

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

خطبة الجمعة

Friday Sermon

*Muharram: The Sacred Month
and the Day of Āshūrā'*

DELIVERED AT

Masjid Adam



ŞİFAH

SCHOOL OF ISLAMIC
FOUNDATIONS &
ADVOCACY FOR HUMANITY

Muharram: The Sacred Month and the Day of Āshūrā'

The First Khutbah

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ، وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا، مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ، وَمَنْ يَضِلَّ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ. أَمَّا بَعْدُ: فَإِنَّ أَصْدَقَ الْحَدِيثِ كِتَابُ اللَّهِ، وَخَيْرُ الْهَدْيِ هَدْيُ مُحَمَّدٍ ﷺ، وَشَرُّ الْأُمُورِ مُحْدَثَاتُهَا، وَكُلَّ مُحْدَثَةٍ بِدْعَةٌ، وَكُلَّ بِدْعَةٍ ضَلَالَةٌ، وَكُلَّ ضَلَالَةٍ فِي النَّارِ.

All praise belongs to Allah. We praise Him, we seek His help, and we seek His forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allah from the evil within ourselves and from our sinful deeds. Whomever Allah guides, none can lead astray, and whomever He leaves astray, none can guide. I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah alone, having no partner, and I bear witness that Muḥammad is His servant and His Messenger. To proceed: the truest speech is the Book of Allah, the best guidance is the guidance of Muḥammad ﷺ, the worst of affairs are the newly invented matters, every innovation is misguidance, and every misguidance is in the Fire.

نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ، أَمَّا بَعْدُ: فَأَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ، بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ.

رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي * وَيسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي * وَاحْلُلْ عُقْدَةً مِنْ لِسَانِي * يَفْقَهُوا قَوْلِي *

We praise Him, and we send blessings upon His noble Messenger. To proceed: I seek refuge with Allah from Satan, the accursed; in the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. My Lord, expand for me my breast, and ease for me my task, and untie the knot from my tongue, that they may understand my speech.

Sūrah Tā Hā (20:25 to 28)

Dear brothers and sisters, **assalāmu ‘alaykum wa raḥmatullāhi wa barakātuh.**

A New Year and a Sacred Month

As the year turns and the month of Muḥarram arrives, a new page opens in the book of our lives. Another year of the Hijrah has passed, another portion of the only capital we truly own, our time, has been spent and can never be recovered. Brothers and sisters, the beginning of a new year is a moment Allah gives us to pause and to reflect, to look back at the year that has gone and forward to the one that has come, and to ask the question the heedless never ask: what have I sent ahead of me to my Lord, and what will I do with the days I have left? And Allah, in His wisdom, opened this new year with one of the most honoured months of the entire calendar, a month He Himself set apart as sacred. For He divided the year into twelve months and made four of them sacred, and Muḥarram is among them.

إِنَّ عِدَّةَ الشُّهُورِ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ اثْنَا عَشَرَ شَهْرًا فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ يَوْمَ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ
مِنْهَا أَرْبَعَةٌ حُرُمٌ ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ فَلَا تَظْلِمُوا فِيهِنَّ أَنْفُسَكُمْ *

Indeed, the number of months with Allah is twelve months in the register of Allah from the day He created the heavens and the earth; of these, four are sacred. That is the upright religion, so do not wrong yourselves during them.

Sūrah at-Tawbah (9:36)

Four months Allah set apart as sacred, Dhul-Qa‘dah, Dhul-Ḥijjah, Muḥarram, and Rajab, and He commanded us not to wrong ourselves within them. The scholars of tafsīr explained that while sin is forbidden in every month, its gravity is multiplied in the sacred months, just as good deeds within them carry a greater weight, for the honour of the time magnifies the deed done within it. So Allah has placed us, at the very start of our new year, in a season of heightened reward and heightened responsibility, calling us to begin the year not in heedlessness but in obedience. And it is fitting to remember why our calendar begins where it does. It was ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, may Allah be pleased with him, and the Companions who chose to date the Muslim era not from the birth of the Prophet ﷺ, nor from his passing, but from the Hijrah, his migration from Makkah to Madīnah, the moment the Muslims left behind persecution and established a community upon the worship of Allah. Our very calendar, then, is built upon sacrifice for the sake of Allah, reminding us with every passing year that this life is a migration from the dunyā toward our Lord.

