

ADVANTAGES OF THE MONTH OF MUHARAM

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ
أَعْمَالِنَا مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ وَمَنْ يَضِلَّ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ
وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَأَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ
اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ وَبَارِكْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ.
أَمَّا بَعْدُ،

فِيَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ، أُوصِيكُمْ وَإِيَّايَ بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ، فَقَدْ فَازَ الْمُتَّقُونَ.

Let us strive to increase our faith and righteousness to Allah the Almighty by doing all that He prescribes and leaving all that He prohibits. May we be blessed in this life and the Hereafter.

Dear brothers and sisters

Among the blessings that Allah the Almighty has bestowed upon us is time to perform worship continuously. After going through the months of ramadhan and zulhijjah, soon we will greet the month of muharam. Allah the Almighty says in chapter 9 (surah al-Taubah) verse 36:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

إِنَّ عِدَّةَ الشُّهُورِ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ اثْنَا عَشَرَ شَهْرًا فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ يَوْمَ خَلَقَ
السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ مِنْهَا أَرْبَعَةٌ حُرُمٌ ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ

Which means: *Indeed, the number of months with Allah is twelve [lunar] months in the register of Allah [from] the day He created the heavens and the earth; of these, four are sacred. That is the correct religion.*

The month of Muharram that we will welcome soon is one of the months which has been determined by Allah the Almighty as mentioned by the Prophet (pbuh) in a hadith narrated by Imam al-Bukhari:

إِنَّ الزَّمَانَ قَدْ اسْتَدَارَ كَهَيْئَتِهِ يَوْمَ خَلَقَ اللَّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ اثْنَا عَشَرَ شَهْرًا مِنْهَا
أَرْبَعَةٌ حُرُمٌ ثَلَاثَةٌ مُتَوَالِيَاتٌ ذُو الْقَعْدَةِ وَذُو الْحِجَّةِ وَالْمُحَرَّمُ وَرَجَبٌ

Which means: *Time has gone back to how it was at the time Allah created the Heavens and the Earth. A year has twelve months, four of which are sacred, three consecutive, Zulkaedah, Zuhijjah dan Muharram, Muharram, and Rejab.*

Dear brothers and sisters

As obedient servants of Allah the Almighty, we must respect the month of Muharam. During this month, unity and brotherhood among Muslims should always be nurtured and continued. Disunity and hostility are prohibited in Islam. However, this is especially true during Muharam and other sacred (*haram*) months. Allah the Almighty says in chapter 9 (surah al-Taubah) verse 36:

فَلَا تَظْلِمُوا فِيهِنَّ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَقَاتِلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ كَافَّةً كَمَا
يَقَاتِلُونَكُمْ كَافَّةً وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾

Which means: *So do not wrong yourselves during them. And fight against the disbelievers collectively as they fight against you collectively. And know that Allah is with the righteous [who fear Him]*

Imam al-Qurtubi explained that Allah the Almighty prohibits any form of tyranny in order to glorify the sacred months i.e. the months of *haram* while this prohibition exists at all times. Hence, acts of tyranny or programs that lead to disobedience are strongly prohibited and should be avoided especially in these sacred months. Ibn Manzur mentioned in the Arabic dictionary, "the month of Muharram was named so because the Arab infidels (*arab jahiliyyah*) prohibited war during this month. Although they were astray and kafir; they continued to glorify all the sacred months so much so that if a person meets his father's murderer on these months, he will not kill the murderer.

Dear brothers and sisters

Specific deeds such as praying, fasting and reciting dzikir are highly encouraged during these months. If government agencies, private sectors and individuals are able to organize beneficial activities during these months, social ills in our society can be reduced. Voluntary fasting is among the practices that is recommended during these months. The Prophet (pbuh) mentions in a hadith narrated by sahih Muslim:

أَفْضَلُ الصِّيَامِ بَعْدَ شَهْرِ رَمَضَانَ شَهْرُ اللَّهِ الْمُحَرَّمِ

Which means: The best fasting after Ramadan is the fasting of Muharram.

Fasting throughout the month of Muharram is recommended. However, based on the Prophet's hadith narrated by Ibn Majah, there is a special verse that recounts the advantages of fasting on 10 Muharram that is the 'Asyura Day.

صِيَامُ يَوْمِ عَاشُورَاءَ إِلَيَّ أَحْتَسِبُ عَلَى اللَّهِ أَنْ يُكَفِّرَ السَّنَةَ الَّتِي قَبْلَهُ

Which means: "Fasting the day of 'Ashura' (is of great merits), I hope that Allah will accept it as an expiation for (the sins committed in) the previous year."

During the reign of Saidina Umar ra, he began the computation of the year in the Islamic calendar in conjunction with Hijrah as its foundation and Muharram was made the first month. Let's take advantage of this month of Muharram to renew

our good deeds so that we are closer to Allah the Almighty and live according to the sunnah of our Prophet (pbuh). Allah the Almighty says in chapter 3(surah Ali Imran) verse 32:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

قُلْ أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ ^ط فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْكٰفِرِينَ ﴿٣٢﴾

Which means: Say, "Obey Allah and the Messenger." But if they turn away - then indeed, Allah does not like the disbelievers.

بَارَكَ اللَّهُ لِي وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقُرْءَانِ الْعَظِيمِ، وَنَفَعَنِي وَإِيَّاكُمْ بِمَا فِيهِ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ، وَتَقَبَّلَ مِنِّي وَمِنْكُمْ تِلَاوَتَهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ، أَقُولُ قَوْلِي هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ الْعَظِيمَ لِي وَلَكُمْ، وَلِسَائِرِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ، وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ، فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ فَيَا فَوْزَ الْمُسْتَغْفِرِينَ وَيَا نَجَاةَ التَّائِبِينَ.