

FRIDAY SERMON OF IMAM ZAFRULLAH DOMUN

27 JANUARY 2012

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

These days we are speaking about the Holy Quran. Since it is our belief that Hazrat Masih Maood^{as} was the person who was given a superior understanding of the Holy Book, so we use what he said to explain to our brothers and sisters the excellences of the Book. Moreover since most Ahmadis are still not yet taking to heart our advices that there is an urgent need for all those who can to read the books of Hazrat Masih Maood^{as}, we are using the opportunity that we have in Friday sermons to diffuse his teachings. In this way at least to a lesser degree our members may become aware of the pearls of wisdom that are embodied in his writings. We hope that consequently we would be able to arouse the interest of the members and they would go for a search of their own to enlighten themselves from the writings of this great spiritual teacher who was Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}.

These days with the exponential diffusion of all sorts of knowledge on the internet, we also see many commentaries that are being published. There are plenty of books available in English and French but there are even more in Urdu and Indonesian and specially Arabic. There are many academics who have written excellent translations and commentaries which shed new lights on several verses. But even in this field Hazrat Masih Maood^{as} has not left us without guidance. He has explained in his booklet "*Barakaatud do'a*" which is translated and published as "The Blessings of Prayer" what are the criteria for making a commentary of the Holy Quran. I will now share with you this extract so that you may have the necessary tools that will help you to understand any commentary that you might read and understand facts from opinion. Unfortunately sectarian thinking in many Muslim groups make some bend the text to support their beliefs. Hazrat Masih Maood^{as} says:

“The **first standard** of a true commentary on the Holy Qur’an is the testimony of the Qur’an itself. It should be remembered that the Holy Qur’an is not like other books dependent upon something else for proof or disclosure of its verities. It is like an orderly structure the whole of which is disturbed by the displacement of one of its bricks. It comprises no verity which is not supported by ten or twenty testimonies contained in it. When we interpret a verse of the Holy Qur’an we should consider whether it contains other testimony in support of the meaning that we have adopted. If other testimony is not available and the meaning that we have adopted is found to be opposed to other verses, we should realize that that meaning is false for it is not possible that there should be any contradiction in the Holy Qur’an. The sign of true meaning is that a whole host of clear testimony from the Holy Qur’an should confirm it.....”

From this first part of the extract we understand that before trying to interpret verses or to give meanings to them one should be well aware if the meaning that we are giving is corroborated by other verses of the Holy Quran or not. No meaning should be forwarded that may be contradicted by other verses of the Holy Book. Many examples may be given to illustrate this point. Incha Allah we will talk in more detail about this matter in our forthcoming booklet. Then Hazrat Masih says:

“The **second standard** for a correct interpretation of the Qur’an is the commentary of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allah be on him]. There can be no doubt that the person who understood the meaning of the Holy Qur’an best was our dear and grand Prophet [peace and blessings of Allah be on him]. Thus if an interpretation by the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allah be on him] becomes available, it is the duty of every Muslim to accept it instantly without hesitation, and whoever fails to do this would be guilty of heresy and philosophizing.”

So in order to write commentaries one also needs to know about the main hadith books because they contain almost all that is recorded of the sayings and doings of our beloved prophet. If he has said something about a verse, we should give his saying priority over what we may think. Besides that one needs to know the science of hadiths and *ilmul rijaal* in order to assess the true meanings of the hadiths.

Hazrat Masih continues:

“The **third standard** is interpretation by the companions of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. There is no doubt that the companions of the Holy Prophet [may Allāh be pleased with them], were the first heirs of the lights of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and of his knowledge, and that they were bestowed great grace by God Almighty and their perception was aided by God for they not only professed but practiced.

The **fourth standard** is reflection upon the Holy Qur’ān with one’s pure spirit, inasmuch as the Holy Qur’ān has a relationship with purity of spirit. God the Glorious says: “*Laa yamassahou illal motahharoune*”. This means that: A person with a purified heart appreciates the holy insights of the Qur’ān on account of his relationship with the Qur’ān. He recognizes them and smells them and his heart bears witness that this is the true way. The light of his heart is a good standard for testing the truth. Unless a person is purified in practice and passes through the narrow path through which the Prophets have passed, he should not become a commentator of the Qur’ān out of impertinence and arrogance, for his commentary would be based upon his opinion and such commentary is forbidden by the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] who has said: “*man fasaral qur’aana be ra’yehi fa asaba faqad akhta*””

This saying of the Holy Prophet ^{saw} means “He who interprets the Qur’an on the basis of his opinion is in error, even if he should put forward a commentary which he considers right.” So this saying helps us to be on our guard on giving meanings to the verses which just come out of our mind. In addition if we want to strive to get to depth of the meanings of the Holy Quran we should see to it that we are constantly engaged in self-purification. And in our quest we should seek Allah’s help so that He might guide us to the proper meanings because He knows best.

