

by Imam Zafrullah Domun

Today, by Allah's Grace, most of our members are present in the mosque for this Friday Sermon. Incha Allah after Jumma prayers, there will be a *Jalsa* where I hope you will all be present to attend the program that we have prepared for the educational, moral and spiritual upliftment of all our members. Let us hope and pray that we will all spend some good time together among friends and relatives for the coming six hours incha Allah.

So, I will start by saying a few words about the Jumma Prayer. I think most of you are well aware that it is obligatory (*farz*) on all male Muslims to attend the Jumma sermon and prayer at the main mosque. There is a verse of the Holy Quran to this effect which says

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا دُعِيَ لِلصَّلَاةِ فَاسْعَوْا إِلَىٰ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَادْرُؤُوا بِعَمَلِكُمْ خَيْرًا كُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

Translation: "O ye who believe! when the call is made for Prayer on Friday, hasten to the remembrance of Allah, and leave off *all* business. That is better for you, if you only knew." (HQ 62:10)

Most people are engaged in their work at midday. Allah is well aware that this is so. Yet He tells us that we should stop engaging in our work and resort to the mosque for Allah's remembrance. Of course, seen from a worldly perspective one might be tempted to think that *naouzo billah* (we seek refuge in Allah) there is no great wisdom in this. But to dispel such a negative thought Allah tells us "إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ" "ذِكْرُكُمْ خَيْرٌ كُمْ" meaning "That is better for you, if you only knew". In other words, we may say that the wisdom of this injunction might not be immediately clear to us. But since Allah has created us, He knows our needs better than we might personally be aware of. In His Wisdom He tells us to resort to the mosque for His Remembrance even if we do not see the wisdom in what He says. In other words, if we had true knowledge about everything we would have understood that resorting to the mosque for Jumma Prayer would be better than engaging in our business or some other pursuits.

At another place in the Holy Allah says:

وَعَسَىٰ أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۖ وَعَسَىٰ أَنْ تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَّكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

"but it may be that you dislike a thing while it is good for you, and it may be that you like a thing while it is bad for you. Allah knows *all things*, and you know not."

Although here Allah is speaking about fighting in Allah's cause yet experience teaches us that this advice is true in many situations. One only has to think of something that one has done in defiance of Allah's teachings and how later on he or she had to admit that wisdom lied in following Allah's instructions and not one's own inclinations.

To make a long story short what I am saying is that all male members of our Jamaat should strive to take time off to come for Jumma prayer. We should not be afraid, we should rely on Allah instead of relying on the little means that are available to us. We should pray to Him and entreat Him to help us to come for Jumma Prayer. In the same surah Jumma Allah says:

إِنَّمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لِّمَنْ أُهِنَ وَنَجَارَةٌ ۖ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرٌ رَّزَقِينَ

Translation:

'That which is with Allah is better than amusement and merchandise, and Allah is the Best Provider.'

As a good Ahmadi Muslim one should be convinced that Allah is the source of all good. Whatever we need we should ask from Him, even very small matters like our shoe laces as the Holy Prophet (saw) told us. If due to circumstances or out of mere laziness, we choose not to fulfill Allah's instructions we should think about the situation/circumstances and try to do better so that we act in conformity with what Allah has asked us to do or else we would regret it. By Allah's Grace our members these days have more material facilities at their disposal than we had when we were young but we did our best to be in the mosque for Jummah prayers. So, I leave it to each one to reflect and to act accordingly.

Concerning the subject of Jummah, I would also like to say that all those who come should do their best to be in the mosque before the second call for prayer is made. We are all well aware about the hadith about being in the mosque before the Imam which is as follows:

“Al-Bukhaari (814) and Muslim (850) narrated from Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “Whoever does ghusl on Friday like ghusl for janaabah, then goes to the prayer (in the first hour, i.e., early), it is as if he sacrificed a camel. Whoever goes in the second hour, it is as if he sacrificed a cow; whoever goes in the third hour, it is as if he sacrificed a horned ram; whoever goes in the fourth hour, it is as if he sacrificed a hen; and whoever goes in the fifth hour it is as if he offered an egg. When the imam comes out, the angels come to listen to the khutbah.”

So, we should take this advice and remember to come for Jummah prayers and to be in the mosque on time. You are all aware that I have made this appeal for our people to be punctual for Jummah prayers several times and then I thought that I will not make this appeal again because I keep repeating myself and the response is quite limited. Then I recall that I am here only to remind and I am not the guardian over anyone except my wife and children. I always pray that Allah helps me and others to understand the wisdom of His Instructions.

