



Summary of Speech of the Khalifatullah Hazrat Munir A. Azim (atba)

26 November 2011 ~ 01 Muharram 1433 Hijri (after Esha Prayers)

MUHARRAM

After greeting everybody with the Salutation of Peace in Islam, and wishing everyone *Naya Saal Mubarak* the Messenger of Allah (atba) read the Tashahhud, Ta'uz, Surah Al-Fatiha, read:

'Inna iddatash-shu-shuuru 'indal-laahisnaa 'a-shara ran-fii Kitaabil-laahi yawma khalaqas-samaawaaati wal-'arda minhaaa 'arab-'atun hurum...

Indeed, the number of months with Allah is twelve months in the register of Allah the day He created the heavens and the earth; of these, four are sacred. (Quran 9: 37)

And then he said:

The verse condemns the arbitrary and selfish conduct of the Pagan Arabs, who, because there was a long-established custom of observing four months as those in which fighting was forbidden, changed the months about or add or deducted months when it suited them, to get an unfair advantage over the enemy. If it suited them they postponed one of these months, and so a prohibited month became an ordinary month: while their opponents might hesitate to fight, they got an undue advantage.

Therefore Allah rectified this practice of the Arab Pagans whereby He says that for Him there are four specific prohibited months in a year which are: Zul-Qaddah, Zul-Hijjah, **Muharram**, and Rajab. And this was confirmed by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) through Abu Bakr (ra).

Whereas Dhul-Qaddah and Dhul-Hijjah are the two last months of the year, **Muharram** is the first month. And the calculation of the years (according to the lunar calendar) existed from the time of the creation of the heavens and earth. We get to know its importance, really with the institution of the Islamic Calendar which is based on the lunar calendar; more specifically so as from the emigration of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) from Mecca to Medina. Despite the fact that the Islamic Calendar is taken as from the date of Hijrat (emigration) of Hadhrat Muhammad (pbuh), the months which have been established by Allah, and which is based on the lunar calendar, upon the visibility of the new moon, existed since times immemorial like Allah makes us understand from this Quranic verse (9: 37).

As this time calculation practice existed since a very long time, the same old practice was used by the Arabs to calculate the duration of months and years according to the lunar calendar which has roughly about 354 days compared the solar calendar which has 365-366 days.

It was in the time of the Khilafat of Hazrat Umar (ra) that the Islamic calendar was definitely established, and according to that which Hazrat Muhammad (pbuh) has us understand, we must base ourselves on the visibility of the month, so that we may know if a month is beginning or not. And if the moon is not visible, therefore the last countable date is only 30 days – neither 28 nor 31; but either 29 or 30 days (according to the visibility of the moon).

Therefore these months (Dhul-Qaddah, Dhul-Hijjah & Muharram), along with Rajab (the 7th month of the lunar calendar) are sacred, and this means that Allah has forbidden wars (and disputes) in these months. In the times of ignorance, there were lots of wars, be it between countries and also the tribes in Mecca and the other places in Arabia. This law of Allah which dated far back in time has been trampled under the feet of people who established their own laws as to decide which months were sacred or not, even if these months were sacred in the eyes of Allah.

This was a hateful practice in the eyes of Allah, because they made a sacred month become ordinary, and thus this destabilise the sacred month of Hajj, when the pilgrims were supposed to perform the Hajj. Therefore, the month of Hajj very often became an ordinary month in the eyes of (these) men (in the times of ignorance).

Therefore during these (sacred) months it is recommended to do a lot of *Ibaadat* (acts of worship) and to stay away from sins. When saying this, this does not mean that it is permissible to sin the rest months of the year. No! But respect for these sacred months has its importance; there is a limit which Allah has told us not to go beyond. Therefore in Islam, our year begins with Muharram and it ends with Dhul-Hijjah (the month of Hajj).

As for the month of Muharram, it is a month filled with many blessings. During this month, Allah Ta'ala shows His goodness (generosity) and pours down His blessings in abundance. We begin a new year but as season does not count in Islam, we do not celebrate New Year. There are only two celebrations in Islam, Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Adha. In the month of Muharram, we celebrate New Year but not like the other nations; instead we thank Allah Who has provided an opportunity for us by His grace to meditate on His existence (and the creations He created) and also to meditate on the Life to come.

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) has said: *“The best fasting after the month of Ramadhan is in the month of Allah, which you call Muharram. And the best prayer (Salat) after the obligatory prayers is the Tahajjud prayers.”* (Muslim)

We all know that Ramadhan in Islam is a sacred month, filled with blessings, but it does not form part of the four sacred months mentioned in Surah At-Tauba. It is in Surah Al-Baqara that we come to see its importance and how much sacred it is in the life of a *Mumin* (believer). Now reflect upon what Hazrat Muhammad (pbuh) has said that the fasting after Ramadhan is the fasting in Muharram which is more than, and Muharram is the Month of Allah.

The 10th of Muharram, the first month of the Islamic Calendar which is the **Yaum-e-Ashura (The Day of Consultation)**. It is an historical date in the time before Islam whereby it is the day when Moses (as) had the upper hand (victory) over Pharaoh. And the Jews used to observe fasting on this day because of this victory (a sign of the victory of Allah and of His Prophet over their

enemies). In addition it is the tragic date of the bloodshed at Karbala, of such past events, and also whereby other events will take place in the future. It is a day which is full of the blessings and on this day, Allah accepts and fulfils prayers made with sincerity. It is recommended to obtain a fast on this day and also one on either the eve or the next day of the Ashura.

On the day of Ashura, perform *Ghusl* (a complete bath); trim your nails, put on clean clothes and enable yourself to enter a state of *Ibaadat* (worship of Allah). On this day, besides the obligatory prayers, do some recitations of the Holy Quran, then read two cycles of voluntary prayers by reciting in each cycle after the Surah Al-Fatiha, ten times the Surah Al-Ikhlaas (Qul Huwallaaho Ahad...); After the prayer, read one time the Verse of the Throne (Ayatul Qursi) and nine times the Darood Ibrahim (which we read daily in our Salaat); afterwards ask of Allah whatever you want (which is permissible in the eyes of Allah).

Hazrat Muhammad (Peace & Blessings of Allah be upon him) said: *“On the day of Ashura, the one who reads four voluntary cycles of prayer, and in each cycle, after the Surah Al-Fatiha reads eleven times Surah Al-Ikhlaas, Allah forgives him all his sins and will build for him an illuminated minbar.”*

This form of prayer purifies a believer from all his sins, and elevates him in his faith, and attracts on him the blessings of Allah.

It is recommended to observe two fasts, that is, the 9th and the 10th day of Muharram. Hazrat Muhammad (Peace & Blessings of Allah be upon him) said: *“After the obligatory fasting of Ramadhan comes the greatness of the Ashura fast, and the latter wash away the sins of the preceding year.”*

It is also highly recommended on this day to perform other forms of worship to seek the pleasure of Allah, for example: to help the needy people in any way, to feed the poor, give away *Sadqua* (charity), etc.

The 10th of Muharram will always remain engraved in the mind of each and every Muslim so that they may always remember the drastic days which befell upon Hazrat Imam Hussein.

It is recommended that we read this invocation on the first day of **Muharram**:

DU'A-E-MUHARRAM

Allahumma antal ‘abadiyul qadiimu wa haazhihi sanatun jadiidatun as aluka fiihaal ismata minash shaytaani wa awliyaa-i-hii wal ‘awni ‘alaa nafsil ammaarati bissuu-i wal ishtighaali bimaa yu qarribunii ilayka yaa kariimu.

O Allah, You are Eternal and it is a new year which is beginning; I ask you to protect me against Satan and his allies and to help me against my *nafs* inclining towards Evil and (I ask you) to make me devote myself in such works which would make me come closer to you, O You who pour down favours upon Your servants.