Don’t throw your Ramadan back into the well

By Talha Haroun.

Khutbah delivered at Jurgens centre, Egham, on 19/4/2024

We begin by praising Allah SWT, declaring his perfection and thanking him for what he has given us, knowing that as much as we thank and praise him and declare his perfection, we will always fall short.

And we thank Allah SWT and bear witness that Muhammad SAW is his final messenger, and we ask Allah SWT to send his peace and blessings upon him, the prophets and messengers that came before him, his family and companions and those that follow in their blessed path.

And we ask Allah SWT to make us amongst them.

Dear brothers and sisters, I hope we are all mourning the departure of Ramadan. I hope we had such a spiritually beneficial month that we are really feeling it deeply that is has now ended.

And I want to frame this Khutbah around an analogy of Ramadan that was first made by a great imam by the name of ibn al-jawzi rahimahullah.

He said that the example of Ramadan in comparison to the rest of the months is like the example of Yusuf AS, the prophet joseph peace be upon him to his 11 brothers.

Through that one brother all 11 brothers are saved and forgiven and shown the mercy of Allah SWT and i want us to build on that analogy for a moment Insha’Allah.

Ramadan was time of heightened gratitude. The Prophet SAW would tell us to be grateful and he would teach us to build gratitude and we want to build on the analogy of Yusuf AS.

In one way gratitude teaches us a few things and there are three things that i want us to take away today on today: (1): shukur: the gratitude that teaches us to thank Allah SWT, to expand something in our eyes and to see value in what's in front of us.

And (2) the gratitude that allows us to overlook the negative and focus on the positive.

And(3) the true meaning of gratitude which is to use the blessings Allah SWT has given us and to direct our actions and energy to those who haven’t been given those blessings.

So those are the three things i want you to take from this specifically as it relates to Ramadan when it comes to the story of Yusuf AS.

When you think on Ramadan, many people don’t realise it’s value just like many people did not recognize the value of Yusuf AS until he was on the throne.

That he was a slave before that, a piece of property before that, a fugitive before that, a prisoner and of course before all that, a threat to his brothers because of the way that his father Yaqoob AS loved him.

But then once he was on the throne, everyone recognized his beauty and the power of his manner, the virtue of Yusuf AS and everyone wanted to come close to him, and everyone wanted to take advantage of him, take advantage of his generosity, take advantage of his mercy, so what's the main message i want you to take from this.

If Ramadan has been put on a throne for you and everything that Ramadan comes with - the worship of Allah SWT, a new connection to the masjid, a new connection to the Quran, a more charitable spirit, more generosity, all these things, dua supplication, what you pushed yourself to do.

Don't throw your ramadan back into a well.

Don't take your Ramadan and take it off the throne and throw it back in the well.

You know there is a term that's used in a derogatory way: Ramadan Muslims. We're all Ramadan Muslims. The sahaba were Ramadan Muslims - they just were not only Muslim in Ramadan, but they spent six months after Ramadan missing it and six months before longing for it, That means that for them Ramadan always stays on the throne.

How does it stay on the throne?

We thank Allah SWT for showing us our potential we thank Allah for allowing us an opportunity to appreciate guidance. The journey that he took that you, so you completed this month and you thank Allah for what he has guided you to.

So many people have so much of this world and have emptiness but with the gift of guidance and purpose you're full, you're fulfilled, you have a sense of true happiness and tranquillity.

Your heart is full, your actions are motivated by a full heart. Allah has given you something special and so for the rest of the year the other 11 months are looking at Ramadan just how the 11 brothers looked at Yusuf AS on the throne.

Don't take off Ramadan off the throne and throw it in the well and suddenly while throwing Ramadan in the well put your Quran back on the bookshelf, go back to the playlist that you used to watch and listen to before Ramadan, get back into gossip. You know gossip is haram after Ramadan.

A lot of things that were haram, it's still haram don't get back into the things that were hurting the soul

Instead of continuing the habits, say to yourself I’m not going to throw my Quran back in the well by putting it on the bookshelf, I’m not going to stop giving charity, I’m going to keep on giving charity, I’m not going to stop praying and waking up at night, I'm not going to stop coming to the masjid, I'm not going to stop treating people as carefully as i was in Ramadan, I don't want to say anything mean, I don't want to hurt them, I don't want to backbite, I don't want to listen to this.

I don’t want to go back to all of that.

Because Ramadan remains on the throne, because it shows me what prayer means, what fasting means, and how i can get that closeness to Allah SWT. So that's number one.

Be grateful to Allah for this month that he has given you to show you the value of guidance and keep on keep on connecting yourself to him with those blessings.

The value of gratitude is that it shows you the value of something and Subhan Allah with Yusuf AS there were some people that saw something in him before he was on the throne.

When Musa AS salaam as a baby came into the palace of Pharaoh, there was a beautiful person, the wife of the pharaoh Asiya, saw something in Musa AS and so some people see value in these things when other people don't.

