

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Practical Lessons from the Month of Fasting

Based on a lecture by Ash-Shaykh Abdul-Muhsin ibn Hamad al-Abbaad

This translation is based on a lecture which was delivered by Ash-Shaykh Abdul-Muhsin ibn Hamad al-Abbaad on Shawwaal 16, 1390 A.H. at the Taybah Secondary School. It was also published in the Journal of the Islamic University of Madeenah, Issue #10. In it, the Shaykh discusses a few points about fasting and the month of Ramadaan as well as its relation to the months that follow. He then highlights certain practical lessons drawn from the attitude displayed by Muslims during Ramadaan and how the same attitude can be transferred to life and worship in other months. Finally, the Shaykh concludes with a reminder to the residents of al-Madeenah, where the lecture was delivered.

Note: Some Ahaadeeth in the original Arabic source of the article appear to have been quoted according to their meanings and not the exact wordings found in the books of Hadeeth cited. However, for the purposes of this translation, they have been left with the wordings and references as in the published article, which is available online at: <http://www.iu.edu.sa/Magazine/10/7.htm>

Practical Lessons from the Month of Fasting

This World is the Abode of Tests and Trials

Allaah created His servants to worship Him alone without partner, and has stated in His majestic book

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ

which means, **And I have not created the jinns and humans except that they should worship Me Alone.** [Soorah Ath-Thaariyaat (51):56]

He sent His esteemed Messengers to outline the way of worship, as He said

وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ

which means, **And verily, We have sent a Messenger among every Ummah proclaiming to them: "Worship Allaah, and avoid all false deities (Taaghoot)." [Soorah an-Nahl (16):36]**

He made life in this world as a place of trial and testing as to which of His servants are best in deeds. He said

الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا

which means, **Who has created death and life, that He may test which of you is best in action.** [Soorah al-Mulk (67):2]

and then said

وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ

which means, **And He is the Almighty, the Oft-Forgiving.** [Soorah al-Mulk (67):2]

This clarifies that these tested individuals include ones who excel in their deeds and will be rewarded due to what is entailed by Allaah's name al-Ghafoor (the Oft-Forgiving). Similarly included are those who act wrongly and will deserve punishment due to what is entailed by His name al-Azeez (the Almighty). That is like His saying

نَبِّئْ عِبَادِي أَنِّي أَنَا الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿٤٩﴾ وَأَنَّ عَذَابِي هُوَ الْعَذَابُ الْأَلِيمُ

which means, **Declare to My servants, that I am truly the Oft-Forgiving, the Most Merciful. And that My Torment is indeed the most painful torment.** [Soorah al-Hijr (15):49,50]

A Season of the Hereafter

Just as Allaah has granted virtue to some of mankind over others, as well as certain places over others, he has also favoured certain times over others. Part of that is the virtue of the blessed month of Ramadaan and its distinction over the remaining months, along with it being chosen as the time when fasting is obligated.

وَرَبُّكَ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيَخْتَارُ

which means, **And your Lord creates whatsoever He wills and chooses.** [Soorah al-Qasas (28):68]

As such, Allaah has granted virtue to this month and designated it as one of the seasons of the hereafter. During it, the servants of Allaah compete with one another and race to achieve success and nearness to Him. They seek to come closer to their Lord by fasting in the daytime, standing to pray at night, and reciting His Majestic Book which falsehood cannot approach from before it nor behind, since it is revealed from One who is All-Wise and Worthy of all Praise. They seek nearness to Allaah by these and other acts of obedience, while cautiously remaining aware of disobedient acts and avoiding them. All this is done hoping for a profitable trade that will never perish, whereby Allaah would pay them their wages in full, and give them an increase out of His Bounty. Indeed, He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Appreciative of good deeds and ready to reward them.