The early scholars, among them Qatādah, may Allah have mercy on him, explained that wrongdoing in the sacred months is graver in the sight of Allah and carries a heavier burden of sin, while righteous deeds within them are greater in reward, for Allah magnifies whatever He wills of times and places. This is part of the meaning of His command not to wrong ourselves within them. So the wise believer treats the arrival of Muḥarram as a merchant treats a season of high prices, hurrying to invest in good deeds while their reward is multiplied, and fleeing from sin while its danger is doubled.

The Migration Upon Which Our Calendar Stands

Since our years are counted from the Hijrah, it is fitting to remember at the start of each one what that migration cost and what it teaches. When the persecution of Makkah grew unbearable and the Quraysh plotted to kill the Prophet ﷺ, he set out with Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq, may Allah be pleased with him, leaving behind his home, his wealth, and his birthplace for the sake of Allah. The enemy pursued them, and the two took refuge in the cave of Thawr while the search party stood so close that Abū Bakr feared they would be seen. In that moment of danger, the Prophet ﷺ spoke words of perfect trust that Allah preserved in His Book.

ثَانِي اثْنَيْنِ إِذْ هُمَا فِي الْغَارِ إِذْ يَقُولُ لِصَاحِبِهِ لَا تَحْزَنْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَنَا فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ سَكِينَتَهُ عَلَيْهِ *

The second of two, when they were in the cave, when he said to his companion: Do not grieve; indeed, Allah is with us. So Allah sent down His tranquility upon him.

Sūrah at-Tawbah (9:40)

Do not grieve; indeed, Allah is with us. The same certainty that steadied Mūsā at the sea steadied the Prophet ﷺ in the cave, and Allah delivered them both. The Hijrah was a migration of the body from a land of persecution to a land of faith, but the Prophet ﷺ taught that it carries a meaning for every believer until the end of time, a migration of the soul away from everything Allah has forbidden.

وَالْمُهَاجِرُ مَنْ هَجَرَ مَا نَهَى اللَّهُ عَنْهُ.

And the true emigrant is the one who abandons what Allah has forbidden.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī **Hadith No:** 10 **Authenticity:** Ṣaḥīḥ

So the turning of the Hijri year is not merely a date upon a calendar; it is a yearly summons to make our own hijrah, to migrate away from the sins of the year that has passed toward the obedience of the year that has come. Every believer who leaves a sin behind for the sake of Allah is walking, in his own heart, the very road the Prophet ﷺ walked from Makkah to Madīnah, and our calendar was built upon that road so that we would never forget it.

The Month of Allah

Of all the twelve months, Allah and His Messenger ﷺ gave Muḥarram a unique and beautiful honour. The Prophet ﷺ called it shahr Allāh, the month of Allah, attributing it directly to the name of Allah Himself. The scholars noted that the Arabs honour a thing by attaching it to a great name, and Allah attached this month to His own most majestic name, a distinction He gave to no other month of the

year. And He singled it out as the most virtuous month for voluntary fasting after the blessed month of Ramaḍān itself.

أَفْضَلُ الصَّيَامِ بَعْدَ رَمَضَانَ شَهْرُ اللَّهِ الْمُحَرَّمِ، وَأَفْضَلُ الصَّلَاةِ بَعْدَ الْفَرِيضَةِ صَلَاةُ اللَّيْلِ.

The best fasting after Ramaḍān is in the month of Allah, Muḥarram; and the best prayer after the obligatory prayer is the prayer of the night.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** 1163 **Authenticity:** Ṣaḥīḥ

Consider this honour, brothers and sisters. After the fasting of Ramaḍān, which Allah made an obligation and a pillar of the religion, the most beloved voluntary fasting to Allah is the fasting of this month, Muḥarram. It is as though Allah, having closed the great season of fasting in Ramaḍān, opened the new year with another invitation to draw near to Him through the same beloved act. The one who wishes to begin his year in the love of Allah has been handed the means: to fast in this sacred month, and especially upon its greatest day, the day of ‘Āshūrā’.

