

Friday 21st March 2008

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.

All 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 own bad deeds. Whom-so-ever God guides to the truth no one will lead astray, and whom-so-ever 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

قُلْ لِمَنْ مَّا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ قُلْ لِلّٰهِ كَتَبَ عَلٰی نَفْسِهٖ الرَّحْمَۃَ

“Say, to who belongs what is in the heavens and the earth? Say: To Allah; He has ordained mercy on Himself” (S6, A12)

Brothers and sisters, ASA.

We are again blessed with another Good Friday which has the beautiful advantage of bringing all the youngsters of our community to this centre. For Muslims, every Friday is a “Good” Friday. Allah(SWT) has made Friday the most honoured of the days of the week. On Friday we have our congregational prayers and khutbah. During this day, Allah(SWT) has appointed an hour during which our Dua’, our sincere and honest Dua’, a Dua’ that is coming from the heart of a faithful Muslim. A Muslim whose heart, tongue and hand all act as one and the same. Allah(SWT) has appointed an hour of this blessed day during which the Dua’ of this Muslim and ISA all Muslims will be answered.

We are blessed and fortunate to have all these youngsters with us today. For this reason, the khutbah must address them. I know that the khutbah should reflect current affairs and the state of the Muslim Ummah, but it should also be educational and should guide us to better ourselves. I would like to cover a number of topics and ISA, in the long term, we will sense the benefit in the knowledge and conduct of our children.

First of all, most of us are probably aware that the 12th of Rabi’u Al-awal was two days ago. The Prophet^(SAAWS) was born on this day of the 12th of Rabi’u Al-awal. It was a Monday. Sub-hana-Allah, it is agreed that the Prophet^(SAAWS) also died on the same day, the 12th day of Rabi’u Al-awal. This simple but amazing fact inevitably leads the Muslims, when they want to celebrate the birth of the Prophet^(SAAWS), they also have to remember the death of the Prophet^(SAAWS) and in doing so, inevitably, they recall the Sirah. One day in the year. No conflict. Just imagine if the Prophet^(SAAWS) died on a different day. Imagine if over the years some Muslims decided that they want to commemorate the death of the Prophet^(SAAWS). Just imagine what a day this could have been. We do witness others commemorating the death of figures of significance for them. Muslims are blessed that the Prophet^(SAAWS) was born and died on the same day.

For the youngsters here today, you need to know that the Prophet^(SAAWS) did celebrate his birthday. He was born on a Monday. The Prophet^(SAAWS) used to fast on Mondays and Thursdays. When asked as to why, one of the reasons given for fasting Mondays was that he was born on that day and fasting is a means of giving thanks to Allah. Just imagine brothers and sisters if we can ever encourage ourselves, our sisters and wives and our children that when their birthday comes, that we all as a family should celebrate that day by fasting. We tend to celebrate our birthdays by being involved in this Dunia. Can we try to celebrate our birthdays by getting involved in the Hereafter? To me this would be following in the footsteps of our beloved Prophet^(SAAWS).

As for fasting Thursdays, the Prophet^(SAAWS) mentioned that it is at the end of this day that our deeds are elevated to Allah(SWT), and he wanted to be in a state of fasting when his deeds are presented before the Lord. For Muslims, celebrations are permissible, but the manner of celebrating is where we have gone off the straight path. We tend to follow current traditions and customs and we have forgotten the essence of celebrating. It is to remember the blessings of Allah on us. If I ask the parents here today, what joy has your newborn brought to you? How immense was the happiness and joy. How fulfilling was

the experience of witnessing your newborn child. What pleasures has that child brought on the family. For some of us who are now grand parents, the joys have been rekindled with the arrival of the grandchild. It is truly joys upon joys:

أَعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَلَهُمْ وَزِينَةٌ وَتَفَاخُرٌ بَيْنَكُمْ وَتَكَاثُرٌ
فِي الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَوْلَادِ ط

“Know that the life of this world is but amusement, and distractions, and pageantry and boasting among you, and the multiplication of riches and children” (S57, A20)

Allah(SWT) tells us that these are the essentials of this life. These are the things that make this world, and we know that. When we get a new TV, a new car, probably a huge wasteful Mercedes, a new house, a new X-box, a new pink Sony Ericson mobile, and so on, and the list is endless. These are all the things that bring joy into our lives. But all of these are temporary, no more so than the mobile phone with a year’s contract. The joy of gaining such a phone is only matched by the joy of getting rid of it in one year, only to get the up to date one. This is what this life is all about, amusements and distractions. But these do not compare to the joys of the birth of a new baby. Let us try, if we can, celebrate the goodness that this new life has given us with fasting so that we keep the close bond between this life and the hereafter close and tight.

