

by Imam Zafrullah Domun

As you might all be aware the crescent of Zill Hajj was visible on Monday 14th September and Eidul Adha will incha Allah be celebrated in Mauritius on Thursday 24th September. The day of Arafat, the peak of the Hajj ceremonies will be on 23rd September. Although we are not allowed to participate in the Hajj ceremonies because of our beliefs, nonetheless I think we should not at all be indifferent to what goes on over there. However for all Muslims who stay at home we are expected to spend our days and nights in the remembrance of Allah, be it in our *nafil* prayers or when we are alone. As active Muslims we should engage ourselves in that which will help us to win the pleasure of Allah. If we have the capacity we should also do our best to offer some sacrifice in remembrance of the great Sacrifice that the *khalilullah* Ibrahim (as) was willing to offer to Allah when he showed his readiness to sacrifice his son Ishmael (as). Only 2 million out of the umma of around 1.6 billion can go to Mecca for Hajj. The rest, that is, more than 99% of all the Muslims in the world participate only in the Eidul Adha prayer and some amongst them offer sacrifices.

From what I have read it seems that all the preparations are in full swing to make the Hajj as safe as possible despite the crashing of the crane which unfortunately killed more than one hundred pilgrims last week and left many injured. Most people will say that accidents do happen and several times they have happened in the past. Nonetheless the Saudi government should also pause and wonder if they are not being delivered a message from on high that they do not have control over everything and they should not behave as if they are the masters of the world. Anyhow that is another subject.

As far as we are concerned, we should do what the Holy prophet (saw) has counselled us to do during these ten days of Zill Hajj. We spoke at length on this matter last week and we will not repeat what we said again here but we will just say that the more we remember Allah, the more will He remember us and solve our problems and guide us to the straight path (*sirat al moustaqim*). When we pray five times every day we ask to be guided on the straight path, the path of the prophets, the truthful, the martyrs and the pious. Hence during these blessed days let us renew our efforts and do our best to show devotion to Allah and be inclined towards Him. We should all remember that we should develop our relationship with Allah in such a way that He becomes what is most important in our life. Hazrat Masih Maood(as) tells us:

“The attainment of nearness to God is the greatest honour a man can ever have and this is also the greatest wealth that he can possess. When a man gets nearer to God, He showers on him thousands of His Blessings- He gives him those blessings from the earth as well as from the skies. How great and strenuous were the efforts that the Quraysh made to uproot the Holy prophet (saw), but they failed miserably? They were a people with large numbers and he was alone. Then, behold who was the one who became victorious and who failed miserably” (Al Hakam Jan 17,1907)

Hazrat Ibrahim (as) sought this nearness and so did all the prophets and also all good believers. They understand that they exist by the will of Allah and they should live their life in devotion to Him and to nothing else. Hazrat Ibrahim (as) was foremost in this understanding when he showed his readiness to sacrifice his son because he mistakenly understood that this was what Allah was asking him to do. Insha Allah we will speak more about this great incident in our Eid sermon next week but suffice it to say that as good believers we should inculcate in ourselves and our children this spirit of sacrifice like Hazrat Ibrahim and his son Hazrat Ismail understood it. We celebrate Eidul Adha every year so that we might remember and ponder over the events that are the background to this festival. We are to elevate ourselves in such a way that we might become an embodiment of what Allah enjoins the Holy Prophet Mohammad (saw) in the Holy Quran:

“Say, ‘As for me, my Lord has guided me unto a straight path — a right religion, the religion of Abraham, the upright. And he was not of those who join gods *with God.*’ Say, ‘My Prayer and my sacrifice and my life and my death are *all* for Allah, the Lord of the worlds. ‘He has no partner. And so am I commanded, and I am the first of those who submit.’ Say, ‘Shall I seek a lord other than Allah, while He is the Lord of all things?’ And no soul acts but only against itself; nor does any bearer of burden bear the burden of another. Then to your Lord will be your return, and He will inform you of that wherein you used to differ.”(6:162-165)

These are indeed noble declarations that any Muslim should follow and he has to see to it that he or she does not associate anyone in the worship of Allah. We do not just have to repeat these words on our lips. These words should qualify the way we lead our lives in this world. In fact Jamaat Ahmadiyya has been created so that there might be a group of people who would show themselves to be sincerely faithful to the teachings of the Holy Quran and not just pay lip service to it. If we say that we belong to this Jamaat we should demonstrate by our words and actions how we embody these teachings in our life.

