

ENLIVENING THE LAST TEN DAYS OF *RAMADAN* WITH *IKTIKAF*

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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 سَيِّدَنَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ
وَرَسُولُهُ.

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ.
أَمَّا بَعْدُ،

فَيَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأُوصِيكُمْ 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.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Let us enliven the last ten days of *Ramadhan*. The Prophet (peace be upon him [PBUH]) strongly encouraged us to increase our worship, especially through *iktikaf* (staying in a mosque to devote oneself to worship) day and night during the last ten days of *Ramadhan*. Allah the Almighty mentions in the Quran in Chapter 2 (*Surah Al-Baqarah*) verse (*ayat*) 187:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

وَلَا تُبَشِّرُوهُنَّ وَأَنْتُمْ عَاكِفُونَ فِي الْمَسَاجِدِ تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا
تَقْرَبُوهَا كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ آيَاتِهِ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ

Which means: “... Then fast until nightfall. Do not lie with them [your wives] during the nights of your devotional retreat in the mosques: these are the bounds set by Allah, so do not go near them. In this way Allah makes His messages clear to people, that they may guard themselves against doing wrong.”

One of the practices that was never abandoned by the Prophet (PBUH) in the month of *Ramadhan* is to practice *iktikaf* in the last ten days of the month as narrated in a *Hadith* by Imam al-Bukhari and Muslim:

كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا دَخَلَ الْعَشْرُ، أَحْيَا اللَّيْلَ، وَأَيْقَظَ أَهْلَهُ، وَجَدَّ،

وَشَدَّ الْمُنْزَرَ

Which means: “When the last ten nights began Allah's Messenger kept awake at night (for prayer and devotion), wakened his family, and prepared himself to observe prayer (with more vigor).”

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The Prophet (PBUH) performed *iktikaf* in the last ten days of *Ramadhan* until his death, then the *sunnah* (practice) was continued by his wives as stated in a *Hadith* narrated by Imam al-Bukhari and Muslim:

أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ كَانَ يَعْتَكِفُ الْعَشْرَ الْأَوَاخِرَ مِنْ رَمَضَانَ، حَتَّى تَوَفَّاهُ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ، ثُمَّ اعْتَكَفَ أَزْوَاجُهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ.

Which means: “*The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) used to observe iktikaf in the last ten days of Ramadhan till Allah called him back (to his heavenly home). Then his wives observed iktikaf after him.*”

Whoever wants to follow the *sunnah* of the Prophet (PBUH) to perform *iktikaf* on the last ten nights of *Ramadhan*, then he should enter the mosque before maghrib on the night of the 21st of *Ramadhan* and continue (without leaving the mosque) until after maghrib on the night of Eid (the celebration at the end of fasting month).

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

There is great significance in the practice of *iktikaf*, especially in the last ten days of *Ramadhan*. One of the reasons is to isolate oneself from the chaotic affairs of this world to dedicate this special time to seek the pleasure of Allah the Almighty.

Iktikaf can also purify our souls and strengthen our spirits. *Iktikaf* is the best way to achieve the benefits of *Lailatul Qadar* (the Night of Glory). Therefore, the mosque committees must schedule programs for *iktikaf* during the last ten days of *Ramadhan*. Hopefully this year we will meet the Night of Glory because this

special night is better than a thousand months as mentioned by Allah the Almighty in the Quran in Chapter 97 (*Surah Al-Qadr*), verses (*ayat*) 1-3:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ
إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ ﴿١﴾ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ ﴿٢﴾ لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ
مِّنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ ﴿٣﴾

Which means: “We sent it down on the Night of Glory. What will explain to you what that Night of Glory is? The Night of Glory is better than a thousand months;”

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