

Eidul Adha Khutbah delivered at IIT by Shaikh Ahmad Kutty

September 1, 2017

Allah is Great; Allah is Great; Allah is Great.

I praise the Beneficent One, the Creator, and Lord of the Universe. I praise Him for His countless blessings. I praise Him for His gift of life, health, and family. I praise Him for honoring us to witness another sacred month; to pray, fast, give charity and offer sacrifice. I praise Him for the peace, security, and prosperity we enjoy in our country, Canada.

I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger and the seal of prophets. May Allah bless Him, his family and companions as well as all prophets and messengers and those who follow their beautiful examples until the end of times.

Brothers and sisters:

I wish you all a most joyous Eid. I pray that Allah continues to shower us with His mercy, grace, and forgiveness.

Before proceeding, let us remember our parents and grandparents, uncles and aunts, brothers and sisters, and friends who have passed away. I pray to the All-Merciful One to illuminate their graves and accept them in His mercy.

Let us also remember the many millions all over the world who are suffering from various forms of oppression, genocide, or occupation of their lands:

Let us remember the Rohingya people who are being murdered by the marauding Buddhist monks - while the world is silently watching. Let us remember the Palestinians who continue to be occupied by the Zionist State of Israel while their women, men and children are often killed with impunity. Let us remember the people of Yemen who are being bombed and their country decimated; Let us remember Syrians who are forced out of their country and living as refugees. Let us remember the people of Kashmir who are being

hunted down by a ruthless army. Let us remember everyone who is living under oppression and injustice.

Let us also remember the victims of natural calamities and floods in Texas, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal and other places.

We are living in a time of Islamophobia, racism, and discrimination based on race, religion, and ethnicity. We see it all around us; where neighbors hate neighbors; women are targeted because of their attire.

The terror we see all around us can only be tackled by a unifying vision of common humanity and brotherhood.

It calls for a new vision to unite humanity. Such a vision can only come from a transcendent source: That is where religious traditions come into the picture.

It is the responsibility of religious leaders and scholars to articulate the message of brotherhood and compassion; to resist those who use religious symbols to divide and discriminate, and turn our countries and communities into war zones.

The time has come for us to return to the basics of our religious traditions. In a world where religion had been turned into lifeless dogmas and rituals, where oppression and injustice were rampant, Allah sent Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) with the message of truth, justice and compassion stressing the sacred bond of humanity.

Islam from its early beginnings conjoined religion with compassion and social justice:

“Do you see the one who rejects religion?

That is the one who rebuffs the orphan

And does not encourage feeding the poor

So woe to those who pray and yet are inattentive to their prayer

Those who put on the appearance

And yet withhold small acts of kindness.” (Qur’an: 107: 1-7).

So, the Qur'anic message is clear. Religion devoid of compassion is a farce; it has no place in Islam.

That is why the Qur'an calls us back to the pristine religion

Today it is the theology that divides the people. Therefore, we need to go beyond theological dogmas to the Soul of Religion.

Abraham was such a monotheist who discovered this liberating vision:

“Abraham was a model (for humanity), obedient to God, devoted and not an idolater, grateful for the favors of God, who chose him and guided him to a straight path. And we gave him good in the world, and in the hereafter, he is to be one of the worthy. So, We inspired you to follow the way of Abraham devotedly; he was not one of those who would join partners with God.” (Qur'an: 160: 120-123).

Abraham discovered God as the transcendent source of the universe.

We declare this truth every time we say Allahu Akbar.

We are affirming that God is not a material body nor is He incarnated in the created things; rather, He is the Spirit, the Power, and the Self-subsisting Source of all beings.

And that we ought to know God through sound faith: a faith based on reflection, reasoning, and critical thinking.

The world today is suffering from those who use religion to divide and rule; to create walls and kill.

That is why we need to discover the natural way of Abraham.

The relevance of the Abrahamic way can be summed up in three points:

Firstly,

It is a call to shake off blind faith; Abrahamic way calls for reflection, incisive questioning, and reasoning.

It refuses to attach divinity to any of the created beings and thus affirms God's transcendence.

Abrahamic vision cuts at the root of all forms of exploitation the world is has been witnessing in the name of religion; for millions have been duped by those who claim divinity.

