

APPLYING THE LESSONS OF RAMADHAN

أَلْحَمْدُ 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.

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أَنَّىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهُ حَيٰوةً طَيِّبَةً ۗ وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ
أَجْرَهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٧﴾

أَمَّا بَعْدُ،

فَيَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ، أُوصِيَكُمْ وَإِيَّايَ بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ وَطَاعَتِهِ، فَقَدْ فَازَ الْمُتَّقُونَ.

Let us all increase our obedience towards Allah the Almighty by doing everything that He prescribes and avoiding everything that He prohibits. Hopefully, we will receive His forgiveness in this world and in the Hereafter.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The month of *Ramadhan* has just passed and today we are in the month of *Shawwal*. The discipline that has been instilled through fasting during the month of *Ramadhan* should leave a deep impression on our lives. It would be truly meaningful if we could maintain the daily routines that we

performed throughout the month such as praying in congregation at the mosque, giving charity, reading the Quran consistently, performing the special night prayers (qiamullail), and various other forms of worship.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Today we are at the beginning of the month of *Shawwal* which is the month of victory for Muslims after the struggles against our worldly desires during the month of *Ramadhan*. It has become a common practice for Muslims in this country to visit relatives, neighbors, and friends as a means to strengthen our brotherhood. This practice is a way to revive the traditions (Sunnah) of our beloved Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

This is a great opportunity for us to reconnect with each other and mend our relationships especially if we have had misunderstandings or disputes.

Such is the beauty of Islam which teaches us to visit each other. We should not make feasting as our priority but instead take the wisdom behind the practice of visiting which is to strengthen our friendship and to seek forgiveness from each other as mentioned by Allah the Almighty in the Quran in Chapter 49 (Surah al-Hujurat), verse (ayat) 10:

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

Which means: *The believers are but brothers, so make settlement between your brothers. And fear Allah that you may receive mercy.*

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Islam also teaches us to do things in moderation. In the excitement of celebrating *Eid-al-Fitr* by holding open houses we must remember to not be wasteful. Allah the Almighty has reminded us in the Quran in Chapter 17 (Surah al-Isra '), verses (ayat) 26-27:

وَأَاتِ ذَا الْقُرْبَىٰ حَقَّهُ وَالْمِسْكِينَ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ وَلَا تُبَذِّرْ تَبْذِيرًا ﴿٢٦﴾ إِنَّ الْمُبَذِّرِينَ كَانُوا

إِخْوَانَ الشَّيَاطِينِ ۗ وَكَانَ الشَّيْطَانُ لِرَبِّهِ كَفُورًا ﴿٢٧﴾

Which means: *And give the relative his right, and [also] the poor and the traveler, and do not spend wastefully. Indeed, the wasteful are brothers of the devils, and ever has Satan been to his Lord ungrateful.*

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

While busy fulfilling invitations for open houses and visiting our relatives and friends, we must not forget to fast an extra 6 days in the month of *Shawwal* .

It is a mercy from Allah the Almighty for the believers that we are compensated with a great reward if we fast for 6 days in the month of *Shawwal*. Therefore we must take this opportunity to perform an extra 6 days of fasting. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said in a *Hadith* which was narrated by Imam Muslim:

مَنْ صَامَ رَمَضَانَ ثُمَّ أَتْبَعَهُ سِتًّا مِنْ شَوَّالٍ كَانَ كَصِيَامِ الدَّهْرِ

. Which means: *“Whoever fasts in the month of Ramadhan and follows it with six days of fasting in the month of Shawwal, it will be as if he fasted for the whole year.”*

Let us remind ourselves to seize this opportunity to fast an extra 6 days in *Shawwal*. Since we know that the reward of fasting in *Shawwal* is enormous, it will be a great loss if we do not do it. After all it only comes once a year.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Let us try our best to continue performing our good deeds as we did in the month of *Ramadhan* in order to produce a wholesome person physically and spiritually as the wise once said:

العقل السليم في الجسم السليم

Which means: *A healthy body keeps a healthy mind.*

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ
وَقُلْ أَعْمَلُوا فَسَيَرَى اللَّهُ عَمَلَكُمْ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَسَتُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ عِلْمِ الْغَيْبِ
وَالشَّهَادَةِ فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٠٥﴾

Indeed Allah the Almighty sees and knows everything as stated in the Quran in Chapter 9 (Surah at-Tawbah), verse (*ayat*), 105:

Which means: *And say, "Do [as you will], for Allah will see your deeds, and [so, will] His Messenger and the believers. And you will be returned to the Knower of the unseen and the witnessed, and He will inform you of what you used to do."*

بَارَكَ اللَّهُ لِيْ وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقُرْآنِ الْعَظِيمِ وَنَفَعَنِي وَإِيَّاكُمْ بِمَا فِيهِ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ وَتَقَبَّلَ مِنِّي وَمِنْكُمْ تِلَاوَتَهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ وَاسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهُ الْعَظِيمَ لِيْ وَلَكُمْ وَلِسَائِرِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ فَيَا فَوْزَ الْمُسْتَغْفِرِينَ وَيَا نَجَاةَ التَّائِبِينَ