

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ لِلَّهِ ، نَحْمَدُهُ وَ نَسْتَعِينُهُ وَ نَسْتَغْفِرُهُ ، وَ نَعُوذُ 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 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 **اللَّهِ** to whom there is no partner and I testify that Muhammad **ﷺ** is his servant and messenger

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ

“O you who believe! Observe your duty to Allah as is deserving of Him, and die not except in a state of total submission” (Aal-Imran, 3:102)



يَأْيُهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ إِنَّ زَلْزَلَةَ السَّاعَةِ شَيْءٌ عَظِيمٌ

“O mankind! Fear your Lord, for the shaking quake of the Hour is something of great might” (Al-Hajj, 22:1)

يَوْمَ تَرَوْهَا تَدْهَلُ كُلُّ مُرْضِعَةٍ عَمَّا أَرْضَعَتْ وَتَضَعُ كُلُّ ذَاتِ حَمْلٍ حَمْلَهَا
وَتَرَى النَّاسَ سُكَرَىٰ وَمَا هُمْ بِسُكَرَىٰ وَلَٰكِنَّ عَذَابَ اللَّهِ شَدِيدٌ

“On the Day you see it, every nursing mother is shocked away from what she is nursing, and every pregnant female will deliver what she carries, and you shall see people as if they are in a drunken state, yet they are not drunk: but dreadful will be the Wrath of Allah” (Al-Hajj, 22,2).

Dear brothers and sisters, these are the opening two ayahs from Surat Al-Hajj, surat 22 in the Holy Quran. There is absolutely no messing about with this opening. This opening defines the state of people as they witness the “hour” and they come to realise that life and time as we know them will come to an end. But for those who believe in Allah(swt), and believe that we shall return to Him and that there is a Day of Judgment, we know brothers and sisters that this is simply the beginning. The convulsion of the “hour” is simply the beginning as we will surely return to Allah and we will all stand in line ahead of our judgement.

In the opening of this surat, the description given of how people will react when the “hour” strikes is vivid and very real. The shock of the event is not something that we need to imagine and the description of how people shall react does resonate with our reality and with our senses. We have witnessed the devastating power of a tsunami, we have witnessed the devastating power of an earth quake and we have witnessed the devastating power of a hurricane. These events are part of our reality.

As Muslims, when we consider the grave, resurrection and the Day of Judgment, the images that we have about such events is limited to what has been revealed to us in the Holy Quran and what has been described for us by the Prophet(saaws). The impact of these events remains totally within our imagination and not within our senses. Yet the description of the “Hour” in Surat Al-Hajj, when it all begins, leaves nothing to imagination. It is very real. When you consider the description that Allah(swt) gives us it is not just frightening but is beyond frightening.

To paint the picture, Allah(swt) defines for us the impact this event will have on the bond of the nursing mother to her baby. This is probably one of the strongest human bonds that exist. It is a bond of love and protection and it is one of the great mercies of Allah. This is not a bond that gets questioned. In the event of danger, what would a nursing mother do? What is the mother's natural instinct to her infant? Whatever the circumstances, the maternal instincts of love and protection are overwhelming and the mother will hold onto and protect her baby at all costs. This is the love and mercy that Allah(swt) has instilled in the hearts of mothers.

Yet, when the shocking quack of the "Hour" hits, there is an overwhelming sense by all people that this is not just another devastating event. You see brothers and sisters, when one thinks that this is the end and death is near, the maternal instincts kick in and the mother holds onto her baby. The image that this ayah leaves you with is that people come to recognise that this is not just another act of nature. In this event, something else happens. Every single nursing mother leaves her baby. Just ask yourself brothers and sisters, what is even stronger than the protective instincts of a mother. All I could come up with is the fact that people will come to recognise this event for what it is. It is not an act of nature but an act of "God". It is the final realisation by all that "God" exists. It is the beginning of eternity as Allah(swt) has promised and not the end as the disbelievers thought it to be.

You see brothers and sisters, people may be worried and frightened of death, but for most, when death comes, there is a realisation that this is an inevitable event. However, what many people do not want to recognise is that resurrection is also an inevitable event and that the Day of Judgment is also an inevitable event. The image that this ayah leaves us with is that sinking feeling of; "Oh my god, what have I done". Suddenly the baby does not matter anymore. Allah(swt) closes the ayah with:

وَلَكِنَّ عَذَابَ اللَّهِ شَدِيدٌ

"But dreadful will be the Wrath of Allah" (Al-Hajj, 22,2).

Brothers and sisters, these opening two ayahs are another reminder for us. I remind myself before you that Allah(swt) is "Haqq", death is "Haqq", the account of the grave is "Haqq", the "Hour" is "Haqq", resurrection is "Haqq", the Day of Judgment is "Haqq", eternal hellfire is "Haqq" and eternal paradise is "Haqq". We ask Allah(swt) to strengthen our Iman. We ask Allah(swt) to keep us on the straight path and we ask Allah(swt) to make us amongst his devoted servants and amongst the dwellers of "Janna". Ameen.

Brothers and sisters, yesterday, it was confirmed that the sighting of the new moon for the month of Zull-Hijja took place and as such, today is the first day of Zull-Hijja, the last month of the Hijri year. As such, and Allah willing, the day of Arafat will be Saturday the 5th of November and Eid will be Sunday the 6th ISA.

Allah(swt) tells us in Surat Al-Ma'ida, ayah 3:

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضَيْتُ لَكُمْ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا

“This day I have perfected your religion for you, and have completed My favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion (way of life)” (Al-Ma’ida, 5:3)

In the two Sahih books, it is reported from sUmar ibn al-Khattaab(raa) that a Jewish man said to him; 'O Ameer al-Mu'mineen, there is an ayah in your Book which you recite; if it had come to us, we would have taken that day as an Eid (festival).' Umar said, 'Which ayah?' The man said:

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضَيْتُ لَكُمْ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا

“This day I have perfected your religion for you, completed My favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion”

Umar said, 'We know on which day and in which place that was revealed to the Prophet(saaws). It was when he was standing in Arafat on a Friday.' (Subhanal-Llah. On the one day that the Prophet(saaws) stood on Arafat, it was also a Friday).

The magnitude of the day of Arafat is so immense that Allah(swt) gave an oath by this day in both Surat Al-Borouj and Surat Al-Fajr: Allag(swt) Says:

وَالْيَوْمَ الْمَوْعُودِ ﴿٦﴾ وَشَاهِدٍ وَمَشْهُودٍ

“By the promised Day; (And) by the one that witnesses, and the one that is witnessed” (Al-Borouj, 85:2-3)

In Tafseer Ibn Katheer, there are a number of interpretations with most agreeing that the promised day is the Day of Judgment, the one that witnesses is the Friday and the one that is witnessed is the day of Arafat. Allah(swt) also Says:

وَالشَّفَعِ وَالْوَتْرِ

“By the Even (number) and by the Odd (number)” (Al-Fajr, 89:3)

It is narrated from Ibn Abbas that the “Odd” is the day of Arafat on the 9th and the “Even” is the day of Eid on the 10th. This is also in Ahmad and An-Nassa’i.

Allah(swt) has chosen for us this glorious day for a special purpose. It is a day where millions of Muslims gather on Arafat raising their hands to Allah(swt) in full submission to His will and His power, asking Allah(swt) for His forgiveness and His mercy and asking Allah(swt) for the goodness in this life and the goodness in the hereafter.

In Surat Al-Baqara, we read in the sequence of ayahs on hajj:

وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ
حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ

“And of them are those who say: "Our Lord! Give us good in this world and good in the Hereafter and save us from the torment of the fire” (Al-Baqara, 2:201)

In Sahih Muslim it was narrated from Aisha(raa) that the Prophet(saaws) said: *‘There is no day on which Allah frees more people from the Fire than the Day of Arafat. He comes close and expresses His pride of the pilgrims to the angels, saying, ‘What it is that they want?’ Ibn Al-Qayem mentions in his book [zad-il-ma’ad fi hadyi khair-il-ibaad], “on the evening of the day of Arafat, Allah(swt) comes close to those standing and expresses his pride of them to the angels saying: what is it that they want, I testify that I have forgiven them”*. During this period of closeness, there is the general closeness of our supplication being answered by Allah(swt) and the special closeness of those standing in Arafat (and Allah knows best).

عَنْ أَبِي قَتَادَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ : " صِيَامُ يَوْمِ عَرَفَةَ
أَحْتَسِبُ عَلَى اللَّهِ أَنْ يُكَفِّرَ السَّنَةَ الَّتِي قَبْلَهُ وَالسَّنَةَ الَّتِي بَعْدَهُ " أَخْرَجَهُ مُسْلِمٌ

It was reported from Abu Qutadah(raa) that the Messenger of Allah(saaws) was asked about fasting on the Day of Arafat. He said, *‘It expiates for the sins of the previous year and of the coming year.’* Narrated by Muslim.

This, brothers and sisters, is the day when Iblees cringes with despair as he witnesses the obedience of so many to Allah(swt). This is the day of Hajj, and this is the day that Muslims all over the world look forwards to in the hope of gaining guidance and salvation through submission and obedience to Allah(swt). This brothers and sisters is the day of Arafat.

أقول قولي هذا وأستغفر الله لي ولكم

2nd Khutbah:

الحمد لله ثم الحمد لله. الحمد لله نستعينه ونستغفره، ونعوذ بالله من شرور
أنفُسنا وسيئات أعمالنا. أما بعد:

What about the first ten days of Zull-Hijja?

It is narrated from Ibn Abbaas(raa) that the Prophet(saaws) said: "*There are no days in which righteous deeds done in them are more beloved to Allah than these days. They said: O Messenger of Allah, not even Jihad in the path of Allah? He said: Not even Jihad in the Path of Allah(swt) except if a man goes out (for Jihad) with his self and his wealth, and he does not return with anything from that.*" (Bukhari, Abu Dawood and others).

It is narrated from Ibn Umar(raa) that the Prophet(saaws) said: "*There aren't any days greater, nor any days in which deeds done in them are more beloved to Allah(swt) than these ten days. So, increase in them Tahleel (La Ilaaha illa Allah), Takbeer (Allah Akbar) and Tahmeed (Al-Hamdu li-llah)*" [Musnad Imam Ahmad]

Brothers and sisters, praise be to Allah that we can have such a reminder on the first day of Zull-Hijja. Let us make an effort to increase our good deeds for the next 10 days. In addition to fasting the Day of Arafat, let us try fasting as many of these days as we can. The Prophet(saaws) said: "*No servant (of Allah) fasts one day in the Path of Allah, except that Allah(swt) distances his face from the fire seventy years.*" (Bukhari and Muslim)

If we have not already done so, let us use these great days to seek "Tawbah" again and seek the closeness and the forgiveness of Allah(swt). And let us increase in our good deeds.

For those who are offering Qurbani, please make sure you have sorted this out as most Islamic charities are able to fulfil this obligation for us with the minimum of fuss. It has been narrated from Umm Salamah(raa) that the Prophet(saaws) said: "*If you see the Hilal of Zull-Hijja, and any one of you wants to make a sacrifice, then he should not cut (anything) from his hair and his nails.*" (Narrated by Muslim). And in one narration, he said: "*Then he should not cut (anything) from his hair, nor from his nails, until he performs the sacrifice*". (It is thought that this is perhaps in keeping with our brothers and sisters offering the Qurbani in hajj (and Allah knows best).

Brothers and sisters, we have another great opportunity to gain the pleasure of Allah and share with the rewards of our brothers and sisters in Hajj. Let us make the most of this ISA.