

CELEBRATE FIRST SYAWAL JUDICIOUSLY

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 وَبَارِكْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ،

فَيَا 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 and leaving all that He prohibits. May we be blessed by Allah the Almighty in this life and the hereafter.

Dear brothers and sisters,

Ramadhan has just ended and it has left an indelible mark on all of us. Ramadhan educated us to be disciplined right from getting up early for *sahur* (predawn meal) till we go to sleep. Ramadhan is filled with many compulsory and recommended deeds such as praying at mosques or masjid, giving charity, reading the al-Quran, performing night prayers (*qiamullail*) and other good deeds. Wouldn't it be great if we could sustain and continue these daily good deeds beyond Ramadhan?

Today, we are in the month of Syawal, which is the month of the Muslims victory after having gone through *jihad* against lust throughout Ramadhan. It is common practise among muslims in our country to organize open houses to celebrate Eid al Fitr (muslim festival marking the end of the fast of Ramadhan).

Islam teaches us to do things moderately. Do not be over enthusiastic in celebrating Eid al fitr by holding lavish open houses which bring nothing but wastages.

Allah the Almighty said in chapter 17 (surah al-Isra) verse 27:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

﴿٢٧﴾ إِنَّ الْمُبْذِرِينَ كَانُوا إِخْوَانَ الشَّيْطَانِ ^طوَكَانَ الشَّيْطَانُ لِرَبِّهِ كَفُورًا

Which means: *Indeed, the wasteful are brothers of the devils, and ever has Satan been to his Lord ungrateful.*

Dear brothers and sisters,

The month of Syawal is the month of familial relationship (*silaturrahim*). So, let us apologize and seek forgiveness from our parents, spouses and children. Invite our families to visit relatives, neighbours and friends. Leave our gadgets , television and social media temporarily and celebrate guests who come to our houses. Make effort to strengthen relationships. Allah the Almighty promises paradise to those who do good

deeds and always maintain good relationships with others. The Prophet (pbuh) said in a hadith narrated by Imam al-Tirmizi:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ أَفْشُوا السَّلَامَ وَأَطْعِمُوا الطَّعَامَ وَصَلُّوا الْأَرْحَامَ
وَصَلُّوا بِاللَّيْلِ وَالنَّاسُ نِيَامٌ تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ بِسَلَامٍ

Which means: “O you people! Spread the Salam, feed(others), and perform Salat while the people are sleeping; you will enter Paradise with(the greeting of) Salam.’”

But keep in mind that we must always maintain our manners and restrictions in our association with others. Avoid exposing the *aurat*, using excessive accessories and shaking hands between men and women who are not *mahram* because this act is prohibited by Islamic laws and can cause slander (*fitnah*).

Dear brothers and sisters,

Giving alms and *infaq* (spending/disbursement without asking for any favor or hoping for a return) should be an agenda when we celebrate this noble day. The tradition of giving money to children and relatives during Eid should be continued to make this celebration merrier. The Prophet (pbuh) said in a hadith narrated by Imam al-Tirmizi:

إِنَّ الصَّدَقَةَ عَلَى الْمِسْكِينِ صَدَقَةٌ وَعَلَى ذِي الرَّحِمِ اثْنَتَانِ صَدَقَةٌ وَصَلَةٌ

Which means: *“To give something to a poor man brings one reward, while giving the same to a needy relation brings two: one for charity and the other for respecting the family ties.”*

The benefits and blessings of Ramadan need to be continued in the month of Shawwal. Muslims are highly encouraged to perform fasting for six days in the month of Syawal. The rewards for this act is likened to fasting throughout the year. The Prophet (pbuh) said in a hadith narrated by Imam Muslim:

مَنْ صَامَ رَمَضَانَ ثُمَّ أَتْبَعَهُ سِتًّا مِنْ شَوَّالٍ كَانَ كَصِيَامِ الدَّهْرِ

Which means: *Whoever fasts Ramadan and follows it with six days of Syawal, it will be as if he fasted for a lifetime.*

In this Syawal and joyous celebration, do ignore our responsibility to continue going to the mosque and surau as we did during Ramadan. Do not let our mosques and suraus be deserted and devoid of their congregation. Let us be steadfast to perform good deeds throughout our lives.

Allah the Almighty says in chapter 46 (surah al-Ahqaf) verse 13:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَمُوا فَلَا خَوْفَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

Which means: *Indeed, those who have said, "Our Lord is Allah," and then remained on a right course - there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve.*

بَارَكَ اللهُ لِيْ وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقُرْآنِ الْعَظِيْمِ، وَنَفَعَنِيْ وَإِيَّاكُمْ بِمَا فِيْهِ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيْمِ،
وَتَقَبَّلَ مِنِّيْ وَمِنْكُمْ تِلَاوَتَهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيْعُ الْعَلِيْمُ. أَقُولُ قَوْلِيْ هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللهُ الْعَظِيْمَ لِيْ
وَلَكُمْ، وَلِسَائِرِ الْمُسْلِمِيْنَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ وَالْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُوْرُ
الرَّحِيْمُ.