

PRACTICES IN THE MONTH OF *SHAWWAL*

April 28, 2023 | 6 Shawwal 1444 H

أَحْمَدَ 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، فَيَا 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, Allah the Almighty will be pleased with us in this world and in the Hereafter.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The month of *Ramadan* has passed, and we hope that all the righteous deeds we have done are accepted by Allah the Almighty. The end of *Ramadan* should not be the end of our good practices. As believers, we should continue to perform all acts of worship until the end of our lives. Allah the Almighty says in the Quran in Chapter 41 (*Surah Al-Fussilat*) verse (*ayat*) 30,

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَمُوا تَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَلَّا تَخَافُوا
وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَبْشِرُوا بِالْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي كُنتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

Which means: “As for those who say, ‘Our Lord is Allah,’ and take the straight path towards Him, the angels come down to them and say, ‘Have no fear or grief, but rejoice in the good news of Paradise, which you have been promised.’”

Remember, our success in performing good deeds such as enlivening the mosque with the five daily obligatory prayers, *taraweeh* prayers, reciting the Quran, giving charity/alms, breaking our fast together, etc. in the month of *Ramadan* is a great blessing from Allah the Almighty to us. Therefore, the arrival of *Shawwal*, which we welcome with joy, is a sign of gratitude for the success of being a servant of Allah the Almighty who always remembers Him. It is a shame if we abandon the mosque that we prayed at during in the month of *Ramadan* once the fasting month is over. The Quran which was our close companion in the month of *Ramadan* suddenly becomes more and more distant from us. The *tahajjud* (optional prayers performed in the middle of the night) prayer that was so easy to do suddenly gets more difficult to be practiced. May Allah the Almighty give us all the strength to continue to be close to Him even though *Ramadan* has passed. Remember, remaining steadfast (*istiqamah*) and continuing to worship after *Ramadan* is a sign that Allah has accepted our good deeds in the month of *Ramadan*.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The arrival of the month of *Shawwal* is an opportunity for us to prove our gratitude to Allah the Almighty by continuing to perform acts of worship. That is why we are encouraged to fast for six days in the month of *Shawwal* to keep our close relationship to our Creator, Allah the Almighty. Let us not ignore this *sunnah* fasting because it's abundantly rewarded as the Prophet (peace be upon him [PBUH]) said in a *hadith* narrated by Imam Muslim,

مَنْ صَامَ رَمَضَانَ ثُمَّ أَتْبَعَهُ سِتًّا مِنْ شَوَّالٍ كَانَ كَصِيَامِ الدَّهْرِ

Which means: “Whoever fasts during the month of Ramadan and then follows it with six days of Shawwal will be (rewarded) as if he had fasted the entire year.”

Even though the practice of praying *taraweeh* on the nights of *Ramadan* has passed, the night prayers (tahajjud) can still be performed continuously every night throughout the year. Try to perform these night prayers consistently even if it is just three units (rak'ats) of *witr* prayer. The same goes for other acts of worship. May the *Ramadan* that has just passed give us strength to continue reciting the Quran, reciting *dhikr* (remembrance of Allah), giving charity and enlivening the mosque with the obligatory five daily congregational prayers.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Muslims in Malaysia are accustomed to visiting relatives and friends during the month of *Shawwal*. This is a noble practice because it strengthens the ties of Islamic brotherhood. The Prophet (PBUH) said in a *hadith* narrated by Al-Hakim:

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

Which means: “*O people, extend greetings (saying Salam to each other), keep relations with your kin, provide food (to people) and pray at night when people are asleep, and you will enter Paradise in peace.*”

However, we should observe good Islamic manners when visiting others so that our visits will be counted as good deeds and be rewarded instead of being counted as sinful and futile acts. Therefore, advise our family members to take care of their modesty when visiting people, not to accessorize themselves excessively and to only shake hands with their *mahram* (people we are forbidden to marry). Use this opportunity to greet others in a friendly manner so that the relationship is strengthened. Avoid using mobile phones to browse social media and play video games when in the presence of relatives and friends. This act will offend them and make the practice of visiting others a waste.

Remind ourselves of the command of Allah the Almighty in the Quran in Chapter 49 (*Surah Al-Hujurat*) verse (*ayat*) 10:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

Which means: “The believers are brothers, so make peace between your two brothers and be mindful of Allah, so that you may be given mercy.”

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.