

30<sup>th</sup> December 2004

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ لِلَّهِ ، نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ ، وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا  
وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا. مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ، وَمَنْ يُضِلِّ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ.  
وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ.

Praise be to **اللَّهِ**.

We praise him and ask him for help and forgiveness. We ask him for protection from the evilness in ourselves and from our bad deeds. Whomever God guides to the truth no one will lead astray, and whomever He leads astray, no one will ever guide.

I testify that there is no God but **اللَّهِ** to whom there is no partner  
and I testify that Muhammad **ﷺ** is his servant and messenger

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ، وَالتَّنظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ ،  
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ، إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴾ (الحشر ، 18)

*"O you who believe, fear Allah, and let every soul look to what (provision) it has sent forth for tomorrow. And fear Allah, for Allah is well-acquainted with (all) that you do" (S59, A18)*



أما بعد:

☆ فإن أصدق الحديث كتابُ الله ، وخيرُ المَهدي هَدْيُ محمدٍ ﷺ ، وشرُّ الأُمورِ محدثاتها ، وكُلُّ مُحدثَةٍ بدعة ، وكلُّ بدعةٍ ضلالةٌ ، وكُلُّ ضلالةٍ في النارِ ☆  
(مسلم ، أحمد ، النسائي)

*The most truthful of words are those of the book of Allah, and the best of guidance is the guidance of Muhammad<sup>(SAAWS)</sup>, and the most evil of matters are its new innovations, for each innovation is invented, and each invention leads astray, and each will lead to hellfire. (narrated by Muslim, Ahmad and An-Nisaa'I)*

The topic for today's khutbah is: **The importance of Time**

As we are nearing the last few hours of this year, it is important for each and every one of us to stand back and consider what we have achieved this year. We need to hold ourselves to account. We all go through yearly routines. Some of us celebrate our birthday to remind ourselves and those around that there goes another year. Students are examined at the end of each academic year to determine their progress and if they can move on. We have to fill in a yearly tax return. Those of us who work independently have to balance the books. We have to look at our losses and gains and plan for the year ahead.

This is how we balance our worldly books. How many of us balance our books of deeds? How many of us are planning for the hereafter?

As we pass though this evening, people around us will celebrate in commemoration of the end of the year that has passed, and celebrate in joy and in anticipation the dawn of the new-year, wondering as to what it may bring. As we bear witness to this, one needs to ask what does the progression of a year after another indicate?

The obvious answer is that it indicates the existence of TIME.

I am told that time is the fourth dimension, and it indicates movement.

When one looks at the celestial bodies, they are **all** in motion, as they have always been, affirming the existence of time, as indicated in the holy book,

﴿ وَالشَّمْسُ تَجْرِي لِمُسْتَقَرٍّ لَهَا، ذَلِكَ تَقْدِيرُ الْعَزِيزِ الْعَلِيمِ ﴾ (يس، 38)

***“And the sun runs unto a resting place, the decree of (Him), The Exalted in Might, The All-Knowing” (S36, A38)***

Time, as we know it, does not stop.

As Muslims, we need to ask ourselves "where does the concept of time fit in the understanding of the Muslim?" What is there in the Holy Quran and the Hadeeth about the Muslim and his interaction with time?

God almighty in his mercy to mankind has revealed to his prophets and messengers

- the understanding of our existence,
- the code of conduct to go by,
- a warning of rejecting this code, and
- a promise of what to come on the day of judgement; eternal paradise God willing, and not eternal fire. But, whichever way it is, it is surely **eternal**.

Eternity is one indication of time. Muslims believe in the eternal life, and indeed we live and die longing for the true reward of eternal paradise. However, our existence on Earth is anything but eternal, and is definitely time-limited.

It is in God’s wisdom that mankind should prepare for the eternal existence by passing through this temporary earthly existence. It is also through God’s mercy that we are given the guidelines and the means to purify ourselves in order to gain the ultimate prize.

