

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

The Summer Vacation: Reminders and Dreams

Khutbah from al-Masjid al-Haraam
delivered by ‘Abdur-Rahmaan as-Sudays

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A translation of the Friday sermon by ‘Abdur-Rahmaan as-Sudays from al-Masjid al-Haraam in the sacred city of Makkah on 1 Sha‘baan, 1435h (30 May, 2014). The sermon was delivered in Arabic, and live English translation was also given as part of the Simultaneous Interpretation Project, a service provided by the General Presidency for Affairs of the Two Sacred Mosques, in order to assist those wishing to understand the sermon in the English language.

All praise is due to Allaah; we praise Him, seek His assistance, ask His forgiveness, turn to Him in repentance, and glorify Him with every form of goodness.

We glorify Allaah with praise upon praise
for His abundant bounty which continues to increase.
And we are always grateful to Him, at all times,
and we hope for His reward on the Day of Judgement

I testify that none has the right to be worshipped except Allaah alone, without any partner; a testimony that causes one's life to flourish with blessing and enlightenment.

I further testify that Muḥammad is the worshipping servant and Messenger of Allaah. Out of his mercy and care, he encouraged us to quickly and keenly make the best use of our time. He brought for us the *Share'ah* – the regulations of Islaam – which contain such an abundance of ease and goodness, like a fresh spring gushing forth profusely. May Allaah send *salaah* and *salaam* upon him; and upon his noble family who are so pristine that they shine with brightness that would fill the horizons; and upon his auspicious Companions whose plethora of noble qualities flows like glistening, fresh, cool water; and upon their followers and all who follow them in goodness aspiring and yearning to be admitted to *Jannah*.

Worshipping servants of Allaah! The best counsel and command one can be given is to have *taqwaa* of Allaah, Most Mighty and Majestic. Thus, observe *taqwaa* of Allaah while in your place of residence and while travelling, as it is this *taqwaa* which serves as the best provision one can prepare for himself. Allaah has said what means, “And take provision for yourselves; but surely, the best provision is *taqwaa*.”¹ Also, the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said what means, “Observe *taqwaa* of Allaah wherever you may be; follow up a bad deed with a good deed and it will wipe it out; and behave well towards others.” This *hadeeth* was collected by at-Tirmithi from both Aboo Tharr and Mu'aath ibn Jabal, رضي الله عنه.²

I have clearly seen nobility in observing *taqwaa*,
and it leads to honor in the abode of the hereafter.
Taqwaa of Allaah is the most remarkable provision there is,
and the best reserve that can be kept for a most difficult day.

My Muslim brothers and sisters! As the seasons change in succession, and the days and nights inevitably elapse, and with the onset of days filled with great visions and aspirations blooming lushly before us, summer begins to emerge, and its breezes and sweet fragrances blow gently towards us. Hopes and eyes are fixated on its arrival, looking forward in expectation of making the most out of this time.

How much more is that the case when the summer has already been unfolded and spread over us, wiping away the pleasant shade, dispersing its aroma all over the place, its sun blazing down with scorching, sweltering heat. All this must prompt us to be mindful, and serve as a warning, about the blazing heat of the hellfire. There is a *hadeeth* in the two *sahheeh* collections from Aboo Hurayrah رضي الله عنه who narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said what means, “The hellfire pleaded with its Lord saying, ‘My Lord, some parts of me have consumed other parts.’ As a result, He allowed it two breaths: one in the winter and another in the summer. The most intense heat you feel is from the extreme heat of the hellfire, and the most bitter cold you feel is from the extreme cold of the hellfire.”³

¹ *Al-Baqarah* (2):197.

² *Sunan at-Tirmithi* (1987).

³ *Sahheeh al-Bukhaaree* (3260), *Sahheeh Muslim* (617).

Al-Hasan al-Basree ؓ said what means “Any destructive extreme cold is the result of hell exhaling, and any destructive extreme heat is the result of hell exhaling.”

