

August 28, 2009

Khutbah

Title: Ramadān: The Gift to Acquire is Sabr/Patience

DVD title: Ramadān: The Best Gift to Acquire is Sabr/Patience

(Opening duas). Allah Swt says, “**Truly the *sadaqa* goes to the poor and the needy, and those employed to collect the *zakat*, and to the reconciliation of hearts, and for freeing captives, and for those in debt in the way of Allah, and for the wayfarer. An obligation from Allah, and Allah is Knowing and Wise.**” (9:60)

Allah Swt in this month of Ramadān tells us that this is the month of giving, remembering, of serving, and of patience for us. The Prophet (sal) told us that this month has many blessings for those who fast, and among those blessings is mercy and guidance and revelation of Qur'an, and peace, happiness, rejoicing, forgiveness, repentance, just to name a few. But how do we get there? Do we get there by just arriving at the month of Ramadān? “It's the month of Ramadān; now we are going to be patient. Now we are going to be merciful, and everything's fine. All the guidance we get will be good. We will repent fully and totally and everything will be fine, because this is the month of Ramadān. Asalaamu aleikum!”

The Prophet Mohammed (sal) announced it. He said, “**O people! A great and blessed month is approaching. It is the month of Ramadān, a month of patience. The reward of patience is Paradise.**” So the month of Ramadān arrives like a box, and inside of it are some gifts from Indonesia? We are talking about some kind of alchemic event. The potential is there. What is it like? Seeds that you plant in the ground, and then you have

to water them and take care of them. Only the month of Ramadān has Dr. Hassouna's aduvent on the seeds, but you still have to plant and water them. The yield will be 100-500% greater because it's the month of Ramadān. *Asalaamu aleikum!* (You're getting several *khutbahs* today.)

That's what's happening. Do you see that? If you anxiously and impatiently come to the month of Ramadān, that's fine. But when you arrive, you will be practicing patience. As I've told you, over 100 times, in 25 different forms, and in 46 *sūrah*s, the word *sabr* is used in Qur'an. For those who are patient, especially during Ramadān, the reward will be very great. What do you bring to it? You bring your faith. That's your seed aduvent. You bring your trust, your submission. You bring to it the teachings you get every day. Then, on top of it all, you bring your *muraqabah*: the teachings of Tasawwuf. That increases your yield many times over. If you don't buy into that yet, you are still stuck in your structuralist mentality, because you can experience it. The maximum reward of Paradise itself comes to you. The one who practices patience in many ways during this wonderful month does so by not eating when wanting to eat, not drinking when wanting to drink, not being too upset emotionally when you want to be, being patient with individuals and ourselves, and in many other ways.

When we act with faith and obedience, what happens to, as Allah Swt says, "**those who are patient and who perform good deeds**"? (11:11) There is a formula there: you are patient and perform good deeds. What form do those good deeds take? Do you just write a check to a poor person? No. You can do that, fine, but that's not it. You perform the good deeds of refraining from speaking what shouldn't be spoken, refraining from doing certain things. You will now think before you act, or you perform the good deed of repenting, because you forgot or misspoke. What is the reward? "**Theirs will be forgiveness and a great reward.**" (11:11) The Prophet (sal) informed us that,

“Whoever fasts with conviction and iman and with expectations, their reward is forgiveness.”

In another *hadith*, the Holy Prophet (sal) said, “**Whosoever fasts Ramadān with conviction and with expectations, his previous mistakes will be forgiven.**” What kind of expectations? Expecting that Allah Swt will fulfill His will and promise to us. If I’m in harmony and resonance with this month, things will go as they are destined and intended to go by Allah Swt—the conviction of a belief. There is the kind of expectation that all that is promised to us will be given to us, but we have to train ourselves without so much outside help (to abstain from food and drink and other things). We have to strengthen our personality and character. For those who can restrain and focus on the essentials of life for this period of time, Allah Swt reveals [in *hadith quds*], “**You have the reward of an eternity in Paradise. The fasting person leaves his food, his beverages, his lusts for My sake. Fasting is for Me, and I am the One to reward. A good thing is to be rewarded ten times.**”