The Day of ‘Āshūrā’ and the Salvation of Mūsā

The tenth day of Muḥarram, the day of ‘Āshūrā’, carries a history that stretches back across the prophets. When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ came to Madīnah, he found the Jews fasting this day, and when he asked them why, they told him it was the day on which Allah saved Mūsā and the Children of Israel from Pharaoh and his armies, drowning the tyrant and delivering the believers. The Prophet ﷺ responded in a way that revealed the unity of all the prophets in the worship of the one God.

هَذَا يَوْمٌ صَالِحٌ، هَذَا يَوْمٌ نَجَّى اللَّهُ فِيهِ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ مِنْ عَدُوِّهِمْ فَصَامَهُ مُوسَى، فَأَنَا أَحَقُّ بِمُوسَى مِنْكُمْ، فَصَامَهُ وَأَمَرَ بِصِيَامِهِ.

This is a blessed day, the day on which Allah saved the Children of Israel from their enemy, so Mūsā fasted it. We have more right to Mūsā than you. So he fasted it and commanded that it be fasted.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** Bukhārī 2004, Muslim 1130 **Authenticity:** Muttafaqun ‘Alayh

We have more right to Mūsā than you, said the Prophet ﷺ, for the believers in Muḥammad ﷺ are the true followers of every prophet who came before, united with Mūsā and ‘Īsā and all the messengers upon the single creed of worshipping Allah alone. And what a day it was that Allah chose to honour. It was the day Allah split the sea and saved a weak and oppressed people from the mightiest tyrant of the age, the day truth was delivered and falsehood was drowned. Remember the moment, brothers and sisters, when Mūsā stood with the sea before him and Pharaoh's army thundering behind him,

and his people cried out that they were surely overtaken. Mūsā did not panic, for his heart rested upon a certainty greater than the danger.

قَالَ كَلَّا إِنَّ مَعِيَ رَبِّي سَيَهْدِينِ *

He said: No! Indeed, with me is my Lord; He will guide me.

Sūrah ash-Shu‘arā’ (26:62)

Indeed, with me is my Lord; He will guide me. With the sea ahead and the army behind, with every visible means of escape gone, Mūsā declared that his Lord was with him, and Allah split the sea. This is the lesson of ‘Āshūrā’ that the believer carries into his new year: that no tyrant, no hardship, and no closed door is greater than Allah, and that the one who trusts in Him, even when the sea is before him and the enemy behind, will find that Allah makes for him a way out from where he never expected. When we fast this day, we are not merely commemorating a distant event; we are affirming our faith in the same Lord who saved Mūsā, who is with us still, and who delivers those who trust in Him.

And there is a deep lesson in the fact that the day Allah chose to honour above the days of the year is a day of deliverance after long oppression. Mūsā and his people had suffered under Pharaoh for generations, their sons slaughtered and their backs broken with labour, their cries seemingly unanswered for years upon years. Yet when the appointed hour came, Allah undid the tyranny of centuries in a single morning, and the sea that should have drowned the believers drowned the tyrant instead. The believer who feels that his hardship has run too long, or that the oppressor is too strong, should hold fast to the meaning of ‘Āshūrā’, for it is the yearly reminder that the rescue of Allah, however delayed it seems, arrives at exactly the hour He has appointed, and that no power on earth can hold it back when it comes.

A Single Day That Wipes a Year

And Allah, in His boundless generosity, attached to the fasting of this single day a reward so vast it should fill us with hope. The Prophet ﷺ told us what the fast of ‘Āshūrā’ can do for the one who observes it sincerely.

صِيَامُ يَوْمٍ عَاشُورَاءَ أَحْتَسِبُ عَلَى اللَّهِ أَنْ يُكَفِّرَ السَّنَةَ الَّتِي قَبْلَهُ.