There is also a *ṣaḥeeḥ* narration where the Prophet ﷺ said what means, “If the heat at *Ṭḥub* time is intense, then pray a bit later when it is somewhat cooler, because the severe, intense heat comes from the exhalation of the blazing hellfire.”⁴

Also, Allaah tells us about attitude of the *munaafiqeen* as well as His response to them, where He stated what means, “They said, ‘Do not set out in such heat.’ Say back to them, ‘The fire of hell is even hotter’, if they could only comprehend.”⁵

Ibn Rajab ؓ commented that when a person experiences the blazing heat of the sun, he must call to mind what its heat will be like at the *mawqif*, where people will be gathered on the Day of Resurrection, waiting for judgement to begin. The sun will be brought near the heads of people on that day, and its heat will intensify. Therefore, if someone is unable to stand the extreme heat of the sun in this world, he must necessarily avoid the deeds which will take him to the hellfire, since no one will have strength or perseverance enough to bear its blaze.

You forgot all about the scorching hellfire when you followed your desires,
Yet strove to avoid the heat of the midday sun.
It is as if you never had to bury a loved one, or were never
present to witness his passing away from this world.

‘Umar ibn ‘Abdil-‘Azeez saw people in a funeral procession who fled to the shade due to the heat of the sun and tried to avoid the dust which was stirred up as the deceased was being buried. At that sight, he wept and said:

Whoever used to fear becoming soiled or unkempt
should the sun or dust touch his forehead,
and used to like the shade in order to maintain his radiance,
shall one day inevitably reside in a grave.
Prepare what you need to reach your desired destination, my soul,
before your demise, because you were not created to live aimlessly.⁶

All of the aforementioned should encourage the worshipping servant of Allaah to take the prescribed preventative measures which would save him from entering the hellfire. The scholars, including ibn Abil-‘Izz al-Hanafee ؓ who explained *al-‘Aqeedah at-Ṭahaamiyyah*⁷, have deduced from the Qur’aan and Sunnah, approximately ten factors which contribute to a person being saved from punishment in the hellfire: *eemaan*; repentance; seeking forgiveness; performing good deeds; adversities of life; punishment in the grave; people of *eemaan* supplicating and seeking forgiveness for others alive or deceased; rewards of deeds performed for the deceased, such as charity, *Hajj*, or supplicating for them; the dreadful circumstances faced on the Day of Resurrection; intercession made by those whom Allaah allows; and the forgiveness of Allaah, the Most Merciful.

My Muslim brothers and sisters, summer is a time of vacation and relaxation, following the hectic period of work and exams, and being worn out from all of one’s tasks and responsibilities. It is a time when the exhausted can find repose, tranquility, and joy. Therefore, the truly fortunate person is he who fills his vacation with obedience to Allaah and makes that its distinguishing quality; and the truly happy person is he who optimally uses that time to do the best deeds he possibly can.

⁴ *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree* (536), *Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim* (615).

⁵ *At-Tawba* (9):81.

⁶ *Lataa’if al-Ma’aarif* (pg.432-433). *Maktabah as-Sajaa*. Cairo, 1423.

⁷ *Sharḥ al-‘Aqeedah at-Ṭahaamiyyah* (pg. 308-312). Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Endowments, Call and Guidance. Saudi Arabia, 1418.

Tears pour forth from my eyes,
and why should I not cry over the good which passed me by;
over the most precious of moments which I have wasted,
spending them heedlessly, and doing things that have only ruined me.

Ibn al-Jawzee رحمته said that every person must know the worth of his life and the value of his time, so that he does not waste a single moment doing anything that would not bring him closer to Allaah.⁸ The embodiment of this can be found in the comprehensive guidance of the Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم. His example of how to make use of time is the best that can be emulated, and his example of rest and recreation is the purest guide that can be followed, in its balance and dignity. He was diligent and firm, yet very kind, amiable, and gentle.

