

ASHURA DAY

6 MUHARRAM 1446H/ 12 JULY 2024

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 عَبْدَهُ وَرَسُولَهُ.
اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ.
أَمَّا بَعْدُ،
فَيَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَوْصِيكُمْ 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,

We are in the special month of Muharram, one of the *haram* (sacred) months besides the months of *Zulkaedah*, *Zulhijjah* and *Rajab*. During these months the sins of injustice and immorality will be multiplied by Allah the Almighty. He says in the Quran in Chapter 9 (*Surah At-Tawbah*) verse (*ayat*) 36:

إِنَّ عِدَّةَ الشُّهُورِ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ اثْنَا عَشَرَ شَهْرًا فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ يَوْمَ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ مِنْهَا أَرْبَعَةٌ حُرْمٌ ذَلِكَ
الَّذِينَ الْفَيْمُ فَلَا تَظْلِمُوا فِيهِنَّ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَقَاتِلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ كَافَّةً كَمَا يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ كَافَّةً وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الْمُتَّقِينَ

Which means: “Indeed, the number of months ordained by Allah is twelve—in Allah's Record since the day He created the heavens and the earth—of which four are sacred. That is the Right Way. So do not wrong one another during

these months. And fight the polytheists together as they fight together against you. And know that Allah is with those mindful of Him

Muslims celebrate *Ashura* Day, which symbolizes the victory of truth, on the 10th of *Muharram* every year. On that day, Allah the Almighty saved Prophet Moses (peace be upon him [PBUH]) and his followers from the cruelty of Pharaoh and his army. Among other events that took place on that date includes the acceptance of Prophet Adam's (PBUH) repentance and being sent down to the world, the landing of Prophet Noah's (PBUH) Ark which saved him and his people from the great flood, the release of Prophet Jonah (PBUH) from the belly of the fish and other important events that symbolize the victory and glory bestowed by Allah the Almighty.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The Prophet (PBUH) taught his companions to fast on the day of Ashura and the day before or after it as a sign of gratitude to Allah the Almighty for these victorious events. The Prophet (PBUH) said in a *hadith* narrated by Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal which means:

The Prophet came to Medina and found the Jews observing the fast on the day of 'Ashura', so he asked them what was the significance of that day which they were observing and they replied, "It is a great day on which Allah delivered Moses and his people and drowned Pharaoh and his people; so Moses observed it as a fast out of gratitude, and we do so also." He said, "We have more rights, and we have a closer connection with Moses." So Allah's messenger observed it as a fast himself and gave orders that it should be observed.

The Prophet (PBUH) strongly encourages fasting on the day of *Ashura* by promising the extraordinary privilege of *kaffarah* (removal) of the sins of the past year. In fact, he advised fasting on the ninth day of *Muharram* or the eleventh day so as not to resemble the practice of the Jews who only fast on the tenth day of *Muharram*. In a *hadith* narrated by Imam Muslim, the Prophet (PBUH) said:

وَسُئِلَ عَنْ صَوْمِ يَوْمِ عَرَفَةَ فَقَالَ: يُكْفِّرُ السَّنَةَ الْمَاضِيَةَ وَالْبَاقِيَةَ. قَالَ: وَسُئِلَ عَنْ صَوْمِ يَوْمِ عَاشُورَاءَ فَقَالَ:
يُكْفِّرُ السَّنَةَ الْمَاضِيَةَ

Which means: *The Messenger of Allah was asked about fasting on the day of Arafah (the 9th of the month of Dhul Hijjah). He replied, "Fasting on the day of Arafah is an expiation for the preceding year and the following year." He was also asked about fasting on the day of Ashura (the 10th of the month of Muharram). He replied, "Fasting on the day of Ashura is an expiation for the preceding year."*

In addition, we are encouraged to increase righteous deeds such as giving alms, feeding guests and acquaintances, maintaining relationships (*silaturrahim*), strengthening Islamic brotherhood, helping others, and increasing worship, as appropriate to the glory and privilege of that day.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As we celebrate the sacredness and glory of the day of *Ashura*, there is an event that touches our hearts, which is the tragedy of the killing of the grandson of the Prophet (PBUH), *Sayyidina* Husin in Karbala, which led to the division among Muslims, particularly during the reign of the Umayyad caliphate.

Let us learn from the event to avoid conflict and build the unity of Muslims by not allowing division to occur in the community and keeping an open mind when there are differences of opinion. Bigotry and extreme attitudes towards a point of view, if not managed well, can be like a fire in a husk that can destroy the unity and strength of Islam itself. Muslims should unite so that Islam is respected and thought of highly at all times, especially in this age which is full of challenges.

Finally, let us increase our good deeds in conjunction with the month of *Muharram* which has many blessings. Celebrating the day of *Ashura* is a symbol of victory. Increasing our good deeds such as fasting, giving charity, strengthening friendships and Islamic brotherhood brings us closer to Allah the Almighty. May all of us always be blessed by Allah the Almighty.

بَارَكَ اللهُ 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 اللهَ الْعَظِيمَ لِي وَلَكُمْ، وَلِسَانِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ، وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ، فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ.