

SERMON OF 'ID AL-FITR

THE REJOICEMENT OF THE BELIEVER ¹

IMAM AL BOUTI

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Allah is Great, Allah is Great, Allah is Great, Allah is Great, Allah is Great, Allah is Great, Allah is Great, Allah is Great, Allah is Great.

Allah is greater than the transgression of the tyrants. Allah is greater than the stubbornness of the arrogant. Allah is greater than the apostasy of the atheists and their like. Allah is altogether great, and an abundance of praise is due to Him, and glory and praise be to Him morning and evening. Glory be to Allah filling the Scale (of good deeds). Glory be to Allah Who is glorified in every place. Glory be to Allah Who is glorified on every tongue. Glory be to Allah, and praise be to Allah, and no deity but Allah, and Allah is Great, Allah is Great, Allah is Great.

All praise is due to Allah, praise that complies with His blessings and ompensates His abundance. Our Lord, for You is all praise as befits the majesty of Your countenance and the might of Your authority. O Allah, I cannot sufficiently enumerate praises upon You; You are as You have praised Yourself. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah alone and He has no partner, and I bear witness that Muḥammad is His slave and Messenger and His sincere and intimate friend, the best prophet that Allah sent to the entire world as a herald of glad tidings and admonition. O Allah, pray upon, give peace and give blessings upon *Sayyidīnā* Muḥammad and upon the family of our *Sayyidīnā* Muḥammad, prayers and peace that last inseparably until the Day of Judgement. I advise you and my sinning self to have fearful awareness of Allah the Exalted.

In this blessed day, rejoicement fills the hearts of Allah's faithful servants who regard that they have achieved what they should have done during this blessed month which we farewelled yesterday. They are happy with the mercy of Allah on them. They feel rejoicement for their hope in Allah's acceptance for their prescribed prayers, fasting, and night prayers. They are filled with hope for being freed from torture and Hellfire. It is a pleasure felt by each one of us. It might be the strongest

¹¹ This sermon was given on 13/10/2007.

proof for Allah's manifestations (*tajaliyyāt*) on His servants with mercy and benefaction.

A person's feelings of comfort and delight today are the fruits of Allah's manifestations in this blessed day. It is a rejoicement through which a person gets closer to Allah, Mighty and Majestic. However, some may be confused in something. He reads in the Book of Allah, **"Say, "In the bounty of Allah and in His mercy - in that let them rejoice; it is better than what they accumulate". [Yūnus:10,58]** On the other hand, he reads as well when Allah tells us about Korah (*Qārūn*) : **"When his people said to him: "Do not be glad (with ungratefulness to Allah's Favors). Verily! Allah likes not those who are glad (with ungratefulness to Allah's Favors)". [al-Qaṣaṣ, 28: 76]**

How do we combine between both Divine verses? How do we gather between Allah's forbidding for not being extremely glad whereas in another verse He commands them to be joyful?

The answer, O slaves of Allah, is that the rejoicement which fills the hearts of the believers in Allah in this day does not emerge from their self-caprices. Their happiness is not resulted from the feelings of amusement or the motives of caprices and lusts kept in one's being. That is the happiness which Allah has warned us against. The moody pleasure - which is an outcome of the amusement of the careless, and man's abidance to his desires and frivolities- when a person finds it easily; he is delighted by it to the extent of being blocked from Allah, Glorified and Exalted. A faithful person does not know this enjoyment because it can't ever find its way to his heart. He is the faithful person who deals with his faith: first as a doctrine and secondly as a behaviour and submission to the commandment of Allah, Glorified and Exalted.

How does a believer enjoy such kind of pleasure- stemmed either from self- frivolities, ostentation, or entire indulgence in bounties without being grateful to the Most Exalted Bountiful Who is Allah Glorified and Exalted be He?? How does this pleasure penetrate a heart that has known Allah, Mighty and Majestic, and that he is His slave? He knows that he owns nothing from what he wishes to enjoy with. He does not own the money which he fully basks in. He does not own the power- which is a trust that goes inside his entity. A believer knows that he is a slave to Allah, Mighty and Majestic and therefore his servitude separates him from such kind of delight. It is the frivolity known by the one who does not know Allah. Nonetheless, persons -who know Allah- are not acquainted with this sort of rejoicement forbidden by Allah for Qārūn

and his like, **“When his people said to him: "Do not be glad (with ungratefulness to Allah's Favors). Verily! Allah likes not those who are glad (with ungratefulness to Allah's Favors)”**. It means: do not be happy with the bounties which Allah has given you like the arrogant and self-conceited persons did.

However, the rejoicement of a faithful person that Allah calls him to be joyful with, when He, the Almighty says, **“Say, "In the bounty of Allah and in His mercy - in that let them rejoice; it is better than what they accumulate”**; it is a sort of worship through which a man get nearer to Allah, Mighty and Majestic. The faithful’s happiness is a mental interaction bloomed from his mind first and then felt by his whole being. A believer in Allah feels happy for being accepted by Allah. Is there ever a pleasure that overwhelms a person – whatever its reason is- more subtle than this reason? When the heralds come from Allah to you that He has accepted you, and accepted your fasting, your night prayers, your prescribed prayers, your supplications and your resort to Him, thus you become accepted at Him. Is there a delight overwhelms a man’s entity more elegant than this rejoicement when he receives these glad tidings from His Creator?