In the second part of this sermon I want to say a few words about the revealed sermon that Hazrat Masih Maood (as) delivered on Wednesday 11th April 1900 on the day of Eidul

Adha. I have spoken about this sermon a few times before but I still think that up till now we have not yet given due credit to the significance of this incident as it merited. By Allah's Grace I have been reading quite a good range of literature in Sufism, in History of Islam and also of important personalities in Islamic History but up till now I have not yet read or heard about someone who has made such an eloquent speech about the philosophy of sacrifice as we read in that famous speech that was delivered by Hazrat Ahmad (as). Before speaking about the incident itself I would like to say that I have taken information about this event from *Tarikh Ahmadiyyat* Volume one in Urdu and also from "the Life of Ahmad" by MA Dard and also from a Friday sermon from the actual Ahmadiyya caliph which he delivered on 11th April last year.

Modern day people cannot imagine how life was in the village of Qadian in 1900. The Jamaat has been established in 1889, which is eleven years before. Many people started converging on Qadian for Eid ul Adha festival. We understand that people came from Sialkot, Amritsar, Batala, Lahore, Wazirabad, Jammu, Peshawar, Gujrat, Jhelum, Rawalpindi, Kapurthala, Ludhiana, Patiala, Bombay, Sanaur, Lucknow etc. There were about two hundred of them. On the morning of the day of Arafat Hazrat Masih Maood (as) asked Hazrat Molvi Nuruddin(ra) to make a list of all the members who were present and send it to him. He had intended to devote himself in prayer after Zohr prayer. So a list was sent to him. On the day of Eid Molvi Abdul Karim who was another companion of the Promised Messiah told him that he should address the assembly on that auspicious day. Hazrat Ahmad (as) told him that he had received instructions from Allah to do so. The revelation that he received was "*aaj toum arabi mein taqdir karo toumhein qouwwat bakhshi gayi hay*" meaning "today make your speech in Arabic; you have been given capacity to do so". In addition he received in Arabic "*Kalamoune oufsehat milladoun rabbin karim*" meaning "this address has been made eloquent from Himself by the Noble Lord" In addition Hazrat Masih Maood (as) asked Molvi Abdul Karim and Hazrat Nuruddin (ra) to bring ink and paper in order to note down the sermon. By around eight o'clock on that morning Masjid Aqsa was almost full. Hazrat Masih Maood (as) came into the mosque at around 8:30am. Prayer for Eid was performed at 8:45am and it was Molvi Abdul Karim who led the prayer. Hazrat Masih Maood (as) stood in the middle of the mosque and delivered a sermon in Urdu first. Then he sat on the right side of Molvi Abdul Karim and Molvi Nuruddin. It appears they were at a table ready to take notes. Then Hazrat Masih Maood (as) stood up again and started speaking in Arabic with the words "*Yaa Ibaadallah*" meaning "O you servants of Allah". There were very few people in the audience who could understand Arabic but they were all completely focused on the Arabic words that were coming from the mouth of Hazrat Masih Maood (as). Hazrat Masih Maood (as) repeated the words three times and at the end of the sentence his voice became

quite low. His eyes were closed and his face was full of light. Later on he would explain that at times he even saw some writings in front of him and at times the words flowed from his lips. He felt that he was not the one who was speaking but a force had taken hold of his whole being. While he was speaking he told the note takers that if they did not understand a word they should ask him on the spot because he might not remember anything later on. So at times they asked him whether it was the letter “seen” or the letter “saa” or the letter “kaaf” or “kaf”. The delivery went on for some time and then Hazrat Masih Maood (as) sat down on the chair. Then Hazrat Masih Maood (as) said that the delivery of this sermon was a sign for the acceptance of all the supplications that he made the previous day.

Then Hazrat Molvi Abdul Karim stood up to give a translation of the sermon in Urdu at the request of the members. According to the reports he gave a very good translation. While he was making the translation Hazrat Masih Maood (as) went in a prostration of thankfulness and all the assembly followed him. When he lifted his head he said that he had just been shown the word “Mubarack” written in red which is a sign of acceptance. Since this speech was an important sign from Allah, Hazrat Masih Maood (as) asked his Khuddam to learn it by heart. In book form the whole speech was of about thirty pages in big Arabic letters. Among those who learnt it by heart were Sufi Ghulam Mohammad the first missionary to Mauritius, Mir Mohammad Ismail sahib, Molvi Mohammad Ali sahib, Mufti Mohammad Sadiq sahib and some others as well. But these four read it back to Hazrat Masih Maood (as) when he held his meetings between Maghrib and Esha on the roof of masjid Mubarak. It is written that Molvi Abdul Karim who knew Arabic very well was in admiration of this text. Others were as well. It is said that even some children in Qadian began repeating words from the sermon.

Incha Allah in my coming sermons I will tell you some more details about the sermon. We will talk about what people felt during the delivery and how it opened an Arab’s heart to the truthfulness of the claims of Hazrat Masih Maood (as). So please remember that Eid prayer will be performed at 9am and please do your best to be on time.