What is the message of Ramadhân?

People always think of the ‘idd as the basis of unity. To some extent that may be true but the question comes: unity for what? The unity in doing salâtu ’l-eid together and that’s it?...

No, my brothers and sisters, this is not the basis of unity. So what should be the basis of unity? The answer lies in the fasting of Ramadhân and Eidul Fitr itself—in the issue of fitra: a clear message of uniting in the matter of concern for the less fortunate brothers and sisters of our community, locally as well as globally.

Unity is not on the eating of baqlawa and cake with coffee together after salâtu ’l-eid where some people show up only once in a year. Real unity is in being concerned for the well-being of the Muslims.

The Daily Duʿâ of Ramadhân

Look at the duʿâ (prayer) you recited in Ramadhân every night. A duʿâ which has come from our own Prophet Muhammad al-Mustafa (s.a.w.):
it...and then give it back to him. And he used to
do this because charity reaches the hand of
Allah before it reaches the beggar’s hands.”

(3)
اللهُمَّ افْتَقِّرُ عَنْ كُلٍّ مَّكْرُوبٍ.

O Allah, feed every hungry person.

Have you thought about participating in the
process of helping the poor in the Muslim
world—especially in Iraq where there are many
Shi’a orphans and widows as result of Sad-
dam’s brutal rule as well as the continued occu-
pation of that land by US-led forces which fur-
ther breeds insecurity created by al-Qaeda and
its supporters in Jordon and Saudi Arabia.

One of the signs of those who don’t take the
Day of Judgement seriously is “they don’t en-
courage (themselves as well as others) to feed the
poor.” (107:3)

(4)
اللهُمَّ افْتَقِّرُ عَنْ كُلٍّ غَرَيْبٍ.

O Allah, clothe every naked person.

What about the women and children in
Darfur who live in inhuman conditions? What
do you know about the situation of the Shi’as in
Afghanistan? Do you know the after effects of
the brutality of the Taliban regime upon them?
Are you aware of the projects organized by
Shi’a organizations to help them in
Afghanistan? If not, then try to find out and do
something.

(5)
اللهُمَّ أَفْضِلْ ذِيَنَ كُلْ مَدِينٍ.

O Allah, fulfill the debts of all those in debt.

Look around among your family and
friends circle. Is someone is really in debt be-
cause of economic circumstances, then see how
you can help them: encourage them to go for
counseling for debt management or see how
much you can relieve them of their debts. Has
your concern increased during this month?

(6)
اللهُمَّ فَرِحْ عَنْ كُلٍّ مَّكْرُوبٍ.

O Allah, relieve the distress
from every person who is in distress.

What about the distress of the people living
in Gaza Strip which is known as the biggest
prison on this earth? Do you think about
them? Do you educate yourself about the Palestin-
ian struggle? Have you thought of participat-
ing with Canadian groups that try to highlight
the misery and distress of the Palestinians?

Are you concerned about the distress that
the Iranians are going through because of the
present threat against that Shi’a country? If the
USA —against the advice of its prominent statesmen and politicians— decides to attack
Iran, are you willing to join the protest
movement against that war?

(7)
اللهُمَّ رَدْ عَنْ كُلْ غَرَيْبٍ.

O Allah, return all the refugees
to their homes safely.

Refugees are becoming a very common fea-
ture of this era, even in the Muslim world—do
we think about them or is our attitude like of
those mentioned in the surah Yasin: “Why
should we bother—if Allah wished, He could
have feed them Himself!”

(8)
اللهُمَّ فَلْنَ كُلْ أَسْبُرٍ.

O Allah, grant freedom
to every innocent prisoner.

When we uttered these words or heard
them or read them on the screen with its Eng-
lish translation on the monitors during the
nightly programs at our centres, did the pic-
tures of innocent prisoners come to our minds?
What about those who are in Israeli jails? What
about those likes of Maher Arar who are in
secret prisons run by the USA in different parts of world? How much do we know and care about those Muslims in Canada who are in jail based on the so-called security certificate where the accused or his lawyer cannot even see the evidence used against him. Do we know that prominent non-Muslim Canadians have spoken against this injustice?

(9)

أَلَّهُمَّ افْتَّنَ كَلِلْ يَوْمِي،

O Allah, reform whatever is wrong in the affairs of the Muslims.

We probably don’t have the means to bring about the change in the ummah on a global level—but what have we done for the betterment and reformation of our own community?

Do we participate in the community issues? The new community centre project is an important issue; what about the three Sunday madrasas with a combined forces of 1500 to 1700 students; then we have the As-Sadiq Islamic School; there are also opportunities to serve as volunteers at various centers in a variety of sub-committees; youth and senior groups—do you participate in any of these?

If things are not working as we wish, what have we done besides complaining? We can’t always get consensus on all things—but we cannot afford to ignore the ultimate goal of making this community a better God-fearing and Allah-conscious community.

And in pursuit of becoming a God-fearing, Allah-conscious community, we cannot afford to abandon the most important social principle of Islam: amr bil ma’ruf and nahi ‘anil munkar. Imam ‘Ali has said in his will that if you abandon amr and nahi, and then evil ones will rule over you, and then you will sit down and pray for relief—Allah will not listen to your prayers because you abandoned amr and nahi.

* * *

You surely have power over every thing.

The sequence of this du’ã is a message by itself—only after praying for others (the dead ones; the poor; the hungry; the naked; those in debt; those in distress; those who are away from their homes; the innocent prisoners; the Muslim ummah at large; and the sick), the Prophet is teaching us to pray for ourselves.

Build in yourselves the concern for the others; we need the unity in the concern for the less fortunate ones and for our community. That is the message of Eidul Fitr even expressed in the verse recited in that prayer: “Indeed success is one who pay charity and remembers the name of his Lord and prays.” This refers the issue of paying the fitra (charity) on the day of Eidul Fitr before going for the salatu ‘l-eid.

The verse goes on: “You prefer the present life while the hereafter is better and ever-lasting. This
And consider your presence in this place of prayer like the day your will be presented before your Lord [for judgement].

And consider your return to your homes like your return to your homes in the Paradise!

O servants of Allah! The least that the people who fasted can expect on the last day of Ramadhan is that an angel will announce: ‘Good-tidings, O servants of Allah, for your past sins have been forgiven; so be careful in what you do from now on.’"

Now that Imam ‘Ali has asked us to consider our return from this eid prayer is like returning to our homes in the Paradise, try to maintain the spirit of Paradise in your behaviour with your wife/husband, your parents and your children.

Message of the 2nd Khutba:

Once Imam ‘Ali bin Abi Talib (a.s.) said in his khutba of Eidul Fitr:

“O people!...This day is like the day of your resurrection:

“So consider your coming out of your homes to your places of [eid] prayer like your coming out of the graves towards your Lord.

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