An Increase in Bounty

Whereas Allaah had prescribed fasting the month of Ramadaan for His servants, the Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) encouraged them to follow it by fasting six days of Shawwaal in order to make their reward as great as that of fasting the entire year. Aboo Ayyoob al-Ansaaree (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) stated

مَنْ صَامَ رَمَضَانَ ثُمَّ أَتْبَعَهُ سِتًّا مِنْ شَوَّالٍ كَانَ كَصِيَامِ الدَّهْرِ

which means, “Anyone who fasted Ramadaan and then followed it with six from Shawwaal, it is as if he fasted perpetually.” Al-Haafith al-Munthiree said

It was collected by Muslim, Aboo Daawood, at-Tirmitheer, an-Nasaa'ee, ibn Maajah, and at-Tabaraanee with the addition, “I said, is there for each day (the reward of) ten?” He replied, “Yes.” Its reporters are those of the saheeh collections.

That is so since the greatest number of days in the lunar year is three hundred and sixty. If six days from Shawwaal are added to the month of Ramadaan and each day is considered like ten, since a good deed has the reward of ten like it, then it is as though the Muslim has fasted the entire year. This is why he (ﷺ) said “it is as if he fasted perpetually.” That is a tremendous bounty from Allaah, and to Him belong all praise and gratitude for His innumerable favours.

From One Good to Another

Part of the favour and kindness from Allaah to His servants is that He eased for them those factors which would raise their level and keep them upon a firm and lasting connection with the worship of their Lord. They come closer to Allaah with the passing of the days and nights of Ramadaan during which He pardons sins, raises ranks, and assists those who falter. As soon as its days depart and come to a close they are immediately followed by the months of performing Hajj to the Sacred House of Allaah. The day of Eed al-Fitr, which is the first day of the month of Shawwaal, is also the first day of the months of Hajj about which Allaah, the Exalted, has said

الْحَجُّ أَشْهُرٌ مَّعْلُومَةٌ فَمَنْ فَرَضَ فِيهِنَّ الْحَجَّ فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا فُسُوقَ وَلَا جِدَالَ فِي الْحَجِّ
وَمَا تَفَعَّلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يَعْلَمَهُ اللَّهُ وَتَزَوَّدُوا فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الزَّادِ التَّقْوَىٰ وَاتَّقُونِ يَا أُولِيَ الْأَلْبَابِ

which means, **The Hajj is in the well-known months. So whosoever intends to perform Hajj during them, then he should not have marital relations, nor commit sin, nor dispute unjustly during the Hajj. And whatever good you do, Allaah knows it. And take a provision with you for the journey and, indeed, the best provision is Taqwaa. Therefore, have Taqwaa of Me, O men of understanding!** [Soorah al-Baqarah (2):197]

Ramadaan is the month in which Allaah revealed the Qur'aan. It is the blessed month during which the gates of Jannah are opened, the gates of the hellfire are shut, and the devils are shackled. In a Qudsee Hadeeth, Allaah has said about the days of fasting

كُلُّ عَمَلٍ ابْنِ آدَمَ لَهُ الْحَسَنَةُ بِعَشْرِ أَمْثَالِهَا إِلَّا الصَّوْمَ فَإِنَّهُ لِي وَأَنَا أَجْزِي بِهِ

“For every good deed of the Son of Aadam, he will have the reward of ten like it, except for fasting. Verily, it is for Me and I shall reward it.” When these days of Ramadaan conclude, there come the days of Hajj about which Messenger (ﷺ) said

مَنْ حَجَّ فَلَمْ يَرْفُثْ وَلَمْ يَفْسُقْ رَجَعَ مِنْ ذُنُوبِهِ كَيَوْمِ وَلَدَتْهُ أُمُّهُ

“Whoever performed Hajj without having marital relations or acting wrongly, he would return absolved from his sins just as the day his mother gave birth to him.” Collected by al-Bukhaaree, Muslim, and others. He (ﷺ) also said about Hajj

الْعُمْرَةُ إِلَى الْعُمْرَةِ كَفَّارَةٌ لِمَا بَيْنَهُمَا وَالْحَجُّ الْمَبْرُورُ لَيْسَ لَهُ جَزَاءٌ إِلَّا الْجَنَّةُ

“One performance of Umrah until the next Umrah is an expiation for what occurred between them. And there is no reward for the accepted Hajj except Jannah.” Collected by al-Bukhaaree, Muslim and others.