How do Muslims perceive God? Well Muslims believe that;

1. God has perfected our creation, and one can spend a lifetime looking at the perfection of the human creation,
2. God has put at our disposal the whole world about us,
3. God has provided us with the brain and mind to access knowledge, (imagine if the mind did not have the capacity of memory or the ability to interpret),
4. God has instilled in us a natural instinct of what is right and what is wrong (FITTRA), [ الفِطْرَة ]
5. God has put into us desires that indeed if applied correctly we are rewarded and if abstained from correctly we are also rewarded, [ الشَّهَوَات ]
6. God has given us the ability to chose and it is through our choices that we get closer to God or further away from him,
7. And furthermore, God has given us through the Quran and the Sunna a **road map** to guide us onto the right path.

People regularly chose to ignore the beauty of these Mercies, and take them for granted. However, the believing Muslim is aware of them, and knows fully well that his

preparation for the eternal life will take place on this earth and within a limited time frame.

This time frame is better known as one's **LIFE**. There is definitely nothing we can do before we start living, and to a large extent there is very little we can do after we die. **This time frame is all we have.**

From that, a Muslim should realise that it is this time frame, or one's life, that is the most valuable if not the only true capital of the human being on this earth. If one uses and invests this capital wisely and according to God's guidelines, one is promised the ultimate prize of eternity in paradise:-

﴿ إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي جَنَّاتٍ وَعُيُونٍ • لَخِذِينَ مَا آتَاهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ ، إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَبْلَ ذَلِكَ مُحْسِنِينَ • كَانُوا قَلِيلًا مِّنَ اللَّيْلِ مَا يَهْجَعُونَ • وَبِالْأَسْحَارِ هُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ • وَفِي أَمْوَالِهِمْ حَقٌّ لِّلسَّائِلِ وَالْمَحْرُومِ ﴾ (الذاريات، 15-19)

*“As for the mutaqueen (the righteous) they are in the midst of Gardens and Springs (of paradise). Taking joy in what their Lord has provided them, they were those who did good deeds. Little of the night did they sleep. And in the early hours of dawn they prayed for forgiveness. And in their wealth there is due share for the poor and the deprived” (S51, A15-19)*

And:-

﴿ فَأَمَّا مَن أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ بِيَمِينِهِ فَيَقُولُ هَآؤُمُ اقْرَءُوا كِتَابِيهِ • إِنِّي ظَنَنْتُ أَنِّي مُلْقٍ حِسَابِيهِ • فَهُوَ فِي عِيشَةٍ رَّاضِيَةٍ • فِي جَنَّةٍ عَالِيَةٍ قُطُوفُهَا دَانِيَةٌ • كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا هَنِيئًا بِمَا أَسْلَفْتُمْ فِي الْأَيَّامِ الْخَالِيَةِ ﴾ (الحاقة، 9-24)

*“Then he that will be Given his Record in his right hand will say ‘here, read my record’, I did think that my account will reach me, and he will be in a blissful life, in a Garden on high, its fruits low and near, eat and drink with full satisfaction, because of the good deeds you have left in the DAYS THAT ARE GONE” (S69, A19-24)*

Brothers and sisters, I remind myself and you that the time that we are given to live on this earth (those few days that we spend) is our only **true capital**. If we invest it wisely we gain and if we invest it foolishly we lose. This is the testimony by God in Sura Al-Assr

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

﴿ وَالْعَصْرُ • إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ • إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ ﴾

***“In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. By the Time. Verily mankind is in loss. Except those who have faith and do righteous deeds, and (join together) in the mutual enjoining of Truth and of Patience and Constancy” (S 103).***

Let us look closer at this Sura. When God almighty testifies by time, it is an indication of the miracle of time and its utmost importance. God almighty follows by the answer to the testimony of time in declaring that mankind are at a loss. The question is who of mankind **is**, and who **is not** at a loss.

Those who will not lose are described in the third Aya as those who believe in God and do good deeds and are brethren in enjoining their testimony to the truth and their patience in adhering to this testimony. The rest are at a loss. Subhan-Allah, this short miraculous Aya describes in a nutshell what we need to do and how we need to do it. We need to believe, we need to do good deeds and be a testament to what is the truth, and we need to be patient in doing so. All this is to be done within the Time Frame given to us. This time frame is but a short instant in the glorious dimension of Time that God Almighty has testified by.

Before we carry on, I want to bring to your attention a term used in the third Aya. A very important term that we need to be clear on.

The third Aya declares the term:- **وَتَوَاصَوْا** *“and join together in testament”*.

The concept of togetherness is very important for the Muslim. The Aya states that for Muslims not to be in loss, there is a duty of every Muslim, every one of us, to his brothers in Islam and there is a duty of these brothers in Islam to each and every one of us. This duty establishes our ability to testify to the truth and to adhere to patience.

Brothers, this is a small Sura that we recite regularly in our prayers. Let it be a constant reminder to us of God Almighty's testament to time, of the importance for us to invest this time wisely and the importance of the fact that this is a collective investment, and not each man to his own

Let us now look more closely at the concept of one's life being one's investment. Let us read the following Aya and explore its meaning:

﴿ قُلْ إِنَّ الْخَاسِرِينَ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَأَهْلِيهِمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ،  
أَلَا ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْخُسْرَانُ الْمُبِينُ ﴾ (الزمر، 15)

***“Say truly those in loss are those who lost themselves and their people on the day of judgement. Isn't that indeed the (real) evident loss” (S39, A15)***

How can one lose one self?

Well, it is God's wisdom that all life will perish and our time on this earth is limited, and there is nothing anyone can do to add or take away even a fraction of a second of one's pre-destined life. Each of us has been given a set capital to work with. The problem faced, is that no one knows how large or how small is one's capital. But one thing is for sure; this capital is desperately limited. Let us listen to what God Almighty says in Sura Al-Kahf:

﴿ قُلْ هَلْ نُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِالْأَخْسَرِينَ أَعْمَالًا • الَّذِينَ ضَلَّ سَعْيُهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ  
الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ يَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ يُحْسِنُونَ صُنْعًا • أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا  
بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ وَلِقَائِهِ فَحَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فَلَا تُقِيمُ لَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَزَنًا  
• ذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَاتَّخَذُوا آيَاتِي وَرُسُلِي هُزُوًا ﴾  
(الكهف، 103-106)

*“Say shall we tell you of those who lose most in respect to their deeds. Those whose efforts have been wasted in this life while they thought that they were acquiring good by their works. They are those who deny the signs of their Lord and the fact of their having to meet Him (in the Hereafter): vain will be their works, nor shall we, on the day of judgement give them any weight. That is their reward, Hell; because they rejected faith and took my signs and my messengers by way of jest” (S18, A103-106)*

One is at a loss when one spends or "invests" his capital **of mere days on this earth** in the denial and the disobedience of God.

Another major loss is when we hear some of us say "we have some time to kill". We see in our societies people sitting around doing nothing. They are merely killing time, and time for them is of no consequence. This is a very important message for our children. Wasting or killing time is almost like committing a slow suicide. As Muslims, when we are killing time, we are disposing of our capital, and we are disposing of our life bit by bit.

So, what should we do? The answer lies in the numerous examples in the Quran and the Hadeeth as to how a Muslim should conduct every aspect of his or her life to gain the pleasure of Allah<sup>(SWT)</sup> and the rewards promised. I chose this specific Aya because of the indication of the relevance of time in God's words:-

﴿ وَلِكُلِّ وِجْهَةٍ هُوَ مُوَلِّيَهَا، فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ ﴾ (البقرة، 148)

*"To each is a goal (aim) to which Allah turns him. So strive fast towards all that is good (as if to race)" (S2, A148)*

**The clear message here is: Do not lose time.**

This aya does not only emphasise the need to do good deeds but also to do that fast, as if God is telling us we should race to be good. Probably because time is running out.

Let's go back to the concept of time being our capital in this life. Are there any certainties about this capital? The answer is surely yes.

- 1- It runs out very quickly
- 2- What has passed can never be recovered

You cannot wake up tomorrow and say I did not like what went on yesterday, I want to have another go at it. What has passed is gone, and you will only come against it again on the day of judgement. Al-Hassan Al-Bassri was wise when he said:

قال الحسن البصري:

ما من يوم ينشق فجره إلا وينادي: يا بن آدم انا خلقك جديد، وعلى عملك شهيد، فتزود  
بني فإني لن أعود إلى يوم القيامة.

*"every day that tears through its dawn says, Oh son of Adam, I am a new being, on your work I will testify. Take from me provisions, for I will only meet you again on the day of judgement"*

This capital is so precious. It is your life from the day you are born to the day you die. Every day that passes you by, you lose a part of your capital, you actually lose a part of yourself. If we do not value how precious time is, the day will come when we will regret its loss:

- 1- The first occasion of regret is on one's death bed, when one wishes more time, more capital, to do good. God states in Sura Al-Munafiqoon:

﴿ وَ أَنْفِقُوا مِنْ مَّا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ فَيَقُولَ رَبِّ لَوْلَا أَخَّرْتَنِي إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ قَرِيبٍ فَأَصَّدَّقَ وَأَكُن مِّنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴾ (المنافقون، 10)

*"And spend (in charity) of what we have bestowed on you, before death should come to one of you and he would say, 'O my Lord, If only you give me respite for a **little time**, I should then give in charity and I should be one of the doers of good'" (S63, A10)*

God give me more time to do good and be righteous, that is what the hypocrite will say. But the reply is swift and decisive in the next Aya.

﴿ وَلَنْ يُؤَخَّرَ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِذَا جَاءَ أَجَلُهَا، وَاللَّهُ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴾ (المنافقون، 11)

"And God will not grant respite to no soul when its **appointed time** has come; and Allah is well acquainted with all that you do" (S63, A11)

God will not delay a soul when its appointed time has come.

2- the second time of regret is on the day of judgement when people ask God almighty to be given a further period of time to do good as in Sura Fatir

﴿ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَهُمْ نَارُ جَهَنَّمَ لَا يُقْضَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ فَيَمُوتُوا وَلَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمْ مِنْ عَذَابِنَا ،  
كَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِي كُلَّ كَافِرٍ ۝ وَهُمْ يَصْطَلِحُونَ فِيهَا رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا نَعْمَلْ صَالِحًا غَيْرَ الَّذِي  
كُنَّا نَعْمَلُ ، أَلَمْ نُعَمِّرْكُم ﴿ (فاطر، 36-37)

"But those who reject Allah, for them will be the Fire of Hell; No term shall be determined for them so they should die, nor shall its chastisement be lightened for them. Thus do we reward every ungrateful one. Therein they will **cry aloud**: 'Our Lord, bring us out, we shall work righteousness, not the deeds we used to do'. **Did we not give you long enough life**" (S35, A36-37)

أَقُولُ قَوْلِي هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ لِي وَ لَكُمْ

2<sup>nd</sup> Khutbah:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ثُمَّ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ . الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ نَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ ، وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شَرِّهِ  
أَنْفُسِنَا وَسَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا . أَمَا بَعْدُ :

Brothers and sisters, be ware of, [ الغفلة ] , that is being unaware of what is asked of you.

Worst still is the thought of I know what I need to do but **I shall** do it tomorrow.

سوف ، التسوييف (The devil's work)

Do not say I shall repent tomorrow, I shall donate tomorrow, I shall do this or that. What guarantees do we have that we will indeed see tomorrow, or even the evening. The word I shall is so pernicious it is considered the devil's work. Do not fall into this trap.

The following is an interesting three verses of poetry that illustrate the point further.

تَزُوْدُ مِنَ التَّحْوِي فَإِنَّكَ لَا تَدْرِي  
فَكَمْ مِنْ سَلِيمٍ مَاتَ مِنْ غَيْرِ عِلَّةٍ  
وَكَمْ مِنْ فَتَى يُمَسِي وَيُصْبِحُ آيِنًا  
إِذَا جَنَّ لَيْلٌ هَلْ تَعِشُ إِلَى الْفَجْرِ  
وَكَمْ مِنْ سَقِيمٍ عَاشَ حِينًا مِنَ الدَّهْرِ  
وَقَدْ نُسِجَتْ أَكْفَانُهُ وَهُوَ لَا يَدْرِي

{Take regular provisions of Taqua, for you do not know if when the night has settled, that you will live to the morning. For how many seemingly healthy people die unexpectedly for no apparent reason, while many seemingly ill people live a while longer. And how many young people sleep and wake up in apparent safety, while their Kafan has been knitted with them unaware.}

Brothers and sisters, we have all witnessed the devastating events of the Indian Ocean earthquake. A devastating sweeping wave many meters high. Within minutes there were tens of thousands men, women and children dead. The devastation was so cruel and so swift. How many of these thousands of people woke up in the morning expecting not to make it by the end of the day? Brothers and sisters, when we are donating for the relief fund, let us not forget that none of us know when our time is up. Muaz-Bin Jabal used to say as he walked I don't even know whether I will live long enough to take my next step.

The Prophet<sup>(SAAWS)</sup> said:

قَالَ ﷺ ☆ اغْتَنِمِ خَمْسًا قَبْلَ خَمْسٍ: حَيَاتَكَ قَبْلَ مَوْتِكَ، وَصِحَّتَكَ قَبْلَ سَقَمِكَ، وَفَرَاغَكَ قَبْلَ شُغْلِكَ، وَشَبَابَكَ قَبْلَ هَرَمِكَ، وَغِنَاكَ قَبْلَ قُرْبِكَ ☆ رواه الحاكم وصححه

*"Make use of five before five; your life before your death, your health before your sickness, your free time before you are busy, your youth before your senility and your wealth before your poverty" Narrated and corrected by Al-Hakem*

It is an instinct that mankind would like to live longer, as is said in sura Al-Baqara,

﴿ يَوَدُّ أَحَدُهُمْ لَوْ يُعَمَّرُ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ ﴾ (البقرة ، 96)

*"Each one of them wishes he could be given a life of a thousand years" (S2, A96)*

In Islam, longevity is deemed a blessing when it is associated with good deeds. But it is not in our hands to prolong life, or is it?

The question is can we prolong life?

The answer lies in our understanding that our life is our capital for good investment. If we invest it well, we may reap the reward even after our departure.

In confirmation, the Prophet<sup>(SAAWS)</sup> said:

عن رَسُولِ اللَّهِ ﷺ ☆ إِذَا مَاتَ ابْنُ آدَمَ انْقَطَعَ عَمَلُهُ إِلَّا مِنْ ثَلَاثٍ: صَدَقَةٌ جَارِيَةٌ، أَوْ عِلْمٌ يُنْتَفَعُ بِهِ،  
أَوْ وَلَدٌ صَالِحٌ يَدْعُو لَهُ ☆ رَوَاهُ مُسْلِمٌ عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ

*"When the son of Adam dies, his work ends except for three: an ongoing sadaqua, useful knowledge and a righteous offspring that prays for him" Narrated by Muslim from Abu Houraira*

This brings me back to the children that are here today. Remember that this hadeeth is telling us that you, our children, are the extension of our own existence. You will extend our work in this life by being righteous and by praying for us long after we have departed. Please, for your parents' sake, do not forget that.

Brothers and sisters, remember that we are simply passing through this limited life. Today we are reminded that a whole year of our lives has been buried. We have buried friends and relatives and surely we will be buried ourselves one day. Do not abuse your capital and do not let your time pass you by. Treat that commodity of time as if it were the most precious thing you possess, for **it is** the most precious. Do not waste it. Make the best use of it, and thank Allah for the fact that we are given a few more days to ask for forgiveness and to do good deeds. Hurry to do good deeds for we do not know how long we have. Let us not be those of mankind who are at loss, and let us remember again the testament of God:-

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿ وَالْعَصْرُ ○ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ ○ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا  
الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ ﴾

اللَّهُمَّ أَرِنَا الْحَقَّ حَقًّا وَارزُقْنَا اتِّبَاعَهُ، وَأَرِنَا الْبَاطِلَ بَاطِلًا وَارزُقْنَا اجْتِنَابَهُ  
اللَّهُمَّ عَلِّمْنَا مَعَ يَنْفَعُنَا، وَانفَعْنَا بِمَا عَلَّمْتَنَا وَزِدْنَا عِلْمًا