And so while others put their Quran on the bookshelf and others move on from these blessings, you keep to them.

The second thing dear brothers and sisters is not just to see the value in it when other people are neglecting it but to always see the positive and the blessings that are ahead of you.

When Malcolm X speaks about his hajj all he talks about was the beauty of it; the beauty of seeing the people together, the beauty of seeing the different races, the beauty of seeing the human equality, the oneness of humanity, recognizing the oneness of God,

And you think to yourself when you go to hajj like didn't somebody push him? didn't he feel the heat? I mean he went to hajj in the summer of 1964. Malcolm was not staying in the clock tower or five-star hotels around Mecca.

Why is it that someone like that only saw beauty in hajj? because the heart was a heart of gratitude, and the heart of gratitude only sees only the positives. It only sees beauty whereas someone else could have five-star hotels and everything and all they see is ugliness.

They come back and complain ah the hotels weren't ready, the heat, the pushing and shoving, this and that.

What does that mean for Ramadan? You might look back on Ramadan and say man that was hard, it was long, I had work, I didn’t like this and I didn’ t like that.

Everything that was happening but you only mention the hardships, you don't mention the beauty of it and that's a problem - when you talk about hajj you only mention the hardships you don't mention the beauty of it.

That means something needs to be corrected about our lens. If you felt isolated or lonely, turn that into an opportunity for spiritual seclusion and focussed worship.

Allah tells us time and time again in the Quran to see everything that way – turning a negative into a positive with the lens of gratitude. And so that even means with your spouses - we're taught by Allah and the Messenger SWS - some people nitpick on the flaws of each other. What we are taught from the messengers is to focus on the things that you like about your each other and let that grow your relationship.

How's the prophet SAW described with food he ate, you know Masha ‘Allah we've all probably gone back to our eating routine, but how was the prophet SAW with food - he never ever criticized his food.

What a beautiful person, the most powerful man in the world never criticized his food you gave him: bread and vinegar; you gave him some barley, you gave him anything, he never said anything negative about food you gave him.

Anything to wear he wore it, and he thanked you for it and he never dispraised a cloth that was given to him or garment that was given to him.

When someone was put in front of the Prophet SAW, he never saw their problems he only saw their potential. He only saw the beauty inside of them and what they could fully become. But that takes an adjustment of mindset, and it starts here after Ramadan.

And this is what I’ll end off with – Allah SWT tells us to speak of the blessings of your Lord, mention the good things about people, mention the good things about situations, and you know what that will do it will transform your mindset and it'll transform your heart.

Otherwise, the prophet saw said the materialistic person only sees poverty through their eyes, all they see is deprivation and poverty – all they see is the bad and negative.

Be the opposite of that. Ramadan taught us to be grateful and gratitude means seeing goodness in everyone and everything around you, in every situation that is around you and even when a hardship comes to you.

Use this an opportunity to say Alhamdulillah! it's a chance to purify me, it's a chance for me to practice patience, and grow my determination, when good comes to you say Alhamdulillah! Allah SWT bestowed this upon me.

May Allah SWT increase us and let us be that way with each other. Let's be that way with our gifts from Allah SWT, let's be that way with the gifts that Allah SWT has given us of worship and let's maintain that attitude of shukur because that is the end goal of all off this.

All that we complete this month, and we have a sense of gratitude, that we're grateful for each other. We're not perfect and someone might say you know that community, that mosque and they might focus on all the negative aspects. They won’t speak about the goodness in the community, in the masaajid.

Talk about all the amazing people from our community who have been working so hard to provide us with all these amazing opportunities and facilities. Let's actively praise the good things about the people around us about the situations around us and grow our perception in that regard.

We ask Allah SWT to make us from the grateful. May Allah SWT connect us to his blessings of guidance throughout the year. May Allah SWT allow the best of what we have taken from this month to remain on a throne so that the rest of the year follows.

May Allah SWT allow us to connect our hearts to the lord of the throne, the one who sent us prophets and messengers and seasons and sacred places only so that we can connect to him.

May Allah SWT connect our hearts to him in sincerity and may Allah SWT connect our hearts to him with shukur, with gratitude, and may Allah allow us to be grateful to one another because he who does not thank the people does not thank Allah.

May Allah allow us to be grateful in being charitable at all times.

May Allah purify our hearts, purify our eyes, purify our ears, purify our tongues, may Allah use us for that which is which is always good, allow us to see good to appreciate good and to be a part of that good.

May Allah SWT alleviate the hardship from our brothers and sisters all over the world may especially in Palestine. Do not allow us to turn a blind eye to our oppressed brothers and sisters and not see them as a burden but see them as a blessing and those on whose behalf we must advocate.

May Allah SWT continue to be with our brothers and sisters in Palestine and our oppressed brothers and sisters all over the world, continue to nourish them with courage and steadfastness that inspires the rest of us.

May Allah SWT allow us all to be gathered in the eternal abode of goodness, around our Prophet SAW, free from the faults of this world.

Ameen!