In actuality, the Muslim hardly bids farewell to one season of the hereafter before he welcomes another. This serves to maintain a continuous link with the worship of His Creator and Originator

who brought him into existence from nothing and granted him an abundance of blessings, both apparent and hidden.

Practical Lessons from the Month of Fasting

The Muslim Ummah bade farewell to this blessed season some days ago. Hence, glad tidings are in store for the people whom Allaah graciously allowed to accomplish righteous deeds during it and favoured them even further by accepting those deeds. On the contrary, there will only be loss in store for those who let the days of Ramadaan pass them by while having not done any good which they would find when they depart from this life. It would be such a disaster if they had occupied their time pleasing the shaytaan and had acted according to the evil desires of their own souls. We seek Allaah's refuge from that.

The remarkable season which recently ended contains numerous lessons and reminders that urge the soul to develop a love for goodness and being continuously obedient to Allaah. At the same time, they cause the soul to have an aversion towards disobedient acts and to avoid anything that would anger Allaah, the Most Mighty and Majestic.

The practical lessons and reminders which the Muslim gleans in the month of fasting are the fine products reaped from those days. In the following words, I will attempt to list some of them, and I rely upon Allaah for success and correctness.

Lesson 1: As the days of Ramadaan elapse, the Muslim finds one of life's opportunities presented before him. It is an opportunity which he may reach once again, or perhaps his decreed fate will overtake him before he reaches it. Nonetheless, what is most important is that this opportunity is utilized by filling it with acts of obedience and remaining far away from sins. Even more important is remaining consistent in doing those things as well, since one of the rewards for a good deed is being guided to perform other good deeds afterwards. In a similar way, one of the punishments for an evil deed is being left to perform other evil deeds after it. Therefore, let us consider the case of the Muslim who wishes good for himself and has been granted the fortune of reaching this blessed month and using it fully in the obedience of his Lord who created him for worship and showered blessings upon him, both apparent and hidden. His soul would find rest in performing righteous actions and his heart would find itself moving towards the hereafter, which is the final destination. It is there that nothing will benefit a person except what his own hands have sent forth, on the day when

neither wealth nor offspring will avail, except him who brings to Allaah a clean heart. During those blessed days of Ramadaan, the soul should have accustomed itself to obedience while hoping for what Allaah has in store, and restraining itself out of fear from His punishment. Undoubtedly, once this has been done, the benefit which the Muslim gleans and the lesson he acquires is that he must subsequently continue to perform good deeds and avoid sins. This is so since Allaah has commanded His servants to worship Him for the entire duration of their lives.

وَأَعْبُدْ رَبَّكَ حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَكَ الْيَقِينُ

which means, **And worship your Lord until the certainty (of death) comes to you.** [Soorah al-Hijr (15):99]

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ ؕ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ

which means, **O you who believe! Have Taqwaa of Allaah as is rightfully due to Him. And do not die except in a state of Islaam, with complete submission to Allaah.** [Soorah Aali Imraan (3):102]

Once the Muslim has tasted the sweetness of obedience during the month of fasting, it is not proper for him to replace it with the bitterness of disobedience. Additionally, once he has overpowered his enemy in the month of fasting, in is not fitting to bring joy to him during Shawwaal and the months that follow. If a Muslim truly wants good for himself, he must not stop performing good deeds with the departure of the month of fasting. Doing so would be like substituting a time that is better for that which is lower in rank. During Ramadaan, as well as at all other times, Allaah is Living and does not die. He sustains and protects all His creation, and does not sleep. The deeds of the day ascend to Him before those of the night, just as the actions of the night ascend before those of the day, and He does not wrong anyone in the least.

وَإِنْ تَكُ حَسَنَةً يُضْعِفْهَا وَيُؤْتِ مِنْ لَدُنْهُ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

which means, **And if there is any good done, He doubles it and grants a great reward from Himself.** [Soorah an-Nisaa' (4):40]

Lesson 2: Fasting is a secret between the servant and his Lord, and no one else is truly aware of its reality except Allaah. This is the reason behind the authentic Hadeeth where Allaah says

كُلُّ عَمَلِ ابْنِ آدَمَ لَهُ الْحَسَنَةُ بِعَشْرِ أَمْثَالِهَا إِلَّا الصَّوْمَ فَإِنَّهُ لِي وَأَنَا أَجْزِي بِهِ يَدْعُ شَهْوَنَهُ وَطَعَامَهُ وَشَرَابَهُ مِنْ أَجْلِي

which means, “Every action of the son of Aadam is rewarded with ten similar to it except for fasting. Verily, it is for me and I shall reward it since he leaves his desires, food and drink for Me.”

That is so since it is possible for the servant to hide from people behind closed doors whilst eating and drinking, and then come out to them while claiming to be fasting, and no one would know that except for Allaah, the Most Blessed and Exalted. However, his sense of Allaah being ever aware and watchful prevents him from doing that, and this is a truly commendable quality in an individual. The key lesson here is to bear in mind that the One whom the human fears when he falls short in his fasting is the very same One whom he should fear when he falls short in his Salaah, Zakaah, Hajj, or any other deed which Allaah has obligated. In other words, the One who made fasting obligatory is the One who obligated the Salaah, which is the greatest pillar of Islaam after the testimony that none has the right to be worshipped except Allaah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah. He obligated Salaah upon His Prophet on the night during which he was taken up through the heavens, and this is due to the tremendous rank and nature of the Salaah, since it serves as the continuous connection between the servant and his Lord. Hence, if the Muslim considers his shortcoming in fasting to be something dreadful, then he must realize that falling short in his Salaah is even more severe. This is one of the most significant and crucial lessons which the Muslim gleans from the month of fasting.

Lesson 3: One of the things which brings delight and happiness to the good-natured souls is finding the Masaajid brimming with worshippers in the month of Ramadaan. However, maintaining and continuing that at other times would bring even further elation. As such, there is a most timely lesson for the Muslim to draw after having witnessed the Masaajid filled during those days. He should firmly resolve to be one of those who make that spectacular state something lasting. This would make him one of the seven whom Allaah will shade on the day when there will be no shade except His. For indeed, as is established in the authentic narrations from the Prophet (ﷺ), one of them is the man whose heart is attached to the Masaajid.

Lesson 4: The obligation of fasting from food, drink, and all else that nullifies the fast falls during the month of Ramadaan. However, fasting from the unlawful is required throughout one’s entire

life. During Ramadaan, the Muslim must fast from the permissible and the prohibited, but he must fast from the prohibited things for his whole life. Hence, the days of refraining from things both permissible and prohibited have passed, while refraining from the prohibited remains continuous. In the linguistic sense, fasting (sawm) means refraining (imsaak) from something, but in the legal sense (Sharee'ah) its meaning is refraining from eating, drinking, and anything else that nullifies the fast for the duration of time between dawn and sunset. The meaning in the Sharee'ah is only a portion of the linguistic meaning. Therefore, in the linguistic sense, it denotes the meaning in the Sharee'ah, but it also includes a wider meaning, part of which is restraint from all that is prohibited. Thus, restraining the eye, tongue, ear, hand, leg, and private parts from prohibited deeds is fasting in the linguistic sense.

