

Friday 28th March 2008

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

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

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ ءَامَنُوْا اِذَا نُوْدِيَ لِلصَّلٰوةِ مِنْ يَوْمِ الْجُمُعَةِ فَاسْعَوْا اِلَىٰ ذِكْرِ
اللّٰهِ وَذَرُوْا الْبَيْعَ ذٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٩﴾

“O you who believe! When the call is proclaimed to prayer on the day of congregation, hasten to the Remembrance of Allah, and leave off business and trading. That is best for you if you but know” (S62, A10)



ASA. We continue ISA from last week's khutbah. We started off by thanking Allah for the blessing of having our children with us as it was Good Friday. I think most of you are still on their Easter break, and again we thank Allah for this blessing of having many of our children with us again today. For the same reason, I thought that this khutbah should also be educational to our youngsters. One of the recurring topics and reminders for our community seems to relate to our lack of proper understanding of what the Juma' prayers is about. We somehow have come to accept certain behaviours and actions during the Juma' as being normal and acceptable. ISA, I will try in this khutbah to address some of these issues both as a reminder to myself and to all of us.

ذکر فیان الذکرى تنفع المؤمنین

(Remind, for the reminder is of benefit to the Muslims)

First of all, as we are about to indulge in some education, let us look at how the Sahabah(RAA) used to take on the teachings of the Prophet(SAAWS). We need to imagine that just as much as it is for our young ones here, the early Sahabah did not know much about their new religion. They had to be taught at the hands of the Prophet(SAAWS). It must have been a wonderful experience to have the Prophet(SAAWS) teaching first hand, but I think it is also interesting for us to see how the sahabah behaved amongst themselves and how they shared and spread their new found knowledge.

We know that as with any new teaching, there will be some teething problems, and the sahabah did make some errors which the prophet(SAAWS) observed and gave advice. This was critical for us as even now we still repeat the same mistakes, and it is just wonderful to have that depth of Seerah to guide us, fourteen hundred years later, through our own teething problems. What is of great interest to me, and hopefully to all of us, is the manner in which the sahabah dealt with such issues. I think we all agree that when one of us makes a mistake, and that includes all of us, it can be a very difficult pill to swallow when you are corrected. A little of pride always intervenes. This is not limited to adults, but I also see it in children, even as young as three (and that is my youngest). Somehow pride always gets the better of us. Most of our misunderstandings come from letting our pride get the better of us. It can be very difficult to accept that you have done something wrong and more difficult to accept that someone is telling you how to do it right. One of the characteristics of being civilized is to be able to face up to criticism and deal with it in a civilized way. So let us see whether our current "civilness" is any better than it was 1400 years ago.

Let us look at some issues relating to what can negate ones salat. We are looking at things that one may do during his or her salat which will make their salat not accepted and they have to do it all over again. Zaid Bin Arqam said that “we” used to talk during our salat. Can you imagine that? Can we imagine the sahabah standing to do salat, and they are talking to each other while they are in a state of salat. We need to understand that we are now talking about the early days of Islam. Zaid Bin Arqam said when we stood for prayers we used to chat to the one standing next to. For me, and probably for the children here today, that piece of information is just amazing. Just imagine the early followers of Islam. Islam is still in its early days. These followers did not know what salat is all about. They did not yet know how to connect with Allah, but they had to “stand for prayers”. So there they are, standing up to pray. What should they do or what should they say. They have yet to develop that special relationship with Allah. If we look around us during prayers, what does this remind us of? It reminds us of our children. They are still young in their understanding of Islam. They will stand with us to pray because we tell them to do so and we are setting an example for them, but they still do not know what it is really all about.

So there we have it, some of the early sahabah used to turn and talk with each other, and sometimes even laugh during prayers. Then came a few verses of the Quran:

حَافِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَىٰ وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ ﴿٢٣٨﴾

“Be steadfast with your prayers, especially the Middle Prayer; and stand to Allah with devotion” (S2, A238)

“And stand to Allah with devotion”.

