

إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ



لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَّسُولُ اللَّهِ

Friday Sermon

HADHRAT MUHYI-UD-DIN AL-KHALIFATULLAH

Munir Ahmad Azim

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After greeting all his disciples (and all Muslims) worldwide with the greeting of peace Hadhrat Khalifatullah (atba) read the Tashahhud, Ta'uz, Surah Al Fatiha, and then he delivered his sermon on: "**Muharram & The Islamic Calendar**".

Best wishes for the Islamic New Year to all my followers and the entire Muslim community in the world. *Alhamdulillah*, we begin the New Year of the Islamic calendar and therefore, the Jamaat Ul Sahih Al Islam presents to all Muslims and Muslims its best wishes for the New Year. We hope that this year we can continue to do good deeds with solid faith (*Iman*) in Allah and the will to fulfill His instructions and commands in the best way possible.

The month of Muharram is the first month of the Islamic calendar. This month is not only sacred but also full of blessings. Even in the pre-Islamic era, the Arabs respected this month, stopped fighting and prevented themselves from harming each other. It's a month dedicated to Allah. I can tell you that our Jamaat in the Comoros is doing a series of religious activities and they invited me and my family, despite their poverty and they mobilized all the other brothers and sisters of the different villages to welcome us at the airport and they phoned me several times

to convince me to come, *Insha-Allah*, and all Comorians, men and women, are waiting for our coming. I very humbly explained our situation and I even spoke with some members of the Jamaat Ul Sahih Al Islam who came to Mauritius about this. They are now back in the Comoros to pass my message and explain the constraint that there is, why it is not possible for us to come to the Comoros for the time being.

I tell you frankly, this invitation touched me a lot. With such a purely religious preparation, where there is the organization of major religious conferences, I have been invited to speak among great personalities and where there will also be the distribution of certificates to the *Hufaaz-ul-Qur'an* (those who managed to memorize the whole Qur'an) at the level of the Jamaat Ul Sahih Al Islam and the other Jamaats also invited me, as guest of honour to give certificates to all those who passed in their Islamic exams, such as: *Hafiz-ul-Qur'an*, and also academic ones and they also invited me to address them a speech on the Muharram, as the main speaker, especially on the importance of Muharram and the 10th of Muharram . At this major national conference, the three islands of the Comoros are invited to participate, that is to say, Moroni, Moheli and Anjouan. *Alhamdulillah*. May Allah bless this conference, and cause all Muslims to stand as one body for the sake of Islam, for the sake of Allah, and finally to stop the chaos and division between brothers and sects / groups of Islam. *Insha-Allah, Ameen*.

So today I had to continue my sermon on the subject of *Duah* (invocation to Allah), but I take the opportunity of the advent of this New Islamic Year to tell you a little about the importance of this month. *Insha-Allah*, I will continue on the subject of *Duah* another day.

THE DAY OF ASHURA

When talking about Muharram, we also recall *Ashura*, the 10th of Muharram which also reminds us of the sacrifice of Hazrat Imam Hussain (ra). In this month devoted to Allah, Islam has given Muharram its true value because the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) revealed to us the greatness of the *Yaum-e-Ashura* which is found in this month. On this day, one of the greatest acts of worship (*Ibadat*) is to fast or do a lot of *duahs*, *Istigfaar*, and reading the Qur'an with translation and also make *Nafil Salat*. Many major events took place on this date.

In a Hadith, narrated by Hazrat Abdullah ibn Abbas (ra), the Holy Prophet (pbuh) said: “Fast the day of Ashura but distinguish yourselves from the Jews by fasting a day before and after.” (Musnad Ahmad)

In another Hadith compiled by Imam Muslim, Hazrat Abdullah Ibn Abbas (ra) also reported that when the Holy Prophet (saw) fasted on the day of *Ashura*, he also ordained his *Sahaba* to do so. The *Sahaba* had said that the Jews also fasted that day (to commemorate Hazrat Musa’s (as) victory over Pharaoh). The Holy Prophet (pbuh) also said, “If I am still alive next year, and God willing, then I will fast on the 9th (that is, along with the 10th of Muharram).”

But the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) died before fulfilling this intention to fast on the day before the next *Ashura*, but the *Sahaba*, *Tabe’in* and *Awliya* continued his practice and kept his wish in mind and observed fasting on the 9th and 10th of the month of Muharram. It should be noted that if someone forgets to fast the 9th Muharram, despite his good intention to do so, as a supererogatory fast, then he can observe it on the 10th Muharram, but if it happens that the 10th Muharram falls on a Friday, then he will not be able to fast on Friday alone, without joining this with another fast, be it the day before Friday (that is, Thursday) or after (that is, Saturday), because in Islam, Friday is an Eid and so, it is forbidden to observe fasting exclusively on that day. But if the fast of *Ashura* falls on a Friday, then it is his responsibility to fast also on either Thursday and Friday, or Friday and Saturday, that is to say, he should fast for two days in a row which is not reprehensible in Islam. Besides, the fast of *Ashura* is not a *Farz* (compulsory act) in Islam. It was compulsory before the revelation of Ramadan, the month of fasting, and subsequently became supererogatory after the divine command to fast the month of Ramadan. But nevertheless, the fasting of *Ashura* remains one of the most meritorious act, and the one who wants to maximize its benefits can do so in all peace of mind for the pleasure of Allah, because fasting is for Allah and it is Allah Who will give reward for it. (Bukhari and Muslim).