Allaah has granted favour to His servants by giving them these indispensable blessings. However, in addition to granting them these blessings, He has ordered that they be used in ways which please Him and He has forbidden using them in ways that anger Him. One of the best ways of being grateful to Allaah for these blessings is for the Muslim to employ them as he has been commanded while refraining from using them to disobey the One who granted him those faculties, as well as every other blessing he has, whether apparent or not.

Hence, it is lawful to use the eye for looking at what Allaah has permitted, and it is unlawful to use it for looking at the prohibited. Fasting of this nature, where the eye refrains from the prohibited, is applicable at all times.

In a similar manner, it is lawful to use the ear for listening to what is permissible for it, and it is unlawful for a person to use it for listening to the impermissible. Fasting of this nature, where the ear refrains from the impermissible, is applicable at all times.

It is lawful to use the tongue in speaking good, and it is unlawful to use it in speaking evil. Fasting of this nature, where the tongue refrains from evil speech, is applicable at all times.

It is lawful to use the hand for engaging in what Allaah has permitted, and it is unlawful to use it in dealing with anything prohibited. Fasting of this nature, where the hand refrains from the prohibited, is applicable at all times.

It is lawful to use the leg for walking toward every good, and it is unlawful to use it for walking toward the prohibited. Fasting of this nature, where the leg refrains from the prohibited, is applicable at all times.

It is lawful to use the private parts for engaging in the permissible, and it is unlawful to use them for anything prohibited. Fasting of this nature, where the private parts refrain from the prohibited, is applicable at all times.

One who shows gratitude for these blessings, using them as Allaah has commanded, has been promised a bountiful reward by Allaah. In contrast to this is the one who neglects these blessings and gives little regard to their proper usage. He unleashes them to commit deeds which anger Allaah and are pleasing to the shaytaan, who is the enemy of Allaah and His sincere servants. Allaah has threatened such a person with punishment and warned him that these very limbs will be questioned about him on the Day of Judgment, and he will be questioned about them.

وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْئُولًا

which means, **And do not follow that which you have no knowledge about. Verily! The hearing, the sight, and the heart – about all of them you shall be questioned.** [Soorah al-Israa (17):36]

وَتُكَلِّمُنَا أَيْدِيهِمْ وَتَشْهَدُ أَرْجُلُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ

which means, **And their hands will speak to Us, and their legs will bear witness to what they used to earn.** [Soorah Yaa Seen (36):65]

وَيَوْمَ يُحْشَرُ أَعْدَاءُ اللَّهِ إِلَى النَّارِ فَهُمْ يُوزَعُونَ ﴿٤١﴾ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا مَا جَاءُوهَا شَهِدَ عَلَيْهِمْ سَمْعُهُمْ
وَأَبْصَارُهُمْ وَجُلُودُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾ وَقَالُوا لِمَ شَهِدْتُمْ عَلَيْنَا
قَالُوا أَنْطَقَنَا اللَّهُ الَّذِي أَنْطَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ خَلَقَكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ

which means, **And (remember) the Day on which the enemies of Allaah will be gathered to the Fire, so they will be collected there. Till, when they reach it, their hearing, their sight, and their skins will testify against them as to what they used to do. And they will say to their skins, “Why do you testify against us?” They will say, “Allaah has caused us to speak, as He causes all things to speak, and He created you the first time, and to Him you shall return.”** [Soorah Fussilat (41):19-21]

Furthermore, the Prophet (ﷺ) commanded Mu'aath ibn Jabal (رضي الله عنه) to guard his tongue. In turn, Mu'aath inquired, "O Prophet of Allaah! Shall we be taken to account for the words we utter?" The Prophet (ﷺ) replied

ثَكَلْتُكَ أُمُّكَ يَا مُعَاذُ وَهَلْ يَكُوبُ النَّاسَ فِي النَّارِ عَلَى وُجُوهِهِمْ أَوْ قَالَ عَلَى مَنَاخِرِهِمْ إِلَّا حَصَائِدُ أَلْسِنَتِهِمْ

which means, "May your mother be bereaved of you, O Mu'aath! Will the people be thrown into the fire upon their faces – or he said their noses – except due to the harvest of their tongues?" Collected by at-Tirmitheeh.

