

Friday Sermon 26/11/2010

**TITLE :**

**“(Remember) when you sought help of your Lord and He answered you”**

Umayyad Mosque

26/11/2010 إذ تستغيثون ربكم فاستجاب لكم

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Praises be to Allah, incessant and oft-repeated; praises which are commensurate with His Favours and equivalent to all increases. Oh Lord! To you belong praises as befit the dignity of your countenance and your mighty and exalted powers.

Glory be to Allah. It is beyond my capacity to glorify and extol You my Lord. You are best described by Yourself. I testify that there is no God but Allah, the One and Only, Who has no partner. And I testify that Prophet Mohammed is His servant and messenger, His chosen and beloved friend and the best of prophets. Allah sent him to the entire world as a harbourer of glad tidings and punishment.

Oh Allah! Convey blessings and salutations upon our master Mohammed and the progeny of our master Mohammed, such that are permanent and lasting till the day of judgement.

I advise you, oh believers and my sinful person to fear Allah.

And now oh servants of Allah! Remember!

Whatever calamity befalls the Islamic nation at any given period of time, and it turns to Allah with sincere pleas and supplications and an expression of need, Allah certainly removes from it the suffering and replaces it with comfort and ease. This is a principle of Allah, among many others, which He has blessed His servants with. Allah has established these principles in His impeccable book through unambiguous and sound statements. History bears testimony to these primordial laws. This has also been illustrated in the following verse of the Qur'an to which I would like to turn your attention towards:

**‘So flee to Allah, verily, I (Mohammed) am a plain warner to you from Him.’  
[Qur’an 51:50]**

Flee from the various tribulations and calamities that have appeared, flee from them to Allah the Almighty.

Consider the verse : **"(Remember) when you sought help of your Lord and He answered you (saying): 'I will help you with a thousand of the angels each behind the other (following one another) in succession.' [Qur'an 8:9]**

Allah has, in the above verse, paired the word '*istijaabah*' [acceptance and response] with the word '*istighaathah*' [relentless supplication and sincere imploration], that is this has been deemed the price of removal of difficulty and elimination of misery.

In reference to the disasters that seem to encircle you, also ponder this verse: **'When Our Torment reached them, why then did they not believe with humility? But their hearts became hardened, and Shaitan (Satan) made fair-seeming to them that which they used to do.'** [Qur'an 6:43]

Let me, Oh servants of Allah, place before you accounts from the glorious Islamic history as evidence of the manifestation of this noble principle of Allah; evidence that is sound and indisputable.

Although time does not permit me to dwell on all such events, I shall nevertheless pick out what is appropriate and relevant considering the limited time.

We are all aware of the crusades that were waged upon this noble piece of land of ours. These fierce and violent campaigns continued until the will of Allah decided otherwise. Much despair accompanied this onslaught within the minds of Muslims, and many wondered if the noble lands had been seized from them forever and they had been occupied with no hope ever of regaining them. But what actually transpired following these events?

Nur al-Deen Zengi and his disciple and associate Salah al-Deen emerged from the scenes, the very first and the most effective weapon which they deployed against the crusaders was to implore and beseech Allah.

It was true beseeching to Allah and sincere pleading at His threshold. It was declaration of the slaves inferiority in comparison to His superiority.

You are aware of the high position of Nur al-Deen Zangi, whose shrine is not very far from this Umayyad mosque. Along with the complete preparedness in material ways, with which he also encouraged the nation, he would spend the most part of the night standing and prostrating, while crying and beseeching Allah. And his student, Salah al-Deen al-Ayyubi would also be immersed in praying to Allah in the same fashion; that is with humility and a show of dependence and need. It was this spirit which was an indispensable element even as regards his material preparations. No doubt material preparations are highly important, but they are at most like the physical body. Can the body function at all without the spirit ? The spirit here is -turning to Allah.

**'So flee to Allah, verily, I (Mohammed SAW) am a plain warner to you from Him.'** [Qur'an 51:50]

And as soon as this blessed piece of land was purified from the assaults of the crusaders and they were forced to retreat, an amazing phenomenon, as testified by history, came to pass, which again reflects the principle of Allah.

**"(Remember) when you sought help of your Lord and He answered you (saying): 'I will help you with a thousand of the angels each behind the other (following one another) in succession.' [Qur'an 8:9]**

Let's look at another testimony. This relates to the so-called era of 'Successive States'. The bonds of Islamic unity had been dislocated in these regions and its foundations dismantled, turning the once united Islamic state into smaller successive states. It was also unfortunate that each state eyed its neighbour with hostility. What then would be the remedy that could rescue the nation from this critical state of affairs that had brought it to the brink of destruction?

It was at this critical juncture that a man named Uthman Ertuğrul, the grandfather of the Ottoman Caliphs, appeared from among these fragmented pieces of the State. He was a man whose garment was submission and subjection to Allah and whose nourishment was beseeching and invoking Allah during the long nights. He had much reverence for Islam and all related phenomena in all its manifestations.

Once one of his relatives hosted him at his house. At bedtime the host guided him to his bedroom that had been prepared for him and closed the door and left. Looking around, Uthman Ertuğrul, noticed what looked like a book in the niche of a wall. Upon drawing near he discovered it was a copy of the Holy Qur'an. Immediately Uthman assumed an upright posture, similar to that of a soldier before his commander and remained in that position until the break of dawn. Neither did he sit nor sleep. When his host enquired of the reason the following day, he simply stated, "How could I sleep or even stretch my legs in a room where the Word of Allah is placed, all the while addressing and instructing me?".

It was the will of Allah to choose such a pious soul for the unification and consolidation of a shattered nation wherefrom the birth of the Ottoman Caliphate took place. Undoubtedly a just reward from Allah for the pleas and entreaties of a pious soul in the night. How true is the Divine statement: **"(Remember) when you sought help of your Lord and He answered you (saying): 'I will help you with a thousand of the angels each behind the other (following one another) in succession.' [Qur'an 8:9]**

It was this very Uthman Ertuğrul who had advised his son moments before his death in the following words:

"My dear son, I was no more than an ant in terms of my weakness. It was Allah alone who blessed me with all this for serving His religion. So live serving the Religion of

Allah, guarding His Shar'iah , for that is the responsibility of the kings on the face of earth."

Shall I not continue relating to you incidents from history that illustrate this principle of Allah?

It was the era of the tribal communities ruled by regional leaders in the outskirts of Morocco. The powerful Umayyad dynasty had crumbled to pieces in Andalusia [Modern-day Spain] due to the many errors made by them for which we do not have time presently. This great state too had transformed into many small states that were incessantly at war with each other. The level of hostility among these states was such that they would seek assistance from the enemies of Islam in order to be able to overpower their neighbours, their brothers; those who shared the same mission of life and the same religion.

Yusuf Tashfin appeared, the very Yusuf Tashfin who was cited as an example for nightly prayers and wakefulness. His nocturnal devotion and weeping was the talk of the town. He had truly carried out the command of: **'So flee to Allah, verily, I (Mohammed) am a plain warner to you from Him.'** [Qur'an 51:50]

Allah consolidated the leaders of the tribes at his hands. The once hostile and resenting autonomies assimilated and merged into a large powerful state, to be reckoned with. The rock that had once given itself to fragmentation had now regained its force and strength. What was the secret of this underlying factor that brought this transition? It was none other than beseeching and crying out to Allah; making peace with Him; forming alliance with Him. And Allah certainly answers prayers.

Once more the divine statement proved itself to be true: **"(Remember) when you sought help of your Lord and He answered you (saying): "I will help you with a thousand of the angels each behind the other (following one another) in succession."** [Qur'an 8:9]

Continuing our examples from history, let me relate to you of Mohammed al-Fatih. The man who would dream to be the one to whom the Prophet upon whom be peace alluded to when he had said: "Constantine would soon be conquered. How admirable is its leader! And how wonderful is that army!"

Mohammed al-Fatih made all the material preparations, as perfectly and zealously as would one whose sole belief is in materiality. He constructed his famous fort on the suburbs of Constantine for this purpose in less than four months. It would not be possible to build such a fort today in double that time even with the technology we have at our disposal. But upon what did Mohammed al-Fatih rely ? What was the catalyst of this great feat ? It was the implementation of the instruction of Allah, **'So flee to Allah, verily, I (Mohammed SAW) am a plain warner to you from Him.'** [Qur'an 51:50]

His attendant turned to him after a portion of night had passed to confer with him on an issue and found him prostrate on earth, with nothing in between him and the grains of sand. He was weeping and entreating Allah for provision of assistance. His attendant stood there motionless in the posture of a soldier waiting for him to end his *sujood* [prostration], his communication with his lord and creator. Indeed, this, had been the reason behind the great victory which Allah subsequently effected upon his hands.

Once again the words of the Almighty stand correct and substantiated: **"(Remember) when you sought help of your Lord and He answered you (saying): 'I will help you with a thousand of the angels each behind the other (following one another) in succession.' [Qur'an 8:9]**

What can I say, as the entire history affirms this divine principle.

'Uqbah ibn Nafi' reached the outskirts of the West, struggling for and propagating the religion of Allah. He found himself in the marshlands surrounded by a jungle infested with wild animals and ferocious beasts. He looked around and soon realized that this was a strategic base for his future plans. He examined his army and selected what few remained of the noble Companions of the Prophet upon whom be peace, fourteen in number to be exact. He assembled them and others behind them, and they beseeched Allah, invoking Him for assistance, affirming their dependence on Him and professing their inability and helplessness. When evening came, 'Uqbah stood on a hilltop of that very frightful land and began addressing the beasts of the jungle in a loud voice thus:

"Oh scattered beasts of this land! We have come to deliver the message of Allah, to carry out His commands. Why do you not then vacate this place and migrate elsewhere so we could make this as a base for our activities? The following morning people witnessed a surprising spectacle, as hordes of beasts, along with their offspring, made their way out of that area. This is the very place where the city of Qirwan was later founded.

Shall I relate more examples, oh servants of Allah? Turn to the pages of history, for the entire history speaks of such events. Allah's principle manifests itself amongst His servants without any change or alteration. And we today, as you are aware, are passing through unprecedented times and conditions. The drought and famine that is being witnessed indicate danger and harm. This is a message, oh servants of Allah. By the Allah beside whom there is no other god, this is a message from Allah. A message which has import and significance ; which has requirements and demands. Do we ever reflect and ponder ? Do we ever fulfil its demands ?

I ask Allah the Exalted and Powerful to enable us to practise this. I say this and seek forgiveness from Allah.