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١﴾ الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ ﴿٢﴾

“Successful indeed are the believers. Those who are humble in their prayers” (S23, A1-2)

The orders have come down, and now the sahabah are aware; “no speaking to each other during the prayers”. So, they stopped. But now for the interesting events. Events that show us that the sahabah are like us, human.

Ibn Massoud said that before we migrated to “Habasha”, when we saluted the Prophet(SAAWS) during his prayers, he used to reply. Again just imagine that scene in early Islam. Our beloved Prophet(SAAWS) is in a state of prayers when one of these early Muslims would go up to him and say ASA. The Prophet(SAAWAS) while still in his prayers, would reply probably saying

WAS. So, when Ibn Massoud came back from “Habasha”, the order to stop talking has been applied and the sahabah who remained back in Makkah stopped speaking during their prayers. Can we now imagine what is about to happen? The sahabah that have just returned from “Habasha” were saying to the Prophet(SAAWS) ASA while in his prayers, and he did not answer back. There is something new here. When they enquired about the reason, the Prophet(SAAWS) replied “there is work to be done during the prayers, and it is not time for talking”. This is narrated by Al-Bukhari.

Another incident was narrated by Mouawiyah Bin Al-Hakam Bin Assulami. He said that as he was praying with the Prophet(SAAWS), a man sneezed, so, in his usual manner he said, while in prayers, “Allah bless you”. Those around him started to look at him in disapproval. Not saying anything, but just giving him looks. You can just imagine this poor man, he just thought that he did something good by saying “Allah bless you”, only to find that those around are giving him the “look” of disapproval. So he said: “Why are you all looking at me like this”. The problem was that the sahabah around him knew that they could not speak, so they tapped on their thighs in a manner to let him know that he should be quite. So Mouawiyah later said, even though I wanted to speak, I remained quite until the salat was over.

Again I find this narration so wonderful. This is Islam in real life between the early Muslims as they are trying to better their Islam and abide by its rules of conduct and behaviour. They learn something new. They apply it to themselves and try to guide others along. So you can just imagine the room for these scenarios when something like this happens. How civilised were these sahabah? How civilised are we?

In the Seerah, we are usually taught about the “major” events of Islam, and probably we are told little about these “minor” events which on the surface may seem of little importance, but from a character building point of view, these are actually very important for us. We have a lot to learn from such lovely events. Can we just imagine Mouawiyah looking around him and saying “why are you all looking at me like this” and then the sahabah tapping on their thighs wanting to say “just be quite” we are trying to pray. Brothers and sisters, the sahabah started off as ordinary people, just like you and me. They started off ordinary, but with the teachings of Islam and the example of the Prophet(SAAWS) they ended up as being exceptionally extra-ordinary.

Let us see how the Prophet(SAAWS) dealt with this situation. Oumayah followed by saying, the Prophet(SAAWS) later spoke to me, and by the soul of my parents, I have never witnessed a better teacher than him. He did not rebuke me, but simply said: “salat is not for the words between people, but it is for the remembrance of Allah and for the recitation of the Quran”. The Prophet guiding the sahabah in a positive manner, in a manner that is just as relevant for us today as it was all these years ago. This was narrated by Imams Ahmad, Muslim, Abu Dawood and An-Nissai. As we start to teach our children to pray, these are the words we can use to guide them.

Excessive laughter can also render the “salat” not accepted. Again one would ask did the sahabah in early Islam smile or laugh on occasions during their prayers. The answer must have been yes. Again it comes to mind that at the early stages of Islam, the sahabah were ordinary people like us here. And again it comes to mind that Islam has elevated them to that extra-ordinary status that we now have as an example for us. This is how we should be looking at our children. How can we elevate them to an extra-ordinary status by the way we teach them Islam.

Now to the topic of the Friday “Juma’ prayers”. We mentioned last week that the Muslims consider every Friday to be a Good Friday as Allah(SWT) has given this day a very special status. The Prophet(SAAWS) said “the best of days that the sun has risen on is Friday. In it Adam was created, and in it he entered the Garden, and in it he was taken out, and the Hour shall rise on this day” Narrated by Muslim.