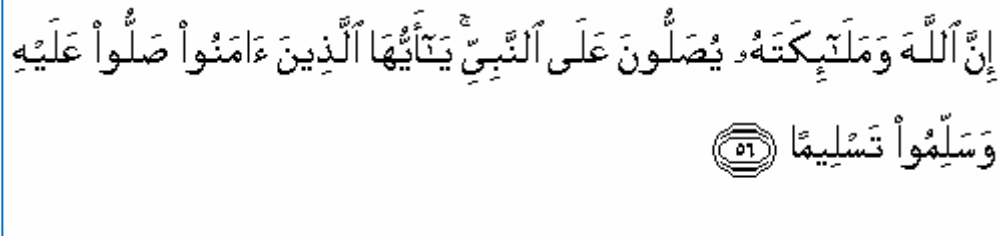
We had a little gathering yesterday to commemorate the Seerah of our beloved Prophet^(SAAWS). In an hour, one can only cover a few minutes of the life of Muhammad(SAAWS). When we mention his name, Muslims should always follow by saying “SAAWS”. This is not an optional few words by Muslims, but it is actually a command. Many of our older generations have lost the significance of this command:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ
وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا ﴿٥٦﴾

“Allah and His angels are praying on the Prophet: O you who believe, pray for him, and salute him with all respect” (S33, A56)

O you who believe; that means every one of us here, adults and children alike, “Pray” for him and “Salute” him with all respect. Pray and salute are commands. These are commands in the Quran. I know that some of our older generation have not got into the

habit of saying “SAAWS” whenever they hear the word “Prophet” or “Muhammad” or “Al-Musstafa”, or whatever name we have for our beloved “Prophet”. We need to get this command back. It is not a tradition, and it is not an optional extra. It is actually a command by Allah.



For today, I ask our children here with us to commemorate the birth of our Prophet^(SAAWS) by taking on this task. The task of saying “SAAWS” every time they hear the name of our Prophet^(SAAWS). Brothers and sisters, the love of the Prophet^(SAAWS) does not come by talking or by writing about him. Love comes from the heart. We recently celebrated Mothers’ day. For the children here, do you remember how you felt when you were planning this celebration. This celebration came from the heart and then you acted on it. You did not celebrate mothers’ day by speaking about it. You felt it and you acted on it. Your heart was your lead. The same is with the Prophet^(SAAWS). We all need to love him and celebrate him every minute of our lives.

Well, you may legitimately ask why? Why do we need to love the Prophet^(SAAWS)? What is so special about this relationship?

This is best exemplified by the story of sUmar^(RAA). This story has been mentioned a few times in previous khutbahs, but it will be a special mention today because of the children here. sUmar^(RAA) was walking with the Prophet^(SAAWS) holding onto his hand and saying, O Prophet of Allah, I truly love you.

Before we go on, just a little side track. How many of us here hold onto the hand of their wife, or their husband, or their mother or father, or their sister or brother, or their child and tell them, with your eyes directly in their eyes, and tell them “I truly love you”. Sometimes we are a little bit shy of expressing our emotions openly and loudly. Somehow for the men and older boys, this is not the “cool” thing. Well, can we now imagine the scene when we say that sUmar^(RAA) was walking with the Prophet^(SAAWS), grasping his hand and telling him “I love you more than everything else”. Do we think that this is not “cool”.

For the children here today, please be in no doubt that Islam is the religion of love and mercy. For you to walk up to your parents, to hold their hand in yours, to kiss their hands and to tell them that you love them is not “un-cool”. It is in fact the “coolest” thing that you can do in Islam. It is very “cool” and very “hip” to tell those that you love that you truly love them. But probably, you may need some encouragement from your parents. How many times do we as parents grab our children, hug them with the same feelings

that we had when they were first born and tell them we love them. Believe you me, practice makes perfect.

Back to sUmar^(RAA). He was saying to the Prophet^(SAAWS), I love you more than anything else. The Prophet^(SAAWS) tested his words. He asked him, “more than your wealth?” He replied, yes. “More than your family?” He replied, yes. “More than you children?” He replied, yes. Then it came to the crunch. This is the critical crunch for our children as well. The Prophet^(SAAWS) asked him, “more than yourself?”

Before I tell you what sUmar^(RAA) replied, let us for a moment imagine what loving someone more than you love yourself is. Can we imagine such a situation where everything that you do or you have or you think or you feel, you find yourself favoring someone else rather than yourself. You love someone so much that when you get your new X-box, you give it to them to play first. When you get your new Sony Ericson, they get to have it; when you have a chocolate, you give it to them. Probably we all remember the advertisement “do you love some one enough to give them your last Rolo”.

You see now, once we start to look closely at what loving someone else more than you love yourself really means, it becomes difficult to fulfill this love. You actually have to put them ahead of yourself all the time. We know this is not easy at all. Probably the closest one comes to that love is the love of a mother to her child. Even when she is thirty, the first drink goes to her child, when she is very hungry, the first bite goes to her child and so on. She wants to her child more and better than for herself. She truly loves her child more than she loves herself. You see, it is not easy to fulfill this statement, “I love you more than I love myself”.

So, what do you think sUmar^(RAA) said. He said “No”. In his honest and straight forward manner he said “no”. The Prophet^(SAAWS) replied, “you are not ready yet”. The Prophet^(SAAWS) was saying to Umar^(RAA), and indirectly to all Muslims, that our Iman is not ready yet. The Prophet^(SAAWS) is telling us that our Iman is not complete until we love him more than we love ourselves. Umar^(RAA) asked the Prophet^(SAAWS) to give him time to think. So he goes away, thinks about the matter and comes back to the Prophet^(SAAWS) and declares that he loves him more than he loves himself. The Prophet^(SAAWS) then said, “Now Umar”, by that he meant, now your Iman has been completed.

For our children here today, do we understand what it means when the Prophet^(SAAWS) says “now Umar”. Do we understand that our Iman, and our Islam is not complete until we love the Prophet^(SAAWS) more than we love ourselves. Well, the clever among you here would legitimately ask, how come? What made sUmar^(RAA) change his mind. How did he get there?

Well, this is again where you the children have an important role in this. It was Umar’s son, Abdul-Llah bin Umar^(RAA) who asked his father, how come you changed your mind. What convinced you to love the Prophet^(SAAWS) more than yourself. For our children here today, and for our brothers and sisters, please take note of what sUmar^(RAA) answered, for in his answer lies profound wisdom that we desperately need. He said, I asked myself,

who am I in need more in this life, myself or the Prophet^(SAAWS). I was in total ignorance until he gave me guidance. In this life, I need the Prophet^(SAAWS) more than I need myself. He is better for me than I was for myself. Then I asked, O Umar, on the day of judgment, who is more important to you, yourself or the Prophet^(SAAWS), and I know that I have nothing to help me on that day except the Prophet^(SAAWS). I now know that in this life and in the hereafter, the Prophet^(SAAWS) is more important to me than myself, and for that, I love him more than I love myself. That was the uncluttered logic of sUmar^(RAA). That is what our logic should lead us to. We need our Prophet^(SAAWS) more than we need ourselves.

لَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا عَنِتُّمْ حَرِيصٌ عَلَيْكُمْ
بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٢٨﴾

“Now has come unto you a Messenger from amongst yourselves: it grieves him that you should be in distress, full of concern for you, and to the believers he is most kind and merciful” (S9, A128)

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ
وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٣١﴾

“Say, if you do love Allah then follow me: Allah will love you and forgive you your trespasses. For Allah is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful” (S3, A31)

أَقُولُ قَوْلِي هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ لِي وَ لَكُمْ

2nd Khutbah:

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

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ
آيَاتُهُ زَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ﴿٢﴾

“It is indeed the believers whose hearts become fearful with the mention of Allah, and when His revelations are recited to them, they elevate them in faith, and on their Lord do they depend” (S8, A2)

I would like to finish with another aya from the Holy Quran:

﴿ وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا إِمَّا يَبُلُغَنَّ عِنْدَكَ
الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا أُفٍ وَلَا تَنْهَرْهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا
كَرِيمًا ﴿٢٣﴾

“And your Lord has commanded that you shall not serve (any) but Him, and “has commanded” Ihssan to your parents. If either or both of them reach old age with you, say not to them (so much as) "Uff", nor rebel them, and speak to them with generous words” (S17, A23)

Brothers and sisters, and children, Islam is the religion of love and mercy. Many events tend to cloud our vision of Islam, our vision of ourselves and our vision for the Ummah. Our children are our future. Let us make sure we give them the right guidance to progress on the path of Allah. Let us guide them to the love of the Prophet^(SAAWS). Let us guide them to be on the example of the Prophet^(SAAWS) and let us pray that they will grow up in the love of Islam and the love of the Porphet of Islam.

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ
الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا ﴿٢١﴾

“Certainly you have in the Messenger of Allah an excellent example for the one whose hope is with Allah and the final day and remembers Allah much” (S33, A21)