

## **Mercy is in the Beginning of Ramadan**

Friday Sermon Presented by

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Oh beloved brethren, congratulations to you and to all the Islamic Ummah on the coming of the blessed month of Ramadan as we are today on the last day of Sha'ban according to some Islamic countries, and on the first day of Ramadan in some others.

How magnificent this occasion is!

How pleasant this specialty is! It is the specialty that the souls wait for, the hearts are eager to, and in which the souls are purified and chastened!

In the sound Hadith, modified by As Suyuti (MBUH), from Ibn Abid Dunia, from the Prophet (PBUH) who said: "**The beginning of Ramadan is mercy, its middle is forgiveness, and its end is release from Hell Fire.**

How pleasant the occasion of this month is! In its first ten days, there is mercy, in its second ten days, there is forgiveness, and in its third ten days, there is release from Hell Fire!

As we are on the threshold of this great month, the month of Allah in which Allah forgives His slaves, pities His slaves, and favors His slaves by releasing them from Hell Fire, how magnificent it is for us to avail ourselves of these specialties!

As we are on the threshold of this month and its beginning, i.e., the time of mercy, it is pleasant to talk about mercy that we need urgently.

How much we need the mercy of Allah, Exalted He is, by which He pities our souls, our hearts, our spirits and our bodies!

How much we need a mercy that runs into us so that we pity one another!

Do you remember the Hadith of the Prophet (PBUH) who said: **"The merciful get the mercy of Allah. Have mercy on those who are on the earth, and the One Who is in heaven will have mercy on you"**.

When mercy is sent by the Exalted Allah, it means honoring and favoring to man. It is one of the meanings of grace and benevolence from the Exalted Allah to His slaves. This mercy of Allah is so extensive that it is capable of encompassing all the universe. It is He, Exalted He is, who said:

**"But my mercy extends to all things"**. His mercy is ready and capable of encompassing all the universe, but He, Exalted He is, said: **That {mercy} I shall ordain for those who do right"** (Al A'raf, 156).

The Exalted Allah gives some of his extensive mercy, which is capable of encompassing all creatures, to some of His slaves. He said: **"He punishes whom He pleases, and He grants mercy to whom He pleases, and towards Him are you turned"** (Al 'Ankabut, 21).

He also said: "**Your Lord is full of mercy all embracing; but from people in guilt never will his wrath be turned back**" (Al An'am, 147).

It is He, Exalted He is, who said: "**Those who reject the Signs of Allah and the Meeting with Him {in the Hereafter}, it is they who shall despair of my mercy; it is they who will {suffer} a most grievous Penalty**" (Al 'Ankabut, 23).

Accordingly, in spite of the fact that mercy is capable of encompassing all creatures, yet, He, Exalted He is, honors some of His slaves with it. The one who gets the mercy of Allah is a winner and successful, but the one who loses it is the forfeiter.

Read the following statement of the Exalted Allah: "**Had it not been for the Grace and Mercy of Allah to you, you had surely been among the lost**" (Al Baqarah, 64).

By the mercy of Allah, man becomes successful and prosperous.

As we are in the beginning of Ramadan whose beginning is mercy, the presence of mercy is consistent with the slave's revealing of joy. Man is used to feeling joy at getting the material, but when he finds the bounty and generosity of the Exalted Allah on the occasion of mercy, he feels joy as he remembers the Exalted Allah's statement: "**Say: in the Bounty of Allah. And in his mercy, in that let them rejoice: that is better than the {wealth} they hoard**" (Yunus, 58).

This is the first headlines of the month of Ramadan in behavior. The headline that we feel in the beginning of

Ramadan is to change the joy at hoarding the material into joy because of the favor of Allah and His mercy to us.

"**Say**", and the addressee is our Master, Muhammad (PBUH), say to them so that they might understand and change the direction of their hearts. Be their teacher and their instructor **"in the Bounty of Allah. And in his mercy, in that let them rejoice"**. This is the cause that man should rejoice in.

**"That is better than the {wealth} they hoard"**. They are used to rejoicing in and being cheerful about accumulating wealth all their life. But the people of faith who have understanding from the Exalted Allah realize the source of rejoicing. They turn away from rejoicing in accumulating worldly wealth into rejoicing in getting the favor of Allah and His mercy.

Oh brethren, real rejoicing is when you go to perform At Tarawih (the night supererogatory prayer in Ramadan), when you fast for the sake of Allah, when you spend out of your wealth in the cause of Allah... .

Expenditure is not restricted to Zakat that is obligatory. You have to spend Zakat to the poor at the lapse of a year, but when you spend more in Ramadan, and you find how successful you will be by the aid of the Exalted Allah, then be joyful and reveal this joy.

