

The Virtues of Dhul-Hijjah

We are now approaching the month of Dhul-Hijjah, the month of Hajj. This is the month upon which Allah has bestowed the days of `Arafah, `Eid Al-Adha, and the Days of Tashreeq, which are the three days following `Eid. This is a special month, a month in which we are encouraged to double our efforts in performing our acts of worship and our good deeds.

If we have missed the opportunity to increase our worship during the last Ramadan, or if we have missed the opportunity to fast the six days of Shawwal, then let it be known, that right now, spread in front of us, is a golden opportunity. An opportunity to be closer to Allah. An opportunity to increase our worship.

This golden opportunity is the first 10 days of Dhul-Hijjah. Let us grab this opportunity before it leaves us. Let us do more *dhikr*, more Prayer, and more fasting. Let us recite Al-Qur'an more. Allah says in Surat Al-Fajr: "And by the ten nights" (Al-Fajr 89:2).

According to most scholars, the 10 days mentioned in that verse refer to the first 10 days of Dhul-Hijjah. Allah mentions it and swears by it in that verse because of its virtues. This is strengthened by the hadith:

"There are no days during which good deeds are more beloved to Allah than these (ten) days." He was then asked, "Not even jihad in the path of Allah?" He replied, "Not even jihad in the path of Allah, except for a person who goes out with his self and his wealth, and comes back with nothing."
(Al-Bukhari and others)

So let us increase our *`ibadah* in these virtuous days, which come but once a year — an opportunity that is better than any offer on earth. If we look around, sometimes we would see a petrol station offering a 15 percent discount. We would then see cars snaking out of that petrol station. Everyone is trying to grab that offer of just 15 percent discount.

These 10 days of Dhul-Hijjah offer a much better offer — an offer that has its rewards waiting for us in the Hereafter, the day when nothing will be of value except those who had prepared for it. A day which Allah describes in the Qur'an as "the day when wealth and children will be of no use, except those who come with clean hearts" (Ash-Shu`ara' 26:88–89).

In a previous sermon we touched upon the need to have proper resolutions and how to achieve them. Let us put into practice what we have heard. Let us all make this resolution to double our efforts in worshipping Allah in these virtuous days of Dhul-Hijjah.

Let us not wait till we get home to make that resolution. Let us do it now! And when we get home, or to office, let us jot down those resolutions on paper so that we may not forget them. If we want to do more sunnah prayers, write it down, and be specific on the type of prayers. If we want to fast on these days, jot down on our calendar or organizer which days will we fast. If we want to pray the Tahajjud Prayers, write it down. And set our alarm clock to ring at least half an hour before Fajr Prayer so that we may have time to do at least do three *rak`ahs* of Witr Prayer. If we want to lessen the sins of our tongue, put in on paper that we will be quieter and only say those things that are necessary. And as a return, we will say more *dhikr* and *istighfar* silently. If we want to read the Qur'an more, jot it down on our organizer and calendar, the amount we will read each day. Is it half a page? A full page? Or more than that? Write it down.

And remember this: Failure to plan is planning to fail.