

## Khutbah 7/8/1440 H – Loving Allah (SWT)

إن الحمد لله نحمده ونستعينه ونستغفره ونستهديه ، ونعوذ بالله من شرور أنفسنا ومن سيئات أعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضلّ له ومن يضلّ فلا هادي له ، وأشهد أن لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له وأشهد أن محمداً عبده ورسوله وصفيّه من خلقه وخليته صلى الله وسلم وبارك عليه وعلى آله وأصحابه وسلم تسليماً كثيراً

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا

“O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, who created you from a single person, and from him He created his wife, and from them both He created many men and women; and fear Allah through Whom you demand your mutual rights, and do not Cut the relations of kinship. Surely, Allah is an All-Watcher over you.”

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا \* يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ ۗ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا

“O you who believe! Keep your duty to Allah and fear Him, and always speak the truth. He will direct you to do righteous good deeds and will forgive your sins. And whosoever Obeys Allah and His Messenger (SAWS) he has indeed achieved a great achievement.”

أما بعد ...

Dear Brothers and Sisters ...

One of the words for love in the Arabic language is **mahabbah** derived from the three root letters *ha ba ba* (ح ب ب). The word **habbah** which means a grain or seed is also derived from the same three letters.

In the Arabic language, there is always a relationship between the multiple derived forms of a word. Hence, there is a relationship between a seed, (a *habbah*), and the love (the *mahabbah*). It's a fact that the *habbah* of *mahabbah* or the seed of love for Allah (SWT) has been planted in the heart of every human being.

وَإِذْ أَخَذَ رَبُّكَ مِنْ بَنِي آدَمَ مِنْ ظُهُورِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَأَشْهَدَهُمْ عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ شَهِدْنَا أَن تَقُولُوا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّا كُنَّا عَنْ هَذَا غَافِلِينَ

So in our primordial state, before our earthly existence, Allah (SWT) planted that seed of His love when He gathered all the human souls and took a covenant from them by asking them, اَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ “Am I not your Lord?” to which they (we) all replied بَلَىٰ شَهِدْنَا “We testify that indeed You are!”. And they got two things at that moment: Firstly, they got the blessing (or the *barakah*) of knowledge (‘ilm), as they understood what Allah (SWT) asked them, and secondly, they got the seed of *mahabbah* that was planted in the heart of every human being.

*Mahabbah* or love is part of human nature. The *qalb* or the spiritual heart contains the seed of love. Every human being falls in love. Every human being has love for something or someone. Every human being feels attracted towards something. It is being human to love; Allah (SWT) designed us that way so that we would use this human attribute of love to love Allah (SWT). There is goodness and light (أو خير ونور) in loving Allah, and there is injustice and darkness (أو ظلم وظلمة) in loving and worshiping other than Allah (SWT). Just as in any normal room it can only be either has light or darkness in it, similarly, there is no **heart** except that it either has the *nur* of the love of Allah (SWT) in it or the darkness of *ghairallah* in it.

When we realize that human beings were *made to* love and that our hearts must love, then why not use our hearts to love Allah (SWT), our Creator?

We always see in this life that LOVE drives everything. If a person has love for this world, then everything he does will be based on that love; on the desires for this *duniya*. Similarly, if a person has love for Allah (SWT) in his heart, then all his thoughts would be for Allah (SWT). All his actions, statements, feelings, and emotions will originate from that love for Allah (SWT).

Because the *deen* of Islam teaches us that we must make Allah (SWT) dominant in our lives, so it only makes sense that we should make Allah (SWT) our true beloved. The more and more one nourishes and nurtures the love of Allah, the more and more one has faith (*iman*) in Allah. Those who have strong faith (or *iman*), love Allah (SWT) most. As Allah says:

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ

“Those who believe love Allah most.” (*al-Baqarah*, 2:165)

Without the love for Allah, our iman is going to remain weak. Just like Allah (SWT) gives life to the soil by sending rain, and thus allowing the plant to grow, similarly, He waters the seed of *mahabbah* all the time through His continuous blessings.

Our reality is like a radio with little or no battery power to receive the signals which are being broadcast all the time. Allah's mercy and blessings are being broadcast on the hearts of the true righteous believers twenty-four hours a day. But the problem is that we are people who have either turned the receiver off, or we are not able to tune the receiver. And we have even placed interference in the signal due to our sins. Our sins block our ability to realize the mercy and blessings of Allah (SWT) that are showered on us all the time. A person who leaves sin and become a person of *taqwa* also becomes a lover of Allah (SWT). Allah befriends him and takes him out of darkness to light.

اللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يُخْرِجُهُم مِّنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ

*“Allah is the friend of those who believe and leads them out of darkness into light” (al-Baqarah, 2:257)*

The truth is that when we love something, we are always thinking about what we love. It is impossible to be in love with something and not think about it. A reliable test of how true our love is for Allah (SWT) is to see how much we are able to serve others and to give of ourselves generously and openly for Allah's sake. The quality of our faith is reflected in our intentions, attitudes, and behavior.

So, what does a person get if he or she takes this plunge into this ocean of the love of Allah? According to a Hadith Qudsi, Allah says, “I am as My servant expects me to be. I am with him when he makes mention of Me. If he makes mention of Me to himself, I make mention of him to Myself; and if he makes mention of Me in an assembly, I make mention of him in an assembly better than it. And if he draws near to Me an arm's length, I draw near to him a fathom's length. And if he comes to Me walking, I go to him running.” And Allah says in the Qur'an:

أَلَا إِنَّ أَوْلِيَاءَ اللَّهِ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ

*“Look, the friends of Allah shall have no fear, nor shall they grieve.” (Yunus, 10:62)*

The question is, do we feel this deep love for Allah (SWT) in our hearts? Do we yearn for Him? Most probably, an honest reply would be, “We don’t.” If we can examine ourselves honestly and know what we love, then we have taken a major step forward. If we find that what we do love *is* Allah (SWT), then we are blessed with a great gift for which all praise is due to Allah (SWT). But if what we love is other than Allah (SWT), then at least we know, and we have the opportunity to seek to change what is in our hearts.

Those who have *only* tasted the pleasures of this world, don’t know about the taste of the love for Allah (SWT). If anyone derives pleasure from committing sins, then only one thing that can take him or her out of that situation is to taste the pleasure of the intimacy with Allah (SWT). Without that, the person will most likely continue to sin even after praying; even after fasting for a whole month in Ramadan, and even after performing Hajj. It is difficult to give up pleasure of this world until one gets a greater pleasure, and that is the pleasure of feeling close and intimate with Allah (SWT). He has given us the gift of His companionship, for He says,

هُوَ مَعَكُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ

“*He is with you wherever you are.*” (al-Hadid, 57:4)

Allah (SWT) is with you wherever you maybe – Masjid, home, workplace, or anywhere else; whether you remember Him or not; whether you are mindful of Him or not; whether you worship Him or not. He is with you even when you are sinning against Him, just waiting for you to turn to Him in repentance.

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ

“*And when My servants ask you about Me, say that I am near. I respond to the call of one who calls, whenever he calls Me:.*” (al-Baqarah, 2:186)

And Allah (SWT) says,

فَاذْكُرُونِي أَذْكُرْكُمْ

“*So remember Me and I will remember you.*” (al-Baqarah, 2:152)

So, **Remembrance** is the way of intimacy with Allah. Brothers and sisters! Allah did not create us to send us to hell. He created us to be eternally happy and to live in Jannah.

Allah (SWT) is closer to us than our own selves. The relationship of love between us and Allah (SWT), between us and others, and between us and all creation is essential to reaching our full potential as human beings. When we nourish our hearts with love, when we manifest Allah's love in our lives; with our families, with our friends, in our work, in our prayers, and in everything that we do, the entire meaning of life changes for us and our own experience of our humanness is transformed.

أَقُولُ قَوْلِي هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ لِي وَلَكُمْ وَلِسَائِرِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ

## Second Khutbah

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الحمد لله رب العالمين والصلاة والسلام على سيد المرسلين وعلى آله وأصحابه أجمعين.

Brothers and sisters! Allah's grace multiplies with our sincere efforts and honest intention to come closer to Him. Whatever we give to Him comes back manifold to us. In this way, little by little, our love for Allah grows and develops and it transforms us into loving, noble human beings. Of course, love of Allah (SWT) requires us to love what Allah (SWT) loves and to dislike what displeases Him, and right now is a great time to invest in our Love to Allah (SWT).

Brothers and sisters! The month of Rajab has passed, and we have entered into the month of Sha'ban. InshaAllah, we will soon be entering into the month of Ramadan. Sha'ban has many merits, and we learn through many authentic prophetic traditions and the Sunnah of our beloved Prophet Muhammad (SAAW) that Sha'ban is one of the most meritorious months.

Scholars say that the linguistic root of the word Sha'ban refers to a branch, because the month of Sha'ban branches off and leads to many good things. Sha'ban acts as a bridge between the two blessed months of Rajab and Ramadan. In spite of this, we learn from a hadith that the month of Sha'ban is often neglected by people.

Usama ibn Zaid (RAA) reports that he asked the Prophet Muhammad (SAAW):

*"O Messenger of Allah, I have seen you fasting in the month of Sha'ban so frequently that I have never seen you fasting in any other month."*

The Prophet (SAAW) replied:

*"That is a month between Rajab and Ramadan which is neglected by many people. And it is the month in which people's deeds are raised to the Lord of the universe; so, I wish that my deeds be raised at a time when I am in a state of fasting."*

What is meant by "deeds being raised"? The scholars say it is a symbolic presentation of our deeds to Allah (SWT). Allah is All-Seeing and All-Knowing, and does not need our deeds to be presented to Him as He is constantly aware of them. However, if someone is not aware of Allah's constant vigilance then he should at least strive to do good deeds at times when his deeds are presented to the Lord of the worlds.

The month of Sha'ban is like an introduction to Ramadan. Observing the Sunnah of fasting in it helps us to welcome and begin Ramadan with a good attitude. However, it should be kept in mind that the fasts of Sha'ban are for those persons only who are capable of keeping them without causing deficiency in the obligatory fasts of Ramadan. Therefore, if one fears that after fasting in Sha'ban, he will lose strength or freshness for the fasts of Ramadan and will not be able to fast in it with freshness; he should not fast in Sha'ban, because the fasts of Ramadan, being obligatory, are more important than the optional fasts of Sha'ban.

One of the wisdoms behind the Prophet (SAAW) fasting abundantly in Sha'ban is mentioned by A'ishah (RAA), who said that in Sha'ban he would make up any voluntary fasts that he had missed during the course of the year. At this time, she would also fast with him to make up any of the fasts that she had missed in Ramadan. From this we learn the necessity of making up any days of Ramadan which we have missed before Ramadan comes round again.

Other than fasting, it is recommended to bestow abundant blessings and peace upon the Beloved of Allah (SAAW). It was in this month that Allah revealed the ayah:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا

*"Allah and His angels bestow their blessings upon the Prophet. O you who believe bestow blessings and peace upon him in abundance."* (al-Ahzab, 33:56)

Bestowing blessings upon the Prophet (SAAW) is one of the greatest means of strengthening our connection with him in this life and the next, as informed by him in a hadith which says, *“The closest people to me on the Day of Rising will be those who bestow the most blessings upon me.”*

It was also the habit of some of the early Muslims to recite the Qur’an in abundance during Sha’ban. This along with fasting gives us the best preparation for Ramadan, as it takes time for the soul (nafs) to become accustomed to doing these things in abundance.

The Prophet (SAAW) used to make a dua to Allah (SWT):

اللَّهُمَّ بَارِكْ لَنَا فِي رَجَبٍ وَشَعْبَانَ وَبَلِّغْنَا رَمَضَانَ

*“O Allah bless us in Rajab and Sha’ban and enable us to reach Ramadan!”*

So, brothers and sisters, we should make the best use of this opportunity to strengthen our Love to Allah (SWT). And let me conclude by sharing with you one of the du’as that the Prophet (SAAW) used to make to express his love, awe, and longing for Allah (SWT). He used to say,

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ حُبَّكَ وَحُبَّ مَنْ يُحِبُّكَ وَالْعَمَلَ الَّذِي يُبَلِّغُنِي حُبَّكَ

*“O Allah, I ask for Your love, and the love of those who love You and love of actions that bring me closer to Your love.”*

May Allah bless us with His love, and the love of those who love Him. May Allah fill our hearts with love.

هَذَا وَصَلُّوا وَسَلِّمُوا عَلَى مَنْ أَمَرْتُمْ رَبُّكُمْ بِالصَّلَاةِ وَالسَّلَامِ عَلَيْهِ، فَقَالَ عَزَّ مِنْ قَائِلٍ: (إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا) اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى عَبْدِكَ وَنَبِيِّكَ مُحَمَّدٍ، وَارْضَ اللَّهُمَّ عَنِ الْخُلَفَاءِ الرَّاشِدِينَ، الْأَيْمَةِ الْمُهَدِيِّينَ: أَبِي بَكْرٍ، وَعُمَرَ، وَعُثْمَانَ، وَعَلِيٍّ، وَعَنْ سَائِرِ الصَّحَابَةِ، وَالتَّابِعِينَ لَهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ إِلَى يَوْمِ الدِّينِ. اللَّهُمَّ أَصْلِحْ لَنَا دِينَنَا الَّذِي هُوَ عِصْمَةُ أَمْرِنَا، وَأَصْلِحْ لَنَا دُنْيَانَا الَّتِي فِيهَا مَعَاشِنَا، وَأَصْلِحْ لَنَا آخِرَتَنَا الَّتِي إِلَيْهَا مَعَادُنَا، وَاجْعَلْ الْحَيَاةَ زِيَادَةً لَنَا فِي كُلِّ خَيْرٍ، وَالْمَوْتَ رَاحَةً لَنَا مِنْ كُلِّ شَرٍّ. (رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ رَؤُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ) (رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ) (سُبْحَانَ رَبِّكَ رَبِّ الْعِزَّةِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ \* وَسَلَامٌ عَلَى الْمُرْسَلِينَ \* وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ).

— وأقيم الصلاة —