

FRIDAY MESSAGE

ISSUE 277

FRIDAY 4th JULY 2025/ 9th MUHARRAM 1447

Muharram, Ashura and the importance of Time

As the Hijri year draws quietly to its end, a tranquil hush envelops the heart of the believer. This is not just the conclusion of a calendar cycle—it is the soft turning of a page in the ever-vanishing scroll of our lives.

With every second that ticks away, we are reminded of the impermanence of all things, and the preciousness of time as the most priceless currency we possess. We do not know how many more years, how many more Ashuras, or how many more chances we will be gifted. And that simple reality makes this moment—this reflection—immensely profound.

This past year, like those before it, was woven with threads of joy and grief, success and failure, heedlessness and devotion. For some, it was a year of immense spiritual growth—days soaked in prayer, hearts softened with du’a, hands open in generosity. For others, it was a year of distraction, of missed opportunities, and moments wasted on pursuits that now seem trivial in hindsight. Yet, regardless of where we fell on this spectrum, we now stand together at the doorway of a new beginning—one that beckons us not with promises of ease, but with the chance to realign, reawaken, and return.

The Qur’an urges us to be conscious of time. Allah swears by it repeatedly: *“By Time, indeed mankind is in loss”* (Surah Al-Asr), and *“By the break of dawn”, “By the ten nights”,*

“By the morning light.” These divine oaths are not casual—they are emphatic reminders to awaken us to the reality that time is not to be taken for granted. These verses demand that we pause, reflect, and reevaluate how we invest each moment. For time is not simply a container in which our actions sit—it is the very vessel through which we meet our Creator.

The scholars understood this deeply. Imam al-Shafi’i once remarked, *“I learned from the people of spiritual discipline that time is like a sword. If you don’t cut with it, it will cut you.”* And Ibn al-Qayyim praised these words, describing them as rare gems—words only a vigilant and purposeful heart could produce. Their wisdom echoes down the centuries, challenging us to look beyond the surface of our routines and ask: what truly matters?

Time, unlike wealth or status, cannot be stored, borrowed, or regained. It slips through our fingers with every tick of the clock, and once it passes, it is gone forever. Ibn al-Jawzi lamented the heedlessness of many, observing how some spent their days in meaningless talk, idle games, or simply watching others live their lives. He concluded, *“Only those whom Allah has guided and inspired to appreciate the worth of time are truly blessed.”* What a powerful truth. What a sobering wake-up call.

And now, as the new year arrives, so too does Ashura, the 10th of Muharram—a day charged with sacred memory and powerful reminders. On this day, Allah saved Prophet

Musa and the Children of Israel from the tyranny of Pharaoh, splitting the sea and delivering them to safety. Musa fasted in gratitude, and our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ continued that legacy, encouraging his Ummah to fast on Ashura. He told his companions that fasting on this day expiates the sins of the previous year. What mercy! That by devoting just a single day with sincerity, a year's burden may be lifted.

This is no small opportunity. In a world where we are constantly striving to correct past mistakes, Ashura invites us to take a simple but profound action: fast, remember, and renew. It's a moment of personal liberation—a symbolic parting of the seas of our own distractions and sins, beckoning us toward spiritual freedom. It is a day of sincere gratitude, not only for the historical deliverance of Prophet Musa's people, but for the many times we ourselves were rescued by Allah's mercy—often without even knowing it.

But Ashura also calls us to remember a second legacy—one marked not by survival but by sacrifice. On this day, the grandson of the Prophet ﷺ, Imam Hussain ibn Ali, stood on the plains of Karbala with a small band of followers, facing a massive army of oppression. His choice was one of principle over safety, of truth over compromise. He knew his chances of survival were slim—but his goal was never survival. It was dignity. It was to uphold the truth, to reject tyranny, and to embody the legacy of Prophethood in its purest form.

His martyrdom was not a tragedy of defeat, but a triumph of moral clarity. In the face of overwhelming darkness, he became a beacon of light. His sacrifice inspired generations. Hussain's courage was not confined to one battlefield—it lives on wherever injustice is resisted and truth is spoken with unwavering resolve.

Thus, Ashura stands as both a day of divine deliverance and moral resilience. It reminds us that the arc of history bends in favour of truth,

no matter how long it takes. It teaches us that obedience to Allah may at times demand hardship—but that hardship carries eternal reward. And it shows us that time is never better spent than when it is offered in the service of justice, sacrifice, and faith.

Ask yourself: What do I want to stand for this year? How do I want Allah to see me when this year concludes? Which du'a do I want to see fulfilled, and what am I willing to give up to pursue it? Who do I need to forgive—and what bitterness am I finally ready to release?

Reflect on these not just once, but often. Make them the compass that guides your choices—because the goal is not perfection, but direction. And it is small acts of sincerity, repeated over time, that transform a life. A page of Qur'an recited with presence. A smile offered despite weariness. A coin given when it could have been kept. A grudge released for the sake of peace.

These are not gestures in vain. They are seeds planted in soil that Allah Himself nourishes. And one day, on a day when time ceases to exist, they will blossom before your very eyes.

So as the final pages of this Hijri year turn, ask Allah for forgiveness—not with despair, but with hope. Step into Muharram not merely with intentions, but with a commitment to growth. And meet Ashura with gratitude and humility, fasting not just with your stomach but with your heart—remembering the victory of Musa and the martyrdom of Hussain, and carrying forward the lessons they have gifted to this Ummah.

O Allah, the Turner of hearts, turn ours toward You. Let us not be among those who wasted their time, but among those who recognised its worth and invested it in what pleased You. Let our coming year be better than the one we leave behind—not just in wealth or health, but in sincerity, consistency, and closeness to You.