He (ﷺ) also said

مَنْ يَضْمَنُ لِي مَا بَيْنَ لِحْيَيْهِ وَمَا بَيْنَ رِجْلَيْهِ أَضْمَنَ لَهُ الْجَنَّةَ

which means, "Anyone who guarantees for me (the chastity of) what is between his jawbones and his two legs, then I guarantee Jannah for him." Collected by al-Bukhaaree in his Saheeh from the Hadeeth of Sahl ibn Sa'd (رضي الله عنه). At-Tirmitheeh also collected it from the Hadeeth of Aboo Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) and declared it hasan with its wording as follows

مَنْ وَقَاهُ اللَّهُ شَرَّ مَا بَيْنَ لِحْيَيْهِ وَشَرَّ مَا بَيْنَ رِجْلَيْهِ دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ

which means, "Whoever Allaah protects from the evil of what lies between his own two jawbones and the evil of what lies between his own two legs, he would enter Jannah."

In addition, he (ﷺ) said

مَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَلْيَقُلْ خَيْرًا أَوْ لِيَصْمُتْ

which means, "Whoever believes in Allaah and the last day should speak good or else remain quiet." Collected by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim from the Hadeeth of Aboo Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه). They also collected from the marfoo Hadeeth of Aboo Moosaa (رضي الله عنه)

الْمُسْلِمُ مَنْ سَلِمَ الْمُسْلِمُونَ مِنْ لِسَانِهِ وَيَدِهِ

which means, “The Muslim is the one from whose tongue and hand the Muslims are safe.”

He (ﷺ) said

المُفْلِسُ مِنْ أُمَّتِي مَنْ يَأْتِي يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ بِصَلَاةٍ وَصِيَامٍ وَزَكَاةٍ وَيَأْتِي وَقَدْ شَتَمَ هَذَا وَقَذَفَ هَذَا وَأَكَلَ مَالَ هَذَا وَسَفَكَ دَمَ هَذَا وَضَرَبَ هَذَا فَيُعْطَى هَذَا مِنْ حَسَنَاتِهِ وَهَذَا مِنْ حَسَنَاتِهِ فَإِنْ فَنِيَتْ حَسَنَاتُهُ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَقْضِيَ مَا عَلَيْهِ أُخِذَ مِنْ خَطَايَاهُمْ فَطُرِحَتْ عَلَيْهِ ثُمَّ طُرِحَ فِي النَّارِ

which means, “The bankrupt individual of my Ummah is he who will come on the Day of Judgement with Salaah, Siyaam, and Zakaah. However, he would come while having cursed a certain person, slandered another, unlawfully consumed the wealth of another, shed the blood of another, and beat yet another. Thus, each of those people shall be given from his good deeds. If his deeds are exhausted before his account is settled, then the sins of those people will be cast upon him and he will then be thrown into the Hellfire.” Collected by Muslim.

He (ﷺ) said

حُفَّتِ الْجَنَّةُ بِالْمَكَارِهِ وَحُفَّتِ النَّارُ بِالشَّهَوَاتِ

which means, “Jannah is surrounded by hardships, while the Hellfire is surrounded by temptations.” Collected by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim from the Hadeeth of of Aboo Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه).

In summary, what preceded indicates that Allaah has ordered the servant to guard his tongue, private parts, hearing, sight, hand, and leg from the prohibited deeds. That, in and of itself, is fasting in the linguistic sense. This type of fasting does not have a specific time; rather, it is an act of obedience to Allaah, the Exalted, which must be constantly observed until death in order to earn His pleasure and be saved from His wrath and punishment. During the month of fasting, the Muslim refrains from things that Allaah has otherwise permitted, since He forbade engaging in them during the days of Ramadaan. The lesson obtained from this fact is realizing that Allaah has forbidden the prohibited things for the entire duration of one’s life and a person must refrain from them at all times. This is to be done fearing the punishment of Allaah which He has prepared for those who oppose His command and engage in what He has forbidden.

The Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) informed us in a Qudsee Hadeeth narrated from his Lord that the fasting person has two times of joy. One of them is when he breaks his fast while other is when he meets his Lord. The fasting person rejoices when breaking his fast since the body partakes in beloved things it had been prevented from. He rejoices after having been granted the success of completing the fast for which there is a tremendous reward with Allaah. Additionally, he shall rejoice utmost at the time when he meets his Lord and is graciously rewarded for his fasting.

Whoever preserves his tongue from foul speech and false testimony; his private parts from what Allaah forbade; his hand from what is not permissible to partake in; his hearing from listening to the unlawful; his sight from all that Allaah has prohibited looking at; and has used these limbs and faculties in permissible ways, protecting and controlling them until Allaah takes his life, then he shall break this fasting of his with the delight which Allaah has prepared for those who obey Him.

The Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) explained the first delight the believer shall encounter at the time of departing from this world to the abode of the hereafter. During his final moments in this world, angels will approach him looking as though the sun is shining upon their faces. They will have a shroud from Jannah along with perfume for embalming from Jannah as well. The Angel of Death will lead them and he will say, “O good-natured soul! Come out to forgiveness from Allaah, and His being pleased with you.” At that, his soul would exit just as a drop flows from the mouth of the water skin, and events would transpire afterwards just as the Noble Messenger (ﷺ) explained.

These are the bright first signs to be experienced by the person who is keen in seeking out happiness for himself and strives to absolve it from anything that would lead to ruin and destruction. For this reason, the man who asked about establishment of the hour was directed by the Doctor of Hearts (ﷺ) to something even more important than the time of its occurrence. In particular, he guided him to preparing for it by performing good deeds, and replied saying, “And what have you prepared for it?” This indicates that throughout one’s worldly existence, he must prepare for his life in the hereafter. Allaah, the Most Exalted, has said

وَتَزَوَّدُوا فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الزَّادِ التَّقْوَىٰ ۗ وَانقُورِ يَتَأُولَىٰ ٱللَّابِبِ

which means, **And take a provision with you for the journey and, indeed, the best provision is Taqwaa. Therefore, have Taqwaa of Me, O men of understanding!** [Soorah al-Baqarah (2):197]

Every journey undertaken requires a suitable provision, and the provision for the journey towards the hereafter comprises Taqwaa of Allaah, acting in obedience to Him, and following the sound course which was brought by His esteemed Messenger, may the best Salaah and perfect Salaam be sent upon him.

A Closing Word

I wish to conclude this lecture with a word that pertains specifically to us who have been blessed by Allaah to reside in Taybah at-Taybah, Daar al-Hijrah, and the first capital for the Muslims.

The blessed month of Ramadaan is a month ennobled by Allaah, and given certain distinguishing qualities which are found in no other month. We, along with the entire Muslim Ummah, parted with this month some days ago and we hope to have all succeeded during it in pleasing Allaah. What I wish to mention here is that this virtuous and sacred time has elapsed and left us, and has similarly left all of the Muslims in every place. However, for us in particular, we reside in a sacred place and all praise and favour belong to Allaah. As such, in the month of Ramadaan, Allaah has combined for us a virtuous time along with a virtuous place, and when the former departs the latter remains. Here, right in front of us, is the Masjid of the Prophet (ﷺ), and it is a marketplace among those of the hereafter. It is authentically reported from him (ﷺ), who does not speak out of his own desire, that he said

صَلَاةٌ فِي مَسْجِدِي هَذَا خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَلْفِ صَلَاةٍ فِيْمَا سِوَاهُ إِلَّا الْمَسْجِدَ الْحَرَامَ

which means, “A prayer in this Masjid of mine is better than one thousand prayers anywhere else, except for al-Masjid al-Haraam.”

It is certainly a tremendous bounty from Allaah that one prayer in this blessed Masjid of the Noble Messenger exceeds one thousand prayers in all other Masaajid except al-Masjid al-Haraam. There is no doubt that those who are engrossed with worldly trade seek after the seasons when demand is high for goods and business flourishes. They would endure perilous conditions and cross deserts just to move their business from one place to another when they know that the item which costs one riyaaal can be sold for two. Similarly, in this virtuous city, a single prayer in the Masjid of the Master of the sons of Aadam (ﷺ) does not amount to two, three, ten or even one hundred prayers. Rather, it exceeds one thousand prayers in any other place except for al-Masjid al-Haraam. Subhaanallaah!

How incredible is Allaah's favour, and vast is His kindness and generosity. To Him belong all praise and gratitude for His blessings.

I must not neglect to mention that since Allaah has blessed us immensely to be residents of Taybah at-Taybah, we must not forget that the responsibility is proportional to the magnitude of the blessing. Just as performing good deeds in this sanctified place has tremendous reward with Allaah, committing sins in it is not like committing sins in other places which do not have a virtuous quality associated with them. This means that someone who disobeys Allaah while being far away from the sanctified area (Haram) is not like the one who disobeys Him whilst inside the Haram itself. In other words, someone who performs forbidden acts while he is in the East or the West is not the same as one who commits sins inside Makkah al-Mukarramah or al-Madeenah al-Munawwarah. The discrepancy between the two is indeed great. That being said, al-Madeenah al-Munawwarah is the most honourable and sanctified spot on the face of the Earth after Makkah al-Mukarramah. It follows Makkah in virtue and is followed by al-Masjid al-Aqsa. This venerable city was the starting point of the Message, and from it emanated the light that spread to all quarters of the Earth. It was the central location and the first capital for the Muslims in the era of the Prophet (ﷺ) from the time he migrated there, and also during the time of Aboo Bakr, Umar, Uthmaan, and some of the era of Alee, may Allaah be pleased with them all. Located in it are the graves of the Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ), Aboo Bakr, Umar, Uthmaan, and a great number of companions. Jibreel (عليه السلام) descended upon this piece of the Earth with the revelation from the heavens to Muhammad (ﷺ). It is the land containing the first ever Islaamic University, whose most outstanding graduates were Aboo Bakr as-Siddeeq, Umar al-Farooq, Uthmaan thun-Noorayn, as well as Alee Abul-Hasanayn, who was the cousin of the Prophet (ﷺ), his son-in-law, and the fourth of the rightly guided caliphs. May Allaah be pleased with them and with all the remaining companions. This is the land which has been tread upon by the feet of the cream of the crop and most elite among mankind after the Prophets: the companions of the Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ), may Allaah be pleased with all of them. Therefore, since Allaah has favoured us to be residing here, it is only right that we seek to obtain from it the provision of righteous deeds which will benefit us after death, and that we remain vigilant whilst in it, lest we commit anything that would cause the wrath of Allaah, the Most Mighty and Majestic.

I ask Allaah, the Most Exalted, to make us all among those whose fasting and standing in prayer were accepted by Him, and that He grant us in this fine land a respectable life, sound morals, and a good ending. I hope from Him, may He be Glorified, that He guide the Muslims all over the world to return to the Book of their Lord and the Sunnah of His Messenger (ﷺ), so that they might succeed by attaining happiness in both this world and the hereafter. Indeed, He is all-Hearing and the One

who Answers prayers. May Allaah bless and send Salaah and Salaam upon His servant, Messenger, Khaleel, and chosen one from the creation – Muhammad the son of Abdullaah – and upon his family, companions, and all who follow his path and are directed by his guidance until the Last Day.