During this month, the month teaches us something. It teaches us how to make Ramadān give out patience and forgiveness. We perform the Taraweeh. We wake up and perform the *tahajjud* before Fajr. We read the whole Qur'an. We perform Fajr early in the morning. We spent the last quarter or third of the night in remembering, retreat, meditation, and contemplation. We make some *itikāf*. We ask for forgiveness. When a person develops the qualities that allow us to do that, or as we develop the qualities that allow us to do all that, we are not only good Muslims, we are good human beings. We are not only a good human being, we are a good example. We are not only a good example, we are a good *mu'min*. So the best gift that a person can acquire in this life is that of *sabr*. Whoever tries to develop *sabr*, Allah Swt gives them *sabr*. There is nothing better and more bountiful than this patience in the heart of the human being. With

compassion comes patience, and with patience comes compassion.

During fasting, we are enjoined to control our emotions with patience, even though someone is trying to provoke, intimidate, aggravate, or insult us. We control our egos, *insh'allah*. We try to act abnormally until the abnormal becomes our normal. I think each one of us has experienced a lot of success and a lot of failure in this process, especially during Ramadān when the magnifying glass is on us. That's very, very important. In this month of Ramadān, there is a great deal of challenge for us in remembering who this fasting belongs to. Allah Swt reveals in *hadith quds*, "**Fasting is Mine, and it is I Who gives reward for it. A man gives up his passion, his food, his drink for My sake. Fasting is like a shield. He who fasts has two joys: the joy when he breaks his fast, and his joy when he meets his Lord. The change in the breath of the mouth of him who fasts is better in Allah's estimation than the smell of musk.**" Allah Swt also reveals to us in Qur'an, "**O you who have attained to secure belief, endure and be steadfast and strengthen each other. Guard yourselves in order that you may be successful.**" (3:200)

Today, brothers and sisters, friends, students, community brothers and sisters, we pray to Allah Swt that He gives us patience, especially in these early days of Ramadān. We are only 7 days into Ramadān. We don't want to say, "Finally! I achieved something at the end of Ramadān." We want to achieve it today. We want to build from all the years of Ramadān. We want to come into Ramadān a much more full human being this year, a much more pious human being, much more giving and sacrificing and patient, and trustworthy human being—believer, Muslim, brother, sister, friend, uncle, auntie, mother, child, *shaykh*. We pray that He increases our patience and perseverance, and gives us more perseverance in the face of things which test us every day. Even as we walk out this door, we don't know what's coming. We endure all types of tests, and pray to Allah Swt

to give us calmness and balance in our lives and activities. We pray for the good *adab* of the children to the parents, the adults to one another, the friends to one another, and of all of us to one another, of ourselves to the *ambiyā*, to the *awliyā*, to the *shuyukh*, to Allah Swt. *Asalaamu aleikum.*

Closing Duas. O Allah, we are all gathered here today and want to ask You for Your blessing especially on the soul of Senator Ted Kennedy, who made in many ways our life possible and easier in this country, to do the work that we do. We pray for his soul and for the comfort and patience and perseverance of his family. Albeit, he may not understand, and they do not, the blessing of dying during the month of Ramadān is a great blessing to descend from You upon him. O Allah, You brought a believer back to Your Heart. There were many stories of his belief, how he would come to the cemetery quietly and sit there for a brief period of time and make prayers. It was his regular practice to leave the cemetery and talk to the people there and console them, who were visiting their relatives. Many good stories about him, how he would listen to stories and immediately go to his office and help the poor or the person who was ill and had no insurance or no means. He was a true believer, and we ask You, Allah, to send Your multiple blessings upon his heart and his soul and his family. Raise up from among us others like him, and silence those hypocrites who are unlike him, but who hold the name or position without the meaning of the position he has.

O Allah, there are those among us who are not well. We ask for Your Blessings upon them, and those among us in this room who have not been feeling well and in the community, who have sought our medical help. We are asking you Allah Swt for Your spiritual *shifāt*. You are the most glorious responder with Your *Nai'ma*, Your Blessing, Your Grace, and Your Mercy. We ask You to shine that mercy upon all of us who have need, who suffer from some illness whether we know it or not, from disease, especially in

this month. *Amin.*