

Date: 08.07.2022

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ مَالٌ وَلَا بَنُونَ إِلَّا مَنْ آتَى اللَّهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ
وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَنْظُرُ إِلَى صُورِكُمْ وَأَمْوَالِكُمْ وَلَكِنْ يَنْظُرُ إِلَى
قُلُوبِكُمْ وَأَعْمَالِكُمْ.

HAJJ: DIVINE INVITATION

Honorable Muslims!

Today is the Day of 'Arafah (eve of eid). Today is the day of standing at 'Arafat. Today is the day when millions of prospective pilgrim brothers and sisters from all over the globe are gathering at 'Arafat after two-years of longing.

In this hour when prayers are accepted, let us unite our most heartfelt prayers with those of our pilgrim brothers and sisters, with our faces and hearts oriented towards the Ka'bah. Let us join them in their excitement at Arafat by chanting "Labbaik!"

لَبَّيْكَ اللَّهُمَّ لَبَّيْكَ، لَبَّيْكَ لَا شَرِيكَ لَكَ لَبَّيْكَ، إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ وَالنِّعْمَةَ
لَكَ وَالْمُلْكَ، لَا شَرِيكَ لَكَ

"Here I am, o Allah, here I am! I am obedient to Your commands! You have no partner. I am obedient to Your commands! All praise is for You. All blessings is Yours, so is all sovereignty. You have no partner."¹

Dear Believers!

Hajj is a sacred trip in which one leaves all worldly things behind in order to fulfill Allah's (swt) command and earn His pleasure. At each stop along this journey, there are many lessons to draw and wisdom, which will guide our life.

The hajj journey starts with the removal of shoes and clothing, much as the Prophet Musa (as) did while entering the holy valley, and the wearing of ihram like a shroud. A believer does not remove their clothes only by wearing ihram. At the same time, they get rid of any grudge, hatred, anger, and envy as well. They strip themselves of worldly ambitions and lusts, and turn toward their Lord (swt).

Dear Muslims!

A believer dressed in ihram heads to Arafat, where it seems like the day of resurrection and gathering. Arafat reminds us that we should live a life that we can account for on the Day of Resurrection. It is stated in the Holy Qur'an as follows, **"The Day when neither wealth nor**

children will be of any benefit. Only those who come before Allah with a pure heart will be saved."²

Arafat is also the place of waqfah. Waqfah teaches us that we will stand before our Lord (swt) not with the worldly wealth, status and fame, but with faith, worships, good deeds and good morals. The Prophet Muhammad (saw) says in one hadith as follows, **"Allah does not look at your faces or your wealth, rather He looks at your hearts and your deeds."**³

Dear Believers!

Each stone hajj travelers throw in Mina is a symbol of a stance against Satan and its followers. With each piece of stone they throw, they express that they will stand by the Haqq and against the false with all their strength.

Believers demonstrate their desire to get closer to Allah (swt) with the qurbani they perform. They equip themselves with the Prophet Ibrahim's (as) faith, and the Prophet Isma'il's (as) patience and submission. They declare that they are ready to give up on all worldly possessions to earn their Lord's (swt) pleasure.

As they circumambulate the Ka'bah, hajj travelers reaffirm their submission to the Divine Will. They remember that death is not the end of their journey and prepare for everlasting life in the Hereafter.

Pilgrims performing sa'y between Safa and Marwa seek out Allah's (swt) mercy and salvation. They feel the sorrow of all children unaware of Allah and the Prophet (saw). They pray for the likes of the Prophet Isma'il in the 'ummah, for their children and youth, and strive to raise them in line with the true path.

Dear Muslims!

Despite the fact that we cannot be at Arafat today, let us learn from the lessons that the hajj teaches us. Let us keep our faith and sense of servitude to Allah (swt) alive. Let us free our hearts, which is what Allah (swt) looks at, from the captivity of worldly greed and lusts. Let us promise to abide by the commands of Allah (swt) and His Messenger (saw), and to abstain from all sins and evils for the rest of our lives.

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

We will enjoy the 'Eid al-Adha tomorrow. I pray to our Lord Almighty that He (swt) may accept the qurbani we perform and the hajj of our pilgrim brothers and sisters.

As I conclude this Friday's khutbah, I would like to remind an important issue. Starting from today, many of us will hit the roads to spend the holiday with our loved ones. Please, let us pay attention to not endangering anybody's life during our travels. Let us be patient, tolerant, and cautious.

¹ Bukhari, Hajj, 26.

² Shu'ara, 26/88-89.

³ Muslim, Birr, 34.