People of the Muslim Ummah, one of the most important central issues related to the searing heat of the summer vacation is the issue of travel and tourism. People long to visit places of lush shade and greenery, gushing springs, and glistening streams in order to get a change of scenery, break the monotony, and find a calm and pleasant atmosphere that would foster reflection and contemplation. Allaah, the Most Perfect, has said what means, “Say: travel throughout the earth, and take heed of how Allaah originated the creation.”⁹ The purpose of this travelling through different terrain varying between hills and valleys is to reflect and contemplate, as well as for the heart to recuperate. Scholars of *tafseer* have mentioned that such travel is permissible in all the sets of laws which Allaah has revealed, so long as it does not become an unnecessary habit. Shaykh al-Islam ibn Taymiyyah رحمته said that if someone uses wholesome permissible means to assist him in accomplishing what is correct, that would be counted among his righteous deeds.¹⁰

With the advent of summer, the glow and beauty of the earth has returned
like a fine young woman in her full adornments;
various scenes of radiant, blossoming greenery
which would be desired by all who see them.
Travel through the hills of the earth which has been adorned so beautifully,
and be captivated by its flora and flowing waters.

However, the absence of proper background and understanding of regulations in Islaam governing travelling and tourism has lured multitudes of Muslims into taking journeys that are appalling and contemptible. In addition, their erroneous concept of a decent summer trip made them deem relinquishing their values and morals to be something acceptable and appropriate; eagerly engaging in humiliating and despicable activities that are displeasing to Allaah. Such has also resulted in cases of blackmail and squandering of fortunes; things which are so bad that just hearing about them is enough of an evil.

So diligently travel along the path leading to admirable objectives
and take heed of my sincere words of advice to you.
And avoid everything silly, inferior, and blameworthy;
whether characteristics, conduct, or repulsive actions.

It is an absolute must for fathers, mothers, educators, and media outlets to cooperate in disseminating the proper concept of what decent, purposeful travel actually is, in order to reinforce and foster proper ideals in the future generation about what is good, upright, and correct; all the while being proud of Islaam as a way of life. It is a message which forms a code of beliefs, laws, regulations, manners, conduct, values, sensibilities, and an entire civilization. It is a must for them all

⁸ *Sayd al-Khaatir* (pg.33). *Daar al-Qalam*. Damascus, 1425.

⁹ *Al-Ankaboot* (29):20.

¹⁰ *Majmo' al-Fataawa* 28/369.

to properly channel and harness time spent during the summer vacation, and to direct recreation and tourism in conformity with the guidelines of Islaam and observing dignified conduct. This should be done by implementing constructive, properly grounded, up-to-date programs and initiatives which are in complete balance and harmony with the guidelines given to us by our Lord. These programs and initiatives should aim to refine souls, sharpen minds and senses, and kindle intellects and intelligence, so as to raise the upcoming righteous generation to great heights with strong resolve and virtue.

Go ahead and attempt to accomplish imposing, important tasks, and do not say
that praise and success are already destined for others.
And do not accept for yourself to be left behind
without attaining the objective which everyone is competing for.

We ask Allaah for His guidance in speaking truthful words, doing righteous deeds, and attaining our objectives and hopes. Allaah has said what means, “Similar difficulties were faced by other peoples who have preceded you, so travel throughout the earth and reflect over the outcome met by those who denied Allaah and His Messengers.”¹¹

O Allaah, bless us with what you have revealed in the tremendous Qur’aan, and allow us to glean benefit from its *ayaat* and admonitions of wisdom. I say this much, and I seek forgiveness from Allaah, the Most Great and Most Sublime, for myself, you, and all Muslims from every sin. Therefore seek forgiveness from Allaah, and repent to Him, as He is most certainly the Most Forgiving and Most Merciful.