In another hadeeth, the Prophet(SAAWS) also said that Adam descended to earth on a Friday, and died on a Friday, and during this day, there is an hour during which Allah will answer the prayers of His worshipers except for what is forbidden.

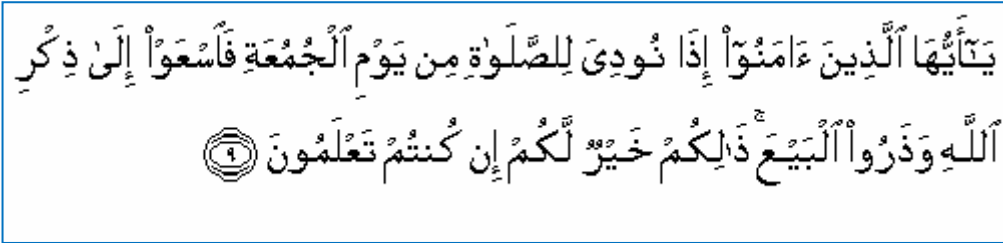
There are indeed numerous hadeeth relating to the significance of supplication and dua’ during this hour on the Friday. Most scholars tend to agree that this special hour is towards the end of the day. We need to revive this wish to ask Allah(SWT) and to do as much Dua’ during this day. I know that most of the times myself and many of us here work during Friday afternoon and evening. However, I am quite sure that our children may have this time free. Can we as parents try to organize and prepare the atmosphere at home for our children to have a quiet period before Maghrib on Fridays. Can we organize it for them to sit and ask Allah(SWT) for whatever they wish for. Can we encourage them to revive this habit. The older generation has probably been overcome by the demands of our careers, and we have forgotten and lost many traditions that connect us with Allah. We must lay the path for our children and we must do it as early as possible. One such tradition is to remind them to supplicate to Allah(SWT) on Fridays. We need to remember however that Friday ends with the Maghrib azan.

The Prophet also reminded the sahabah of the significance of Friday and asked them to pray on him. The Prophet(SAAWS) said “pray abundantly on me on the day and the night of Friday”. We mentioned in last khutbah how we need the Prophet(SAAWS) more than anything else for this life and for the hereafter. Our abundant prayers on him is the least we can offer for the goodness that we have received in return.

Another recommended tradition is to read or recite surat Al-Kahf on the Friday. It should be read quietly without disturbing the rest of those who are in the Masjid. The Prophet(SAAWS) said: “for the one who reads surat Al-Kahf on the Friday, there will be a light that shines from beneath his feet that reaches the heights of the skies. This will light up for him on the day of judgment, and he will be forgiven his minor sins between the two Fridays”.

As a quick reminder it is a “makrooh” for Fridays to be fasted as a single day, and it is also a “makrooh” for one to do Qiyam of the night of Fridays only.

Now for some of the Do’s and Don’ts of the Friday Juma’ prayers we know from the Holy Quran. These are the last three ayas from Surat Al-Juma’:



“O you who believe! When the call is proclaimed to prayer on the day of congregation, hasten to the Remembrance of Allah, and leave off business and trading. That is best for you if you but know” (S62, A10)

The Prophet(SAAWS) said, (as an Ummah) we are the latest (in this dunia) and the first on the day of judgment, in that the people of the Book have been given theirs before us, and we gained ours after them. And this is the day that has been ordained on them (meaning Friday), but they have been lost to it, and Allah has guided us to it, and the rest of people are followers of us. The Jews tomorrow and the Christians after tomorrow. Narrated by Bukhari and Muslim.

The Friday prayers is obligatory on every adult Muslim male. In a hadeeth sahih, the Prophet(SAAWS) said that the Juma’ prayers is compulsory except for four: a slave who has no will of his own, a woman, a child, and a person who is ill”. In another hadeeth, a further excuse has been granted for the one who fears for himself by attending the masjid. There is also a license on a very bad day where the weather makes it prohibitive to attend the masjid. Under such circumstances, all these Muslims will do a routine Zuhur prayers and are excused from the Juma’.

For those of us who are here today, we are thankful to Allah to have blessed us with the fact that we are not distracted by the Dunia away from this congregational prayers. Being here is indeed a blessing. Being able to pray the Juma’ prayers where ever we are is indeed a great blessing.

To accomplish this blessing, there are a few things that we are encouraged to do. It is strongly recommended that for those who intend to come to the Juma’ prayers to attend in a state of cleanliness and in the best of cloths. We have tended to ignore this vital order and for some of us we have lowered our standard of cleanliness quite badly. For most of us, we tend to be too busy to recognize that the Prophet(SAAWS) and the sahabah used to bathe on the Friday and put on the best of their cloths to attend the masjid. It was a celebration for them. This prayers was something very special. They come in anticipation of forgiveness for the next week. I still remember when I was young, many years ago, living in the middle East, Friday was a public

holiday, and it was made special with the Juma' prayers. It was the focus of the day. It was indeed very special. I know it is very sad for us that for most if not all of us, Friday in a non-Muslim society is a working day. We therefore need to try our best to make this as special as possible, if not for us, then at least for our children.

The Prophet(SAAWS) said, every Muslim should bathe on the Friday, put on the best of their cloths and apply perfume. This was narrated by Imam Ahmad.

Another hadeeth narrated by Ahmad and Bukhari: The Prophet(SAAWS) said: for a man to bathe on the Friday, to apply of what he has of perfume, and then to go to the masjid, and does not split between two people, and then prays what is possible for him, and then listens to the Imam when he speaks, he is forgiven from one Friday to the other.

This brothers and sisters is the significance of the Friday Juma' prayers. This is what we want to achieve. This is what makes this prayers so special. When we pray Zuhur on a Friday, it is simply a Zuhur prayers. As special as it is, it does not provide forgiveness from one Friday to the next. If we do the Friday Juma' prayers properly, ISA we gain this forgiveness. This is what we seek here today, forgiveness from one Friday to the next.

أقول قولي هذا وأستغفر الله لي و لكم

2nd Khutbah:

الحمد لله ثم الحمد لله . الحمد لله نستعينه ونستغفره ، ونعوذ بالله من شرور
أنفُسِنَا وَسَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا . أَمَا بَعْد :

The Prophet(SAAWS) asked us to come early to the masjid. In a narrated hadeeth by most Imams, the timing of arrival to the masjid has been equated to giving Qurbani. Those who arrive earliest are akin to those giving a camel, while those arriving latest are akin to those giving an egg. And once the Imam comes out, the angles attend and listen to the remembrance of Allah. So just imagine that the angles are now sitting with us here remembering Allah with us and listening to the khutbah. This is indeed a special occasion.

We have tended to witness a few things on the Friday that we need to educate ourselves so as we do not lose the bounty of this glorious occasion. Firstly, we witness some of us arrive a little late and try to come forwards by stepping over people, and then seek a small space between two people to sit between them. The Prophet(SAAWS) witnessed, as he was giving the khutbah, a man stepping over people as he was coming forwards. So he told him; “sit down, for you have arrived late and you have harmed people”. Let us be considerate when we come late and look for a place to sit. For those of us who arrive early, we need to seek a forward place and keep tight to each other so as we do not fill the masjid too quickly, and then the only way for those coming late is to step over us.

It is acceptable for those arriving early to do “Naffl” prayers as long as the Imam has not commenced the khutbah. If already started it is accepted that when a person entering the masjid during the khutbah that he or she can do the two raka’s of entering the masjid, as long as they are done quickly and quietly. If the Imam is in the second part of the khutbah and nearing finishing, it is better not to do these two raka’s. Sometimes as we try to listen to the Imam, a brother or sister comes in and start to do the two raka’s loudly with quite a distinct “Allah-u-Akbar” which sometimes is even louder than the Imam. This is not good practice. The prayers during the khutbah should be quick and silent so as not to disturb your brothers and sisters. You are definitely not recommended to stand up during the khutbah and do any other naffl prayers. Listening to the khutbah is part of the Juma’. For us to gain the forgiveness between the Friday and the next, we need to listen quietly to the khutbah. If not, we are wasting a great opportunity for forgiveness.

We are allowed to change our place during the khutbah if we feel tired or sleepy to help us be more attentive.

Now for the khutbah. The khutbah is an integral part of the Juma’ prayers, and the Prophet(SAAWS) gave a khutbah on every Friday. Most scholars have agreed that it is an integral part of the Juma’ prayers. It is a tradition for the Imam to greet those in the masjid by saying “Assalam-Aleikum”. The second Azan was introduced at the time of sUthman(RAA) due to the expansion of the Madinah, and the fact that many people were living far away from the Masjid and needed time to travel. This change was accepted by the Sahabah at the time, and was never changed after his Khilafa, and has remained with us until our time.

It is also a tradition to open the khutbah with praising Allah(SWT) and with the “Shahada”. It is also a tradition that the Imam has a small break during the khutbah during which he sits down. One tradition that I have not mastered yet is the fact that the khutbah should not be too long. I can only sincerely apologies for that. My excuse, and if you will let me get away with it, is that for some of us, the only time you have a chance to learn something about Islam is in the Juma’ Khutbah, and I feel as if I am cheating you if I do not give an adequate reminder. So again, I seek your forgiveness. It is however necessary that the Imam should be able to get his ideas and teachings across, and ISA, I do try my best in that.

Even though it is not permissible to be chatting during the khutbah, the Imam can be interrupted in case of an unforeseen or urgent matter. The Prophet(SAAWS) stopped his khutbah on more than one occasion for various reasons, and then went back to complete it. However, there is one definite rule about the khutbah. This is something that we have pointed out before, and I left it late to remind us all. This is the fact that we are not permitted to speak during the khutbah. The Prophet(SAAWS) said that he who speaks during the khutbah, and he who asks him to listen both have lost their Juma'. That is very interesting. Not only he who speaks, but also he who tells him off.

The Prophet(SAAWS) said, three types of people come to the Friday prayers. One comes to it to speak, and that is what he gets from it. One who comes to ask Allah, and Allah may or may not grant him what he asked for. The third is the one who comes to listen and is quiet, he did not step over any one and (listen carefully to this one) and did not harm anyone. For him, it erases his sins until his next Friday and an extra three days.

So, brothers and sisters, we need to be very careful on this day and during the khutbah so as we do not lose the blessing of the Friday prayers. One of the difficulties that we put our brothers and sisters in is when we enter late, the Imam is doing the khutbah and we do "salam" to our brothers and sisters and put our hand out to shake it. It really puts your brother and sister in a difficult position because it distracts them. However, for the brother and sister who is greeted with a salam, it is obligatory to respond, but do it quietly and quickly.

As regards coming late while the prayers have started, there is a slight difference between some of the scholars in that some say if you miss one "raka'" only, you add another and your Juma' is achieved, but if you arrive while the second "raka'" was done, you have missed the Juma' and you will need to do Zuhur as four "raka's". Other scholars, such as Abu Haneefa states that as long as you catch the prayers and accomplish what you have missed you have achieved your Juma' ISA.

Finally, with regards to the nafl prayers before and after the Juma'. At the time of the prophet(SAAWS), the Prophet(SAAWS) used to have the Azan announced and he would start the khutbah straight away. Therefore, there was no salat between the Azan and the khutbah. Now that we have two Azans, one may think that there is a definite Sunnah to pray after the first Azan. There are no recorded traditions as to an established Sunnah before the Juma' khutbah. The hadeeths suggest that once the person arrives to the masjid, they can pray as much as they want until the Azan for the khutbah is announced. After the Juma' prayers, the Sunnah is to do four raka's. It is even suggested that it is preferable to do the Sunnah at home, if one plans to return home straight after the Juma', and if that is the case, the Sunnah is to do two raka's only.

I ask Allah(SWT) to guide us to understand the Deen of Islam and to guide us to apply it as best as we can and ask Allah(SWT) to accept our prayers and to make our Juma' accepted and to gain forgiveness for our sins until next Friday ISA.