

The Significance of Worship in the Month of Zulhijjah

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،

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

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

Allah the Almighty mentioned in the Quran in Chapter 2 (Surah Al Baqarah), verse (ayat) 200:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمْ مَنَسِكَكُمْ فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَذِكْرِكُمْ ءَابَاءَكُمْ أَوْ أَشَدَّ ذِكْرًا فَمِنْ

النَّاسِ مَنْ يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا ءَاتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَمَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلْقٍ ﴿٢٠٠﴾

Which means: *So when ye have accomplished your rites, celebrate the praises of Allah, as ye used to celebrate the praises of your fathers, yea with far more heart and soul, there are men who say: "Our Lord! Give us thy (bounties) in this world! But they will have no portion in the Hereafter.*

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The month of *Zulhijjah* is a month of many benefits when one performs good deeds especially in the first ten days as mentioned by Allah the Almighty in the Quran in Chapter 89 (Surah Al-Fajr), verse (*ayat*) 1-2:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
وَالْفَجْرِ ۝١ وَلَيَالٍ عَشْرٍ ۝٢

Which means: *By the break of Day. By the ten Nights;*

The early scholars such as Ibn Abbas, Mujahid and others stated that this verse refers to the first ten days of the month of *Zulhijjah*. When Allah the Almighty vows by the ten days in the month of *Zulhijjah*, it shows the significance of performing good deeds on those days. Among the good deeds which are highly encouraged for us to perform are pilgrimage, fasting, *wuquf*, celebrating *Eid*, and slaughtering sacrificial animals. Therefore, the arrival of the month of *Zulhijjah* should be welcome and we should be prepared to do as many good deeds as possible. The Prophet (may peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him) said in a *Hadith* which was narrated by Abu Daud:

مَا مِنْ أَيَّامٍ الْعَمَلُ الصَّالِحُ فِيهَا أَحَبُّ إِلَى اللَّهِ مِنْ هَذِهِ الْأَيَّامِ يَعْنِي أَيَّامَ الْعَشْرِ.
قَالُوا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَلَا الْجِهَادُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ قَالَ وَلَا الْجِهَادُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ إِلَّا
رَجُلٌ خَرَجَ بِنَفْسِهِ وَمَالِهِ فَلَمْ يَرْجِعْ مِنْ ذَلِكَ بِشَيْءٍ

Which means: "No good deeds done on other days are superior to those done on these (first ten days of *Zulhijjah*)." Then the companions of the Prophet asked, "Not even Jihad?" He replied, "Not even Jihad, except that of a man who does it by putting himself and his property in danger (for Allah's sake) and does not return with any of those things."

In interpreting verse (*ayat*) 28 in Chapter 22 (Surah Al-Hajj):

وَيَذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللَّهِ فِي أَيَّامٍ مَّعْلُومَاتٍ

Which means: "...and celebrate the name of Allah, through the Days appointed,..."

Imam Nawawi said that the appointed days were the first ten days of the month of *Zulhijjah*. Hence the practice of remembering Allah the Almighty (*zikrullah*) at the beginning of the month is strongly encouraged and will be rewarded greatly.

In addition, fasting is also encouraged in those days. If we do not have the opportunity to fast for nine days in the month of *Zulhijjah*, then we must not miss the day of *Arafah* which falls on the 9th of *Zulhijjah*. Prophet Muhammad (may peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him) mentioned the special reward of fasting on the day of *Arafah* in a *Hadith* which was narrated by Imam Muslim:

صِيَامُ يَوْمِ عَرَفَةَ أَحْتَسِبُ عَلَى اللَّهِ أَنْ يُكَفِّرَ السَّنَةَ الَّتِي قَبْلَهُ وَالسَّنَةَ الَّتِي بَعْدَهُ

Which means: "*Fast the Day of Arafah, for indeed I anticipate that Allah will forgive (the sins) of the year after it, and the year before it.*"

At the same time, let us revive the month of *Zulhijjah* with the slaughtering of our sacrificial animals. The Prophet (may peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him) said in a *Hadith* which was narrated by Ibn Majah:

مَا عَمِلَ ابْنُ آدَمَ يَوْمَ النَّحْرِ عَمَلًا أَحَبَّ إِلَى اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ مِنْ هِرَاقَةِ دَمٍ

Which means: "*There is no other good deed that the son of Adam does on the Day of Sacrifice that is dearer to Allah than shedding blood (of the sacrificial animals) ...*"

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Ibn Rehab al-Hanbali stated, "Verily, Allah the Almighty granted multiple rewards on our good deeds (whether the obligatory or the optional ones) in the first ten days of the month of *Zulhijjah* - more than any other days. So let us take advantage of the great opportunities that Allah presents in this month of *Zulhijjah* by seriously performing many good deeds.

Remember, every Muslim who loves to live in the state of worship will always have the protection of Allah the Almighty from any misfortunes and calamities. We are constantly faced with various challenges from the enemies of Islam. Remember, Malaysia is the only country where all Malays are Muslims, so let us safeguard the sovereignty of the Malays, especially the Malay language that is becoming increasingly marginalized like what has happened to *jawi* writing. It is even more unfortunate that foreign languages are beginning to be given equivalent status to Malay language. However, let us not despair because Allah the Almighty is always there to help and guide us as He mentioned in the Quran in Chapter 29 (Surah Al-Ankabut), verse (*ayat*) 69:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَمَعَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٦٩﴾

Which means: *And those who strive in Our (cause), We will certainly guide them to our Paths: For verily Allah is with those who do right.*

بَارَكَ اللَّهُ لِي وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقُرْآنِ 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.