

Eidul Fitr Khutbah (Sermon) delivered by Shaikh Ahmad Kutty at the Islamic Institute of Toronto on July 06, 2016

All praises to Allah for His blessings.

And peace and blessings on all of His chosen messengers from Adam to Muhammad as well those who follow them sincerely.

Today, we are celebrating *Eidul Fitr*; we experience joy while celebrating our spiritual achievements of the blessed month of Ramadan.

We also feel a sense of loss and sorrow for the departure of this honorable guest.

It seems it was all too soon; we feel it was only yesterday we welcomed the month, and today we are bidding farewell to it.

It ought to remind us of the transient nature of life in this world.

We are sojourners here; soon we will be called back to meet our Lord; the time, place and manner are decided by Him who alone has the absolute power over life and death.

Brothers and sisters,

Let us thank Allah for honoring us to pray, fast and perform the many acts of devotion in the blessed month.

Let us pray that He accepts them and forgive our shortcomings.

None of us is perfect; so let us turn to Allah in humility recognizing our sins and seeking His grace and forgiveness.

While saying farewell to Ramadan, we ought to ask ourselves: What is next?

We ought to reflect on the lessons learned.

I would focus on three points for us to focus.

1. We need to prioritize our life; set priorities; manage our time to ensure that we achieve good in both worlds.

Often we get carried away by the frivolous pursuit of worldly pleasures neglecting our *aakhirah*; we are too obsessed with seeking favor with people while forgetting to please Allah; after all, we will be called to account before him for our life, time, health, opportunities, and our resources.

Let us remember the words of our Prophet (peace be upon him):

2. We need to imbibe the true spirit of Islam: the spirit of mercy, compassion, peace, and kindness. Today there is no shortage of people who use the name of Islam for bloodshed, violence and targeting innocent people. Think of the suicide bombing in Istanbul, Iraq, and elsewhere. Now they have gone even further by targeting holy sanctuaries; the recent bomb blast in Madina is the most horrible act we can think. It should be an eye-opener for us. The cause of it is a lack of proper understanding of Islam.

All of this boils down to people failing to imbibe the true spirit and message of Islam.

The solution is to seek the authentic knowledge; knowledge as Imam Bukhari tells us is to be acquired from those who are qualified to impart it.

It is the sole mission of the Islamic Institute. We seek to transmit authentic knowledge of Islam. We want to do it by distilling the universal message of Islam, the message of mercy, and kindness to make a better country and a better world.

We are opposed to all forms of bigotry, fanaticism, sectarianism.

We adhere to the motto of Imam Hasan al-Basri:

“Religion of Allah shuns both extremes of excessive legalism and permissiveness.”

Spirit of Ramadan is all about self-discipline, remembrance of Allah and charity and compassion.

Today millions in the world are suffering from hunger and starvation. Islam teaches us that a believer is not the one who fills himself when his or her neighbor is starving.

We have an obligation to share the blessings we enjoy with the less fortunate.

We can afford to help others only when we are willing to curb our wasteful habits, simplify our life and practice moderation in all of our habits.

We are fortunate to live in Canada where we enjoy prosperity, peace and security.

However, I am saddened to know that the people of the first nations in this prosperous country are living under the worse conditions.

Statistics about their suffering are alarming. They are deprived of even the most essentials of life, clean water, and affordable living.

Muslims of Canada must take it upon themselves to address this issue.

I would venture to say that they are worthy recipients of Zakah under the category of *mu'allafatul al-quloob* (Those whose hearts are to be reconciled).

Next time when you have the urge to throw a feast, keep it simple and limit the dishes and spare the savings to help out the poor.

This alone is the way to live the lessons of Ramadan.

And this is the way we can walk the talk and act as ambassadors of Islam.

And this leads us to the next point, countering the increasing Islamophobia all around us:

Islamophobia is spreading at an alarming rate in Canada as our sisters are targeted, mosques are vandalized, and innocent people are attacked.

We are living in very trying times; this is the time we need to practice the beautiful lessons of Ramadan: lessons of patience, self-restraint, meeting ugliness with beauty.

We Muslims are victims of violence from the war mongers using bombs, drones, and chemicals; we are also victims of violence committed by those who claim to be Muslims, who have chosen to meet violence with violence and hatred with hatred.

We ought to stand up for sanity, wise and proactive action.

The prophet fought hatred with love and

And his message was:

"Forgive those who offend you; join relations with those who sever relations with you; do good to those who mistreat you and speak the truth even if it hurts you."

Let this Prophetic motto be our mantra as we fight Islamophobia. Allah orders us to repel the ugliness with that which is beautiful.

"But [since] good and evil cannot be equal, repel the evil with that which is beautiful and you will find your enemy turning to be your loyal friend." (Qur'an: 41: 34).

Islam calls us to stand forth as witnesses of truth, justice, and compassion.

It calls for cooperation and united action. Allah calls us to join with everyone regardless of religious differences on terms of justice, compassion and rendering acts of kindness.

We live with people of various religious and ideological affiliations; we should join them in all that is good while shunning evil, vices and corruption.

"Be ever steadfast in your devotion to God, bearing witness to the truth in all equity; and never let hatred of anyone lead you into the sin of deviating from justice. Be just: this is closest to being God-conscious." (Qur'an: 5:8).

“And help one another in furthering virtue and God-consciousness, and do not help one another in furthering evil and enmity.” (Qur’an: 5:2).

Let us thus not forget the valuable lessons of Ramadan as we face the many challenges in the coming weeks and months.

I pray to Allah to inspire us with patience and make our feet steadfast on the straight path and give us victory against the rejecters of truth.

I pray that Allah showers His mercy on the victims of terror attacks everywhere and turn their suffering into bliss.

I pray that Allah forgives our parents, grandparents, uncles and aunts, and brothers and sisters who have passed away.

May the all-Compassionate illuminate their graves and save them from trials of grave and hellfire and admit them into the blissful paradise.

I pray that Allah sends down healing and cure upon those who are sick and suffering; may He ease their pains, and remove the hardships from their lives, and console their hearts.

I pray that Allah is with those who are suffering from varying forms of occupation, wars, genocide, violence, dehumanization and deprivation.

May He help them regain their dignity, freedom and God-given rights.

I pray that Allah brings back to the fold of Islam those who have strayed away from the path.

I pray that Allah helps those who are seeking righteous marriage partners find partners who will bring joy to their hearts and assist them in building strong families.