

14<sup>th</sup> May 2010

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

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

All Praise be to اللّٰهُ .

We praise him and ask him for help and forgiveness. We ask him for protection from the evilness within ourselves and from our own bad deeds. Whom-so-ever God guides to the truth no one can lead astray, and whom-so-ever He leaves misguided, no one has the power to guide.

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

وَأَنْتُمْ يَوْمًا تُرْجَعُونَ فِيهِ إِلَى اللّٰهِ ثُمَّ تُوَفَّى كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ  
وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٨١﴾

***“And guard yourselves from the Day when you shall be brought back to Allah. Then every soul shall be recompensed what it has earned, and none shall be dealt with unjustly” (S2, A281)***



Dear brothers and sisters, ASA. I remind myself and all of you of these ayahs from the Holy Quran:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ ۖ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ

***“O you who believe! Be mindful of your duty to Allah in the most truthful manner that is deserving of Allah {Haqqa Tuqatihi}, and die not except in a state of Islam” (S3, A102)***

Brothers and sisters, we all know that the Friday Khutbah is a chance for us all to be reminded of our duty towards Allah. It is a reminder for us to keep on a path that leads us towards Allah(SWT) and not a path that leads us away from Him. Brothers and sisters, we all know that the path towards Allah is to believe in Allah(SWT) and to obey Him. Our belief and our obedience are to get us to Allah(SWT). Our belief and our obedience are a mercy from Allah(SWT) and not a burden. To believe and to obey is to our own advantage in this life and in the hereafter.

Our success in this life and our success in the hereafter are ultimately linked to our “Taqwa”. This “Taqwa” demands, amongst many other things, that we say what is right. In doing so, Allah(SWT) has promised to rectify our conduct and to forgive us our sins. Brothers and sisters, it is only through the obedience of Allah(SWT) and the obedience of His Messenger, our beloved Prophet(SAAWS) that we achieve eternal success and salvation.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا (٧٠)

يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَعْتَرِ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ ۗ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ ۖ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا (٧١)

***“O you who believe! Be mindful of your duty to Allah, and (always) say what is right: That He may make your conduct whole and sound and forgive you your sins: The one who obeys Allah and His Messenger, has attained the highest Achievement” (S33, A70-1)***

These last two ayahs are from Surat Al-Ahzab, Surat 33. These are ayahs 70 and 71 at the end of the Surat. Islam demands that if we truly want to define ourselves as believers, we need to say what is right. In the first ayah, to say what is right is linked to “Taqwa” of Allah(SWT).

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا (٧٠)

The believer should be aware that saying what is right is part of his or her duty towards Allah(SWT). Being mindful of our duty towards Allah(SWT) can be difficult and demanding, and saying what is right can also be difficult and demanding. We ask Allah to grant us the ability to seek what is true and to say what is true and then to abide by what is true. We ask Allah to grant us the ability to know what is false and to help us abandon all forms of falsehood.

We read one of the difficult ayahs in the Quran towards the end of Surat Al-Kahf:

قُلْ هَلْ نُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِالْأَخْسَرِينَ أَعْمَالًا (١٠٣)  
الَّذِينَ ضَلَّ سَعْيُهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ يَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ يُحْسِنُونَ صُنْعًا (١٠٤)

***“Say: Shall We inform you who will be the greatest losers by their deeds? Those whose effort goes astray in the life of this world while they think that they do good work” (S18, A103-4)***

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ وَلِقَاءِ رَبِّهِمْ فَحَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فَلَا تُقِيمُ لَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَزَنًا  
(١٠٥)

***“It is those who disbelieved in the signs of their Lord and in returning to Him. Thus their deeds were in vain, and on the Day of Resurrection We assign no weight to them. Hell is what they gained by their disbelief, and by taking in jest Our signs and Our messengers” (S18, A105-6)***

Brothers and sisters, Islam questions us every step of the way and demands the best of us. Islam is not a whimsical religion, but the rewards are tremendous. The link between our deeds with the potential reward and punishment is an essential part of our belief. We need to recognise that when we do what Allah(SWT) has asked of us, there are tremendous rewards. Should we chose not to do so, we will be at the mercy of Allah(SWT) on that Day. Believing in the concept of reward and of punishment is a very important part of our submission. Yes, we are in no doubt that the Mercy of Allah(SWT) has encompassed everything, but Allah(SWT) repeatedly warns us of the punishment of those who disbelieve and those who disobey.

إِنَّا أَنْذَرْنَاكُمْ عَذَابًا قَرِيبًا يَوْمَ يَنْظُرُ الْمَرْءُ مَا قَدَّمَتْ يَدَاهُ وَيَقُولُ الْكَافِرُ يَا لَيْتَنِي كُنْتُ تُرَابًا (٤٠)

***"We have warned you of a punishment close at hand, on the day whereon the person will look on that which his own hands have sent before, and the disbeliever will say: "How I wish that I was dust!" (S78, A40)***

At a time when Istanbul was the centre of culture and religion, a Russian monarch wanted to adopt a religion for his people. He wanted reform and wanted to lead his people in the right way. He went to Istanbul and assessed for himself what is on offer. He looked at Islam, Judaism and Christianity, and as a man looking to help his people but at the same time appease them to accept what he has on offer, he chose Christianity. We are told that he did not choose Islam because alcohol is prohibited and he was worried that such a religion would be too difficult for his people to adhere to. Like this monarch, we are having to make choices for ourselves on a daily basis and many of us, including myself, are having some difficulty with our decisions.

There are aspects of Islam that are straight forward and to some extent easy to follow. But, there are also some aspects that are demanding. We may not see the immediate wisdom in such demands and some of us might find difficulty where others might find ease and vice-versa. A few years ago, some Muslims found it difficult not to sell alcohol in their establishment for the fear of losing customers. Some eventually decided that their livelihood lies in the hand of their creator and not the hands of their customers, and took a strong, bold and demanding step and stopped selling or serving alcohol. The others still felt that their livelihood lies in the hands of their customers and are having difficulty letting go. For me, a critical factor when one looks at such an issue is looking at that defining moment when a Muslim finds the strength to stand by his or her convictions. What is it that happens within that Muslim that promotes them to take on this demanding and bold step, and what is it that keeps their brother or sister still fearful?

At what step in our belief does weakness becomes transformed into strength. If I as a Muslim want to better my Islam and I am having difficulty, where can I find my strength? If I eventually find this strength, how can I keep to it? Am I strong or weak because of me or because of my circumstances? The answers to these questions will most likely be different for each and every one of us but we all know the answer to where the hand of power lies in this struggle?

There are many questions, but if we fail to find the answers, can we ever better ourselves as Muslims. Can we ever move forwards? If we can't move forwards, can we ever be in a position to help our friends, our families and our children move forwards. Brothers and sisters, some of you may think that these are pedantic questions, but wait until you have to

address them with someone close to you; wait until you have to address them with your own children.

To start addressing these issues, one needs to get back to the source. We need to get back to the Quran. We need to read, learn and understand our Holy Quran. This is where we understand the concept of “Taqwa of Allah” and “to be mindful of our duty to Allah”. And this is where we come repeatedly across the concept of “Total Submission” to the will of Allah(SWT). That is where the true hand of power of change lies.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِ ۖ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ (١٠٢)  
وَأَعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا

***“O you who believe! Be mindful of your duty to Allah in the most truthful manner that is deserving of Allah, and die not except in a state of Islam. And hold fast, all together by the rope of Allah, and be not divided among yourselves” (S3, A102-3)***

In ayah 102 in Surat Al-Imran, Allah(SWT) demands of the believers that they should be mindful of their duty to Allah as is deserving to the status of Allah, and that we should always be in a state of Islam, a state of total submission to Allah. It is a very strong expression to say, as the ayah states: ***and die not except in a state of Islam***. No one here can tell when they will die, so how can we be sure that we will “die not except in a state of total submission”. When you consider this statement, brothers and sisters, you will recognise that this is only possible when **we always live** in a state of Islam, and a state of total submission.

In these two ayas, this is where we find the best answer to gaining strength. We gain our strength by submitting to Allah(SWT), by holding tight to the message of Islam and by being united.

In the Seerah of the Issra’ and Mi’rage, the Prophet(SAAWS) describes as he ascended the heavens that these heavens were heaving with angels stacked closely together with no room between them. These angels were in a state of worship; standing, bowing or prostrating. On the day of “Qiyama”, these angles will come out of their state of worship, their state of total submission, declaring; “Our Lord, we have not worshiped you as you deserve to be worshiped” (Ma abdanaka haqqa ibadatik).

Our total submission dictates the submission of the mind, the submission of the intellect, the submission of the heart, the submission of pride, the submission of fears, the

submission of desires and the submission of everything that we are. That is what one declares when they state that they are “Muslim”. That is what we declare when we say:

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

This is our statement of submission brothers and sisters. With this statement comes a great deal of responsibility but with it also comes a great reward. So let us ask ourselves again; have we truly submitted.

أَقُولُ قَوْلِي هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ لِي وَلكم

2<sup>nd</sup> Khutbah:

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

فَإِلَهُكُمْ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ فَلَهُ تَسَلَّمُوا

**“And your god is One God; to Him should you submit” (S22, A34)**

Brothers and sisters, one aspect of the concept of submission is the remembrance of Allah(SWT), “Zikr” and “Dua””. In a recent family gathering, one of the sheikhs was talking to the children about “Zikr” and the daily “Dua’s” including those that one says first thing in the morning. I will ISA go through two of these in a second, but before that, I want to share with you an interesting thought.

Once the children were told what the “Dua’s” were and what the powers of these “Dua’s” were, I asked them: Do you really buy into it? Do you really believe that if you say such a thing when you wake up on that day that you will be saved from the fire of hell and that you will gain paradise? These children are 5 to 15 years old. Some said, and very reassuringly, if Allah(SWT) said that then we buy into it. Some of the boys on the other hand said, we want proof. That is when I thought to myself, what proof can anyone give that if you say a “Dua” you will get the reward. What proof do we have? What proof do we give our children?

I do not have an answer for you, but my sincere advice is that each and every one of us should look very closely at what proof will they present to their children if asked for one. What I will say to my children is that if Allah(SWT) said so, then it is. This is what I bought into when I said, and I keep on saying:

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

If I need a proof, then I am probably barking up the wrong tree.

Now for the two Dua's:

اللَّهُمَّ أَنْتَ رَبِّي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ ، خَلَقْتَنِي وَأَنَا عَبْدُكَ ،  
وَأَنَا عَلَىٰ عَهْدِكَ وَوَعْدِكَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُ ، أَعُوذُ بِكَ  
مِنْ شَرِّ مَا صَنَعْتُ ، أَبُوءُ لَكَ بِبِعَمَلِكِ عَلَيَّ ، وَأَبُوءُ  
لَكَ بِذُنُوبِي فَاعْفِرْ لِي فَإِنَّهُ لَا يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ .

O Allah! You are my Lord! None has the right to be worshipped but You. You created me and I am Your servant, and I am faithful to my covenant with you and my promise to you as much as I can. I seek refuge with You from all the evil I have done. I acknowledge before You all the blessings You have bestowed upon me, and I confess to You all my sins. I entreat You to forgive my sins, for nobody can forgive sins except You.

Shaddad ibn Aws(RAA) relates that the Prophet(SAAWS) said that the most superior way of asking for forgiveness (Sayyid al-Istighfar) is to say this Dua'. He also said, "If someone recites it in the morning with firm faith in it, and dies the same day, he will be from the people of Paradise; and if someone recites it at night with firm faith in it, and dies before the morning, he will be from the people of Paradise."

The second Dua':

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَصْبَحْتُ (إِنِّي أَمْسَيْتُ) أَشْهَدُكَ وَأَشْهَدُ  
حَمَلَةَ عَرْشِكَ ، وَمَلَائِكَتِكَ وَجَمِيعَ خَلْقِكَ ،  
أَنَّكَ أَنْتَ اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ وَحْدَكَ لَا شَرِيكَ لَكَ ،  
وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُكَ وَرَسُولُكَ

Oh Allah, I have awoken this morning (I have reached this evening) testifying to you, and testifying to the bearers of Your Throne, to your angels and to all of your creations that you are Allah, there is no other god but you alone, to whom there is no partner, and that Muhammad is your servant and messenger.

In Sahih Bukhari and in Abu Dawud, it is narrated that should one say this Dua' four times in the morning and pass away that day he or she will be saved from the fire of hell, and should one say this Dua' four times in the evening and pass away that night he or she will be saved from the fire of hell.