Hazrat Ali (as) said that the day of *Ashura*, one must trim one’s nails, take a bath, put on *Surma/ Kohl* and *Attar* (perfume), fast, perform voluntary prayers (in addition to the obligatory ones), give *Sadaqa* and read the Holy Qur’an.

As I told you at the beginning of my sermon, one can also do *Tauba* (repentance) and *Istighfar* (ask for Allah’s forgiveness) because it is also reported that it was on

this day/ date that Allah (swt) accepted the repentance of Hazrat Adam (as). So on the day of *Ashura*, you can read a lot: **“Subhanallah Walhamdulillah Wa Laa illaaha illallah Allahu Akbar Wala Hawla Wa La Quwata Illah Billah Hil Aliyil-Azim”**. (*Glory to Allah, All praise belongs to Allah, No one is worthy of worship except Allah, Allah is Great, There is no Power and Might except from Allah, The Most High, The Great*).

And read *Nafil Salat* (voluntary prayers) for your own benefit, to connect yourselves more with Allah, and fully enjoy God’s blessings.

THE ISLAMIC CALENDAR

I shall now address you some explanations on the Islamic Calendar. The Islamic Calendar has a story and origin and we should know about it.

All nations used to keep count of years as from a specific epoch. Whenever there was a highly important event that is known to the whole world, then people took it as a starting point of an epoch, to start a calendar. The best way to start a calendar would have been to date it back to the advent of Hazrat Adam (as) on earth or even start the calendar as from the deluge in the times of Hazrat Nuh (as), for these are highly important events in history. But unfortunately, we do not have exact information on the times when these events occurred. Therefore, each nation took as starting point a main event/ situation which they witnessed in their own times.

It has been reported that the descendants of Hazrat Ibrahim (as) began to count the days/ years as from the day that he was thrown into the fire. As for the Arabs, they based their calendar on the Year of the Elephant, and here is its story:

An Abyssinian, by the name of Abraha built a big cathedral at Sana (in Yemen) and he had plans to make this construction a greater place of pilgrimage than Mecca. When the Arabs got to know about this, they became very angry, and one of them went there and burnt down the cathedral. When Abraha got this news, he thought about taking revenge by completely destroying the Holy Ka’aba. He gathered an army which marched towards Mecca, having an Elephant also at its head. When Abraha marched along with his army towards Mecca, the sky became dark and there was a striking, loud noise. A multitude of birds came, and each of

them had stones/ rocks with them which they pelted upon the army of Abraha, coming close to the army and throwing the stones on them. Those stones were hard, sharp and were enough to harm/ pierce/ kill them.

It is in this way that Allah safeguarded His Sacred House, the Holy Ka'aba. This news spread around the world and the Arabs thus took this event as a starting point of their epoch. They used to date their letters and their acts (i.e. documents) as from this year (the Year of the Elephant as they called it). Even during the times of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), they used this calendar. But it has been reported that the Holy Prophet (pbuh) used for some of his writings (i.e. letters), such a date which corresponded to that of his migration from Mecca to Medina (i.e. the Hegira).

It is in the times of the caliphate of Hazrat Umar (ra) that the Islamic calendar was definitely established taking the Hegira as the starting point of the Islamic Calendar. This happened in the following circumstances:

Abu Musa Al-Ashari (ra), who was at that time the governor of Basra wrote to Hazrat Umar (ra) to inform him that letters from him, the Commander of the faithful reached them without proper dates. Thus, they could not determine which letter and instruction to comply with because of the lack of information concerning the dates [whether the letters were now obsolete/ void or new]. Abu Musa (ra) therefore requested the *Amir'ul Mumineen* Hazrat Umar (ra) to date his letters. Upon reading this letter, Hazrat Umar (ra) saw that it was indeed high time to draft a final calendar and he gathered all knowledgeable people as well as the Muslim advisors to ask them their opinion on the subject.

Hazrat Umar (ra) used to based his decisions concerning the Islamic State after consultation with the companions and other knowledgeable people in what is called a '*Shura*'. He always took their opinions before taking his own final decision. He used to say: *"The opinion of a single person is like a very fine thread [i.e. liable to break]. Two opinions [i.e. the opinions of two persons) is like two thread knotted together. If there are many opinions, it becomes like a solid rope."*

By saying this, Hazrat Umar (ra) was referring to those people who are truly pious, those who base themselves on the teachings of Allah, and who judge with *Taqwa*. He did not meant those kinds of Mullahs like we see nowadays who are bereft of

Taqwa, for example, in the case of the Ahmadi Muslims whereby there was a consensus in the Muslim world to decree such and such as non-Muslim. This is not done! This is completely unislamic because it is only Allah Who has the right to judge faith, not the people. When someone says: “*Laa Ilaaha Illallah Muhammadur Rassullullah*” or even “*Laa Ilaaha Illallah*”, we do not have the right to judge his faith, unless Allah Himself sends by way of revelation or inspiration that such and such person is not a Muslim, or reveals that such and such is an infidel or hypocrite. The latter situation is completely different [because Allah is specifically saying something by way of revelations].