“The **fifth standard**” Hazrat Masih Maood^{as} says “is the Arabic lexicon, but the Holy Qur’an supplies so many means itself that it is not very necessary to have recourse to the lexicon, though it adds to one understanding Sometimes by having recourse to the lexicon attention is drawn to the mysteries of the Holy

Qur'an and a hidden matter is discovered.....” What he says is quite clear. Knowing Arabic might not be necessary but it is useful.

Then he says:

“The **sixth standard** of appreciating the spiritual system is the physical system, for there is complete accord between the two.”

So in order to understand the Holy Quran well one has to understand the physical world because it is a reflection of the spiritual world. So the person who tries to comment on the verses of the Holy Quran to make it understandable to the common man should have a deep understanding of the physical world as it is although one cannot know all that there is to be known. But at least one should have a good understanding of the main parts of the physical universe.

In the end Hazrat Masih tells us:

“The **seventh standard** is the revelation and visions of the saints. This standard in a way comprises all other standards as the recipient of revelation is a complete reflection of the Prophet whom he follows, and with the exception of Prophethood and new commandments, he is bestowed everything that is bestowed on the Prophet. The certain and true teaching is disclosed to him and he receives everything by way of bounty and favour that is bestowed on the Prophet whom he follows. He does not indulge in conjecture, but speaks having seen and expounds having heard. This way is open for the Muslims for it cannot be that there should be no true heir. [*Barakat-ud-Du'a, Ruhani Khaza'in, Vol. 6, pp. 17-21*]

Here we understand that the Promised Messiah means such visions and dreams that explain or give added meanings to the verses of which one might not have thought about. It is a well known and documented fact that many saints have been taught added meanings of some verses of the Holy Quran. Many have even received many verses as revelations. But in another place Hazrat Masih has also cautioned us that any revelation visions or dream that is in contradiction with any verse of the Holy Quran should be rejected outright. From this extract we also understand that there will be heirs of the Holy Prophet. This is Allah's privilege and he grants it to whosoever He wishes so that such a person may be a source of guidance and not

a way of perdition for the people. Allah can grant this privilege to whomsoever He pleases. He does not have to rely on anyone's recommendation to make His appointments. Those who think that because of them that such and such were granted favours from Allah are only fooling their own selves and are trying to fool others. In the Holy Quran we understand that the granting of Favours is the privilege of Allah and Allah alone. He who wants others to believe that this is not the case is puffed up by his own importance and wants others to recognize his apparent favours. But as devoted servants of Allah we know quite well that the Holy Prophet has said "he who is not thankful to the people will not be thankful to Allah". The heirs of the Holy Prophet within the ummah strive to follow in his footsteps. They strive to make people know, recognize and obey their Lord. They do not ask people to recognize them. They try to live in love and peace despite differences of opinion. They do not fight but if they are fought they will respond appropriately. They do not work for any kind of thanks or recognition from the people. Their Allah is their reward and that is quite sufficient for them. It is of such people that Hazrat Masih has spoken who would be the heirs of the Holy Prophet.

We members of Jamaat Ahmadiyya Al Mouslemeen, by the Grace of Almighty Allah we strive to understand and practice the Holy Quran in our daily lives. Allah has said to me several times that I am on the *sirat mustaqim* and that I guide to it. Those who follow me do it out their own free will and for their own good. I am confident that Allah will reward them for their faith. We keep an open mind and we are open to criticism and we will assess them to consider their validity. If we think they are valid we will change our course of action. When we see that the criticisms that are being leveled against us are unwarranted we will ignore what is useless. We will appreciate if anyone could show us through the Holy Quran how we might be wrong in what we believe and what we do. But they who try to do so should not distort the meanings of the verses of the Holy Quran to suit their purpose. That is why I have chosen to explain what Hazrat Masih has said on this important matter so that everyone may know what the guidelines to interpret the Holy Quran are. It is not appropriate from anybody despite all his grandiose titles to cite verses out of context and to make people believe that he is an authority on understanding the Holy Quran.

May Allah always protect us from such people who enjoy leadership positions in groups but who are nonetheless not well versed in the teachings of the Holy Book and they try to distort them to suit the meaning that they want the verses to have in order to hide their own ignorance. Our weapon to fight such ignorance is the Holy Book itself. That is why each one of us should equip himself and herself with the knowledge that the book contain so that they might ever be enlightened and are ever ready to show the bluff of those who make the Holy Quran follow their own inclinations. May Allah make our heart a true repository of the knowledge of the sacred book. Ameen.