



OFFICIAL RAMADAN MESSAGE 2007

The Society's message this year comes from Glasgow, where the failed terrorist plot at the airport made headline news. Sajid Quayum addressed listeners on the city's Radio Ramadan.



My dearest brothers and sisters,

Assalamu alaikum.

It feels this year as though the blessed month of Ramadan has almost caught us unaware. The great British non-summer of 2007 is barely over and we are only just getting ready for autumn, yet a whole year has gone by since last Ramadan and this special visitor is with us once again.

For me, this feeling of Ramadan's abrupt yet welcome arrival has been especially acute. Less than a month ago my wife and I became the proud parents of our second little boy. Since then, the whirlwind of events and activity that every new father is overwhelmed with has kept me extra busy. Welcoming Dawud into this world has been a privilege difficult to put into words.

Almighty God is the giver of life and gives us all the opportunity to make the most of our lives and the lives of those around us. As a parent, I witness the reality of this truth in the joy of my son's birth and in my hopes and aspirations of who he will become. Every parent must wish the very best for their children, and pray, perhaps even instinctively, that they remain safe.

As we fast, we remember. We remember those who are without. And as I see my son, I can only pray for families who have had their son or daughter taken away from them by the cruelty and sins of man. I am painfully aware that it has not even been a week since family and school friends buried Rhys Jones. Who can understand their pain? Rhys was the nation's child – he represented every parent's son because it could have happened to anyone, to any child of yours or mine. We must remember the suffering and pain of those who have lost loved ones, and pray for them.

This time of reflection in this month of fasting and remembrance, on the gift of life and the duties that it carries was preceded by a poignant reminder of the terrible waste that humans can make of their lives if they do not appreciate them for the treasure that they are. In June this year my home city of Glasgow was shocked by evil actions of a few young men who were intent on taking not only their own lives, but the lives of many others...and it didn't matter if they were 11 year old boys or 1 week old girls. Such actions demonstrate unspeakable ingratitude for the precious gift of life, and could not be further away from timeless Islamic teachings to cherish life and to build upon it, not to destroy life and its soul.

Indeed, God reveals in the Qur'an: *And we ordained for the Children of Israel that if any one kills a person - unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief on earth - it would be as if he killed all humankind; and if any one saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of all humankind. (5:32)*

God's messenger, Muhammad, may peace and blessings be upon him, never failed to emphasise this in his life and his example. From his unbounded love and compassion for the young, to his consistent encouragement to those around him, to get up, work and make something of themselves and build society. If even idleness is ingratitude, then what of those who engage in acts of destruction? Now is not the time to be idle. Now is the time to pool our skills and energies instead to build life, to build a stronger society – one which values and protects life - so that when we come to think of our children and their future, we are filled not with despondency, but with hope and optimism.

I wish you all a safe and peaceful Ramadan.

Sajid Quayum
Vice President
13th September 2007