

September 18, 2009

Khutbah



Title: [Farewell to Ramadān](#)

DVD title: Salām to Our Friend, Ramadān:  
Reflections on this Month

*Asalaamu aleikum.* It's a beautiful day. [There are] signs of the Laylatul Qadr from last night on. Today is the final farewell to our friend, visitor and companion, Ramadān. Later I will tell you some words that Ramadān spoke to me today before he told me he was leaving. We begin our move toward the Eidal-Fitr and the month of Shawwal. In the Holy Qur'an, Allah (swt) reveals to us,

**And surely this community of yours is one community and I am your Lord. So be conscious of me and ward off evil within and without. But they have separated their affair of unity among the believers. They have separated their affairs between them, each set rejoicing in what they have. So leave them alone in their condition for a while. They calculate what we give them in wealth and children. We are hastening to them with good things; nay, but they do not perceive their error.**  
(23:52-56)

We have had a month of reflection. It's not too late – we have another day left. Solidify your plans and your relationship with the months to come. *Inshā'a-Llāh*, we will all have the opportunity to fast again. Today is a very important day in our lives. It's Friday. We have heard the importance of Friday and the opening of the *khutbah*. This particular

Friday is very unique. It is the last Friday in the month of Ramadān, and allows us to have a double blessing, with the doors of Hell being closed, and the opportunity for us to reflect upon ourselves and receive the blessings of Allah (swt). Each one of us in some way are like those who are spoken about in the Qur'an: we see but we don't see. We divide ourselves, and we don't realize the great blessings that are always coming toward us. Also, the doors of Paradise are opened on Fridays. I venture to say that none of us feel quite ready or qualified to receive the status of those who have confidence that we will have our place in Paradise. But we are hopeful, *inshā'a-llāh*

In this blessed month of Ramadān, we have studied and talked about and experienced this reflection. We begin to think about our friend Ramadān leaving. We will have a farewell party on the Eid. But, as I suspect, he will sneak out before that. This month is most dear to us, and every sincere Muslim will return only after the year has turned one revolution. We understand that for some people, it doesn't come back. We pray that Allah gives respite to those who don't return for another month of Ramadān. We hope that those who are not well this year, who have not been able to fast completely or at all, have the opportunity to have their health back in the next year and are able to fast.

We have to think that we may not have the opportunity to fast again. We have to reflect on how well we have done this year. We don't want to lose any of the blessings of this holy month, whether we have strived to do it outwardly or inwardly. For those who worship Allah with sincerity, of course, Allah is always with us. Ramadān leaves us with all the blessings and rewards. Hopefully, they will remain; and we hope and pray that we will continue to have them. That lies in the realm of our ability, each one of us, to fulfill our duties and responsibilities. One thing we can talk about and reflect upon for the next few days is those commitments and responsibilities toward Allah (swt). I also hope that we will be contemplating and reflecting upon the virtues of this month, and the character

that it develops during this month. Tonight I'll speak on that subject.

Though the month passes by, we cannot leave it. We can fast for 6 days in the month of Shawwal, as we are enjoined to do. Many of us have days to make up, by the will of Allah. Whoever fasts during the month of Shawwal is rewarded the reward equivalent to a year's fast. The Prophet Mohammed (sal) said, ***“Whoever fasts for Ramadan and then follows it with 6 days in Shawwal, will attain the fasting equivalent to a year.”*** What a great blessing. In the last few days of Ramadān, we put our house in order and prepare for the retreat and for guests. We are still preparing. We have to complete the recitation of Qur'an. *Inshā'a-Llāh*, tonight we will do the 29<sup>th</sup> Juz, and I ask us all to read the 30<sup>th</sup> in our evening tonight, so we have it complete by tomorrow morning, *inshā'a-Llāh*.

We have to increase and magnify our kindness, our generosity, and our hospitality. We have a wonderful opportunity to do that. Old ones, dear ones, loved ones are returning, and some new people are coming to taste the hospitality and the warmth of our community. *Inshā'a-Llāh*, everyone will reach out for that. We should pay the general *zakat*, and we should pay *zakat al-fitr*, which everyone has done. The children returned today after buying over \$200 of food and taking it to the food bank. We have been doing this every year for the last 25 years, *alhamdulillah*.

We have tried our best to observe and find Laylatul Qadr, and wish we had more opportunities to find it, and more assurances that we found it. Let's assume Allah has let us find Laylatul Qadr due to our sincerity. We all could have done more and sat longer. Today is not a bad day to make the intention that if Allah allows you to fast next year or participate in Ramadān, you'll spend that whole night seeking Laylatul Qadr and that it will be revealed to you. On the Eid, we have the opportunity to distribute good words, kind thoughts, and gifts, and greetings to one another. Some people who made *itikāf*

found great benefit this year. Some prefer to go a step further and continue *dhikrullah* and *tasbih* every night. We need to prepare our hearts and enjoy the celebration that is coming with the passing of this month and the leaving of our friend. Certainly, there are some who pray they can celebrate by leaving this planet during Ramadān. We hope everybody remains here, however. What a great blessing.