We are a jamaat, a group of people who have at heart its own reform and that of others who wish to join us. Personal reform whether for women or men is a lifelong process. There is no magic wand which can be wielded to bring permanent reform all of a sudden. Wishing to be reformed, to stay away from all sorts of sins and to be determined to live a life of devotion to Allah is difficult except for him/her to whom Allah makes it easy. Allah will not facilitate it for someone who ignores Allah. Allah will make it easy for someone who seeks Allah, who prays regularly everyday of the year and at times at night as well. Hazrat Masih Maood (as) created this jamaat for that purpose. We, as a jamaat, should do our best to fulfill that purpose or else what are we here for. Participating in a Jalsa helps in fulfilling that purpose but it is not enough. Explaining why he organized that Jalsa once a year in Qadian, Hazrat Masih Maood (as) said:

“The primary purpose of this Convention is to enable every sincere individual to personally experience religious benefits; They may enhance their knowledge and – due to their being blessed and enabled by Allah, The Exalted – their perception [of Allah] may progress. Among its secondary benefits is that this congregational meeting together will promote mutual introduction among all brothers, and it will strengthen the fraternal ties within this Community.” (Ishtihar 7 Dec. 1892, Majmoo`ah Ishtiharat Vol. I, Page 340).

In this extract we see that the Promised Messiah (as) has included a “progress in the perception of Allah” as one of the benefits of attending the Jalsa. How this may occur? Is it just by listening to the speeches? No, it cannot. Unless we make a note of what we hear and follow up on them we will forget almost all that we heard within a few days. So as a sincere Ahmadi Muslim we should follow up by acting on what we hear and do our best to become students of Islam in our own right by making regular reading and reflection. Or else we will be just like others. Hazrat Masih Maood (as) expected each one

among us to become knowledgeable so that we might take to heart Allah's teachings and do our best to follow them in our daily life.

In addition, we should develop so much confidence in the truthfulness of Islam and our understanding of it that we can defend its teachings at any time and place. To do this, a commitment to be a lifelong student of Islamic Teachings is a must. Several Jalsas would not be enough. That is why I have been saying that each one amongst us should make it his/her duty to read a portion of the Holy Quran everyday or as often as he/she can and pray for understanding it so that we may fulfill the purpose of our life. Hazrat Masih Maood (as) used to pray for understanding the Holy Quran in the following words:

"O my Allah! This is your word and I can understand it only when you will grant me its knowledge".

So, we can imitate him and regularly pray in these words which can easily be memorized.

The second point that the Promised Messiah (as) explained as an objective of this Jalsa is that we develop mutual brotherly and sisterly feelings among ourselves. The Jalsa is an occasion for meeting those we meet regularly and specially those we meet rarely as brothers and sisters. This is more easily said than done. The Holy Quran tells us:

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلَحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوِيكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ

Translation:

"Without doubt the believers are brothers of one another so then make peace and harmony between your brothers and have consciousness of Allah so that maybe He will show you mercy." (Al Hujuraat V10)

Similarly, we have this prayer:

رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ رَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ

They say, 'Our Lord, forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in the faith, and leave not in our hearts any rancour against those who believe. Our Lord! Thou art indeed Compassionate, Merciful.' (HQ 59:11)

From the hadiths we have plenty of instructions for a development of a feeling of sympathy towards other fellow Muslim brothers. I will tell you some:

"Surely the believers – in relation to the mercy and compassion and affection (that they show for one another) - are the same as one body. Therefore, if one part of the body is feeling pain, then it complains about this pain to the other parts of the body through a fear and hurt (so that the body can help the hurt or injured part)."

As good Muslims we should learn to develop love for all human beings and not feel any kind of hatred for anyone especially if that person is a fellow Muslim. This is the teaching of Islam that we strive to adopt even if at times it is difficult.

In another hadith the Holy Prophet (saw) said:

يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّىٰ يُحِبَّ لِأَخِيهِ مَا يُحِبُّ لِنَفْسِهِ لَا

Translation:

None of you has believed until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself. (Bukhari)

A good Muslim considers Allah to be the Giver *par excellence* and he does not wish to have something exclusively for himself. He should always be ready to share and wish that others may have what he has

or even better. He would not mind it at all. His distinction is not what others think of him but rather what Allah thinks of him.

In another hadith we read:

“Do not be envious of other Muslims; do not overbid at auctions against another Muslim; do not have malice against a Muslim; do not go against a Muslim and forsake him; do not make an offering during a pending transaction. O’ servants of Allah, be like brothers (or sisters) with each other. A Muslim is the brother (or sister) of another Muslim; do not hurt him (or her) or look down upon him (or her) or bring shame on him (or her). Piety is a matter of heart (The Prophet (S.A.W) repeated this thrice). It is enough evil for a person to look down upon his Muslim brother (or sister). The blood, property and honour of a Muslim are inviolable to a Muslim.” (Muslim)

May we all achieve the objective of today’s gathering by keeping in mind what were the purposes for which the Promised Messiah (as) initiated these gatherings. May we all become people in whose heart the love of this world is diminished and that we never be afraid of death incha Allah. Ameen.