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All praise and gratitude are due to Allaah, and I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped except Allaah alone, having no partner; a testimony we make in our beliefs and our words. I further testify that our Prophet, Muḥammad, is the worshipping servant and Messenger of Allaah; the role model whose example is to be followed in determining how to spend our time in recreation during the summer vacation. May the *salaah* and *salaam* of Allaah be upon him, and all his family and Companions – who were united upon sound guidance – as well as upon all those who follow them in goodness until the end of time.

Servants of Allaah! Observe *taqwaa* of Allaah, invest your time by performing righteous deeds which would serve as purification, and fill your lives with all that will bring you closer to Allaah.

People of the Muslim Ummah! As everyone becomes engrossed in their summer plans and activities which produce an atmosphere of joy and happiness in our societies, we cannot help but reflect as many unfortunate events eat away at our Ummah. We cannot help but think about and remember the widespread, longstanding, painful problems in the land of *al-Israa’ wal-Mi’raaj* – the wounded and terrorized land of Palestine – as well as the deeply grieving, devastated, murdered lands of ash-Shaam, where bloodshed is profuse, and senseless aggression and oppression reign supreme. Such events have taken place at the hands of bandits who only care to murder and destroy, and they have shattered our bothers and sisters in Islaam and torn them to bits. We cannot help but think about them in order to try to further their cause and alleviate their hardships. May Allaah remove their anguish, unite them, protect them, and may our Lord send for them people who care to protect and assist them. Our Lord is indeed All-Hearing, the Bestower of Mercy, Most Kind and

¹¹ *Aali ‘Imraan* (3):137.

Generous.

We also cannot help but call to mind those who work hard outdoors in the sweltering heat of the summer sun. They most certainly deserve to be relieved and treated kindly with due consideration and consolation, without neglecting humanitarian gestures and compassion towards them.

My beloved brothers and sisters, I wish to offer a gentle reminder to those amongst you who will be embarking upon their journeys and travels to various resorts and destinations; pursuing a retreat, pleasant atmosphere, and recreation in a lush environment. I wish to remind you of your responsibility of representing Islaam, its teachings, and your country in the best way possible. In doing so, you would bring about much good and happiness for yourselves, and your Ummah. Ensure that your travels are always filled with dignity, obedience to Allaah, and making the best use of what He gives you. Also, beware of embarking upon any journey to reprehensible destinations of corruption and disobedience, which will only bring about anguish and darkness to your heart. Always take care to draw near to Allaah, the Most Mighty and Most Praiseworthy, by consistently fulfilling His obligations, as well as performing optional deeds, and maintaining respectable, pure conduct. Only then would travel actually be a source of joy and relaxation – when it takes place amidst acts of obedience and guidance from Allaah. We bid you farewell, entrusting to Allaah your religion, your trusts, and the last of your deeds. May Allaah grant you *taqwaa* as your provision and forgive your sins.

I would also like to remind those who have planned wedding celebrations that they must always be mindful of Allaah in observing the guidelines and conduct outlined in Islaam for these events, such as moderation and obedience to Allaah; as well as avoiding extravagance, all forms of wastefulness, and all types of sins. May Allaah bless you in what He gives you, shower His blessings upon you, and unite you upon all that is good.

In conclusion, invoke *salaah* and *salaam* upon the leader of all former and later people – the chosen Prophet whose virtues are abundant – and upon his pure virtuous family, and his noble Companions. This is as Allaah has commanded you in His revelation, the most truthful of speech, where He said what means, “Indeed, Allaah and His angels send *salaah* upon the Prophet. O People of *eemaan*, invoke *salaah* and abundant *salaam* upon him.”

Also in a *hadeeth* collected by Muslim, ‘Abdullaah ibn ‘Amr ibn al-‘Aas narrated that the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said, “If someone invokes *salaah* upon me once, Allaah would send *salaah* upon him ten times due to that.”¹²

May Allaah and all the angels send *salaah*
upon the one who called all mankind to guidance,
and upon His righteous, praiseworthy family,
and my writing this in ink has been guided by an enlightened heart.

[...followed by *du‘aa’*...]

¹² *Saheeh Muslim* (384).