

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ○

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

Hazrat Ameer's Ramadan ul Mubarak Message 1429 Hijrah (September 2008)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ
عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٨٣﴾

“O you who believe fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may guard against evil.” (Al-Baqarah, 2:183)

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ
فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ ○

“And when My servants ask thee concerning Me, surely I am nigh. I answer the prayer of the suppliant when he calls on Me, so they should hear My call and believe in Me that they may walk in the right way” (Al-Baqarah, 2:186)

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Assalaamu Alaikum Wa Rahmatullahi Wa Barakaato Hoo.

This year I have selected two verses from Surah **Al-Baqarah** (The Cow) for my Ramadan message. As we all look forward to this Blessed Month we should reflect on these verses as the first one gives us the reason for fasting and the second the path to nearness to Allah.

The major reason given for fasting in the Holy Qur'an is that **'you may guard against evil'** i.e. to attain **Taqwa**. **Taqwa** may be understood to represent the spirit (**baatin**) of an outwardly act (**zaahir**). As stated in the Holy Qur'an this is the main aim of all devotional acts in Islam and other major religions. This is what the Prophet Muhammad, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, meant when he said that it is not your thirst and hunger that pleases Allah but the **Taqwa**; this is also what is mentioned in the Bible where **Matthew 6: 16-18** states:

“Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward.

But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thy head, and wash thy face;

That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.”

The main advantage of **Taqwa** which is stated in verse 186 is that one is able to attain nearness to Allah. This verse also gives us guidance on how this nearness is attained. What we have to do is **to believe in Him and hear His call** by being obedient and submitting completely to Him (i.e. becoming His **'abd**).

Allah desires that human beings seek closeness to Him; He assures that He is close to those who are His **'abd**. Though translated as 'servants', **'abd** in the real sense means people who mould their lives in such a way that they live as Allah wishes them to; spend their lives as exemplified by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.

Dear Sisters and Brothers, I pray that Allah grants us the opportunity to attain nearness to Him by following the guidance in the Holy Qur'an, the revelation of which commenced in this Blessed Month. I pray that we fast with the aim of elevating our **'baatin'** so we attain the state where we feel His presence in our hearts. I pray that He accepts our prayers and devotional acts (**'ibaadat**) during this sacred month.

As you pray for members of your families and dear ones, don't forget that you are members of a bigger family, our Jama'at. Pay particular attention to your brothers and sisters of the Jama'at in your prayers. You have also to pray for the Muslims of the world and Islam which is passing through time of great trials and tribulations; you have to pray for peace amongst all occupants of our **global village**. You have to pray for the acceptance of prayers of all those who benefit from the opportunity this month will provide.

I pray for acceptance of my prayers for you and the Jama'at. May Allah Ta'ala grant us protection and nearness to Him.

Aameen.



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