Fasting, reading Qur'an and contemplation in the month of Ramadān has to be accompanied by other things. The most important is the remembering of Allah (swt) by realizing, “**Wheresoever you turn, there is the countenance of Allah.**” And it is important to understand what that really means. We are living at an incredible time of need to remember this. I don't want to come to the *minbar* and talk about the world we are living in any detail, but to remind us all that there is a great deal of good that needs to come to this world. It doesn't come through some esoteric way, but through the good character and actions of people. (I'll speak on *akhlaq* and you can derive the *'aqīda* from that.) It defines the way people relate to the world, and the way the world relates to people—believers and non-believers, Muslims and non-Muslims.

We have achieved a great deal over these years. There have been tests and trials over this year. There have been losses of good and great people; you may all know who they are. There have been new births in our own community this year, with both hope and anxiety for the future. There are changes that have taken place. So we have to remember what is being said to us. In my discussion with Sidi Ramadān, I wrote down some of the things he said to me. (When Ramadān is speaking to a woman, it is a woman. Isn't that amazing?) He said to me, “Your life consists of days and nights, hours and minutes. Not a day goes by without it saying to you, ‘O son of Adam! I am a new day. I am witness to your deeds. So make the most of me for I will not return to you except on the Day of Judgment.’ Wisdom calls out to you and says, ‘O son of Adam! You are just a number of

days, because the days of your life in this world are numbered. If a day of your life passes by, then see it as part of your passing by. With each day that goes by, your life shortens. These passing days carry forth the deeds that you did to the next life, so look to what you fulfill, and what you fill your days full with.”

He continued with some advice to me that I’m sharing with you. This is a month chosen by Allah (swt). He said, “Allah made me a great means for worship in Islam by means of fasting. Muslims beautify me with their fasting, prayers and congregation, their night prayers and by doing various good deeds that bring them closer to Allah. Allah (swt) has beautified me by giving me the night which is better than a thousand months, Laylatul Qadr. How fortunate is a person who gains the blessings and goodness of this month, and how *unfortunate* is the person who is heedless and preoccupied with other things to gain nearness to his master. How *unfortunate* is the person who passes by one year for the next without any change, finding each year as he left the previous one.”

“O Muslim! Ask yourself: what did you gain from this month? What acts of obedience and extra good deeds did you do in this month that you did not do prior to it?” The most important question was whispered to me: “Did you change during Ramadān? Did you better your state? Did you leave your bad habits? Did you leave off those things that would not please Allah (swt)? Did you get closer to your Lord? Did you cry and repent for your sins? Did you do good to those around you—your family and your friends?”

*Astaghfiru-Llāh!* There are many questions which we need to ask ourselves and answer individually and personally. If your answers are in the positive, this is good tidings, glad news. This is a sign of deeds and repentance being accepted. If your answers to these questions are in the negative, then ask Allah (swt) right now for forgiveness and blessings, refuge and help against your desires from the Shaytan. I’ll pause just in case someone has to join me in asking.

“*O Muslim! Islam does not want you to be a seasonal people, obeying Allah in certain months and then cutting your link immediately after you are finished.*” One of the pious forerunners said, “*The most miserable communities are those who do not know Allah except in Ramadān. So be people of divine characteristics and not people of Ramadān only.*” Do not be people who follow Islam and Ramadan only. Be obedient to Allah in all the months, at all times. Continue with your acts of obedience after Ramadān ends. This will be proof that Allah has accepted your fast and prayers. A sign of your good deeds and being accepted is that you are granted the blessing to be able to follow it with another good deed. Allah (swt) says in Suratu Maryam, “**Allah increases the guidance of those who choose to be guided.**”(19:76)

He left me with some other impressions. One of the signs of being punished for doing bad deeds is that you follow it up with another bad deed. This is a punishment that is here in this worldly life before life in the Hereafter. But if you repent, this causes Allah (swt) to be pleased with us and to increase our good deeds and follow them with better acts, with steadfastness and consistency in doing them. This is the characteristic of a noble person, a person of *akhlaq*. The Prophet (sal) constantly asked Allah (swt), “***O Turner of hearts! Make my heart firm in Your Dīn.***” And from the supplications in Qur’an there is, “**Our Lord! Let our hearts waver now that You have guided us. Shower us with Your Mercy, for You are the Grantor.**” (3:8)

What more, my dear brothers and sisters, can we say but to bid farewell to our friend, Ramadān, who has left us with a good message. *Salām*, it is said, all over the Muslim world: *Salām to you, O month of illumination of the heart. Salām to you, O month of compensation for past sins. Salām to you, O sacred month in which lies the night that is better than a thousand nights. Salām, salām, O month of Ramadān, O sacred month*

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*whose nights are blessed by Almighty Allah and are a means of one's passing. Salām to you, O month of virtue and blessings of Almighty Allah. Salām to you, O month of charity and fasting. Salām to you, O month of ibāda and Taraweeh and remembrance of Allah. Salām to you, O month of takbīr and glorification of Allah. Salām to you, O honorable visitor we have welcomed enthusiastically. O traveler, we bid you an honorable farewell. Salām, O month of Ramadān, blessed are you. We know not whether you will be a witness for us or against us on the Day of Judgment. This is your last conversation with us. We do not know whether you will return to us in our lifetime, or whether death will overtake us. Allahu akbar. Takbīr.*

(Duas in Arabic and English).

Let us remember and ask Allah to send His Blessings upon those who are ill, who have passed, who are oppressed. O Allah (swt), we ask you to pour blessings upon so many of the believers and the children of Adam. *Asalāmu aleikum.*

SECOND KHUTBA. Closing duas.