The Abrahamic way calls for liberation from myths and superstitions; it is opposed to blind adherence to customs and conventions:

Abraham asked his people:

“What if your forefathers have been misguided or deluded?”

Abrahamic way calls for critical thinking.

Secondly,

Abrahamic way calls us to open our doors to the strangers and to tear down the walls that separate us. Abraham had a part of his tent always open to welcome visitors. Today when we see the refugees knocking at our doors, let us remember the lessons of Abrahamic way.

Thirdly,

Abraham was a man who was devoted to God, trusting in His will, and fighting the forces of evil within and without

Islam commemorates Ibrahim in most of the rituals of Hajj

He is remembered while we do *Tawaf*;

He is remembered while we walk between the hills of Safa and Marwah;

He is remembered while we pelt the stone pillars;

He is remembered while we offer sacrifice;

He is remembered when we offer the daily supplication: *My worship, my sacrifice, and my life and death are dedicated to the Lord of the worlds.*

The Qur'an sums up this message of surrender to the one and only God:

“Say, “Would I seek a lord other than God, the Lord of all things? No soul gets but what it is due, and no one bearing responsibility can bear the burden of another. And then your destination is back to God who will inform you about that wherein you differed.”
(Qur'an: 6: 164).

Brothers and Sisters:

Time has come for us to get back to the basics of religion; to shun superstitions and idols of wood, stone, and flesh and accept the Oneness and Sovereignty of the one and only God.

And thus also affirm the oneness of humanity.

Let us recognize the sacred bond of humankind that unites us. Let's recall how our Prophet (peace be upon him) was moved to tears upon seeing a clan who appeared before him emaciated and walking like bare bones. He climbed the pulpit exhorting people to charity reminding them of common humanity that binds us all.

The Prophet's message moved the companions to be so charitable that soon there was a heap of provisions like a mountain and the sight lighted the Prophet's face.

Today the sights of the poor scavenging for food in garbage dumps and the children emaciated and walking like bare bones should stir us to action.

It is the perfect time for us to put the lessons of our religion into practice:

Let us heed the lesson the Prophet (peace be upon him) taught us through this sacred narrative:

God will address us on the Day of Resurrection:

“Son of Adam, I was sick, and yet you didn't care to visit me! He will ask, “How can I visit you, You who are the Lord of the worlds? God will say, “My servant was sick and yet you didn't visit him; didn't you know if you were to visit him you would find Me with him.

Son of Adam, I asked for a drink, and yet you didn't care to give Me a drink. He will ask, “How can I give You drink, You are the Lord of the worlds? God will say: My servant asked you for a drink and yet you didn't give him drink. Didn't you know that if you were to give him a drink, you would find that with Me?

Son of Adam, I asked you for food, and yet you didn't feed me! He will ask, "How could I feed You, You who are the Lord of the worlds? God will say, "My servant asked for food, and yet you didn't care to feed him; didn't know if you were to feed him, you would find it with Me?"
(Reported by Ibn Hibban)

Let us pray to Allah to open our hearts to experience His presence through acts of compassion.

Our Lord, You are the All-Compassionate, the All-Merciful

Have mercy on us; forgive us, and bless us all to remember You, to glorify You, and worship You.

Our Lord, guide us unto the straight path; guide our families and children, young and old, males and females unto the straight path.

Our Lord, forgive those who have passed away; and grace them with Your mercy.

Our Lord, send down healing and cure upon those who are sick and grant them a sound and healthy life - if life is good for them. And take their souls with mercy and forgive them if death is right for them.

Our Lord, have mercy on those who are suffering in the world; help them regain their dignity, and rights, and assist them against their oppressors.

O the Beneficent One, grant relief and comfort to the victims of floods and natural calamities in Texas, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and elsewhere. And compensate their losses.

Our Lord, where there is war, make us instruments of peace; where there is hatred make us instruments of love, where there is suffering, make us those who bring comfort.

Our Lord, accept our good deeds, remove our fears and anxieties, and send down tranquility and peace upon our hearts.

Our Lord, grant us joy and comfort in our spouses and children and make us models for the God-fearing.