Consequently, rejoice in your success in performing Tarawih, rejoice in your success to be pious, rejoice in your success to avoid amusement centers, rejoice in making your night devotion to Allah, rejoice in His making you unlike the unbelievers and the materialists who spend their time watching space serials instead of turning to the

Exalted Allah by their hearts, and instead of employing their time in being close to Allah. Some people occupy themselves in watching the dancers, in doing vain useless activities. Some who have abusive minds wait for Ramadan to amuse themselves in abusiveness that implies all types of aberration.

Where is the specialty of Ramadan?

Where is the specialty of chastity?

Should the nights of Ramadan, in which Allah forgives His slaves and pities His slaves, be an occasion for libertinism?

Should these nights be an occasion for doing vain useless activities?!

It is the lowest level of occupying one's time.

This phenomenon that has prevailed over the Islamic world is described, at least, as distraction for the Muslim from Ramadan, in addition to its being full of legal violations, distraction from mentioning Allah, from reading the Qur'an, from turning the heart to Allah.... Make this temporal circumstance a time for spiritual retreat to your Lord. The Prophet (PBUH) used to spend all Ramadan in Harra' Cave in devotion to Allah.

Oh youth, where is Harra' Cave?

Make your life Harra' Cave while you are among people. Al Jariri, Abu Muhammad (MBUH) said: "**Solitude is to be among the crowd of people, but they do not crowd in your interior**". It is to have your inner heart communicated with Allah only.

Be resolute to be slaves only to Allah before the coming of this month, at the sunset of this day. If you do that, Ramadan will be yours.

But if habits in this month predominate over the concept of worship, we will be deprived of the month of Ramadan, and this opportunity, that is repeated only once in a year, will have passed, and you might die before the coming of the next Ramadan.

The Exalted Allah said: "**But the Mercy of your Lord is better than the {wealth} which they amass**" (Az Zukhruf, 32).

He also said: "**Is one who worships devoutly during the hours of the night prostrating himself or standing {in adoration}, who takes heed of the Hereafter, and who places his hope in the Mercy of his Lord {like one who does not}?**" (Az Zukhruf, 9).

Shouldn't we seek mercy that we always hope for in this time of mercy while we are in the time of mercy?

"**Say: are those equal, those who know and those who do not know?**" (Az Zumur, 9). The calamity is in recognition, in man's knowledge of his Lord. When man's recognition of the material becomes stronger than his recognition of his Lord, his interest becomes focused on the occasion of entertainment in Ramadan.

Another cause of special mercy, as is mentioned in the Holy Qur'an, is the following:

1-Listening to the Holy Qur'an with attentiveness. When you read the Qur'an, listen carefully to what you are reading. Do not have the illusion that "**When the Qur'an is**

**read**" means somebody else reads it, for the reciter is Allah, whether you recite it or another person does. It is Allah Who said: "**But when We have promulgated it, follow thou its recital {as promulgated}**" (Al Qiyamah, 18).

The Reader is Allah, so you have to listen attentively. Whether you recite the Qur'an, or another person does, listen attentively to Allah Who is reading: "**When the Quran is read**". This statement is presented in the passive voice so that the knowledgeable be distinguished from the ignorant, because the latter would say: "Who reads?", but the knowledgeable knows for sure that it is Allah Who is reading.

**"listen to it with attention, and hold your peace: that you may receive mercy"** (Al A'raf, 204).

If you desire to have mercy, sit in the presence of the Exalted Allah and listen to Him. Be resolute in the month of Ramadan to read the Qur'an repeatedly, not only by the tongue, but also by the heart, by the mind, and be disciplined by it and obedient to its instructions. How should your attitude be if you sit with the venerated??

Remember this while you sit to listen from Allah. If you do that you will get mercy.

2-the Exalted Allah said: "**Among them are men who molest the Prophet and say, 'He is {all} ear}'. Say, 'He listens to what is best for you; he believes in Allah, has faith in the Believers, and is a Mercy to those of you who believe"** (At Tawbah, 61).

Our Master, Muhammad (PBUH) is a mercy to those who believe among you because he is mercy to the world.

Certainly, he is mercy to the world, but the mercy of the believers is a specific one.

As we are told by the Exalted Allah that we get mercy by the Qur'an, as well as by Muhammad (PBUH), we have to remember this fact in every prayer we perform when we say: "Peace be upon you, oh Prophet".

You sit in the presence of your Lord as well as in the presence of Muhammad (PBUH) and salute them, and by means of your greeting the Prophet (PBUH), you invoke Allah's mercy "**and is a Mercy to those of you who believe**". Consequently, listening to the Qur'an and being attentive to it is the cause of your getting mercy, and when you love Muhammad (PBUH) deeply and be engrossed in his love and perish in his meaning, this will be the cause of your getting mercy too, and what a great mercy!

3- The Exalted Allah said: "**For the mercy of Allah is {always} near to those who do good**" (Al A'raf, 56).

