

## Making Full Use of School Holidays

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 وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ  
وَرَسُولُهُ اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ وَبَارِكْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ  
أَجْمَعِينَ.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، يَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ، أَوْصِيكُمْ وَإِيَّايَ بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ، فَقَدْ فَازَ  
الْمُتَّقُونَ.

Let us all increase our devotion towards Allah the Almighty by performing all that He has decreed and abstaining from all that He has prohibited. Hopefully, we will be blessed in this world and in the Hereafter.

Allah the Almighty says in the Quran in Chapter 2 (Surah Al-Baqarah), verse (ayat)132:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ  
وَوَصَّى بِهَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ بَنِيهِ وَيَعْقُوبُ يٰبَنِيَّ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَى لَكُمُ الدِّينَ فَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ  
إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٣٢﴾

Which means: *And this was the legacy that Abraham left to his sons, and so did Jacob; "Oh my sons! Allah hath chosen the Faith for you; then die not except in the Faith of Islam."*

**Dear Brothers and Sisters,**

It is an obligation on parents to ensure that their children are raised and developed as Muslims who are obedient to Allah the Almighty so that they will lead a peaceful life in this world and in the hereafter. Allah the Almighty commanded all

parents to protect their children from the torture of the hellfire as mentioned in the Quran in Chapter 66 (Surah Al-Tahrim), verse (ayat) 6:

يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا قَوًّا أَنفُسُهُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا

Which means: *O ye who believe! save yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is Men and Stones, over which are (appointed) angels stern (and) severe, who flinch not (from executing) the Commands they receive from Allah but do (precisely) what they are commanded.*

Children are our future hope. We aspire to see them grow up as pious Muslims who are strong in faith, always perform good deeds, avoid sinful actions, and constantly remember Allah the Almighty. Let's follow the footsteps of Prophet Muhammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him [pbuh]) who were very concerned about educating his children. They were nurtured and guided to always remember Allah the Almighty. When his daughter Fatimah requested to have a house helper, the Prophet (pbuh) advised his daughter to increase her remembrance towards Allah the Almighty to ease the burden of performing the household chores. The Prophet (pbuh) said in a *Hadith* which was narrated by Imam al-Bukhari:

أَلَا أُعَلِّمُكُمْ خَيْرًا مِّمَّا سَأَلْتُمَانِي، إِذَا أَخَذْتُمَا مَضَاجِعَكُمْ تُكْبِرًا أَرْبَعًا وَثَلَاثِينَ،

وَتُسَبِّحًا ثَلَاثًا وَثَلَاثِينَ، وَتَحْمَدًا ثَلَاثًا وَثَلَاثِينَ

Which means: *"Shall I teach you a thing which is better than what you have asked me? When you go to bed, say, 'Allahu-Akbar' thirty-four times, and 'Subhan Allah' thirty-three times, and 'Al hamdu-li l-lah' thirty-three times... "*

Giving advice was the main practice in the Prophet's (pbuh) household. When his stepson, Umar bin Abu Salamah, who was still small, took food that was served around him, the Prophet (pbuh) gave advice to the boy as stated in a *Hadith* which was narrated by Imam Muslim:

يَا غُلَامُ سَمِّ اللَّهَ ، وَكُلْ بِيَمِينِكَ ، وَكُلْ مِمَّا يَدِيكَ

Which means: 'O son! Mention the Name of Allah, eat with your right hand, and eat of the dish what is nearer to you.'

Similarly, when his foster grandson, Usamah bin Zaid, appealed to lighten the punishment for a thief, the Prophet (pbuh) firmly reminded Usamah to adhere to the teachings of Islam as mentioned in a *Hadith* which was narrated by Imam al- Bukhari:

أَتَشْفَعُ فِي حَدٍّ مِنْ حُدُودِ اللَّهِ وَإِنَّمُ اللَّهُ لَوُ أَنَّ فَاطِمَةَ بِنْتَ مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ سَرَقَتْ لَقَطَعْتُ يَدَهَا

Which means: *The Quraish people became very worried about the Makhzumiya lady who had committed theft. They said, "Nobody can speak (in favor of the lady) to Allah's Messenger and nobody dares do that except Usama who is the favorite of Allah's Messenger. " When Usama spoke to Allah's Messenger about that matter, Allah's Messenger said, "Do you intercede (with me) to violate one of the legal punishments of Allah?" Then he got up and addressed the people, saying, "O people! The nations before you went astray because if a noble person committed theft, they used to leave him, but if a weak person among them committed theft, they used to inflict the legal punishment on him. By Allah, if Fatima, the daughter of Muhammad committed theft, Muhammad will cut off her hand!"*

**Dear Brothers and Sisters,**

The arrival of this long school holiday season is an opportunity for all parents to remind their children of their responsibility towards Allah the Almighty. Parents should always remind their children to perform their obligatory prayers on time and to pray congregationally at the mosques. Allah the Almighty says in the Quran in Chapter 20 (Surah Taha), verse (*ayat*) 132:

وَأْمُرْ أَهْلَكَ بِالصَّلَاةِ وَاصْطَبِرْ عَلَيْهَا

Which means: *Enjoin prayer on thy people, and be constant therein. We ask thee not to provide sustenance: We provide it for thee. But the (fruit of) the Hereafter is for righteousness.*

Children should spend the school holidays doing beneficial activities. Therefore, parents need to prepare and plan constructive holiday activities such as attending personal religious obligation (*fardhu ain*) courses, learning the Quran, and attending religious classes. Children may also be sent to motivational camps organized to form their personalities/characters.

Do not let them spend time with activities that do benefit them. It is sad to see many teenagers loitering around entertainment centers or by the roadside. It is sadder if parents let these teenagers stay out until late at night. Let us ponder on the Prophet's (pbuh) *Hadith* which was narrated by Imam al-Tirmizi:

نِعْمَتَانِ مَعْبُودُونَ فِيهِمَا كَثِيرٌ مِنَ النَّاسِ الصَّحَّةُ وَالْفَرَاغُ

Which means: *'Two blessings which many people waste: Good health and free time.'*

Let us also contemplate on the following verse from the Quran in Chapter 31 (Surah Luqman), verse (*ayat*) 17:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ  
يَبْنِيَّ أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَأَنْهَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأَصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا أَصَابَكَ  
إِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ ﴿١٧﴾

Which means: *"O my son! establish regular prayer, enjoin what is just, and forbid what is wrong: and bear with patient constancy whatever betide thee; for this is firmness (of purpose) in (the conduct of) affairs.*

بَارِكْ اللهُ لِيْ وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقُرْءَانِ الْعَظِيْمِ، وَنَفَعِنِيْ وَإِيَّاكُمْ بِمَا فِيْهِ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ  
وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيْمِ، وَتَقَبَّلْ مِنِّيْ وَمِنْكُمْ تِلَاوَتَهُ، إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيْعُ الْعَلِيْمُ. أَقُولُ قَوْلِيْ  
هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللهَ الْعَظِيْمَ لِيْ وَلَكُمْ، وَلِسَائِرِ الْمُسْلِمِيْنَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ،  
وَالْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ، فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَفُوْرُ الرَّحِيْمُ.