The Farewell Sermons

Importance:
We are currently in the months of hajj, the time when Muslims around the world yearn to present themselves before the Baytullah and stand on the plains of ‘Arafah, fulfilling the rites of hajj. The journey of hajj has been aptly referred to as ‘The Journey of a Lifetime’ as a person receives only one opportunity to fulfill his fardh hajj, and people spend their entire lives eagerly awaiting their chance to travel to the Holy Lands and carry out their hajj.

Nabi (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) performed only one hajj after hajj was made fardh on the Ummah, and he performed this hajj approximately three months prior to leaving this world. To be precise, Nabi (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) left this world 81 days after the Day of ‘Arafah. Furthermore, it was an occasion at which more than 100 000 Sahaabah (radhiyallahu ‘anhum) were present. The advices which Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) gave on this momentous occasion, in various sermons, were therefore extremely comprehensive, pertinent and are regarded as parting advices. It is for this reason that the Sahaabah (radhiyallahu ‘anhum) named this hajj, ‘The Farewell Hajj’ (Saheeh Bukhaari #1739, #1742, #4402). Hereunder are some of these advices.

Honour of a Muslim:

About Abdullah bin ‘Amr (radhiyallahu ‘anhu) narrates:

فإن دماءكم وأموالكم وأعراضكم عليكم فليس أنتم تذينون ما تذينين ذلك إليه بعدهم ليس فيه شيء من ذلك.

Ibn ‘Abbaas (radhiyallahu ‘anhum) narrates that Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) addressed the people on the day of ‘Eidul Adha in a sermon and asked, “O people! Which day is this?” The people replied, “A sacred day.” Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) next asked, “Which place is this?” The people replied, “A sacred place.” Finally, Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) asked, “Which month is this?” The people replied, “A sacred month.” Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) then said, “Indeed your blood, wealth and honour are sacred (i.e. haraam for another person to violate) upon you, just like the sanctity of this day of yours, in this place of yours, in this month of yours.” Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) repeated the statement a few times.

The honour of the occasion was compounded by it deriving honour through multiple aspects, i.e. it was a day in which fighting was not allowed, it was a place (the Haram) in which fighting was not allowed and it was also a month in which fighting was not allowed. Despite the occasion enjoying sanctity from three separate dimensions, the sanctity of a Muslim was still shown to be greater. To emphasize the point, Nabi (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) repeated the statement a few times (probably three times).

The sanctity that a Muslim enjoys can also be understood from this narration:

فأي يوم حرام كحرمة يومكم هذا وكنتم له تعاونا وسماواتكم تعاونا وكنتم له تعاونا.

Abdullah bin ‘Amr (radhiyallahu ‘anhum) narrates: I saw Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) performing tawaaaf around the Ka’bah while he was saying (to the Ka’bah), “How delightful you are, and how delightful is your journey!”

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your fragrance! How great you are, and how great is your sanctity! By that Being in Whose control lies the life of Muhammad (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam)! The sanctity of a believer is greater in the sight of Allah Ta’ala than even you, his wealth, his blood and that we hold nothing but a good opinion of him.”

It is so unfortunate that today, we look for every opportunity to do a Muslim down and ‘take him for a ride’. Further, his honour has become so cheap that based on mere suspicions, we blacken his name and tarnish his reputation, broadcasting all sorts of lies regarding him, especially via social media. The matter becomes even more serious, when the person is an ‘Aalim or a Deeni elder.

**Extortion:**

> “Behold! Do not oppress! Behold! Do not oppress! Behold! Do not oppress! The wealth of a Muslim is not permissible without his happiness!”

There are many different forms of extortion. One form of extortion (extracting money from people against their will) occurs in the winding up of the deceased’s estate. One or more of the heirs deliberately set out to deprive other heirs – primarily the women – of the fair share which sharee’ah has stipulated for them.

Another form of extortion is where a person is in financial constraints and thus resorts to selling some of his assets in desperation. Knowing full well that the person is in a ‘squeeze’, we happily squeeze him further by offering him an amount that we know is below the value of the asset. Eventually, the person accepts, as he is desperate for the cash. However, such a transaction, although valid, will never carry barakah as the seller agreed with an unhappy heart.

There are also other more subtle, sophisticated and polished manners of extortion which have even become socially acceptable. A few examples of these forms of extortion are bridal showers, baby showers and housewarming parties. For these occasions, the guests are expected to arrive with a gift in hand. Hence, those invited feel compelled to present the host with a gift – even if it is difficult for them to manage – as arriving empty-handed will be a source of embarrassment and disgrace.

One very common problem which also falls under extortion is where an employer exploits his employee and takes advantage of his plight by forcing him to work overtime, etc. without remunerating him correctly.

What we need to realise is that the curse of this oppressed person will definitely catch up with us one day.

‘Amr bin Dinar (rahimahullah) narrates: A man from the Bani Israa’eeel was once walking on the seashore, when he heard a person exclaiming, “I should serve as an example for a person who intends committing an act of oppression.” When requested to explain what he meant by this statement, he replied, “I was once a policeman walking on this very shore, when I noticed a fisherman catching a fish. I requested him to give the fish to me, but he refused. I then asked him to sell it to me, but he refused. I then struck him on the head with my whip and forcefully took it away from him. As I walked away with the fish in my hand, it gripped my thumb with its teeth. I tried to remove my thumb from its mouth but did not manage to do so. After returning home, my family tried to remove my thumb and only managed to do so after much effort. The wound was small but gradually increased in size. I endeavoured to treat it, but my efforts were in vain. When my thumb had swollen considerably, I decided to consult a doctor. He advised that I had no choice but to amputate my thumb, as the wound would spread to my other limbs. My thumb was then amputated. Soon thereafter, I noticed that my palm had become infected. Again, the doctor advised that my only choice was to amputate my hand. I consented, but my woes were not over. The wound then spread to my forearm. After my forearm was amputated, the wound spread to my upper arm and the doctor advised that even this be amputated. When I saw this, I dashed out of my home in desperation, screaming like a madman. After wandering about for some time, I decided to rest beneath a large tree and fell asleep. In my dream, a person appeared to me and asked, “How many more of your limbs will be amputated? Rather, seek forgiveness from the person whom you had oppressed and you will be cured.” When I awoke, I realised the truth of the message conveyed in the dream and knew that it was a warning from Allah Ta’ala to repent from my evil deed. I made my way to the seashore, in search of the fisherman. When I reached him, he was busy removing his fishing net from the water. It contained a large amount of fish. He did not recognize me and asked who I was. I begged him to forgive me and explained, “I am the policeman who assaulted you and took away your fish.” I showed him my hand and he immediately recited some words seeking refuge in Allah Ta’ala from His displeasure. He then forgave me. Immediately, the wound in my arm began to heal. I turned around to leave, but he said to me, “This is not justice in my opinion. I had cursed you for a single fish which would have made no difference to
me, and my prayer was accepted.” He grasped my hand and led me to his home. When we had entered, he instructed his son to dig up a particular corner of the floor and removed a chest containing thirty thousand gold coins. His son counted out ten thousand coins and the fisherman handed them to me, saying, “Take this and use it when you need to.” He then instructed his son to count out another ten thousand coins and handed them over to me saying, “Distribute these to your poor relatives and neighbours.” As I was about to depart, I decided to ask him how he had cursed me on that fateful day. He replied, “When you struck me on the head of Deen, I looked up in the sky and called out, “O Allah, You created us both but You made him strong and me weak. You allowed him to overpower me and due to my weakness, I could not oppose him. You did not grant me the strength to prevent his oppression upon him. By the power with which You created him and made him strong and me weak, I beg You to make him an example to humanity.” (Rawdur Rayyaaheen pg. 253)

**Interest:**

“The interest of jaahiliyyah is cancelled, and the first interest that I cancel is our interest (i.e. the interest of our family member), the interest of ‘Abbaas bin ‘Abdil Muttaalib (radhiyallahu ‘anhu), for his interest has been cancelled entirely (i.e. the interest and the loan amount have both been cancelled).”

On this occasion, Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) ruled that all the interest monies that we owed to different people from loans issued during the pre-Islamic era will fall, i.e. only the initial loan amount will be repaid and no interest will be paid. However, when it came to his uncle, ‘Abbaas (radhiyallahu ‘anhu), then Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) cancelled even the initial loan amount so that nothing would be owed to him. (Ad-Durrul Mandood vol. 3, pg. 255)

For a person of imaan, merely the fact that his Allah and Rasul (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) have prohibited a person is a sufficient deterrent. However, the aspect of interest is so severe that Allah Ta’ala has announced war with such a person. Further, all those who are associated with the transaction have been cursed by Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam).

"Jaabir (radhiyallahu ‘anhu) narrates that Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) cursed the one who receives interest, the one who pays interest, the one who records the transaction and those who witness the transaction. Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) said, “They are all equal.”

How can one ever be successful and prosperous when he is at war with Allah Ta’ala and earning the curse of Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam)?

Many a times a person is fooled by the fact that he can outwardly see growth in his own business or the business of another person, despite him being involved in interest. The answer to this is:

1. Every type of growth is not beneficial. A growth or tumour in a person’s body is extremely dangerous and fatal. Hence, let alone being devoid of barakah, growth in the form of interest will ultimately destroy a person.
2. The scholars have mentioned that it takes up to 40 years for the evil consequences of interest to catch up with a person. (Ma’aariful Quraan vol. 1, pg. 651)
3. The harm may not necessarily affect a person financially. Rather, it sometimes affects him in the form of marital problems, family feuds, stress, delinquent children who are disobedient or on drugs, being distant from Deen, etc.

Even worse than this is, when one begins to legalise it, by calling it ‘profit’ instead of interest etc.

**Changing Deen:**

"Indeed time has rotated (until the months have now returned to their original sequence) as it was on the day that Allah Ta’ala created the heavens and the earth. The year consists of twelve months, of which four are sacred. Three of them are consecutive i.e. Zul Qa’dah, Zul Hijjah and Muharram, and Rajab of Mudhar which is between Jumaadal Ukhraa and Sha’baan.”

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All the Ambiyaa (’alaihimus salaam) would honour the four sacred months. The Arabs, who claimed to follow Nabi Ebrahim (’alaihis salaam), also understood and acknowledged the sanctity of these four months. However, they were a people who fought and waged war almost all-year round. Hence observing the sanctity of these months by abstaining from fighting was inconvenient for them. Hence, they would tamper with these months and switch them around for their convenience. Because of this taking place excessively, the months of the year were mixed up to such an extent that at times, the month they declared as Zul Hijjah was not really Zul Hijjah due to their switching. However, in the year in which Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) performed Haj, the months had returned to their original places.

The lesson understood here is that we cannot make adjustments in Deen to suit our convenience. Rather, we should adjust ourselves to suit Deen. The Quraan Majeed repeatedly reprimands the Jews for repeatedly making changes in Deen to suit themselves. Unfortunately, this is becoming very common nowadays.

Kindness to Wives:

“Fear Allah Ta’ala regarding women, for you have taken them (into your Nikaah) with the trust of Allah Ta’ala (i.e. they are an amaanah from Allah) and you have made relations with them halaal through the words of Allah Ta’ala (as the khutbah recited at the time of Nikaah consists of verses of the Quraan Majeed and the name of Allah Ta’ala). It is your right over them that they do not allow anyone into your home that you do not approve of... and it is their right over you that you provide them with their food and clothing in a good manner.”

Another narration states: “Fear Allah Ta’ala regarding women for they are like captives with you (i.e. bound to you through nikaah). They do not possess anything of their own, and they have rights over you and you have rights over them.”

“Fear Allah Ta’ala regarding women” - Women, by nature, tend to be submissive on account of their modesty and weakness. Unfortunately, some men take advantage of their submissive nature, understanding that these women cannot leave them (as they rely on their husbands to put a roof over their head, etc., and there are often children involved as well) and the husbands thus abuse their wives emotionally, mentally and even physically. We need to realise that we may have some authority over them, but Allah Ta’ala has complete authority over us.


“For you have taken them with the trust of Allah Ta’ala ...” - Just as an amaanah cannot be abused, these women are an amaanah from Allah Ta’ala and cannot be abused. Furthermore, just as a Muslim will not speak a lie after taking the name of Allah Ta’ala, as he respects the sanctity of Allah Ta’ala’s name, he should respect his Nikaah and not use it to abuse his wife, as his Nikaah was performed with the name of Allah Ta’ala as well.

“They do not allow anyone into your home ...” - In the pre-Islamic era, even when the husband would be away from home, his wife would allow other men into the home to sit and speak with her. In this way, a strange man (not her mahram) would sit with her in privacy and conduct a casual conversation. In this khutbah, •

6 Abu Mas’ood Badri (radiyallahu ‘anhu) narrates: I was once hitting a slave of mine with a whip when I heard a voice behind me say, “Know, O Abu Mas’ood!” However, on account of my extreme anger, I did not understand the voice. When the person drew closer, I saw that he was none other than Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) who was saying, “Know, O Abu Mas’ood! Know, O Abu Mas’ood!” I threw the whip down, and Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) said, “Know, O Abu Mas’ood! Allah Ta’ala has more power and control over you than you have over this slave!” I thus said, “I will never hit a slave again after him.”

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Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) condemned this practice of Jaahiliyyah and explained that the laws of hijaab and niqaab must be upheld. Hence, there must be total segregation between non-mahram men and women. This prohibition also applies to chatting with non-mahram males via social networks, which has become extremely common nowadays.

“That you provide them with their food and clothing ...” - Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) also made it clear that it is the responsibility of the husband to provide for the wife. Hence, it is incorrect for the husband to make his wife toil and slog in his business, or encourage or force her to seek employment to supplement the income. When this is done, the poor woman is abused as she has to work, see to her domestic responsibilities and also see to the upbringing of her children. She is thus burdened with both her responsibility and her husband’s responsibility. The injustice of this to the woman is just one problem. Another serious problem is the violation of the laws of sharee’ah (e.g. laws of hijaab and niqaab) that are commonly violated in the workplace.

“And they will not disobey you in permissible matters ...” - Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) highlighted that a wife should obey her husband. However, Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) clearly explained that she will only obey him in permissible matters. Hence, the husband cannot force her to comply with him in haram, e.g. forcing her to dress attractively out of the home, attend mixed gatherings and carry out haraam actions in the bedroom.

True Muslim etc.:

I will inform you as to who a true Muslim is. A true Muslim is the one from whose hands and tongue people are safe, and a true believer is he from whom the people are safe in regard to their wealth and lives, and a true mujahid is the one who strives to obey Allah Ta’ala against his desires."

A true Muslim and a true believer is a person who does not cause any harm, pain or anguish, whether mental, physical, financial or emotional, to another person. Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) showed this to be a quality that is linked to a person’s imaan and Islam i.e. without a person possessing this quality, his Islam and imaan are deficient.

In this hadeeth, Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) mentioned that the true mujahid is the one who wages war against his desires and strives to obey Allah Ta’ala. The reason for the person engaging in this form of jihaad (i.e. Jihaad against the carnal self) being called a true mujahid is that this form of jihaad is a perpetual jihaad, as opposed to a battle which lasts for a few moments. In battle, a person either wins, gaining booty and reward, or is killed, gaining martyrdom and reward. However, in jihaad against desires, the person only wins when he dies with imaan and only sees his rewards in the Hereafter.

Passing the Message:

فِي أَلَّا هَلْ بَلَغْتُ ؟ قَالَوا : نَعْمَ ، قَالَ : "اللَّهُمَّ أَشْهَدْ ، فَلْبِلْغُ الشَّاهِدِ الْغَابِبِ ، فَلْبِلْغُ أُمِّيٍّ مِنْ سَامِعِ " . ( "صحيح البخاري" ) ٢٣٥٩

Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) said, “Behold! Have I conveyed?” The Sahaabah (radhiyallahu ‘anhum) replied, “Yes.” Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) then said, “O Allah! You bear witness (that I have conveyed the message). The one who is present should convey the message to those who are absent, as many of those to whom the message are conveyed safeguard the message better than those who hear the message (directly).”

‘Every man for himself and god for all’ is the mindset of the disbelievers. Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) was perpetually filled with a deep concern for his Ummah. As the followers and ardent lovers of Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam), we should also have a concern for the Ummah and those around us. Hence, beginning with our children, immediate family and friends, each person should make an effort to improve the Islamic condition of each person, including himself. When the purpose is to improve the person and encourage him – not to smash him and break his spirit – then the manner of advising will be one that will appeal and be appreciated by the person.