

by Imam Zafrullah Domun

After reciting the *Tashahhud*, the *Ta'uz* and the *Sura Al Fatiha* of the Holy Quran, Imam Zafrullah Domun said:

## **Main Points:**

One month is already gone in this year. Today is the last Friday of the month. We see that time is flying by very quickly. When we look at the years that have gone by we have the impression that our experiences of the past do not seem as long as the number of years but that they seem to be quite recent in our memory. This is how we perceive our life. In order to lead a fulfilling life it seems to me that we should learn to make the best use of the time that is available to us. Most of us take each day for granted. But when you think deeply you will come to understand that each day is a new beginning. That is why the Holy Prophet (saw) has advised us to make the following prayer when we wake up: “ *Alhamdo lilla hillazi ahyaana ba'ada maa aamaattana wa elayhin noshour*” which we translate as “ All praise are for Allah who has brought us back to life after we were dead and the return will be to Him. So on waking up the Muslim is reminded of what is most important in his or her life and that is Allah. He is reminded that if he lives or he has been given back his life it is a Grace from Allah and that is why he praises Him as was the practice (Sunna) of our beloved Prophet Mohammad (saw). Similarly there are other prayers that we have been advised to read when we go to the toilet and when we come out of it and when we make our ablution. All these prayers are there to remind us of the importance that Allah should have in our life. In addition there are prayers that have been recommended for us when we leave our home for work and when we return back to our home. In fact there are prayers for each circumstance of life. It is incumbent for a Muslim that he or she knows all of them and that in his daily existence he does his best to remember Allah and he leads a life that is in conformity with the practice of the Holy Prophet Mohammad (saw).

The greatest tribute that we as Muslims can give to our prophet (saw) is not that we should go out and burn flags and create riots and get killed because others, out of their own ignorance, are insulting him in the name of free speech. The greatest tribute that a Muslim can give to the Holy Prophet (saw) is to lead a life copied on his example. If this effort on our part is missing then whatever else we do will not have much weight in the sight of Allah because Allah has made it quite clear for us

that if we seek His Love we should follow the example of the Holy Prophet Mohammad (saw). This is a very subtle point that all Muslims should try to remember and to act upon. When we are young we live under the delusion that there is plenty of time to read prayer on time or to study the Holy Quran or to read additional prayers or even to read Tahajjud prayers. But all experienced people who have tried to tread the path leading to Allah would tell you that it is when you are young that you are best equipped to have the real enthusiasm, the zeal and the capacity to make long prayers and long studies. In fact as we age our capacities do not increase but rather they decrease. So we should think about the passage of time and its effect upon us and realize as soon as possible that we should learn to seize the moment and do the best that we can for our life in this world and in the next.

So when we try to tread the path of the Holy Prophet saw we should follow his example. Since these days following the massacre in France how we as Muslims should respond to abuse from others is again in the news I will give you a few examples of how the Holy Prophet (saw) acted with those who abused him. We will start with the following hadith: "The Muslim who mixes with the people and bears patiently their hurtful words is better than one who does not mix with the people and does not show patience under their abuse." This is an important and very interesting hadith. It may apply to a society where the members are exclusively Muslims or to one where there are Muslims and several other religious groups. If we are living in a society which is exclusively Muslim we should not just remain in our own corner and not mix with others. As Muslims we should get involved in the affairs of the Muslims and we should do our best to relieve their suffering and improve their lot as much as we can. While doing so we will always come across some people who might abuse us although it should not have been the case. Under such circumstances we should bear the abuses patiently and carry on getting involved and doing good deeds. On the other hand if we live in mixed societies where there are several religious groups living we should learn to be patient and let go of all the abuses that we might be subjected to or we might hear. We cannot and should not try to impose our values on others. Islam is good *per se*. If people learn the wisdom of its teachings they would adopt them. There is no need to impose anything. But avenues should be explored to make the teachings known to others in the best possible way. It is not for nothing that it is reported that at least five thousands British and French citizens are converting to Islam every year these days and most of them are women. There are quite interesting documentaries that can be viewed about them on Youtube. So according to this hadith no poster, no film no cartoon no article no book should offend Muslims so much that they should resort to any sort of violence. The Holy Prophet expects us to act with dignity and to ignore all such indignities.

There is an incident in the life of the Holy Prophet saw which gives us an idea of how best to deal with those who criticized him. It is reported that Suhayl ibn Amr

was a prominent man among the opponents of the Holy Prophet Muhammad at Makka. He was a spokesman and skilled orator of the Quraish tribe, and used to employ his oratory in making speeches against the Holy Prophet. He was captured by the Muslims at the battle of Badr and brought before the Holy Prophet.

