

The Noble Occation of *Ramadhan*

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُسْتَعِينُهُ 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

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن

قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

أَمَّا بَعْدُ،

فِيَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَ أَوْصِيكُمْ وَآيَايَ بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ، فَقَدْ فَازَ الْمُتَّقُونَ.

Let us all increase our obedience towards Allah the Almighty by doing everything that He prescribes and avoiding all that He prohibits. Hopefully, we will be blessed in this world and in the hereafter.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Whether we realize it or not, time passes quickly. The month of *Sha'ban* (the eighth month of the year in the Islamic calendar) has approached its end and soon we will enter the glorious month of *Ramadhan*. This month of *Ramadhan* is full of blessings in which good deeds

will be given multiple rewards, and the doers will receive mercy and forgiveness from Allah the Almighty.

Ramadhan is not merely a month in the Islamic calendar but it is an institution that can develop and train our souls to achieve excellent character and personality. The month of *Ramadhan* is the greatest gift and a grace for Muslims because Allah has provided many rewards for His servants who believe in Him. Every second, our deeds receive multiple rewards from Allah the Almighty.

In a *Hadith* which was narrated by Abu Hurayrah, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) delighted his companions with the arrival of *Ramadhan* by saying:

قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَمَضَانُ شَهْرٌ مُبَارَكٌ ، أُفْتَرَضَ عَلَيْكُمْ صِيَامُهُ ، تُفْتَحُ فِيهِ أَبْوَابُ الْجَنَّةِ ، وَتُعَلَقُ فِيهِ أَبْوَابُ الْجَحِيمِ ، وَتُعَلُّ فِيهِ الشَّيَاطِينُ ، فِيهِ لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ ، مَنْ حُرِمَ خَيْرَهَا فَقَدْ حُرِمَ .

Which means: *When the month of Ramadan starts, the gates of the heaven are opened and the gates of Hell are closed and the devils are chained. It contains the night of Power which is better than a thousand months.*

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

In preparation for the arrival of this blessed month, the following are some suggestions which we should follow in order to reap the maximum benefits which Allah the Almighty has promised:

First: Let us together perfect our intention and have firmness during the month of *Ramadhan*.

Our intention and firmness must be solely to devote ourselves to Allah the Almighty. Let us make this *Ramadhan* the best opportunity to seize all the advantages offered. God willing, with the right intention and firmness we will be helped by Allah the Almighty in perfecting our acts of worship.

Second: Let us together improve our knowledge about fasting.

In order to achieve the highest degree of fasting, we should equip ourselves with the correct knowledge of how to perform the actual fasting as established by Islam.

Third: Let us publicly express our joy for the arrival of *Ramadhan*

Ramadhan presents a great opportunity for Muslims to increase our good deeds. Therefore, Muslims must express our happiness and pray to Allah the Almighty that He will permit us to live until this year's *Ramadhan* and beyond. Moreover we must remember to ask Allah for a chance to encounter and experience the night of Power (*Laylat al-Qadr*).

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We must remember the *Hadith* which was narrated by Imam Ahmad which described the incident when the Prophet (pbuh) mentioned the word "Amen" three times just before getting ready to deliver a *Khutbah* (Friday sermon). When he finished delivering the *khutbah*, his companions asked the Prophet why he repeated the word "Amen" three times. The Prophet (pbuh) replied that Angel Gabriel came and supplicated against three groups:

A person who hears the name of Prophet Muhammad being mentioned but does not say, "Peace be upon him" is doomed. He who grows up while both of his parents or one of them is still alive, but they do not cause him to enter Paradise is doomed. The third one is a person who is given a chance to be in the month of *Ramadhan* but is not forgiven by Allah the Almighty.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

To end today's *khutbah*, let us strive to perform as many acts of worship and good deeds during the month of *Ramadhan* because each act is rewarded with multiple rewards. Those who still have not repaid the missed fast in the previous years, must do so before this year's *Ramadhan* arrives. May Allah the Almighty bless us and forgive us this *Ramadhan*.

Allah the Almighty has urged us to seek His forgiveness as He mentioned in the Quran in Chapter 3 (Surah Ali-Imran), verse (ayat) 133:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

وَسَارِعُوا إِلَى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ
أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ

Which means: *And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord and a garden as wide as the heavens
and earth, prepared for the righteous*

بَارِكُ اللَّهُ لِيْ وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقُرْآنِ الْعَظِيمِ، وَتَفَعَّلِي وَإِيَّاكُمْ بِمَا فِيهِ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ، وَتَقَبَّلَ مِنِّي
وَمِنْكُمْ تِلَاوَتَهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ. أَقُولُ قَوْلِي هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ الْعَظِيمَ لِيْ وَلَكُمْ، وَلِسَائِرِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ
وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ، وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ، فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ.