

Strong Believers

DISCLAIMER: This reminder was originally delivered in Arabic on Friday, 7 August 2009. 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.

During these blessed days we are living a time which is distinct from all other times of the year and after few weeks we will welcome the month of Ramadan which Allah (Glory be to Him, Most High) has favoured with things that made it distinct from other months.

It is a month when the doors of hell are closed and the doors of paradise are opened for those who go back to Allah with truthful hearts and humble souls. It is a month when the Quran was descended from the preserved slate to the nearest heaven in order to commence revelation upon the heart of the prophet (pbuh) and begin its mission to change the world from worshipping others to submitting to Allah alone with no partners.

The days of Ramadan are distinct with the worship of fasting. This form of worship embodies sincerity and humbleness and the worship of night prayer which feeds the souls with healing and mercy of Quran. The first third of Ramadan are days of mercy, the second ten days are the days of forgiveness and the last ten days grant freedom from Hell. Added to that is the celebration of the day of Eid "For the fasting person there are two times of joy; a time of joy when he breaks his fast and a time of joy when he meets his Lord."

It seems that the message Ramadan is delivering a message to every one of us; oh Muslims, be distinct in your life. The distinction of the Muslim is reflected in his resolute thinking and his noble and high objectives. It is also reflected in him clinging to the best of manners, avoiding the insignificant of matters, preserving his principles, customs, belief and striving hard against the whispers and tricks of Shaytan. This is the distinction which always calls for virtues, chastity, modesty and noble manners.

The prophet (pbuh) said:

"The strong believer is better and more beloved to Allah than the weak believer, while there is good in both. Guard over that which benefits you, seek Allah's assistance, and don't lend yourself to things devoid of benefit, and if something befalls you, then don't say 'If I only would have done such and such,' rather say 'Allah ordained this and He does what He wills' for verily the phrase 'If I only would have' makes way for the work of the Devil."

It seems that the prophet (pbuh) wanted to see your distinction oh Muslims. He wanted you to be a successful and effective member in this life without showing any signs of laziness or weakness and without being deceived by rest or comfort or blaming fate. Never say 'If I only would have done such and such' as it opens the way for neglect and provides a rail for you to hang unreachd hopes and objectives on. It is amongst the work of Shaytan to make you look to the past to regret the losses, hopes and goals that weren't achieved. Or he persuades you that your neglect to achieve them warrants hopelessness and despair.

Oh Muslim, Islam does not want you to be like those people who say “If only I would have done such and such,” or ‘I wish I did so and so’ as this is not a manner of a Muslim. Instead, deal with matters and events with a completely positive approach. Allah says,

“O you who have believed, do not be like those who disbelieved and said about their brothers when they travelled through the land or went out to fight, "If they had been with us, they would not have died or have been killed," so Allāh makes that [misconception] a regret within their hearts. And it is Allāh who gives life and causes death, and Allāh is Seeing of what you do.” [Al-Imran 3:156].

Reflect, oh Muslims, upon the nature of true belief when it mixes with the hearts. It gives you a power which is reflected in your behaviour. It makes you confident when you talk, firm and established when you work and clear when you pursue your goals. That is how true belief produces men of principles who are distinct by excellence in their morality, perceptions and objectives and committed to their religion at the same time. A man like this will deal with people wisely. If they do good he cooperates with them and if they do bad he avoids their wrongdoing and calls them with wisdom and good instruction using the guidance of the prophet (pbuh):

“Do not blindly follow people saying: ‘I am with people, if they do good I do good and if they do bad I do bad.’ But get yourselves used to doing good when people do good and to avoiding their bad when they do bad” [Al-Tirmithi].

The weak amongst us is the one who becomes a slave for culture and customs despite their being contrary to the Islamic legislations. The one who is controlled by the prevailing traditions despite them being deviations from the way of truth will bring themselves only loss in both this life and the hereafter. Let your slogan always be “I only intend reform as much as I am able. And my success is not but through Allāh. Upon him I have relied, and to Him I return.” [Hud 11:88]. Always be a frontrunner in worshiping Allah, obeying him and getting closer to him with your worship. Compete with others in doing good and totally submit to the orders of Allah SW and his messenger (pbuh), Allah says: “It is not for a believing man or a believing woman, when Allāh and His Messenger have decided a matter, that they should [thereafter] have any choice about their affair. And whoever disobeys Allāh and His Messenger has certainly strayed into clear error.” [Al-Ahzab 33:36].

The distinct believer is the one whose belief leaves beautiful effects within his soul and limbs. Effects like reforming the self, a sense of satisfaction and tranquillity, rejection of what is contrary to total adherence to Islamic customs and traditions. This does not prevent a Muslim from being modern and benefiting from the modern technologies to use them for the advantage of his religion and community. Indeed, Muslims should precede others in this field provided it is not contrary to the legislation of their religion.

Distinction is not achieved by a special look or cloth, rigidity or stagnancy or blindly following others. Islam is the religion which grants freedom to the mind to think, excel, renew and permits you to be distinct to create success, achieve your hopes and reach your objectives as long as you are fearing Allah, obeying his orders and clinging to your religion. The prophet (pbuh) said:” Allah does not look at your appearance or your possessions; but He looks at your heart and your deeds”. “Taqwa is here”, he (pbuh) said it three times while pointing to his chest. **والحمد لله رب العالمين**