Fasting the day of ‘Āshūrā’, I hope from Allah, expiates the year that came before it.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** 1162 **Authenticity:** Ṣaḥīḥ

A single day of fasting, and Allah wipes away the sins of an entire year. Reflect on the mercy of this, brothers and sisters. A whole year of slips and shortcomings, of small sins accumulated day after day, can be forgiven through one day given to Allah at the start of the new year. There is no investment in

all the world that returns so much for so little. And the Prophet ﷺ, in the final year of his life, expressed his intention to perfect this fast by adding the ninth day to the tenth, both to follow the practice of Mūsā more completely and to be distinct from the practice of others who fasted only the tenth.

لَنْ بَقَيْتُ إِلَى قَابِلٍ لِأَصُومَنَّ التَّاسِعَ.

If I remain until next year, I will surely fast the ninth.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** 1134 **Authenticity:** Ṣaḥīḥ

From this the scholars derived that it is best to fast two days, the ninth and the tenth of Muḥarram together, both to complete the Sunnah the Prophet ﷺ intended and to distinguish the believers in their worship. So let none of us, having heard of a day that expiates a year, allow it to pass by unfasted. It is one of the easiest and most generous gifts our Lord has laid before us at the threshold of the new year.

The scholars relate that the fast of ‘Āshūrā’ was so weighty in the early days of Islam that it was an obligation upon the Muslims, before the fasting of Ramaḍān was made obligatory. When Allah revealed the fast of Ramaḍān as a pillar of the religion, the obligation of ‘Āshūrā’ was lifted, and it remained as a beloved and strongly encouraged voluntary fast. See in this the wisdom of Allah, who once made this day a duty and then, in His mercy, kept its door open as a voluntary treasure, so that the believer who seeks the forgiveness of a year need only give a single day to his Lord.

Honouring the Family of the Prophet ﷺ

We cannot speak of Muḥarram and of the tenth day without remembering, with grief and with love, a tragedy that unfolded on this day many years after the Prophet ﷺ. For it was on the tenth of Muḥarram, in the year sixty one after the Hijrah, that the beloved grandson of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, al-Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī, may Allah be pleased with him, was martyred at Karbalā’, betrayed and slain along with members of his household. He was the son of Fāṭimah, the daughter of the Prophet ﷺ, and of ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, and he was among the most beloved of people to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. His killing was a crime and a calamity, a wound in the heart of this Ummah, and the believer cannot recall it without sorrow and without sending peace and blessings upon Ḥusayn and his noble family.

The love of the family of the Prophet ﷺ, the Ahl al-Bayt, is an obligation upon every believer, woven into the very fabric of our faith. In his farewell, the Prophet ﷺ reminded the Ummah of their rights in words we must never forget.

وَأَهْلُ بَيْتِي، أَذْكُرُكُمْ اللَّهُ فِي أَهْلِ بَيْتِي.

And the people of my household: I remind you of Allah concerning my household.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** 2408 **Authenticity:** Ṣaḥīḥ

And the Prophet ﷺ honoured Ḥusayn and his brother Ḥasan with a rank that should silence every tongue that would dishonour them, naming them the leaders of the youth of Paradise.

الْحَسَنُ وَالْحُسَيْنُ سَيِّدَا شَبَابِ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ.

Al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn are the two leaders of the youth of the people of Paradise.

Source: Sunan at-Tirmidhī **Hadith No:** 3768 **Authenticity:** Ṣaḥīḥ per al-Albānī

So we love Ḥusayn, we grieve his martyrdom, we honour his family, and we send blessings upon them. Yet our love and our grief follow the way the Prophet ﷺ taught, not the ways that people later invented. For the virtue of ‘Āshūrā’ and its fast was established by the Prophet ﷺ himself long before Karbalā’ ever occurred, going back to the salvation of Mūsā, and it is not a day Allah appointed for ritual mourning, nor for wailing, nor for striking or harming the body, nor for any of the innovations that grief, however sincere, has given rise to. Nor, on the other side, did the Prophet ﷺ ever make it a day of celebration and feasting as though it were a festival. The balanced path, the path of the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions, is to honour the day as he honoured it, by fasting and drawing near to Allah, and to honour Ḥusayn and the Ahl al-Bayt as he commanded, with love in the heart, blessings upon the tongue, and a life lived upon the Sunnah he and his grandfather called us to. The truest honour we can give to Ḥusayn is to hold fast to the religion for which his family lived and died.