Do enter into the sphere of benevolence outwardly and inwardly, in behavior, in deeds and in state. The Qur'an produces mercy, so is the Prophet (PBUH). As explained by the Prophet (PBUH), benevolence is: "**To worship Allah as if you see Him, and if you cannot achieve this state of devotion then you must consider that He is looking at you**". Thus, benevolence in this context is the cause of getting mercy.

4-Obedience to Allah and His Messenger, submission to His orders, and avoiding his prohibitions are the cause of getting mercy. The Exalted Allah said: "**And obey Allah and the Messenger; that you may obtain mercy**" (Al Imran, 132).



How do you allow yourself to commit disobedience in the time of mercies?

Be disciplined and listen to Allah and His Messenger.

5- The Exalted Allah said: **"The Believers, men and women, are protectors, one of another: they enjoin what is just, and forbid what is evil; they observe regular prayers, practice regular charity, and obey Allah and His Messenger. On them will Allah pour His Mercy"** (At Tawbah, 71).

**"The Believers, men and women, are protectors, one of another; they enjoin what is just, and forbid what is evil".**

Turn to your family and order them to do good and be obedient to Allah so that they avoid evil.

Recommend your friends the same so that they avoid doing evil. Be their Imam by being pious.

**"They observe regular prayers"**. Prayer should be performed in form and in soul. It is to stand in the presence of Allah while you are communicated with Him, not with the present life. When you begin your prayer, cut your relationships with the others.

**"They practice regular charity"**. If you are of those who fall short of paying Zakat, be careful to set yourself right.

Nowadays, if Zakat on lands for sale were paid only in the city of Aleppo, the poor people of Syria would be satisfied.

There are some who depend on the advisory opinion that has no relationship with reality. The Office of Legal Opinions in Aleppo has issued advisory opinion that Zakat

is an obligation for every Muslim on all possessions paid every year (including lands that are prepared for sail), so that one should not depend on mere rumors said by so and so.

If Zakat on land only in Aleppo were paid, the poor people in all Syria would be satisfied, so how if Zakat were paid by all the owners of lands in all Ash Sham country? And how if Zakat were paid in all our Islamic world?

We are an Ummah that has all the constituents of revival, but we turn away from them. We are an Ummah in whose theoretical legislation there is guarantee of its renaissance, but today, we turn away from the principles of our legislation and present pretexts. The liars lie to us, and the irreligious try to search for some legal opinions that might justify their giving up Zakat. Then the Exalted Allah said: "**and obey Allah and His Messenger**" without hesitation.

When As Saddiq (ABPWH) was asked to explain the meaning of what he had said concerning the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), he summarized the matter by saying "**If he said that, then certainly he is true**", and the matter was determined.

I am astonished at some who debate about some details though it has been proved that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) did and recommended them. But sorrowfully, personal interests prevail and blind the others.

The method of the right path is clear enough, but personal interests prevail and blind them.

Then the Exalted Allah said: "**On them will Allah pour His Mercy**" (At Tawbah, 71).

6- the Exalted Allah said: **"If only you ask Allah for forgiveness, you may hope to receive mercy"** (An Naml, 46).

Make the door of Ramadan an entrance to repentance, and be, all of you, repentant to Allah.

**"How can the heart be illuminated while the forms of creatures are reflected in its mirror?**

**Or how can it journey to Allah while shackled by its passion?**

**Or how can it desire to enter the Presence of Allah while it has not yet purified itself of the stains of forgetfulness?**

**Or how can it understand the subtle points of mysteries while it has not yet repented of its offenses?"**

These are the causes of getting mercy.

Some other causes of getting mercy are:

6-Removal of disagreement among brothers:

Do not cut your relationship with anybody so that you get mercy, because if the Exalted Allah pities His slaves and bestows mercy, bounty and forgiveness upon them, he will not do that upon a contender or the one who severs his relationship with a relative. Read the following words of the Exalted Allah: **"The Believers are but a single Brotherhood"**. Do feel this bond, and let us all feel this bond, the bond of faith that is the most sacred bond.

**"So make peace and reconciliation between your two {contending} brothers"**. No doubt, enmity among people

is inevitable, for it is a human natural feeling, and disagreement is inevitable too, but in this case the people of reformation and of educating as well as proselytizers should interfere to remove this disagreement by reformation.

**"And fear Allah"** in this interference for reconciliation, because the Exalted Allah dislikes giving up this process of reconciliation.

**"That you may receive Mercy"** (Al Hujurat, 10) by your reformation and by your removing disagreements.

Allah willing, we may complete dealing with mercy in Ramadan, for dealing with this subject takes a longer time, but in the beginning of the month of mercy, and on the occasion of mercy, I want only to talk about, at least, part of this matter.

Allahum..., guide us to You favorably, and make us from those who listen to wisdom and follow the best of it.

I say my words and ask Allah's forgiveness.