

On World Health Day

As-salámu ‘alaikum wa rahmatul láhi wa barakátuh!”

“A-úthu billáhi minash shaytánir rajeem. Bismilláhir rahmánir raheem.

Al hamdu lillahi nahmaduhu wanasta’eenahu, wanastagh-firuhu, wanatoobu ilayhi, wana’oothu Billaahi min shuroori an-fusinaa, wamin sayyi aati a’maalinaa.

May- Yahdillahu fa huwal muhtad, wa may- yudlill falan tajidaa lahu waliyan murshida. Wa ash-hadu an Laa ilaaha ill-Alláh, wahdahoo laa shareeka lah, wa ash-hadu anna Muhammadan ‘abduhoo warasooluh”

In the Name of Allah, Most Merciful, Most Compassionate.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Today our khutbah will be about the importance of good health as today is World Health Day and this is therefore a relevant issue for us to contemplate. We should express gratitude to Allah (SWT) for bestowing us with health as in Islam, health is considered as one of the greatest blessings after belief, as narrated in the following hadith:

The final messenger of God, Prophet Muhammad (SAW) mounted the pulpit, then wept and said, “Ask Allah (SWT) for forgiveness and health, for after being granted certainty, one is given nothing better than health.” Related in Tirmidhi

We often forget that God has entrusted us with our bodies for a preordained period of time. Our bodies have been loaned to us to glove our souls during our time on earth and when the hour arrives our bodies will return back to their true owner, Allah (SWT). Our bodies should not be abused or neglected but maintained in good form. When borrowing a friend’s mobile phone or item of clothing we take great care not to damage or tear it, yet we do not put as much concern into the wellbeing of our bodies. We will be accountable for the way in which we utilised our bodies and good health on the Day of Judgement, as narrated in the following hadith:

Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said:

“No one will be allowed to move from his position on the Day of Judgement until he has been asked how he spent his life, how he used his knowledge, how he earnt and spent his money and in what pursuits he used his health.” Related in Tirmidhi
With this in mind we should safeguard our bodies and take every measure to maintain and enhance good health. There are numerous examples in the Qur’an and the Sunnah that show how we must protect our health and live in a state of purity. Healthy living is part of the foundations of an Islamic life, introduced more than 14 centuries ago and we must show daily appreciation to our Creator for such blessings.

Once a person came to Yunus ibn ‘Ubayy, one of the scholars of the Salaf, and he complained of extreme poverty as he had not been blessed with much. Yunus ibn Ubayy asked him, “Would you be willing to give away your sight for a certain amount of money?” The man said, “No, of course not.” Then he asked him, “Would you be willing to give your hands away?” He said, “No, of course not.” He asked, “Your feet?” He said, “Of course not.” When he finished he said “I see that you have

hundreds of thousands of millions of blessings, yet you are complaining of poverty?”

We have been given eyes to see the beautiful creations of Allah (SWT), ears to hear the recitation of the Qur'an, limbs to run, walk and pray. Does one have to lose these blessings before realising the importance they have? Let us be thankful for these blessings when we are in good health and not when it is too late.

Another very important component of a healthy life is a nutritious diet. It is important to remember that the primary goal of eating and drinking is to enable our bodies to function properly, however the abundance of choice and great quantities of appealing snacks promoted to us through the media and in our local supermarkets tempt us to eat a lot more than necessary.

As with everything, a healthy diet should also be balanced. Over indulgences can cause harm to our bodies leading to illnesses such as diabetes and vascular and heart diseases. Islam teaches that we should eat in moderation, as narrated in the following hadith:

“No human being has ever filled a container worse than his own stomach. The son of Adam needs no more than a few morsels of food to keep up his strength, doing so he should consider that a third of his stomach is for food, a third for drink and a third for breathing.”

A healthy diet goes hand in hand with regular exercise and physical activity. Prophet Mohammed (SAW) advised his companions to work, start their day early and be energetic, all elements of maintaining a healthy body. Salah, Islamic prayer, is a form of exercise in itself as it prescribes movement in all the muscles and joints in the body. When performed five times throughout the day, the compulsory prayers provide a good means for the circulation of blood, breathing and general flexibility of joints.

To conclude, it is important to remember that a good Muslim recognises the wonders and miracles of the human body and devotes time to looking after, appreciating and being thankful for it. Let's spend today, World Health Day, thinking about how fortunate we are to have functioning bodies which allow us to complete simple tasks with such ease. When we sit for our next meal let's try to fill only a third of our stomachs with food and a third with water allowing a third to breath and rest comfortably. A true believer is a health conscious person who blends diet and exercise with the intention to fulfil all of their Islamic obligations with the remembrance of Allah (SWT).