And the way of Ahl al-Sunnah is a way of comprehensive love that excludes no one whom the Prophet ﷺ loved. We love the household of the Prophet ﷺ, ‘Alī and Fāṭimah and Ḥasan and Ḥusayn and all the pure family, and we love alongside them the noble Companions, Abū Bakr and ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān and the rest, may Allah be pleased with them all, for the Prophet ﷺ joined them together in his love, his household married into his Companions and his Companions into his household. To love the family while reviling the Companions, or to honour the Companions while neglecting the family, is to tear apart what Allah and His Messenger ﷺ joined together. The balanced believer holds them all in his heart, sends blessings upon them all, and refuses to let the tragedy of Karbalā’ become a cause of division within the very Ummah for which Ḥusayn gave his life.

A Year of Honest Self-Reckoning

And so this sacred month, standing at the gate of the new year, calls us to a duty the heedless neglect their whole lives: the reckoning of the soul. Allah commanded every believer to pause and examine what he has prepared for the Day he will meet his Lord.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ *

O you who believe, be conscious of Allah, and let every soul look to what it has sent forth for tomorrow. And be conscious of Allah; indeed, Allah is fully aware of what you do.

Sūrah al-Hashr (59:18)

Let every soul look to what it has sent forth for tomorrow. This is the work of the new year: not the empty resolutions of those who count only the dunyā, but the honest accounting of a believer who looks back at the year now gone and asks what he sent ahead to his Lord. What did I send forward this past year of prayer, of charity, of kindness, of repentance? And what did I send forward of sin and heedlessness and wasted time? ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, may Allah be pleased with him, gave the Ummah a principle that should govern every new year of our lives.

Take account of yourselves before you are taken to account, and weigh your deeds before they are weighed for you.

‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, may Allah be pleased with him

And the reason for this urgency is that time is the one resource Allah swore by and warned us not to squander, for the whole of the human being's loss or success is measured in how he spends it.

وَالْعَصْرِ * إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ * إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَّصُوا بِالحَقِّ وَتَوَّصُوا بِالصَّبْرِ *

By time. Indeed, mankind is in loss, except those who believe and do righteous deeds, and advise one another to truth, and advise one another to patience.

Sūrah al-‘Aṣr (103:1 to 3)

By time, Allah swore, that the human being is in loss, every one of us, draining away the hours of our lives toward the grave, except those who fill that time with faith, righteous deeds, and calling one another to truth and patience. A new year is a fresh page of that time, handed to us by Allah. The wise believer does not let it fill itself with the same heedlessness as the year before; he takes hold of it, reckons his soul, and resolves to make this year a year closer to Allah than the last.

And there is a mercy in measuring our lives by years, for it gives us, again and again, a fresh beginning. The believer who looks back with regret upon a year heavy with sin is not chained to it; Allah has handed him a new page, clean and unwritten, and placed at its very head a sacred month and a day that wipes the past year away. No one need carry the old year into the new. Let the one whose past twelve months were a season of heedlessness make these coming twelve months a season of return, and let the one whom Allah blessed with a good year ask Him for a better one, for the believer's journey is always forward, from Allah, by Allah, and back to Allah.

Muharram in the Life We Actually Live

It would be a failure of this gathering to speak of the sacred month and the new year and never ask what they demand of us in the world we actually inhabit. We live our daily lives by a calendar that is not our own, and many Muslims today could not name the months of the Hijri year through which their own Prophet ﷺ lived, nor mark the sacred seasons Allah set apart. Part of honouring this month is simply to become aware of it, to know which month of Allah we are in, and to revive in our homes and our children a consciousness of the sacred times that shape a believer's year.

