

The Day of Arafah

Friday Khutbah (29/12/2006) delivered by Shaykh Muhammad Taher

DISCLAIMER: This reminder was originally delivered in Arabic. Any meanings lost in translation are not to be attributed to the speaker as reminders are translated by volunteers. The mosque has no official translator and volunteers often have no formal qualifications to translate on the day. Please forgive any errors as they are from our human weakness and any right guidance is from God.

It has been narrated in the two sahih's (Bukhari and Muslim) on the authority of Umar ibn al-Khattab that a Jewish man said:

"Oh Commander of the Faithful - there is a in the Quran that if it had been revealed to us (i.e. Jews), we would have celebrated the day in which it was revealed.

Omar asked: 'Which verse is that?'

The man said: 'This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion.'

Omar said: 'I know the day and the place in which it was revealed, it was revealed unto the Prophet *sallallahu 'alayhi wasallam* while he was standing on Arafah on a Friday.'

On a blessed day like this one, this great verse from the Qur'an was revealed. It confirmed God's perfection of the religion, the completion of His favour upon us and His choice of Islam as a religion for us and that no other religion else will be accepted from anyone. Thus God has forbidden Paradise to those who do reject Islam [after it has been conveyed to them perfectly], and the hellfire will be their reward and eternal dwelling.

When the day of Arafah falls on a Friday, the blessings and the blessings are coupled and so it becomes a very special day. The best day of the year coupled with the best day of the week. This is the day that contains:

- the hour on Friday in which every supplication [dua] is accepted
- the opportunity for pilgrims standing on Arafah to ask from [and make dua to] God and their dua is accepted, and
- the great numbers of Muslim congregations for the Friday reminder and prayer *whilst* the **greatest** congregation of Muslims is standing on Arafah - the Muslim community is unified in their congregations on one day - all asking for the blessings of God.

The day of Arafah is a day of pride for the Muslims. The great number of Muslims congregating this day will not happen on any other day. This great congregation is a sign of Allah's Greatness and His Ability. He hears the dua and supplication of all those present - people of different colours, nationalities and languages - and He answers their duas and grants them their hopes and wishes, as He is the All Hearing, the All Knowing.

The day of Arafah is a day of fear, submission and humbling oneself before Allah. A day of crying and asking for the bounties and the blessings of Allah. The Prophet *sallallahu 'alayhi wasallam* said:

"The best of supplications is the supplication on the day of Arafah and the best which I and the Prophets before me have said is:

(La ilaha ila Allah wahdahu la shareek lah, lahu-l-hamd, wa lahu-l-mulk, wa huwa ala kulla shay'in qadeer)

'None has the right to be worshipped except God alone, without partner. To Him belongs all praise and sovereignty and He has absolute power over all things.'

[Narrated by Tirmidi and Malik as a Hasan hadith].

The day of Arafah is day in which the mercy of God descends to His servants. To try to imagine the vastness of God's mercy think upon the saying Prophet *sallallahu 'alayhi wasallam* that:

"God has divided His mercy into one hundred parts, He kept ninety nine to Himself ... and [He] sent *only one* part to the earth, and it is because of this one part that there is mutual love among the creation so much so that the animal lifts up its hoof from its young one, fearing that it might harm it."

[Muslim - on the authority of abu Hurayrah]

God's mercy is abundant and is not limited nor prevented by sin as God The Most High motivates those who have transgressed [to repent, with his promise] that He will forgive their sins:

" Say: O My slaves who have transgressed against themselves (by committing evil deeds and sins)! Despair not of the mercy of God: indeed, God forgives all sins. Truly He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful"

There is no other day that mirrors the day of Arafah in which God's mercy and forgiveness is hoped for, as it is a day on which God grants people salvation from the Hellfire. On the authority of Aisha, the Prophet Muhammad *sallallahu 'alayhi wasallam* said:

"There is no day on which God grants salvation from the hellfire more than on the day of Arafah, He descends and parades His servants before the angels and says: what do these people hope for." (Muslim).

The scholars have said that this [parade] confirms Allah's forgiveness and mercy, which He grants the pilgrims. This is because God will not parade the people before the pure angels unless He has purified these people from all sins.

On **this day** - the Day of Arafah - Allah, the Most High forgives those who fast, the previous year and the coming year, [whether or not they have made the pilgrimage]. God is the oft-forgiving the Most Merciful.

On this day many people are humbling themselves before God (seeking His mercy and forgiveness), their eyes watering due to the many shortcomings towards their religion and many seeking God's forgiveness - [in this state] they are granted that which they seek.

The Shaykh then recited some words from a classical poem:

'they raised their arms and sent their prayers... and humbled themselves before God on Arafah... dishevelled under the clouds of mercy... the wings of the angels have wrapped their worships and good deeds... those are your guests Oh Lord seeking forgiveness and vast blessings... they left behind them the worldly matters and came to you with high hopes.' [translation of poetry]

In the Second Khutba, the Shaykh said that:

Tomorrow is the first day of Eid ul-Adha. During this day, Eid prayer needs to be observed as a form of drawing closer to God [we will be praying this at 9am and 10 am tomorrow inshAllah]. In addition it is a form of congregating with other Muslims. [We also observe two acts of remembrance:]

1. **[Remembrance of the very high level of sacrifice of Ibrahim] that is observed in performing a sacrifice:** from cattle that includes a camel, cow or sheep/lamb. [Typically in this country], we should sacrifice one sheep/lamb for ourselves and our family.
This is a religious tradition required of every Muslim and a Sunnah of this religion. Therefore, those who can afford it must observe the sacrifice. This religious duty cannot be substituted with giving charity as this will bring an end to this great symbol of Islam.
2. **[Remembrance of the very greatness of Allah] that is observed by making Takbeer:** (saying Allahu Akbar). This is part of the Sunnah of the Prophet *sallallahu 'alayhi wasallam* as he confirmed when he said:

"And mention God on the mentioned days" and ibn Abbas said: it's the days of the tashreeq (11th, 12th and 13th of the month of Dhul-Hijjah).

So the time for it starts on the dawn of the day of Arafah and the following three days, (that fall on Sunday 31st December 2006, Monday 1st and Tuesday 2nd January 2007) - especially after the prayers and ideally at all times.
3. And we end with the best remembrance on this day common to all the Prophets:

[(La ilaha ila Allah wahdahu la shareek lah, lahu-l-hamd, wa lahu-l-mulk, wa huwa ala kulla shay'in qadeer)
'None has the right to be worshipped except God alone, without partner. To Him belongs all praise and sovereignty and He has absolute power over all things.']