So, after seeking the opinions of one and all, and pondering over all these opinions, Hazrat Umar (ra) decided to start the Islamic Calendar as from the Hegira. By way of explanation, he said: “*We count as from the year which the Messenger of Allah has migrated, because it is during this year that the power of Islam has been manifested, truth has become firmer and lies disappeared. There is no event which happened in the world which is much more important than this.*”

Verily, the Hegira was a great turning point for the mission of the Holy Prophet (pbuh) and a revolution in Islam. Islam was by then constituted into a community with a sole leader. At Mecca, it struggled, with passive resistance, but at Medina it became active and was organized into a religious society. So, with the Hegira began a new era in the history of Islam.

As for the number of months in the Islamic year, the Islamic Calendar constitutes of twelve months. This number has been fixed by Allah Himself, whereby He says in the Holy Qur’an:

“Verily, the number of months with Allah is twelve months (in a year), so was it ordained by Allah on the Day when He created the heavens and the earth; of them four are Sacred.” (Surah At-Tauba 9 : 36).

These four months are **Dhul-Hijjah** et the months which comes before it and after it, i.e., **Dhul-Qaddah** and **Muharram**. The fourth one is **Rajab**, which comes just before Shabaan and Ramadan.

The names of the months in the Islamic Calendar are: Muharram, Safar, Rabi'ul Awwal, Rabi'ul Aakhir, Jamadul Awwal, Jamadul Aakhir, Rajab, Shabaan, Ramadan, Dhul-Qaddah, and Dhul-Hijjah.

The names of those months were changed from their initial pre-islamic names. For example, the first month was called '*Mortammar*' and the second month was called '*Nardjizah*'.

We should also know that each of these months is a reminder of a past event or situation which happened in those different months. Some examples:

- 1) *Muharram* which means 'sacred', was thus called because fighting and wars were forbidden in this month.
- 2) *Rabi* which means 'spring', was thus called because this season lasted during the difficult months of *Rabi*.
- 3) *Ramadan* which means 'heat', because during this month it was usually hot.
- 4) *Dhul-Hijjah* which means 'pilgrimage'. It was thus called because it was the month of pilgrimage.

An important point about the Islamic Calendar is the fact that it is a lunar-based calendar, and not a solar-based one. Almighty Allah says in the Holy Qur'an :

"They ask you about the new moons. Say, 'They are measurements of time for the people and for Hajj.'" (Al-Baqara 2 : 190).

And moreover Allah says : **It is He who made the sun a shining light and the moon a derived light and determined for it phases - that you may know the number of years and account [of time]. Allah has not created this except in truth. He details the signs for a people who know.** (Yunus 10: 6).

Thus, the month of Muharram is the first month of the Islamic Calendar and it is among the four sacred months which Almighty Allah has mentioned in the Qur'an. Almighty Allah show His kindness and pours down His blessings in abundance. We do begin a new year but as seasons are of no account in Islam, we do not celebrate the New Year [we do not consider it as a festivity]. There is only two festivals in Islam: **Eid-ul-Fitr** and **Eid-ul-Adha**.

The other nations celebrate [their] New Year. But what should a Muslim do during the New Year (i.e. be it the Islamic one, and the International one)? He should give thanks to Allah Who has bestowed upon him the opportunity by His grace to meditate of his own existence and to reflect on the future. Just like people worry about the profits which their enterprise shall reap, and they prepare an appraisal and statement of accounts every year so that they can take a decision for the future (of the enterprise/ company), or like the results at the end of a school year when the stakeholders (school staff, parents etc.) look at these to determine who among the students shall go to higher classes and who are those who shall repeat classes, likewise, a believer must also make an appraisal of all his deeds during the past year and ponder over what he shall do in the future.

We should recall that each passing minute during the day and night is leading us close to death. Pray that Allah may enable us all to meditate on our past deeds, and to learn from past mistakes so that we may act well today as well as in the future.

I tell you a truth, that there is 700 commandments in the Holy Qur'an and if someone tries to put into practice those commandments, then he shall definitely find opened for him the true and perfect path, and verily this perfect path which has been created for him is the Qur'an [the path of the Qur'an shall be opened for him]. He should therefore study the Holy Qur'an closely and lead his life according to it just like the Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (pbuh) led his life as per the Qur'an. Establish between you and the Qur'an an unbreakable love, and trust and love it for therein lies your salvation. *Insha-Allah, Ameen.*