And we are surrounded by a culture that knows only one kind of new year, a night of celebration and a list of worldly resolutions about wealth and appearance that are mostly abandoned within weeks. The believer's new year is something far deeper. It is not a night of heedless festivity but a season of self-reckoning, repentance, and renewed worship; its resolutions are not about the body alone but about the soul, the prayer, the character, and the standing before Allah. Let us not allow the blessed day of 'Āshūrā' to slip past unnoticed simply because the world around us takes no notice of it; let us mark it, fast it, and seize the forgiveness it carries.

And in an age when believers across the world face their own seas with the enemy at their backs, oppressed and afraid in so many lands, the lesson of 'Āshūrā' and of the Hijrah is a lifeline: that Allah is with those who trust Him, that He splits seas and opens caves and delivers the weak from the strong when every visible door has closed. The believer who carries this certainty into the new year does not despair at the state of the Ummah nor at his own trials, but holds fast to the One who has never once abandoned those who turned to Him.

A Moment of Honest Accounting

Before we close this first khutbah, let each of us stand at the threshold of this new year and look honestly at the year that has passed. What did I send ahead to Allah in the twelve months now gone, and what do I wish I had not sent? Have the years been passing while my faith stands still, or while it grows? Will I let this sacred month and its blessed day of 'Āshūrā' slip by unfasted, throwing away a day that could wipe a year of sin, or will I seize it? And as I begin a new page, do I carry forward the heedlessness of the old year, or do I make of this new year a true migration toward my Lord, as the Hijrah upon which our calendar is built was a migration toward Him? These questions are not meant to burden us, but to wake us, for the one who reckons himself in this life will find his reckoning easy on the Day the books are opened.

I say these words of mine, and I seek the forgiveness of Allah for me and for you, so seek His forgiveness, for indeed He is the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful.

أَقُولُ قَوْلِي هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ لِي وَلَكُمْ فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ.

I say this statement of mine, and I seek the forgiveness of Allah for myself and for you, so seek His forgiveness, for He is the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful.

Closing of the First Khutbah

The Second Khutbah

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ، وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى أَشْرَفِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَالْمُرْسَلِينَ، نَبِيِّنَا مُحَمَّدٍ
وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ. اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ، كَمَا صَلَّيْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ
وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ.

All praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the worlds, and may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon the noblest of the Prophets and Messengers, our Prophet Muḥammad, and upon his family and all his Companions. O Allah, send blessings upon Muḥammad and upon the family of Muḥammad as You sent blessings upon Ibrāhīm and upon the family of Ibrāhīm. Indeed, You are Praiseworthy and Glorious.

A Reminder Carried Home

Dear brothers and sisters, in the first khuṭbah we learned that Muḥarram opens the new year as one of the four sacred months, that the Prophet ﷺ honoured it as the month of Allah and the best month for voluntary fasting after Ramaḍān, and that its tenth day, ‘Āshūrā’, is the day Allah saved Mūsā and a day whose fast expiates a whole year. We remembered the martyrdom of Ḥusayn with love and grief, and learned to honour him and the Ahl al-Bayt upon the balanced way of the Prophet ﷺ and we were called to reckon our souls at the turning of the year. The danger now is that the month passes and the day of ‘Āshūrā’ slips by while we do nothing. So let us make a plan before this sacred season escapes us.

A Practical Plan for the Sacred Month

First and most urgently, resolve now to fast the day of ‘Āshūrā’, the tenth of Muḥarram, and the ninth alongside it if you are able, for it is a day that expiates a year, and few gifts are so generous or so easily seized. Mark the day, intend the fast, and do not let it pass you by. Second, increase your voluntary fasting and your worship throughout this month of Allah, beginning the year as you wish to continue it, in nearness to Him. Third, take the honest accounting of your soul that the new year invites: sit with yourself, weigh the year that has passed, repent sincerely for its sins, and set down a few clear resolutions for drawing closer to Allah in the year ahead, in your prayer, your character, and your dealings. Fourth, renew your love for the family of the Prophet ﷺ, send blessings upon them, and honour them by holding fast to the Sunnah for which they stood, free of both neglect and innovation. And guard this sacred month from sin, for wronging your soul is graver within it, as Allah warned.

And let every resolution you make for this new year be built upon constancy rather than a single burst of enthusiasm that fades by Rabī‘, for the Prophet ﷺ taught that the deeds dearest to Allah are the most lasting, even when they are small. A small act of worship you carry steadily through the whole new year is worth more before Allah than a grand resolution abandoned by the second month.

أَحَبُّ الْأَعْمَالِ إِلَى اللَّهِ أَدْوَمُهَا وَإِنْ قَلَّ.

The most beloved of deeds to Allah are the most constant of them, even if they are few.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** Bukhārī 6464, Muslim 783 **Authenticity:** Muttafaquun ‘Alayh

Between Hope and Fear

Let no one leave this place weighed down by the sins of the year that has passed, for Allah has placed at the very start of the new year a day that wipes a year clean, and the door of repentance stands open to whoever turns to Him. And let no one leave so pleased with himself that he wastes the fresh page Allah has handed him, slipping back into the heedlessness of the old year. Brothers and sisters, walk into this new year between the two wings of hope and fear: hope in a Lord who forgives a year through a single day of fasting and who delivered Mūsā from the sea when every door was closed, and fear of a year of your life draining away into loss, as Allah swore by time that the heedless are in loss. The believer enters the new year as a traveler resuming his migration toward Allah, with hope in his Lord and a watchful fear of wasting the days he has left.

The Promise of the New Year

Let us not forget where this road leads, for the believer who begins his year in obedience is carried by the promise his Lord has made him. He who fasts ‘Āshūrā’ in hope of his Lord’s reward is promised the expiation of a year; he who reckons his soul now will find his reckoning light on the Day the books are spread; and he who trusts in Allah as Mūsā trusted will find that his Lord opens a sea before him where there seemed no way through. Every fast you keep this month, every sin you abandon, every resolution you hold, every accounting of your soul, is a step that turns this new year from a year of loss into a year of profit. Do not measure these acts as small. Measure where they are taking you, into a new year drawn nearer to the One to whom we are all migrating.

Closing Du‘ā

Dear brothers and sisters, let us raise our hands to Allah at the dawn of this new year, asking Him to make it a year of nearness and not of distance. O Allah, let us reach the day of ‘Āshūrā’, grant us the fasting of it, and expiate by it the sins of our past year.

O Allah, bless us in this sacred month and in this new year, make it better for us than the year that has passed, and make it a year of guidance, obedience, and nearness to You. O Allah, accept our fasting and our worship, forgive the sins of the year now gone, and let us not return to them. O Allah, we ask You to gather us with our Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ and with his beloved family, with Ḥusayn and the Ahl al-Bayt, in the gardens of Paradise. O Allah, forgive the believing men and the believing women, the living among them and those who have passed. O Allah, set right the affairs of this Ummah, unite the hearts of the Muslims upon truth, and protect our families and our children in an age of trial. O Allah, relieve the distressed, heal the sick, settle the debts of the indebted, and grant safety and provision to our brothers and sisters who are oppressed and afraid in every land, for You are the All Powerful and they have none besides You.

O Allah, forgive us and our parents, and have mercy upon them as they raised us when we were small. O Allah, accept from us our prayers, our fasting, and our standing before You, and overlook our shortcomings and our sins. O Allah, grant us beneficial knowledge, hearts that truly fear You, and sincere deeds for Your Face alone. O Allah, deliver us as You delivered Mūsā, and let us trust in You as he trusted, and seal our lives with the best of deeds. Our Lord, give us good in this world and good in the Hereafter, and protect us from the punishment of the Fire.

The Final Reminder

Remember the command of your Lord, with which Allah closes the affair, the command of justice and excellence and kindness to kin, the way of life by which a sacred month and a new year are truly honoured.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ
يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ *

Indeed, Allah commands justice, excellence, and giving to relatives, and He forbids immorality, wrongdoing, and oppression. He admonishes you that you may take heed.

Sūrah an-Naḥl (16:90)

So remember Allah, the Most Great, and He will remember you. Thank Him for His favours and He will increase you. And establish the prayer.

وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