

Do your best in Ramadan O Muslim!

Friday Khutbah (14th September 2007) delivered by Shaykh Muhammad Taher

DISCLAIMER: This reminder was originally delivered in Arabic. Any meanings lost in translation are not to be attributed to the speaker as reminders are translated by volunteers. The mosque has no official translator and volunteers often have no formal qualifications to translate on the day. Please forgive any errors as they are from our human weakness and any right guidance is from God.

Ramadan is the month in which the Qur'an was revealed, guidance for people and clear (Signs) for guidance and judgment (Between right and wrong)... [2:85]

Ramadan is a time of goodness, a gift from the Lord of the Worlds for whoever knows how to benefit from it; for it is an occasion for the God-Conscious, a type of business for the pious as returns upon investment of time are multiplied many fold. By having genuine intentions and by doing sincere actions for Allah the Most High rewards can be accumulated and we can achieve Allah's acceptance.

Ramadan comes along every year, ushering with it the opportunity for you O Muslim, to increase in good and it becomes a reason for you to decrease in wrongdoing.

The doors of good are opened during this month and the doors to paradise are wide open too. The doors to Hell are closed and the devils are chained up during this time. All this indicates that Allah Almighty wants us to benefit from all this goodness. This is why He eased the means to do good for us. He has opened our hearts to His remembrance and our souls to His worship. This comes with Allah's support and by His concern for you by decreasing the means for doing bad.

What a joyous thing this is! So who will benefit from this opportunity and grab this chance to gain a great reward!?

It is mentioned in both Bukhari and Muslim that the Prophet (Pbuh) said:

When Ramadan comes, the doors of heaven are opened and the doors of hell are closed and the devils are chained up.

In another narration it goes on to say: "And a caller calls, 'O seeker of goodness, come forward, and O seeker of evil, desist.'"

So, seeker of goodness,

- come forward, the opportunity is in front of you so long as you are not heedless of Allah!
- come forward as good deeds will be multiplied.
- correct what is between you and your Lord.
- come closer to your Lord with your fasting, your night prayers and by increasing your obedience.

Do not let your fast be only a fast of your appetites. How many people who fast do not gain anything from their fasts except hunger, thirst and difficulty, yet (these poor people) believe they are doing good!?

How will the reward be for the one who does not know the great value of fasting as only Allah knows this as he said in His saying through the words of the Prophet SAW [Hadith qudsi]: “every action of the Son of Adam is for him except fasting, for that is for Me and I will reward him accordingly.”

How can one desire forgiveness for the sins that went before by fasting yet does not look after what the eye sees when it looks upon things that are forbidden nor when he uses his tongue to lie, backbite, insult, mock and indulge in vain, non-beneficial talk. And whose ears are open to hearing unlawful speech and deceit and corruption etc.

It is not fruitful, O Muslim to fast with your stomach and your sexual appetite whilst you are not taking care of these other matters [affecting your sight, speech and hearing]. The Prophet SAW said: “the one who did not abstain from bad speech and acting upon this, Allah has no need for him abstaining from food and drink.”

The one who has no concern for the etiquettes of Islam, does not epitomise the characteristics of a believer and his actions reflect a lack of observance of Allah in private or in public – he will not taste the sweetness of fasting and he will not gain anything from his fast except hunger and it will be difficult for him.

The month of Ramadan, O Muslim, speaks to you: if you do good by me, I will be a source of good for you, have consciousness of Allah and I will be a witness for you before your Lord and I will be a means of you to gain forgiveness for your sins.

As the Prophet SAW informed us: “between the five prayers, between one jumu’ah to the next, between one Ramadan to the next - there is forgiveness for those who avoided the major sins”. So take care of yourself, your tongue, of your hearing, of your sight, of your hands, your feet – of your every limb until you are no longer touching, hearing or walking towards that which is unlawful nor committing any wrongdoing.

Ramadan also says to us: fasting is a worship for us to rectify ourselves and our spirits, so improve (silah) your self, purify your souls with Allah’s remembrance and by reciting the Qur’an.

O servant of the body, how you have toiled in the service [of this your body]. You seek to gain from that in which there is loss. Come nearer to your lower self (nafs) and seek its perfection of virtue for you are human only on account of your soul not your body.

For these are your opportunities O Muslim, as fasting brings you nearer to Allah the almighty, because you have made unlawful on yourself that which you are used to throughout the year i.e. your food and your drink. And here you are on this day in Ramadan having left all that for the sake of Allah’s pleasure, the Most High and to realise the great meaning of worshipping Allah and for actions to be accepted which are only accepted through sincerity to Allah.

The Prophet SAW advised us: “every action of the Son of Adam is for him, every good deed is rewarded ten of its like and up to 700 times it. Allah SWT says ‘except fasting as that is for me and I will reward him accordingly. He leaves off food for my sake, he abstains from drinking for my sake and he goes without fulfilling his sexual appetite for my sake.’ [related by ibn Huzaima]

So for the sake of Allah alone you leave your desires and so for this reason Allah almighty wants to account this worship Himself. For this reason also the Prophet SAW said, “whoever fasts Ramadan with faith and hoping for reward, he is forgive his past sins.”

We ask Allah to make us from those He has accepted their deeds. O Allah, make us those who enter Ramadan and achieve your mercy, who are covered by your forgiveness, who leave this month with saviour from the Hell Fire. O Allah, help us fast the day with faith and hope in your reward and let us stand in the night with faith and hoping for your reward.