Anyhow we will see.

Now we will talk about something which is completely different. Jamaat Ahmadiyya international through its caliph says that it promotes peace and justice in the world. They have announced that they will hold a peace conference in London in November on the

subject “Khilafat Peace and Justice”. Some people who are not well aware of what really goes on within the Jamaat have been so impressed by the caliph’s letters that they recognize him as an ambassador of peace. Someone in Singapore awarded him a plaque recently in London in recognition of his efforts for peace in the world. We do not at all resent anyone any peace prize. But to give people peace prizes only on their intentions and not on their actions is just a show. We all know that as he was elected president of the USA Barack Obama was awarded the Nobel peace prize in 2009. He received the award and many expected that we will enter an era of real world peace. But he was not true to his words and he has not been able to make the world a safer place despite all the resources at his disposal and the power of his speech. He has failed so much and recently he has started a new war and his critics are speaking about the Obama deception. So, receiving a peace prize does not in fact make you a real promoter of peace around the world. Obama could have done more to stop the Israelis from killing children in Gaza but he did nothing to stop the war and consequently about 2300 people died in the 50 days war including about 70 Israelis. Similarly there is a spin about what the caliph is doing around the world but when it comes to how he deals with those who do not agree with him, his ideals of “peace and justice” do not exist at all. He has institutionalized hatred among brothers and sisters, among parents and children and among relatives and yet he speaks about peace. Recently he spoke about how people are coming to join the Ahmadiyya Jamaat thanks to their dreams or even revelations. He seems to be so impressed with these incidents that he declared in one of his sermons:

“Accounts of new Ahmadis should not be listened to as interesting stories; these are factual accounts which should be faith-enhancing and we should be grateful to God for His treatment of the Jama’at. These accounts should inspire us to be mindful of our responsibilities. Indeed, it is our obligation to take the message of Islam Ahmadiyyat to others and while we need to make efforts for this we also need to look at our own practices and adapt them according to ways of God. Our good, positive role models will further strengthen the faith of new Ahmadis.”(FS 12 September 2014)

However to the caliph all those who are long time Ahmadis who have a direct contact with Allah are not worth mentioning at all. These are the people who are reaping the fruits of what was promised to them through the Promised Messiah but they are completely rejected and boycotted and discriminated against. Hence we ask how come such a man of peace who wants to teach others how to live in peace cannot within his own Jamaat maintain harmony. There seems to be a yawning gap between what is said and what is practiced. It is as if practice is not important at all. What is important seems only to be making good speeches and pious wishes. But as practicing Muslims we know that there should be a complete harmony between what we say and what we do. If this harmony does not exist all the speeches of the world are just wind blowing and nothing else. May Allah help the caliph and his representatives to understand true Islam as explained by Hazrat Masih Maood (as) and then explain it to the world. That is much more difficult than just making speeches.