Umar ibn al-Khattab suggested that the following punishment should be applied to him before releasing him: “O Prophet of God, let me pull out Suhayl’s front teeth so that he would never be able to exercise his oratory against you.”

The Holy Prophet replied without hesitation:

“Certainly not. I will not mutilate anyone, for God would mutilate me even though I am His Prophet.”

The Holy Prophet also made this prediction about Suhayl: “Perhaps one day he will say something which will make you happy.” Some six years later when Makka was conquered by the Holy Prophet, he declared a pardon for all his former enemies including Suhayl. Deeply moved by this compassionate treatment, Suhayl embraced Islam. Two years later when the Holy Prophet died and the Muslims were plunged into confusion and uncertainty, then just as in Madina Abu Bakr made a speech that restored their faith and composure, likewise in Makka it fell to Suhayl to make a similar speech that reinforced the confidence of the Muslims of that city too that Islam would continue to exist despite the Holy Prophet’s death. Thus was fulfilled the Holy Prophet’s prophecy that the man who was making speeches attacking Islam would one day make a speech that would bring Muslims great joy.

From this incident we can learn that in Islam it is forbidden that we mutilate anybody. The Holy Prophet said that if he did any such thing he would be punished by Allah even if he was a prophet. So we understand that if the Holy Prophet did something that was forbidden by Allah he would have to pay for it. So being a prophet imposed upon him to be more careful than other common persons. In addition we see in this incidence the forbearance of the Holy Prophet saw and also his prescience. With his confidence in Allah he expected that it might be that Suhayl would one day make a speech which would make Muslims happy.

In another incident we learn that once when the Holy Prophet divided some wealth among his followers, a man accused him in his face of being unfair and insulted him by telling him:

“Fear God, O Muhammad.”

After the man had left, a Muslim asked the Holy Prophet’s permission to go and kill him. The Holy Prophet refused to allow it and actually tried to find some good in the man by saying:

“Perhaps he says his prayers.”

That Muslim replied:

“There are many people who pray, but what they say with their tongues is not what is in their hearts.”

He meant that the man might not be a Muslim at heart. The Holy Prophet replied: “I have not been commanded by God to look inside people’s hearts or cut open their insides.”

This was a Muslim who found fault with the way the Holy Prophet distributed booties on one occasion. Nonetheless despite the fact that the prophet was stung by his remarks he did not react violently nor did he allow anyone to react violently towards that person.

The last incident is one which is well known. It is from Bukhari. Once some Jews accosted the Holy Prophet Muhammad by distorting the greeting *as-salamu alaikum* (“peace be upon you”) and saying it as *as-samu alaikum*, which means “death be upon you”. His wife Aisha retorted: “And upon you be death and curse”.

The Holy

Prophet told her: “Be calm, Aisha, Allah loves that one should be kind and lenient in all matters”, or according to another version he said: “Be calm, Aisha. You should be kind and lenient, and beware of using harsh and bad language.” The Holy Prophet said that he had heard their greeting and had given them a sufficient reply by simply saying: “and upon you too”.

We see here also that the Jews did not spare any pain to annoy him. But he was the Prophet of Allah, a model of excellence, the one endowed with excellent moral qualities “*kholqan azima*”, he could not stoop to the level of the Jews who were paying only lip service to their religion. So he rebuked Hazrat Ayesha for her harshness and advised her to be kind and lenient. And he told them “*wa alaykoun*” meaning that whatever you were wishing me is for you as well. You might recall that this “*wa alaykoun*” has been used against us, members of Jamaat Ahmadiyya Al Mouslemeen. Apparently it was the present caliph who told his followers to reply to our greetings of salaam by just saying “*Wa alaykoun*”. Now you can imagine the validity of this instruction when you know what the historical context of that phrase was.

Anyhow the takeaway message for today is that Muslims should ignore abuses and remit their affair in the hand of Allah. We are not allowed to reply to abuses by abuses. We should show patience and let Allah deal with those who abuse us or our religion or our prophet. The Prophet’s name was Muhammad, meaning the praised one or the praiseworthy. But when the Meccans became his most dire opponents, they themselves coined a name for the Prophet, ‘Muzammam,’ on the pattern of ‘Muhammad,’ Muzammam meaning condemned. They used to heap abuses on him calling him by this epithet of Muzammam. But the Prophet was never enraged at this distorted version of his name. All he said in return was: “Aren’t you surprised that God has turned away the abuses of the Quraysh from

me. They abuse a person by the name of Muzammam. Whereas I am Muhammad. This was how the Prophet dealt with the abuses that were levelled at him. We should all learn from him and never let others' abuses affect us in any way. May Allah grant all Muslims the necessary resolve to follow as best as they can in the footsteps of our beloved prophet Mohammad (saw).