

## ISTIQAHAH (steadfastness) IN WORSHIP

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ. وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ  
أَعْمَالِنَا. مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ وَمَنْ يَضِلَّ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ.

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ  
وَرَسُولُهُ. اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ،

فِيَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ، وَأَوْصِيكُمْ وَنَفْسِي بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ وَطَاعَتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ  
تُفْلِحُونَ

Let us increase our righteousness to Allah the Almighty by doing all that He prescribes and avoiding all that He prohibits. May we be blessed by Him in this world and the hereafter.

Dear brothers and sisters,

We are indeed so blessed to be able to face Ramadan this year. How many of our relatives and friends are not with us today to perform worship during Ramadan? Let us take this opportunity to intensify our worship and obedience in this blessed month. Allah the Almighty says in chapter 2 (surah al-Baqarah) verse 183:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

Which means: *O you who have believed, decreed upon you is fasting as it was decreed upon those before you that you may become righteous .*

We are into the month of ramadhan for a week now. So, let us proceed with our deeds right up to the end of Ramadan. Proceed with congregational taraweeh prayers of twenty rakaats during this month and increase voluntary acts of worship such as reciting the Quran, increasing our charity and other acts

Dear brothers and sisters,

Emulate the exemplary islamic scholars who are also role models for us to continue our worship during Ramadan. Among these scholars are Imam Shafie r.a. Imam al-Nawawi narrated that Imam Shafi'i r.a. completed the recitation of the al-Quran twice a night during Ramadan.

Dear brothers and sisters,

Performing worship continuously or steadfastly is a great challenge for many of us. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was asked by his companions as to why he had gray hair. The Prophet (pbuh) answered:

شَيْبَتِي هُوَ وَأَخْوَاتُهَا

Which means: *That which caused me to have gray hair is the content of surah Hud and chapters of its kind.*

According to the ulamas, the prophet (pbuh) had gray hairs because the contents of surah Hud depicted the Day of Judgment and there is a verse that required the Prophet (pbuh) to do something religiously challenging that is steadfast. Allah the Almighty says in chapter 11(surah Hud) verse 112:

فَاسْتَقِمَّ كَمَا أُمِرْتَ

Which means: *So remain on a right course as you (Muhammad) have been commanded.*

Dear brothers and sisters,

Let us remain steadfast in doing worship during this blessed month of Ramadan. We still have three weeks to cultivate willpower and determination so that we can complete our mission until the end of Ramadan. Create a conducive environment for performing worship together with our family members at home and at the mosques. Come up with engaging activities at the mosques to attract our children and young people to be steadfast and do worship. To perform worships in a steadfast manner requires support from many quarters which include congregating to perform teraweeh prayers not only during early ramadhan but continuously right up till the end of ramadhan. Let us congregate to

do our daily prayers together at nearby suraus or mosques. Let us recite the al-Quran together throughout ramadhan. May Allah the Almighty give us strength and steadfastness in performing our worship to Him. Allah the Almihty says in chapter 41 (surah Fussilat) verse:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوا تَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَلَّا تَخَافُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَبْشِرُوا بِالْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي كُنتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ

Which means: *Indeed, those who have said, "Our Lord is Allah " and then remained on a right course - the angels will descend upon them, [saying], "Do not fear and do not grieve but receive good tidings of Paradise, which you were promised.*

لِيُؤْتِيَهُمُ اللَّهُ حِكْمًا بِيُحْكُمُوا مَا يُرِيدُ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ. وَإِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ. وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ مِيثَاقَهُمْ لَعَنَّاهُمْ أَنْ يَقُولُوا ذُرِّيَّتِي هَالِكَةٌ كَالَّذِينَ هَلَكُوا قَبْلَ هَذَا. فَمَا كُنْتُمْ بِمُعْذِرِينَ عَلَيْهِمْ. فَأَعْرَضُوا فَأَرْسَلْنَا السَّمَاءَ نَزْلًا مُبِينًا يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ. وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ مِيثَاقَهُمْ لَعَنَّاهُمْ أَنْ يَقُولُوا ذُرِّيَّتِي هَالِكَةٌ كَالَّذِينَ هَلَكُوا قَبْلَ هَذَا. فَمَا كُنْتُمْ بِمُعْذِرِينَ عَلَيْهِمْ. فَأَعْرَضُوا فَأَرْسَلْنَا السَّمَاءَ نَزْلًا مُبِينًا يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ.

مِنِّي وَمِنْكُمْ تِلَاوَتُهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ. أَقُولُ قَوْلِي هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ الْعَظِيمَ لِيْ وَلَكُمْ، وَلِسَائِرِ

المُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ، وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ، فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ.