



بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Australian Federation of Islamic Councils



ما أحوج المسلمين اليوم إلى  
من يرد عليهم إيمانهم بأنفسهم،  
وثقتهم بماضيهم، ورجائهم في  
مستقبلهم .. وما أحوجهم لمن  
يرد عليهم إيمانهم بهذا الدين  
الذي يحملون اسمه ويجهلون  
كنهه، ويأخذونه بالوراثه أكثر  
مما يتخذونه بالمعرفة.  
سيد قطب

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The most important priority of the day is,  
to help the Muslim acquire confidence in  
himself and in his past so that he is able to  
face the future with hope, courage and  
high resolve.

His faith in the religion he professes but  
whose genius he does not always  
understand has to be revived and vitalised.  
His bond with Islam is mainly that of  
heritage, he is a Muslim because he is born  
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his religion.

Sayyid Qutb



Talk delivered by  
The Most Eminent  
**Sheikh Abdul Quddoos Al Azhari**  
at  
Australian Federation of Islamic Councils  
Annual Grand Iftar  
1 April 2023

## بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الحمد لله رب العالمين والصلاة والسلام على أشرف الأنبياء والمرسلين سيدنا محمد وعلى آله وصحبه أجمعين. أشهد أن لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له وأشهد أن سيدنا محمدا عبده ورسوله.

We glorify Allah, our Creator, Sustainer, Provider, The Most Merciful, The Most Compassionate. We testify that there is no one worthy of worship except Him. We testify that Nabi Mohammed (saw) was the best of messengers and the last of the Prophets.

I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we meet this evening, and pay my respect to their elders' past, present and emerging.

Respected Dr Ratib Jneid ( Hon president of AFIC) Mr Keysar Trad (CEO of AFIC) respected members of Parliaments, Your Excellencies the Ambassadors and High Commissioners, community leaders from various societies, associations and organisations, representatives of the media and Home Affairs, ladies and gentlemen.

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon you all.

What a wonderful occasion, AFIC annual grand iftar. I welcome you all and thank you all for making the effort to come and attend this annual event this evening.

**Al Qur'an says:**

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

**'Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those who came before you, so that you will become mindful of Allah'. (Al Qur'an 2:183)**

This verse points out the background of fasting and the purpose.

I would like to elaborate on these 2 points.

Faith communities before Mohammed (s.a.w) had been fasting. In fact, every religion had practiced some sort of fasting.

- Eesa (AS) - Prophet Jesus had been fasting. He had fasted for 40 days and nights.
- Musa (Moses) fasted, before he received the 10 commandments on Mt Sinai.
- It has been reported Ayoub (Job) was fasting every alternate day.
- Suleiman (Solomon) was commanded to fast 14 days.
- Jesus's mother Mariam (Mary) also fasted.

فَكُلْ وَاشْرَبْ وَاقْرَأْ عَيْنًا فَمَا تَرَيْنَ مِنَ الْبَشَرِ أَحَدًا فَقُولِي إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لِلرَّحْمَنِ صَوْمًا فَلَنْ أُكَلِّمَ الْيَوْمَ إِنْسِيًّا

**'...If you see any of the people tell them that you are fasting and cannot talk to any person.' (Mary fasted and took a vow of silence)'. (Al Qur'an 19:16)**

As you can see fasting was a common practice in the scriptures, it is total abstinence from food for a specific amount of time and days. It is to devote oneself through prayer and seeking to gain the pleasure of God.

As far as the purpose of fasting is concerned The Holy Qur'an said: So that you become mindful and conscious of God.

The true goal of fasting is, as mentioned in the above Ayah is to achieve and develop the quality of Taqwa (feeling of benevolence) God consciousness and mindfulness of God. That is to perform good deeds and restrain oneself from doing wrong acts. A person who is conscious of God, will be conscious and mindful not to commit misdeeds.



The development of Taqwa requires physical restraints, discipline for the soul through regular prescribed acts of worship that are performed with sincerity. It requires being constantly on guard against one's lower inclinations. For this and many other reasons, the prophet (s.a.w) said:

مَنْ لَمْ يَدَعْ قَوْلَ الزُّورِ وَالْعَمَلَ بِهِ وَالْجَهْلَ، فَلَيْسَ لِلَّهِ حَاجَةٌ أَنْ يَدَعَ طَعَامَهُ وَشَرَابَهُ؛ رواه البخاري

**“As for the one who does not abstain from false talk and action upon it and ignorance, Allah has no need for him to abstain from his food and drink”.**

He also said:

رَبِّ صَائِمٍ لَيْسَ لَهُ مِنْ صِيَامِهِ إِلَّا الْجُوعُ وَرَبِّ قَائِمٍ لَيْسَ لَهُ مِنْ قِيَامِهِ إِلَّا السَّهَرُ؛ صحيح ابن ماجه

***“It may be that a fasting person will only gain hunger from his fasting and it maybe that a person who prays at night gains nothing but a sleepless night.”***

The scholars have identified; three grades of fasting:

- Ordinary fasting
- Special fasting
- Extra special fasting

Ordinary fasting means abstaining from food, drink and conjugal acts.

Special fasting means the above plus guarding one's body parts from committing sinful acts.

Extra special fasting means the above plus guarding one's heart from sinful or unworthy worldly thoughts which are not conducive to the remembrance of Allah. This fast involves abstaining from attachment to anything other than Allah.

After seeing the purpose of fasting it is becoming clear that Ramadan is teaching us self-discipline, austerity, solidarity, and endeavour. We thank Allah (s.w.t) and bow before the Almighty for giving us the strength and opportunity to fulfil the blessed fast.

Ramadan is teaching us how to control temptations and weaknesses and the desire to quench one's thirst or soften the pangs of hunger.

A fasting person learns to develop a higher level of kindness, honesty and justice. Only when he has the awareness of how the suffering person feels does a fasting person understand the reality of hunger more affectively.

In the next Ayah Allah says:

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَىٰ وَالْفُرْقَانِ

**“It was the month of Ramadan in which the Qur'an was [first] bestowed from Allah as a guidance unto humanity and a self-evident proof of that guidance, and as the standard by which to distinguish the true from the false.” (Holy Qur'an 2:185)**

Allah (s.w.t) selected Ramadan to send down His guidance, His book Al Qur'an Al Kareem to be a guide to humanity, clear signs to distinguish between right and wrong and a criterion between haqq (right) and batil (falsehood).

Allah says at another verse:

الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَتْلُونَهُ حَقَّ تِلَاوَتِهِ أُولَٰئِكَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ ۖ وَمَن يَكْفُرْ بِهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ

**“Those unto whom We have brought the Book [and who] follow it as it ought to be followed -it is they who [truly] believe in it; whereas all who choose to deny its truth -it is they, they who are the losers!”**  
(Al Qur'an 2:121)

The commentator of Qur'an has explained this Haqqa Tillawatihi".

The Al Qur'an has four rights upon us.

1. Read properly and correctly with Khushue (humbleness) and Khudho (respect)
2. Understand the message that the Qur'an is conveying to us.
3. Practice that message.
4. Propagate that message to humanity.

Nabi Mohammed (s.a.w) has said:

وَعَنِ ابْنِ عُمَرَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «إِنَّ هَذِهِ الْقُلُوبَ تَصْدَأُ كَمَا يَصْدَأُ الْحَدِيدُ إِذَا أَصَابَهُ الْمَاءُ». قِيلَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَمَا جَلَاؤُهَا؟ قَالَ: «كَثْرَةُ ذِكْرِ الْمَوْتِ وَتِلَاوَةُ الْقُرْآنِ». رَوَى الْبَيْهَقِيُّ الْأَحَادِيثَ الْأَرْبَعَةَ فِي شُعَبِ الْإِيمَانِ (حديث ضعيف)

***"Our hearts get rusted just like the iron that rusts when it comes in contact with water." People asked him, "How do we clean rusted hearts?" then Rasulallah said, "Remembering death often and reading Al Qur'an ul Kareem."***

Al Qur'an is unique in its spiritual upliftment. It touches in the hearts of those who are sincere and honest. Al Qur'an says:

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ

***"Indeed, We have revealed the Qur'an, and indeed We will guard it (from any alteration or loss)."***  
(Al Qur'an 15:9)

The Qur'an has withstood the passage of 14 centuries without change or loss. Over the centuries rivers change their courses, civilisations rise and fall, languages become extinct and new ones develop. Any Arabic speaker can open Al Qur'an today and read its message as did all people in the intervening centuries.

Ladies and gentlemen, brothers and sisters, before I conclude this short talk, I would like to leave you with an important quote by the great thinker Sayyid Qutb more than 70 years ago.

He wrote this in Arabic in his introductory note for a book by Abul Hasan Ali Nadawi. He said:

ما أحوج المسلمين اليوم إلى من يرد عليهم إيمانهم بأنفسهم، وثقتهم بماضيهم، ورجائهم في مستقبلهم .. وما أحوجهم لمن يرد عليهم إيمانهم بهذا الدين الذي يحملون اسمه ويجهلون كنهه، ويأخذونه بالورثة أكثر مما يتخذونه بالمعرفة.  
سيد قطب

#### ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The most important priority of the day is, to help the Muslim acquire confidence in himself and in his past so that he is able to face the future with hope, courage and high resolve.

His faith in the religion he professes but whose genius he does not always understand has to be revived and vitalised.

His bond with Islam is mainly that of heritage, he is a Muslim because he is born into Islam, he's rarely made any serious attempt to acquire a real understanding of his religion.

Sayyid Qutb

Brothers and sisters, ladies and gentlemen I am pleased to be part of this important wonderful program, once again I welcome you all to this Iftar and I thank the organisers of AFIC for this great Iftar, please enjoy the rest of the program.

Ramadan Mubarak

Assalamu Alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuhu