

27th July 2007

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ لِلَّهِ ، نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ ، وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شَرِّهِ وَأَنْفُسِنَا
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.

Praise be to **الله**.

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

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَايَ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ
وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿١٠﴾﴾

"Allah commands justice, the doing of good, and the giving to the kin, and He forbids indecency, injustice and rebellion: He admonishes you that you may be mindful" (S16, A90)



Dear brothers and sisters, ASA.

As Muslims, believing in the day of judgement is an essential part of our 'Iman'. Even though most Muslims ignore this fact, they all believe in it. We remember the hadeeth when S-Jibreel(AS) came to the Prophet(SAAWS) and asked him about Islam, and then asked him about Iman, and then asked him about Ihssan. The answer relating to Iman was clear and concise. Iman is to believe in Allah, to believe in the angels, the books and the messengers, to believe in the Day of Judgment and to believe in fate, both its good and its bad. Believing in the Day of Judgment is part of our Iman. It therefore comes as no surprise that in Islam we have a lot of information about this day in the Quran and in Hadeeth.

The topic of today's khutbah relates to a hadeeth that I came across in a book called "The day of the greatest fear" {Yaom Al-Faza' Al-Akbar}, by Imam Al-Qurtubi. The Quran reminds us of the calamity of this day, but unfortunately, our actions and our behavior testifies that despite numerous reminders, we are still not mindful of this inevitable calamity, and I am just as guilty as everyone else. For that reason, we have had a few khutbahs addressing aspects of death, the grave, the day of resurrection and the day of judgement. This book {Yaom Al-Faza' Al-Akbar}, looks at various scenes of that awesome day, not simply to frighten the living day lights out of us, but also to guide us, gently! When we know what to expect, hopefully we can be that little bit more prepared when it comes to it.

This hadeeth is lengthy, and we will go through it step by step ISA. It may take us more than one khutbah to cover all its aspects, however, the main aim is not to simply learn the hadeeth, but to learn from it. Some of the issues raised may be too difficult to grasp in one go, and some may be too difficult to explain. However, there were few points that were quite clear, and ISA I will be able to share them with you.

ISA, we have started discussing this hadeeth in our latest study circle, and ISA, we will go through the hadeeth again. If anyone has questions or want to discuss this further, the study circle would be a good time. In fact, I would encourage as many to join the circle so as we can all learn from each other and help each other to better understand Islam. I am quite sure that many of you will have questions and doubts, so don't miss the opportunity to attend.

I am just as guilty as most of us here when it comes to seeking knowledge of Islam. There is always something more pressing or something more important when it comes to attending study circles or talks or lectures on Islam. These events somehow do not feature as being important for me in this life and in the hereafter. However, I keep on reminding myself of the hadeeth that states that when Muslims meet for the sake of Allah, the angles

closely join them (haffathum-al-mila'ika) and they are engulfed in peace and mercy from Allah (ghashiat-hum-as-sakinatu war-rahma) until they disperse. We all gather for many other reasons to do with this Dunia, so why do we not put the same effort to meet up for the sake of Allah and for the sake of the hereafter. When I ask myself do I need the angels to be by my side and do I need the mercy and peace of Allah, I find it easier to pick myself up and come to the Masjid. We need to encourage ourselves to gather for the sake of Allah and to learn for the sake of Allah.

As Muslims, we probably have plenty of reminders about the benefits of the acts of worship and acts of kindness. We should know something about the benefits of:

1. Dutifulness to our parents (bir-rul-walidain)
2. Ablution
3. The remembrance of Allah
4. Salat
5. Fasting
6. Performing ghussel
7. Hajj and Umrah
8. Keeping kinship ties (Silat-ul-rahem)
9. Charity
10. Enjoining what is good and forbidding what is bad (Al-amru bil-ma'rouf)
11. Good conduct
12. The fear of Allah
13. Coping with the loss of a child
14. To be in awe of Allah
15. Tears of a person whose heart is fearful of Allah
16. Prayers on the Prophet(SAAWS)
17. Shahadah: La-Ilaha-Illa-Allah

We know how these aspects of Islam have a palpable benefit in this life, and we also know that they add to our balance on the Day of Judgment. However, what amazed me in this hadeeth was the fact that in addition to these benefits, these specific acts also have a special and specific value on that day. This value seems to be over and above the ordinary. It is almost as if Allah(SWT) is giving us more and more incentives to do more and to be better.

Islam has an amazing benefits system, which highlights the generosity of Allah(SWT) {Al-Kareem, Al-Wahhab, Ar-Razzaq}. Allah wants us to return to Him. Allah(SWT) wants us to enjoy our time on earth, but not at the expense of the hereafter. The big snag in all that is the fact that we are created with a will and we have a choice. Our free will remains our biggest strength, yet it also remains our biggest weakness. Our will can take us to heaven, and our will can also take us away from it. We have to choose carefully and wisely, and we must choose to return towards Allah.

When we explore Islam, the benefits laid in front of us are so immense it is difficult to imagine why we do not fall over ourselves getting back to Allah. We all know about the

generosity of Allah when we are told that a deed of charity is rewarded 700 times over. We all know about the generosity of Allah when we are told that a good deed is rewarded tenfold, but a bad deed is valued as is. Even when one contemplates a good deed and does not do it he is rewarded, and when one contemplates a bad deed and does not do it he is also rewarded.

What sort of a person is it who would refuse all this and follow his whims? We see it day after day, people forsaking Allah in pursuit of this Dunia. When will we start adjusting our scales to realize the short-lived rewards of this Dunia against the eternal rewards of the Hereafter. For this reason, I found the following hadeeth another good reminder.

The hadeeth is by Imam Al-Tirmizi, found in the book “Nawader Al-Ussoul”. The hadeeth has a chain of narrators from the father of Imam Al-Tirmizi to Abdul-Rahman Ibn Samra who narrated: The Prophet(SAAWS) came out to us one day as we were in the Masjid of Madina and said:

إني رأيت البارحة عجباً:
رأيت رجلاً من أمتي جاء ملك الموت ليقبض روحه ، فجاء برّه بوالديه ، فرده عنه

I saw yesterday astonishing things. {This was explained as what the Prophet(SAAWS) saw in a dream: }

I saw a man of my Ummah, the angle of death has come to seize his soul. But then comes the dutifulness of this man to his parents, and the angle of death was repelled.

The opening of this hadeeth starts with a difficult concept. Can life be extended? My understanding of this part of the hadeeth, is that the extension of one’s life is not as we sometimes understand. It is not like when someone says I want to live longer to do all the things I did not have the chance to do. I want to cruise the world. I want to see the wonders of this world, I want to do this and I want to do that. No, this is not what this part of the hadeeth is about. To lengthen one’s life in this context is to allow a person more time to do more good deeds, and to increase the balance of this person in the hereafter as a reward for being dutiful to his parents. This hadeeth tells us that Muslims should not see life on earth as an ordeal, but as an opportunity. We are asked to pray: {Allahuma-ijaal alhayata ziadatan lana fee kuli-khair} “Oh Allah, make this life an increase for us in all that is good”.

As we can also see, this hadeeth, which is essentially about the hereafter, starts by re-enforcing dutifulness towards our parents. I can see many youngsters here today on holiday who may well ask why should Muslim children be dutiful to their parents. By the way, being dutiful does not only mean to be good when your parents are good to you. Being dutiful means that we always have a duty towards our parents. A duty of kindness, a duty of good relation, a duty of mercy when they are old, a duty of respect, a duty of care and so on. Muslim children may rightly say; most of our friends or other teenagers we know, or characters we see on TV programs like East Enders, Coronation Street, or

even Neighbors if you are desperate to watch a TV soap, they do not express this “dutifulness towards their parents”, so why should we? Our Muslim children are aware that these teenagers do not seem to worry that much about being dutiful to their parents. Their relationship with their parents is probably based on: if you are good to me, I will be good to you. The Muslim concept of being dutiful to your parents is alien to them. Their interaction with their parents and families come from a different concept to Muslims. It doesn't seem to be the cool thing to be dutiful to your parents.

Islam however, teaches us differently. In another hadeeth, we read that the Prophet(SaAWS) was asked: which of deeds are most loved by Allah. He said prayers on time. He was then asked: and what else: He said: being dutiful towards your parents. He was then asked: and what else. He replied: Jihad in the way of Allah.

In this hadeeth, dutifulness towards our parents comes after prayers but above jihad. We know about the man who went to the Prophet(SAAWS) and asked permission to do jihad. The Prophet(SAAWS) asked him, are your parents alive. He replied: Yes. The Prophet(SAAWS) said: in them do jihad.

We all also know the Aya:

﴿ وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا ٢٣ ﴾

“Your Lord hath decreed that you worship none but Him, and that you be kind to your parents” (S17, A23)

It seems that our path to the hereafter starts with our relationship with our parents. Islam tells us that the duty towards our parents is the next step after worshipping Allah. This hadeeth re-enforces this concept. Our path to the hereafter goes through our parents, and especially through our mothers.

With regards to longevity, this is not the only hadeeth that mentions this fact. We hear in another hadeeth, The Prophet(SAAWS) said: who ever wants to increase in his ‘Rizq’ and to have longevity, let them keep their kinship ties. In this hadeeth, duty is extended beyond the parents and is inclusive of our close relatives.

The next part of the hadeeth is when it starts to get a bit scary. Probably most of us this summer will either read or watch the new release of Harry Potter to get that buzz of being scared. Well, reading this hadeeth may actually be more scary, and probably of more benefit.

The next part of the hadeeth starts to get into that period of our existence when there is nothing more that we can do, and we hope that we have done enough. This is the part when we become totally helpless, and our deeds and actions start to act on our behalf. All

those who have died so far are now in this helpless state, but we are a little bit more fortunate as we still have the time to do more. The next section reads:

ورأيت رجلاً من أمتي قد بسط عليه عذاب القبر ، فجاءه وضوؤه فاستنقذه من ذلك

And I saw a man of my Ummah where the torment of the grave has been laid over him. But then comes his ablution, his “wudu” and saves him from that torment.

Brothers and sisters, the torment of the grave is a real thing. The Prophet(SAAWS) has reminded us frequently about this torment. We are told that the most horrific place on earth is the grave, but what comes after it is even more horrific. The grave is where it all starts. As soon as the funeral procession leaves, and the deceased hears their footsteps receding, the two angels, Munkar and Nakeer, start the process. It seems that there is no rest. The Prophet(SAAWS) has taught us what to do to save ourselves from this terrible period, before the Day of Judgment even starts.

Brothers and sisters, I think most of us are aware of the benefits of reading the Quran, and especially Surat Al-Mulk, and that one of these benefits is the companionship of the Quran for us in the grave. We probably know that surat Al-Mulk is one of the “munjiatt”, one of the saviors, and we are asked to recite this surat every night. So, for our youngsters who want to try and improve on your Quran in this holiday, a good advice is to try to read this surat each night, and if you really want to excel, why not learn it by heart and recite it in your Isha prayers.

What I did not know, which came in this hadeeth, was the fact that wudu ISA will act as a savior for me in the grave.

أقول قولي هذا وأستغفرُ الله لي و لكم

2nd Khutbah:

الحمدُ لله ثم الحمد لله . الحمد لله نستعينه ونستغفره ، ونعوذُ بالله من شرور
أنفُسنا وسَيِّئات أعمالنا . أما بعد :

ورأيت رجلاً من أمتي قد بسط عليه عذاب القبر ، فجاءه وضوؤه فاستنقذه من ذلك

And I saw a man of my Ummah where the torment of the grave has been laid over him. But then comes his ablution, his “wudu” and saves him from that torment.

When I first read this part of the hadeeth, the first impression that one gets is the clear fact that wudu has a special benefit for the Muslim in the grave. What then struck me was the fact that this section of the hadeeth is describing a man from the Ummah of the Prophet(SAAWS). {And I saw a man of my Ummah where the torment of the grave has been laid over him}. Not only that, but this man was obviously performing wudu, and most likely was also performing salat. That was when it became scary. A Muslim, like you and me. A Muslim who comes to the Masjid to do wudu and salat, like you and me. A Muslim who believes in Allah, the angels, the books, the messengers and the Day of Judgment, like you and me. This is when it became clear, that anyone here, like you and me, may be lying in that grave with the torment of the grave being laid on.

Is this possible? And what should the message be.

The answer is yes, it is clearly possible as this hadeeth is telling us, and the message is two-fold.

The first message is that being a Muslim, doing wudu and performing salat may not be enough for us to save ourselves. Being a Muslim is much more than that. It is about our conduct, it is about our behavior, it is about our role on this earth, it is about us being the representatives of Allah on this earth. This is the first message.

The second message is not to despair. Even if we are not able to lift ourselves to that role, let us not be lazy with our routine acts. Let us perform wudu as it should be done. Let us keep ourselves all the time in a state of wudu, for ISA, if we are unfortunate enough to be like this man, our wudu will save us from the torment of the grave.

I am mindful of the time, and there are still fifteen sections to this hadeeth. ISA we will continue in next khutbah.