

## PREPARATIONS TO WELCOME RAMADAN

17 March 2023/24 Syaaban 1444H

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ. وَنَعُوذُ بِاللّٰهِ مِنْ شُرُوْرِ اَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ  
سَيِّئَاتِ اَعْمَالِنَا. مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللّٰهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ وَمَنْ يَضِلَّ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ.  
وَأَشْهَدُ اَنْ لَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيْكَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ اَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ  
وَرَسُوْلُهُ.  
اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلٰى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلٰى اٰلِهِ وَاَصْحَابِهِ اَجْمَعِيْنَ.  
اَمَّا بَعْدُ،

فِيَا عِبَادَ اللّٰهِ، اِتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَاُوْصِيْكُمْ وَاِيَّايَ بِتَقْوٰى اللّٰهِ، فَقَدْ فَازَ الْمُتَّقُوْنَ.

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

### Dear brothers and sisters

We are now in the final week of Syaaban. In a few days we will welcome the arrival of Ramadan al-Mubarak. During the days of the Prophet (pbuh), the companions always looked forward to the coming of this month. Why not indeed? The month of Ramadan is full of advantages and privileges that are not found in other months.

So with that, what should we do before the arrival of Ramadan? The main thing that we should do is to replace fasting (*qada'*) which we had missed previously. It must be fulfilled according to the number of fasts left. It is sinful for anyone to deliberately not make up the missed fast without reasons until the next month of Ramadan; and he/she must make up for that fast and on top of that he/she must pay *fidyah* ( a fine imposed towards a person for certain reasons or deliberately delaying the *qada'* for Ramadhan). The obligation to repay this fasting debt is explained in the Qur'an. Allah the Almighty says in chapter 2 (surah al-Baqarah) verse 184:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

أَيَّامًا مَعْدُودَاتٍ فَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ وَعَلَى  
الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ فَمَنْ تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَهُ وَأَنْ تَصُومُوا خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ  
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٨٤﴾

**Which means:** *Fast a prescribed number of days. But whoever of you is ill or on a journey, then let them fast an equal number of days after Ramadan. For those who can only fast with extreme difficulty, compensation can be made by feeding a needy person for every day not fasted. But whoever volunteers to give more, it is better for them. And to fast is better for you, if only you knew.*

## Dear brothers and sisters

Before we enter the month of Ramadan, let us review the laws related to fasting during Ramadan . We should cleanse our hearts from all impurities such as envy, revenge, hatred, ill will, anger and so on.

One important thing before we enter the month of Ramadan is to increase *istighfar* (seeking forgiveness from Allah for our sins) and repentance. This is the best time for us to repent for the sins we have committed. In fact, we should always seek repentance; and not only occasionally when we feel like repenting. The Prophet (pbuh) said in a hadith narrated by Imam Muslim:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ تَوُوبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ، فَإِنِّي أَتُوبُ فِي الْيَوْمِ إِلَيْهِ مِائَةَ مَرَّةٍ

**Which means:** *“O people, seek repentance from Allah and seek His forgiveness. Verily, I seek repentance one hundred times a day.”*

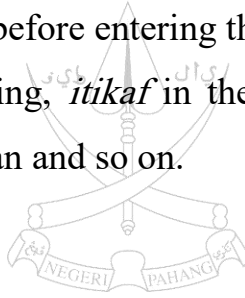
We are also encouraged to be mindful of our morals and control our behavior ahead of this Ramadan. Avoid wasting time with useless things; do not visit places of immorality, keep our eyes away from seeing things that lead to sin. Fasting also demands that we guard our words. Guard our tongues from gossiping or talking dirty. The Prophet (pbuh) said in a hadith narrated by Imam al-

Baihaqi:

لَيْسَ الصِّيَامُ مِنَ الْأَكْلِ وَالشُّرْبِ فَقَطْ إِنَّمَا الصِّيَامُ مِنَ اللَّغْوِ وَالرَّفَثِ

**Which means:** *“Fasting is not just abstaining from eating and drinking, but fasting is abstaining from negligence and vile words.”*

Let us change our sleeping habits by going to bed earlier every night and waking up earlier which is one third of the night. This is in preparation of getting used to waking up for sahur. It is best to perform recommended prayers first or read the Quran while waiting for the time Fajr; then go to the mosque for the congregational Fajr prayer. Thus, in accordance with its nickname 'Month of Ibadah', before entering the month of Ramadan, practice acts of worship such as fasting, *itikaf* in the mosque, performing tahajud prayer, zikir, reading the Quran and so on.



**Dear brothers and sisters**

To end this sermon, let us all increase our supplication to Allah the Almighty that He may extend our lives and grant us good health to meet the month of Ramadan this year. May we be able to perform our obligation to fast in the month of Ramadan and to do other acts of worship. Let us make *doa* as what the Prophet (pbuh) said in a hadith narrated by Imam Ahmad:

اللَّهُمَّ بَارِكْ لَنَا فِي رَجَبٍ وَشَعْبَانَ، وَبَارِكْ لَنَا فِي رَمَضَانَ

**Which means:** “O Allah, bless us in Rajab and Syaaban and enable us to reach Ramadan.”

May our acts of worship (*ibadah*) during Ramadan this year be better than the Ramadan in previous years.

Allah the Almighty says in chapter 10 (surah Yunus) verse 58:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

قُلْ بِفَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَبِرَحْمَتِهِ ۖ فَبِذَلِكَ فَلْيَفْرَحُوا هُوَ خَيْرٌ مِمَّا يَجْمَعُونَ

**Which means:** *Tell them (O Prophet!): 'Let them rejoice in Allah's grace and mercy through which this (Book) has come to you. It is better than all the riches that they accumulate.*

بَارِكْ اللَّهُ لِي وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقُرْآنِ الْعَظِيمِ، وَنَفَعَنِي وَإِيَّاكُمْ بِمَا فِيهِ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ

وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ، وَتَقَبَّلْ 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.

