

**VOLUNTARY FASTING IN THE MONTH OF MUHARRAM
(TASU'A & ASHURA)**

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الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا. مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ وَمَنْ يَضِلَّ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ.
أَشْهَدُ 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 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,

Allah the Almighty says in the Quran in Chapter 9 (*Surah At-Tawbah*) Verse (Ayat) 36:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

إِنَّ عِدَّةَ الشُّهُورِ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ اثْنَا عَشَرَ شَهْرًا فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ يَوْمَ خَلَقَ السَّمُوتِ وَالْأَرْضَ مِنْهَا أَرْبَعَةٌ حُرُمٌ ذَلِكََ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ فَلَا تَظْلِمُوا فِيهِنَّ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَقَتْلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ كَافَّةً كَمَا يُقْتُلُونَكُمْ كَافَّةً وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الْمُتَّقِينَ

Which means: “Allah decrees that there are twelve months- ordained in Allah’s Book on the Day when He created the heavens and earth- four months of which are sacred: this is the correct calculation. Do not wrong your souls in these months- though you may fight the idolaters at any time,

if they first fight you- remember that Allah is with those who are mindful of Him.”

This verse reminds us that Allah the Almighty has elevated specific months in Islam, among which is the month of *Muharram*.

This glorious month should be filled with righteous deeds and obedience to Allah the Almighty. Among the practices that are highly encouraged in *Muharram* is fasting during the first 10 days of the Month, especially on the days of *Tasu'a* (9 Muharram) and *Ashura* (10 Muharram). In fact, the Prophet (peace be upon him [PBUH]) explained that fasting on the day of *Ashura* atones for the sins from the previous year, as narrated by Imam Muslim:

وَصِيَامُ يَوْمِ عَاشُورَاءَ، أَحْتَسِبُ عَلَى اللَّهِ أَنْ يُكَفِّرَ السَّنَةَ الَّتِي قَبْلَهُ

Which means: “...and I seek from Allah that fasting on the day of *Ashura* may atone for the sins of the preceding year.”

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The glory of the month of *Muharram* also teaches us that every command and prohibition of Allah the Almighty has wisdom and a purpose in educating humans. All acts of worship that are prescribed are not to burden, but to guide humans to become more obedient and moral servants. For example, fasting instills discipline, controls desires and teaches the soul to always submit to the command of Allah the Almighty. Likewise, every obligation in Islam does not burden a person except according to his ability. This shows that Islam is a religion that is in accordance with human nature and is able to produce balanced humans in this world and the hereafter.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The day of *Ashura* reminds us of the great event of Prophet Moses (PBUH) and his followers being saved from the tyranny of Pharaoh. Allah the Almighty says in the Quran in Chapter 20 (*Surah Taha*) Verse (*Ayat*) 80:

Which means: “*Children of Israel, We rescued you from your enemies. We made a pledge with you on the right-hand side of the mountain. We sent down manna and quails for you,*”

This event became a great lesson about the victory of truth, the power of faith and the help of Allah the Almighty to His believing servants. Therefore, the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) encouraged Muslims to fast on the day of *Ashura* as a sign of gratitude to Allah the Almighty for His blessings and help.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Let us purify ourselves in this month of *Muharram* by staying away from evil things, whether minor sins or major sins. Sins can occur due to our mistakes towards Allah or our mistakes towards fellow humans. If there are mistakes with Allah the Almighty, especially major sins, we need to repent with sincere repentance (*taubatan nasuha*), while minor sins can be erased with the obedience we do. However, sins with other people are only erased with their forgiveness, especially with those who are wronged.

Therefore, use this month as an opportunity to renew ourselves by increasing our faith, increasing our acts of worship, developing praiseworthy qualities, seeking forgiveness and forgiving each other. The arrival of the new

Hijri year should also encourage us to become more obedient Muslims and closer to Allah the Almighty.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

To conclude the *khutbah* (sermon), let us take some important lessons from the month of *Muharram*:

First, fasting the first 10 days of *Muharram*, especially on the 9th and 10th of *Muharram* (*Tasu'a* and *Ashura*) has great merit in the sight of Allah the Almighty.

Second, this fasting is a sign of gratitude to Allah the Almighty for His blessings and help.

Third, the month of *Muharram* should be used as a starting point to increase righteous deeds and abandon evil deeds.

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا تُوبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ تَوْبَةً نَصُوحًا عَسَىٰ رَبُّكُمْ أَن يُكَفِّرَ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَيُدْخِلَكُم جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ يَوْمَ لَا يُخْزِي اللَّهُ النَّبِيَّ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مَعَهُ نُورُهُمْ يَسْعَىٰ بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَبِأَيْمَانِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا أَتْمِمْ لَنَا نُورَنَا وَاغْفِرْ لَنَا إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

Which means: “Believers, turn to Allah in sincere repentance. Your Lord may well cancel your bad deeds for you and admit you into Gardens graced with flowing streams, on a Day when Allah will not disgrace the Prophet or those who have believed with him. With their lights streaming out ahead of them and to their right, they will say, ‘Lord, perfect our lights for us and

*forgive us: You have power over everything. ’’ (Quran [Surah At-Tahrim]
66:8)*

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 إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ.