

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

FRIDAY SERMON

HADHRAT MUHYI-UD-DIN AL-KHALIFATULLAH

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Ramadhan Mubarak!

(Summary of Sermon)

After greeting all his disciples (and all Muslims) worldwide with the greeting of peace Hadhrat Muhyi-ud-Din (atba) read the Tashahhud, Ta'uz, Surah Al Fatiha, the verse 186 of Chapter 2 (Al-Baqara) and then he said:

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَىٰ وَالْفُرْقَانِ فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ وَمَن كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ وَلِتُكْمِلُوا الْعِدَّةَ وَلِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَاكُمْ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ○

Shahru Ramadaa-nallaziii 'unzila fiihil-Qur-'aanu hudal-linnaasi wa bayyinaatim minal-hudaa wal-furqaan. Faman-shahida min-kumush-Shahra fal-yasumh. Wa man kaana marridan 'aw 'alaa safarin fa 'iddatum-min 'ayyaa-min 'u-khar. Yuridullaahu bikumul-yusra wa laa yuriidu bikumul 'usr. Wa litukmi-lul-'iddata wa lituk abbirullaha 'alaa maa hadaakum wa la-'allakum wa la-'allakum tashkuruun.

“The month of Ramadan (is that) in which the Quran was revealed, a guidance for the people and clear proofs of guidance and criterion. So whoever sights (the new moon of) the month, let him fast it; and whoever is ill or on a journey - then an equal number of other days. Allah intends for you ease and does not intend for you hardship and (wants) for you to complete the period and to glorify Allah for that (to) which He has guided you; and perhaps you will be grateful.” (2:186).

Ramadhan is a month of countless blessings and virtues. The word **RAMADHAN** is derived "*ramdh*" which means "*burning the feet from heat*". This is because of the fast, which burns the sins of a Muslim into ashes. Ramadhan has been given the name of blessed month because:

- 1) In this month, the Quran was revealed, and the angel Gabriel used to come to make the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) recite the Quran, from beginning to end.
- 2) In this month, there is the night of Qadr, which is better than 1000 months.
- 3) In this month, the reward of a good deed is equal to the *fardh* of another month.
- 4) This is the month of patience and the reward of this patience is Paradise.
- 5) This month teaches the lesson of kindness towards others.
- 6) In this month, the first ten days are of mercy, the second ten days are of forgiveness and the last ten days are of being freed from hell.
- 7) The month of Ramadhan is a month in which the mercy and blessing of Allah (swt) descend upon us continuously if we are truly seeking the mercy of Allah and His countenance.

The idea of the fast has been inculcated in all religious disciplines based on revelation, though strict conformity to the divine ordinances relating thereto is no longer insisted upon. Indeed, within some disciplines, the fast has been reduced to a purely symbolic observance. In Islam, the ordinances relating to the fast are clearly stated and defined and to the degree of their applicability, they are to be strictly observed. A tendency towards greater rigidity is sometimes encountered and has to be checked and countered through exposition of the true purpose of the fast and of the meaning of the regulation and their spirit.

Like recently I received a question from one of our dear brothers asking this humble self about the length of time of fasting sometimes ranging from 9 hours to 22 hours, depending on the countries in which Muslims find themselves, and he wanted to know if there was a solution to reduce the length of their fast and give them a decent time limit to break their fast. We find this kind of problem in the Northern countries, such as Iceland, Finland and Sweden where sunset is virtually absent and even when the circumference of the sun falls at the horizon, yet the sky remains to a certain extent still blue. Many schools of thought have suggested that the people facing this problem should then take the same hours of fasting as that of their nearest neighbours (countries) which do not suffer that much from assiduous fasting length of time.

It is invariably true that those Muslims who are found in countries where the season intimates that sunset is delayed to a maximum of 17-22 hours faces great deal of hardships. But Allah and His Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (pbuh) has been very explicit on the subject, be it in the Holy Quran and Hadiths. Allah never put a burden on someone which is beyond his capacity. And He ordained that the length of fasting should be from Fajr prayer till the Maghrib prayer. But He is not heartless in that to force the weak ones observe the fast. Indeed He has exempted the weak with health problems, the travellers, the old people and pregnant and breastfeeding women

from fasting, and has provided a good solution for them in that which they can give *fidya* for the numbers of days they miss their fast. As for those who later on want to replace the missed fasts, they are welcome to do so (for example in such season time which is more convenient to their health). This implementation of *fidya* in the month of Ramadhan acts an alternative to the missed fasts, which in turns act as a means of protection for those who are not fasting.

As for the healthy and strong ones, they should respect the fasting length of time of their countries – which is absolutely based on Quranic commandments and not the fixed time of scholars who want to reduce the fasting period. They should observe the fasts even if they are as long as 22 hours. Do you think my dear brothers and sisters that Allah was not aware of this kind of problem when He gave such commandments? He knows very well each difficulty that each among us Muslims has to face to observe the fast for His sake. That is why the reward of fasting is Allah Himself. The patience, steadfastness and devotion which the physically able Muslims display when fasting, even for the longest time possible, is worthy of the love of Allah if these people are really sincere and seek the countenance of Allah and His pleasure.

The blessed fasting month of Ramadhan comes but once a year, and this is a month bestowed with a lot of divine blessings. One of its special qualities is that if this time is spent in righteous devotion, then the blessings of this month will remain for the full year, and if this time is unfortunately wasted (not with a valid reason) then no blessing will remain until the next Ramadhan. Once with the approach of Ramadhan the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said: *“On you has come such a month in which there is a night which is superior to one thousand months. That unfortunate person who has missed this night has deprived himself of all good and only that person is excluded from the bounty of this night who is in fact very unfortunate.”*

Allah is never stone-hearted concerning His sincere servants, and He has given blessed solutions such as the giving away of *fidya* in the blessed month of Ramadhan, and also by the long duration of fasting (depending on seasons and countries) He tries His servants and see the refinement of their devotion, provided they are physically fit. If the people, even the sincerest one of His servant is not feeling well, and cannot wait for the whole 22 hours for example, then he has to break his fast, for fasting was prescribed for Allah and was not meant by Him to endanger the life of His servants, for if so, lots of His servants would have died of it.

In this blessed month it is more important to stay away from evil than to do good deeds. As much as possible one should endeavour to save the eyes, ears, tongues, hearts and all parts of the body from the slightest sin. One should especially refrain from slander and harmful talk. Kindness, good manners and the remembrances of Allah are the ornaments of this month of blessings and these should not be destroyed by vulgarity and bad manners. This is the month in which sympathy should be shown to the needy and therefore one should give as much as can be afforded in *Sadqua*, *Khayrat*, *Iftari*, *Sehri* etc., and preparations should be made for the hereafter. It is stated in a Hadith that anyone who provides a fasting person with *Iftari*, it will

assist him in having his sins forgiven, save him from the fire and he will receive as much reward as the person who has fasted. When giving charity, it must be clearly borne in mind that one's intention should be free from attaining fame and publicity, for this will nullify the reward. A good way of making charity is to send some at the end of every ten days with the intention of reward to the homes of the poor and needy (those who do not go out to beg). In this way one could sympathise with them.

The subject of Ramadhan also brings us to the subject of *fitra* which is an obligation on every Muslim who has the means of discharging it. A father should pay *fitra* on behalf of his minor children as well. It is preferable to discharge one's *fitra* before the Eid prayer. It is also permissible to pay it in advance at any time during the month of Ramadhan. However if a person failed to pay the *fitra* before the Eid prayer, the obligation remains and *fitra* has to be paid. *Fitra* cannot be used for any charitable cause other than giving it to the poor. Reasons of giving *fitra*: it cleanses a person from any unbecoming behaviour and utterances committed during Ramadhan. It is a means also for provision for the poor and also to thank Allah for bestowing us the ability of fasting during Ramadhan.

The fast terminates with the appearance of the new moon of Shawwal. The new moon may be visible after sunset of the twenty-ninth day of the fast, but if not, the fast must be continued the next day, thus making a total of thirty days during the month. It may be that on the thirtieth day evening, visibility may be very poor due to atmospheric conditions and the moon may not be visible. That could make no difference and Ramadhan would terminate at sunset on this day, as it is recognised that a lunar month cannot extend beyond thirty days.

I hope and pray that this sermon be an eye-opener for many Muslims around the world so that through their execution of the will of Allah, they get to have Allah Himself as reward. Allah is Merciful and Kind and wants the best for us so that our souls be rightly purified and that we may get access to Him in a dignified and magnificent manner. May Allah give us the reward of fasting and overlook our weaknesses and forgive us and let us be among those people to whom all gates of paradise are open so that we may choose either one of them to go through under His merciful gaze. *Ameen, Summa Ameen, Ya Rabbul Aalameen.*