

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ لِلّٰهِ ، نَحْمَدُهُ وَ نَسْتَعِينُهُ وَ نَسْتَغْفِرُهُ ، وَ نَعُوذُ 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

وَتُوبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا أَيُّهَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٣١﴾

"And seek Tawbah and return unto Allah together, O believers, so that you may be successful" (An-Noor, 24:31)



Brothers and sisters, ASA. It is difficult to imagine that we are now one week down from Ramadan. It is important to remind myself first and you of fasting of the six days of Shawal. It is the generosity of Allah(SWT) that the reward of fasting of Ramadan and the six days of Shawal is equivalent to that of fasting the whole year. Let us not lose out on this great opportunity to gain good deeds and “Hassanat” for the hereafter. In addition to the rewards, we know from human nature that once Ramadan is finished, we are keen to return to our routines. During Ramadan, it was somewhat easy for us to get into the spirit of fasting and the spirit of getting back to the Quran and to Allah.

From a practical point of view, these six days of Shawal are very important for us to keep the spirit going. During Ramadan, we enjoyed the “togetherness” and we gained from the spirit of our whole community and our families. Now, each is back to his and her routines and we no longer enjoy that special Ramadan community spirit or even within the family. During Ramadan, we fitted our lives around fasting and the Quran. Now we are back to fitting fasting and Quran around our lives. These six days of Shawal are so important for us and for many of us it may well set the standard for the rest of the year.

Brothers and sisters, the best reward from fasting these six days will be, ISA, the fact that we can establish a routine of fasting and reading the Quran within our lives’ routine. For that reason, I would encourage you to set the dates for these six days and to fast them in the same manner as we did during Ramadan. Waking up for “suhuri”, reading the Quran and doing “Dhikr” and Du’a at Fajr. In essence, it is trying to develop a routine that can realistically stay with you until next Ramadan. For this reason, I would give a personal and humble advice. Do not do them all in one go as if they are a burden to be got out of the way, nor leave them to the last minute for them to again become a burden. These six days are an exercise to maintain our good habits. Spread them evenly and use the exercise wisely and to best effect.

ISA if we are able to deliver on this, we may be able to start fasting every Monday and every Thursday. We may be able to start fasting the middle three days in the month and so on. Again the idea being that we can fit fasting and the Quran around our daily routine now that we have had the blessings of Ramadan. Always remind yourself when you feel tired or lacking in stamina that just a few weeks ago you have accomplished a whole month of fasting. You have the ability and you have the strength. What you need to develop is the will to do it on your own.

Now for the topic of today’s khutbah. As we exit another Ramadan, the emphasis must focus on one of the most important acts of worship in Islam. It is a compulsory act. It is an act that demands patience and strength. It is an act that demands a great deal of resolve and reformation of character. This act of worship is “Tawbah”.

وَتُوبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا أَيُّهَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٣١﴾

"And seek Tawbah and return unto Allah together, O believers, so that you may be successful" (An-Noor, 24:31)

In Surat Al-Furqan, Allah(SWT) describes for us the character of a group of very special people. These are described as the servants of "Ar-Rahman", the merciful,

وَعِبَادُ الرَّحْمَنِ الَّذِينَ يَمْشُونَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا وَإِذَا خَاطَبَهُمُ الْجَاهِلُونَ قَالُوا سَلَامًا

"And the (faithful) servants of Ar-Rahman (the Beneficent) are those who walk upon the earth modestly, and when those who are ignorant address them they respond peacefully" (Al-Furqan, 25:63)

This ayah is the start of the description of the faithful servants of Ar-Rahman in Surat Al-Furqan. It is a set of beautiful ayahs that describes for us what the characteristics of those whole truly and faithfully serve Allah(SWT) are. I recommend to you to read these ayahs and understand them very carefully. As we proceed with the description, we come across the following ayah:

وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَدْعُونَ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ وَلَا يَقْتُلُونَ النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَلَا يَزْنُونَ

"And those who do not worship any other god along with Allah, nor take the life which Allah hath forbidden except that in (the course of) justice, nor commit adultery" (Al-Furqan, 25:68)

These are indeed very serious transgressions. To associate in worship with Allah, to murder and to commit adultery are very serious transgressions. Those who are true and faithful servants of Allah are far removed from such deeds but we know that the rest are not. Transgressions against Allah(SWT) and transgressions against fellow humans are so widespread, one can only ask what hope do we have when we commit such sins. Allah(SWT) has given us the worst of examples to guide us first as to what His punishment will be and then as to what His mercy is.

وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ يَلْقَ أَثَامًا
يُضَاعَفْ لَهُ الْعَذَابُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَيَخْلُدْ فِيهِ مُهَانًا

"And whosoever does such acts shall face the penalty; Their punishment will be multiplied on the Day of Resurrection, and he will abide therein disdained for eternity" (Al-Furqan, 25:68-9)

Indeed, for such acts of transgression, the punishment is so severe. The ayah leaves us in no doubt as to what can be expected on the Day of Judgement. The most severe of punishments and an eternal life of humiliation and disdain. An eternity in hell. This is the punishment for such crimes. When one reads such a level of punishment it is almost inconceivable that forgiveness can be granted once such transgression has taken place. Can there really be a way back from such crimes. Well, let us read what Allah(SWT) follows such a warning:

إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا فَأُولَئِكَ يُبَدِّلُ اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ حَسَنَاتٍ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا

“Except the one who turns to Allah “Taaba”, and re-establishes his “Iman” and does good work; as for such, Allah will change their evil deeds into good ones. For Allah is ever Forgiving, Merciful” (Al-Furqan, 25:70)

This brothers and sisters is one of the most comforting ayahs we read in the Quran for those of us who transgress. There is nothing worse than transgressing and then falling into the trap that Allah(SWT) will not accept us anymore. The punishment is so severe, but we need to understand that this is for the one who does bad deeds, insist on them and dies in a state of no remorse and failed to seek the forgiveness of Allah and seek returning to Him.

I have always wondered why did Allah(SWT) state:

إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَآمَنَ

Except the one who turns to Allah and re-establishes his “Iman.”

My impression of “Tawbah” is to return to Allah with sincere repentance and to improve one’s conduct with doing good work. But this ayah states “re-establishes” his “Iman. The scholars explained that by stating that when one does such crimes they can never be in a state of “Iman”. The servants of Allah, those who are of strong Iman and are connected with Allah, sheitan has no influence on them. Allah(SWT) says:

إِنَّ عِبَادِي لَيْسَ لَكَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَانٌ إِلَّا مَنْ اتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ

“As for my servants, you will have no power over them. Your power will be on those who wrong themselves and follow you” (Al-Hijr, 15:42)

Those who serve Allah(SWT) faithfully with a strong Iman, sheitan has no power over them. But inevitably, sheitan will gain control over those who wrong themselves by drifting away from Allah for whatever reason. They could be tempted by their “Nafss”, by their desires and by this “Dunia”. But whatever the starting point may be,

as they drift away from Allah(SWT) they ultimately fall victim to sheitan. It is for this reason that the ayah states; except those who turn back to Allah and re-establishes ones Iman. Part of repentance is to rekindle that relationship with Allah. To be able to truly repent and walk away from sheitan demands a strong Iman, a strong faith.

During Ramadan, all of us were standing here late at night trying to re-connect with Allah and to re-establish our Iman. Now that Ramadan has passed, we hope that we have strengthened our Iman enough to consider a true “Tawbah”. Brothers and sisters, this is the time to turn back to Allah. “Tawbah” is an obligatory act of worship. To be able to establish a genuine “Tawbah” we need a strong Iman. What better time for this than now. We are just fresh out of Ramadan. Sheitan is back tempting us. Over a period of time, we will most likely start to drift away from Allah unless we take a firm commitment to “Tawbah”. We all have sins that need a sincere repentance. We all have disobeyed Allah(SWT) in one way or another. This is the time to return back to Allah.

Brothers and sisters, we only disobey Allah when we are weak in faith and when sheitan misguides us. Let us not let this continue now that we have revived our Iman. To fail to seek “Tawbah” during these days after Ramadan is to give away a fantastic and a great opportunity. Let us return to Allah with sincere repentance for this is one of the most loved of acts to Allah:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ

“For Allah loves those who turn to Him with Tawbah and those who seek cleanliness and purity” (Al-Baqara, 2:222)

Allah(SWT) loves for us to turn back to him with sincere repentance and loves us for doing so. In doing so, Allah(SWT) continues to tell us in surat Al-Furqan:

فَأُولَٰئِكَ يَبَدِّلُ اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ حَسَنَاتٍ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا

“As for such, Allah will change their evil deeds into good ones. For Allah is ever Forgiving, Merciful” (Al-Furqan, 25:70)

As for such, Allah will change their evil deeds into good ones. The reward goes beyond forgiveness. Allah(SWT) tells us that the life of such a person will be transformed. But to gain such a reward one needs to repent, to strengthen the Iman and to go down a path of good work.

أقول قولى هذا وأستغفر الله لى و لكم

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

Brothers and sisters, some of us may have entered and left Ramadan with a feeling of despair. They may have felt that despite all the spirituality of this glorious month, somehow they still lack the confidence that Allah(SWT) will have forgiven them. Remember brothers and sisters that in surat Al-Furqan, the sins that Allah(SWT) mentioned were so grievous that without repentance the outcome is an eternity of punishment. Yet, with such sins, Allah(SWT) tells us that forgiveness is there for those who return back to Allah with sincere repentance. Let us never forget this and let us also turn to our friends and family who have wronged themselves and are in despair of gaining forgiveness. Let us remind them of these beautiful ayahs and that Allah((SWT) loves us to return to him, especially those who have wronged themselves.

In a hadeeth by Imam Ahmad, Sheitan tells Allah(SWT) that he will stay in the heart of man so long as there is life in him. Allah(SWT) says, my forgiveness will never be withdrawn so long as there is life in him.

Brothers and sisters, there is no better time to return to Allah with sincere repentance than the present time. Do not say to yourself “I am going to repent”. We may not see the light of another day. As long as there is life in us, the door for forgiveness is open. Once our lives are gone, the door for forgiveness is closed and the door of judgement opens. Seek forgiveness now and do not despair from the mercy of Allah for whatever sins you have done.

Allah(SWT) tells us:

كَتَبَ رَبُّكُمْ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِ الرَّحْمَةَ أَنَّهُ مَن عَمِلَ مِنكُمْ
سُوءًا بِجَهْلَةٍ ثُمَّ تَابَ مِن بَعْدِهِ وَأَصْلَحَ فَأَنَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٥٤﴾

"Your Lord has ordained mercy on Himself, (so) that if any one of you does evil in ignorance, then turns back to Allah with “tawbah” after that and acts righteously, then He is Forgiving, Merciful" (Al-Anaam, 6:54)

قُلْ يٰعِبَادِيَ الّٰذِينَ اَسْرَفُوْا عَلٰٓى اَنْفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوْا مِنْ رَّحْمَةِ اللّٰهِ اِنَّ
اللّٰهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوْبَ جَمِيْعًا اِنَّهٗ هُوَ الْغَفُوْرُ الرَّحِيْمُ

“Tell them: O my servants who have transgressed against themselves, despair not of the mercy of Allah; Indeed Allah will forgive all sins. Verily it is He the Forgiving, the Merciful” (Az-Zummar, 39:53)

We end with this beautiful ayah that sums it up for us. Mankind has been created with the willingness to transgress and the willingness to sin. To sin is human. To insist on sinning and to refuse to turn to Allah(SWT) with repentance goes against our nature and is a sign of poor Iman and a poor understanding of the forgiving nature of Allah and the fact that to better our lives in this “Dunia” and in the hereafter, we need to return to Allah:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا تُوْبُوْا اِلَى اللّٰهِ تَوْبَةً نَّصُوْحًا عَسٰٓى رَّبُّكُمْ اَنْ يُّكْفِرَ
عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَيُدْخِلَكُمْ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِيْ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْاَنْهٰرُ
يَوْمَ لَا يُخْزِي اللّٰهُ النَّبِيَّ وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا مَعَهٗ نُوْرُهُمْ يَسْعٰى
بَيْنَ اَيْدِيْهِمْ وِبِاَيْمٰنِهِمْ يَقُوْلُوْنَ رَبَّنَا اَتْمِمْ لَنَا نُوْرَنَا وَاغْفِرْ لَنَا اِنَّكَ
عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ ﴿٨﴾

“O you who believe! Turn to Allah with sincere repentance: In the hope that your Lord will remit from you your evil deeds and admit you to Gardens beneath which rivers flow. On the Day that Allah will not abase the Prophet and those who believed with him. Their Light will run forward before them and by their right hands, while they say, “Our Lord! Perfect our Light for us, and grant us Forgiveness: for You have power over all things” (At-Tahrim, 66: A8)