



Friday Sermon

HAZRAT MUHYI-UD-DIN AL-KHALIFATULLAH

Munir Ahmad Azim

05 February 2016 ~
(25 Rabi'ul Aakhir 1437 Hijri)

After greeting all his disciples (and all Muslims) worldwide with the greeting of peace Hadhrat Khalifatullah (atba) read the Tashahhud, Ta'uz, Surah Al Fatiha, and then he delivered his sermon on the subject of ***“Islam and Slavery”***:

Since the abolition of slavery as commemorated here in Mauritius every February 1st and also considered as a holiday fell on a Monday, February 01, 2016, so today Friday, February 05, 2016, my sermon will focus on the subject:

ISLAM AND SLAVERY

Islam abolished the institution of slavery, established thousands of years ago. It is the only religion to abolish this institution by its teachings. No other religion made plans for its abolition. Instead, this institution was recognized in all other religions. Slavery is viewed within Judaism and Hinduism as religious institutions (e.g., in the treatment towards non-Jews and casteism respectively). Christianity is only a branch of Judaism and as such slavery continued to be recognized (and accepted) by the Christian nations for centuries. The abolition of slavery was the result of an advance in the standards of ethics and had no link with any Christian teaching. The history of the Christian church bears witness to the efforts undertaken in many occasions, to end slavery. But on each occasion, it was astonishingly the church which offered the fiercest opposition. As for the Hindus' casteism system, it has established slavery so firmly and on a large scale that slavery is considered as a good with the least evil. As for Islam, it has abolished slavery in all prohibited forms.

There is, however, an institution recognized by Islam which has been described by the term 'slavery'. In fact, it corresponds to the situation of prisoners of war. Even if it is an evil, but it is a necessary consequence of the war. When two nations are at war, it is

inconceivable that prisoners captured on the same day are returned to their troop at night to then join the battle the next day. Even in some games, the one who gets caught must withdraw and not participate until the end of the game. Moreover it is clear that if we could take no prisoner during war, or if it was mandatory to release them immediately after having captured them, then the state of war would have been perpetual. Thus, the taking of prisoners is a necessary evil; it is a necessary consequence of war. Apart from this provision/ exception, Islam does not endorse any other form of slavery.

The prophets obviously had no slave. God says in the Holy Quran: **“It is not fitting for a prophet that he takes captives before he took part in a regular battle in the country. You (Muslims) want the goods of this world, but Allah desires for you the Hereafter. And Allah is Mighty, Wise.”** (An-Anfal 8: 68)

No prophet was allowed to make slaves of anyone. This is to say that it was forbidden not only to the Holy Prophet (pbuh) to have slaves, but that guidance was extended to all the prophets. So these prophets obviously had no slave. We must therefore conclude that neither Ramchandra nor Krishna nor Jesus nor Moses had rebelled against those commandments and thus those who attribute to them such conduct cannot have our trust.

The verse which I have cited teaches us that in case of war, that is, implying deaths on a large scale, it is allowed to have prisoners of war. This also indicates that such prisoners can be captured only during a war between nations or states but not during tribal or familial conflicts. Those wishing to take slaves or prisoners in situations other than those mentioned above, only seek material benefits and not the pleasure of Allah. But God wants them to aspire to the future (eternal) life. God is Great, Wise. These orders, like all those coming from God are indeed full of wisdom.

History shows us that all people practicing slavery was then reduced to slavery. If Muslims ignore and establish slavery, they will, in turn be reduced to slaves. History shows us that all people practicing slavery was then reduced to slavery. The Abbasids encouraged slavery and the result was that the majority of the caliphs were descended from slaves-girls; the latter were apparently free and independent, they were no better treated than slaves.

The word Ithkhan used in this verse for war means war followed by a countless loss of lives and excludes the idea of a tribal war or border skirmishes. It involves regular war between organized nations or states. A nation that wants to take the risk of turning some of his people into prisoners of war should logically avoid aggression. If it embarks on an aggression that leads to war and the loss of human lives, it cannot protest if some of them are taken as prisoners. If prisoners were captured during a war as defined by Islamic

teachings, the choice between two types of procedures is presented as prescribed by the following verse: **“And when you meet the unbelievers in regular battle, strike them in their necks until you have wounded and taken them as prisoners. And afterwards either set them free as a favour or let them ransom (themselves) until the war terminates...”** (Muhammad 47: 5).

At the end of the war, all prisoners must be released by a pure act of charity; or they must negotiate their release against a ransom. If a prisoner is not released voluntarily, he must remain prisoner and perform suitable work (according to his capacity) until he can arrange for a ransom or someone pays it for him. This cannot be considered as an abuse for like today, prisoners of war are often made to work according to their capabilities.

It appears that authorization was granted by the Holy Prophet (pbuh) for the release of any prisoner who would give assurance/ promise not to participate in wars against Muslims. An incident at the time of the Holy Prophet (pbuh) illustrates this. During the Battle of Badr, a man by the name of Abu Uzzah was taken as prisoner. The Holy Prophet (pbuh) released him after taking his promise that he would never fight against the Muslims in wartime. But unfortunately for him, he broke his promise during the Battle of Uhud. Later on, when he participated in the Battle of Hamra Al-Asad, he was again captured as prisoner by the Muslims and was executed.

Therefore, the principles of Islam are very clear to all Muslims and non-Muslims. Its teachings are based on a truth that comes from a unique and perfect God who guides His servants. The teachings of Islam are for all times. If today the world's nations deign to consider the perfection of the Divine Book which is the Holy Quran, then all problems will be solved, but for this approach to be perfect people shall necessarily have faith in the unique God and Creator Who has given them everything for their best guidance. And therefore a great number of problems/ ills would have been tackled, such problems as modern slavery would have been eradicated.

May Allah help the nations of the world to perceive the truth of Islam and the perfection of His teachings. *Insha-Allah, Ameen.*