[How it is tremendously great] when a slave of Allah feels in this blessed day the manifestations of Allah- Glorified and Exalted be He- which He has bestowed on His slaves whilst He is gifting them with their rewards for their good deeds and repentance to Him, the Glorified; when the faithful slave feels that Allah- Glorified and Exalted- casts upon him His merciful manifestations. How isn’t he filled by the joy coming from Allah? Any one of us when he reads the speech of Allah, Glorified and Exalted- Who is addressing His faithful slaves who are sticking to His commandments, or speaking about them, **“Allah is the Walī (Protector or Guardian) of those who believe. He brings them out from darkness into light”**. [al-Baqarah,2:257]; and contemplates and feels that he is belonging to Allah through this Divine speech! My Guardian is Allah, the Almighty! I belong to Allah through this protection! Hence, I am not homeless in this vast earth. I am not astray in this universe. I do belong to Allah, Mighty and Majestic. How does not happiness overwhelm me when I regard this belonging is declared in the speech of Allah to me?!

How is there a huge difference between that dissolute pleasure which is an outcome of self-caprices and its animal sentiments laying in a man’s entity; and that pleasure descended from the highness of Allah’s lordship? They are subtle manifestations shown to the hearts of the believers!

Hence, we know, o slaves of Allah, how can this happiness – which is a kind of worship through which we get closer to Allah – meet with the feelings of sorrow and sadness for the slaves of Allah who are afflicted by hardships and calamities.

How many people think that combining between these two feelings is impossible because of their contradiction?! How can I feel sorry for my brothers who go through hardships while I rejoice that I receive the glad tidings from Allah, Glorified and Exalted? No, this is a sort of worship and the other is another sort of worship. They are perfectly matched and harmonized. When I am happy that Allah has helped me, and that I belong to Him as a slave to Him together with His protective and guided sustainment to me. It is a mental sort of worship which resides in my mind and then spreads all over my entity. On the other hand, I am sad for my brothers who badly suffer from hardships; this is also another sort of worship through which I get closer to Allah. A faithful slave does not turn right or left unless he accomplishes through that another sort of worship to get nearer to Allah . All his feelings and conducts are means of nearness. When a believer realizes his faith and submits his life and conducts to the realities of his faith in Allah

We congratulate ourselves, we the Muslims, that Allah has made us to be closer to Him in this day through this rejoicement which dominates our hearts. Additionally, we congratulate ourselves that He has made in our hearts prepared places to feel sorrow for our brothers who severely suffer from hardships. The heart of a believer can bear this and that because the joy of a believer - as I have previously told you - is not a moody joy like that felt by those who do not know their Lord and Creator; who go astray in the darkness of their desires and caprices, and who are unaware of their identities and selves.

No, a believer does not know this ever, and he can't go a step forward in this way. The believer is that person whose whole entity dyed with the meanings of servitude to Allah. Henceforth, his heart is prepared and spacious for all what pleases Allah. Whoever is not caring about the matters of his fellow Muslims, he does not belong to them. Therefore, he must care about others.

“Say, "In the bounty of Allah and in His mercy - in that let them rejoice; it is better than what they accumulate”. Therefore, he must feel happiness for what Allah granted him. He heralds me with His mercy, so how don't I rejoice? Allah heralds me with His grace, so how don't I enjoy this grace?

This is the answer for this question. It is a privilege that distinguishes the faithful slaves of Allah. None knows this merit except those who are chosen by Allah to know Him. He chooses them to be their Protector: **“Allah is the Walī (Protector or Guardian) of those who believe. He brings them out from darkness into light. But as for those who disbelieve, their Auliya (supporters and helpers) are Taghut [false deities and false leaders, etc.], they bring them out from light into darkness”**. Moreover, He dictates us this reality through His saying, **“Verily, my Wali (Protector, Supporter, and Helper, etc.)”**[7: 196]. It means you should say it! My protector is Allah! When a person says it from the bottom of his heart, how does not he rejoice? It is the same feelings of rejoicement when he hears the call of Allah **“Say, “O My servants who have transgressed against themselves [by sinning], do not despair of the mercy of Allah . Indeed, Allah forgives all sins. Indeed, it is He who is the Forgiving, the Merciful”**. [39:53] This is how Allah addresses us with that we belong to Him as slaves, **“ O My servants”**! The Most sublime feeling ever that stimulates feelings of rejoicement that makes someone extremely happy!

And may Allah have mercy on that poet who once said:

What really increases my joy and pride

Till I was about to touch the stars

That I am amongst Your call “O My servants”

And that You made Ahmad is my Prophet

O Allah, complete our rejoicement with You in this blessed day , O the Owner of Majesty and Bounty! Crown the happiness of Your faithful slaves in this blessed morning with near sustained victory. You are truly worthy to do this even if we do not deserve it.

I say this statement of mine and I ask the forgiveness of Allah, the Most Great.

MUḤAMMAD SA’ĪD RAMAḌĀN AL-BŪṬĪ