



Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura

Friday Sermon

27 February 2015 / 08 Jamadilawal 1436

The Akhlak of a Learned Person: Humility/Tawadhu'

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الْخَبِيرِ الْحَكِيمِ ، أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْوَاحِدُ
الْقَوِيُّ الْمَتِينُ ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ صَادِقُ
الْوَعْدِ الْأَمِينِ ، اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ
وَأَصْحَابِهِ وَمَنْ اتَّبَعَهُ إِلَى يَوْمِ الدِّينِ .
أَمَّا بَعْدُ ، فَيَا أَيُّهَا الْمُسْلِمُونَ ، أُوصِيكُمْ وَنَفْسِي بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ ، فَقَدْ
فَازَ مَنْ اتَّقَى وَخَابَ مَنْ عَصَى .

Blessed Jemaah,

Let us be pious toward Allah s.w.t. by obeying all of His commands and by abstaining from all of His prohibitions. Let us aspire to be closer to Allah, and let us commit to being a believer who is learned and well-mannered.

Blessed Friday Jemaah

In last week's sermon, we discussed about a comprehensive, balanced and integrated methodology of receiving, analysing and

applying knowledge (manhaj). Every knowledge/information that we receive cannot deviate from the path of Allah s.w.t. The more knowledge we gain, the more it should make us grateful to Allah s.w.t. for the gift of knowledge that He has bestowed upon us. The more knowledge we gain, the more we should reflect humility, or tawadhu', towards others. Tawadhu' is a sign and proof that we have truly gained knowledge. As the Malay saying goes, "be like the paddy stalk; the matured it is, the lower it bows". It is humility that will morph us to be sources of good, to shine the lives of others within the community, and to truly reflect the values of the Prophet s.a.w.

Know that the act of seeking knowledge in itself is an act of worship, or ibadah. For example, the prayers that we perform are not complete if we do not cleanse our physical selves from any filth. Likewise, the spirit of seeking knowledge is not complete unless we cleanse our hearts, especially from arrogance and feeling superior towards others, or takabbur.

Both these traits are hated and cursed by Allah s.w.t. in the Quran in surah Ghafir, verse 60:

وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمْ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَاخِرِينَ



Which means: *“And your Lord says: “Call on Me; I will answer your (Prayer): but those who are too arrogant to serve Me will surely find themselves in Hell - in humiliation!”*

Friday Jemaah,

A sincere and open heart that is not tainted with dishonourable traits such as pride, arrogance and takabbur will make it easier for one to seek and retain knowledge. In fact, it will drive the person to have good manners and a sense of humility that will lead to compassion, which is the spirit of Islam.

Let us reflect upon a story of an eminent scholar, Imam Malik r.a. and the Caliph Harun Ar-Rasyid. Imam Malik r.a. is someone who is extremely learned in Fiqh and a deeply respected scholar. When he was offered for his mazhab (school of thought) be made the official mazhab of the empire during the Abbasid Period, he refused with much humility. He realised that he did not possess exclusive rights to truth, and did not want to be drowned and distracted by the influence of power.

Blessed jemaah,

In comparison, with the advancement of technology today and the ease of communication through electronic media and so on, we can easily gain access to religious knowledge and information all over the Internet. As a result, there are some amongst us who are

blatantly vocal in giving fatwas and discussing religious laws indiscriminately, without humility and without taking into consideration the welfare of others. They do so with much pride, arrogance and a sense of superiority, whilst blaming and boldly putting down others. This lack of adab (good manners) in seeking knowledge can lead to fanaticism (ta'assub), segregation and cliques within the Ummah, eventually leading to further disunity. There are those amongst us who enjoy spreading religious opinions from various sources without ensuring the validity or accuracy of the information, nor its effect on other individuals and their families.

As a true seeker of knowledge with a deep sense of love for knowledge, we need to realise that seeking knowledge is a long and arduous journey. In seeking knowledge we need to constantly be in a state of worship to Allah. Only then will we be guided to cleanse our hearts from mazmumah, or ugly traits such as pride, arrogance and takabbur, that have been proscribed by the Prophet s.a.w.

From Abdullah bin Mas'ud r.a, Nabi s.a.w. said: *"No one with even an atom's worth of arrogance will enter paradise."* A man then asked: *"But a person loves that his clothes are seemly and his sandals are seemly."* The Prophet s.a.w. replied: *"Indeed Allah is*

Beautiful and loves beauty. Arrogance is denying truth and holding people in contempt.” [Hadith narrated by Imam Muslim]

As long as we are on the path of Allah and His Messenger, our hearts will be alive with mahmudah or honourable traits such as humility (tawadhu’), gentleness, and good manners – the traits of the Prophet s.a.w. The knowledge bestowed by Allah upon us should make us fear Allah and be closer to Him. This gift from Allah should also strengthen our iman (faith), increase our sense of devotion to Him, release us from the clutches of darkness, and towards the brightness of nur (light) and the truth, increase our desire to do good deeds, and shape our love to gain Allah’s pleasure. Nabi Sulaiman a.s. was bestowed by Allah with great knowledge and vast hikmah (wisdom), but he was still tawadhu’ and ever grateful to Allah. Let us reflect upon what Allah says in surah An-Naml verse 19:

فَنَبَسَّمَ ضَاحِكًا مِّن قَوْلِهَا وَقَالَ رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ
الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَىٰ وَالِدَيَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ وَأُدْخِلْنِي
بِرَحْمَتِكَ فِي عِبَادِكَ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿١٩﴾

Which means: “So [Sulaiman] smiled, amused at her speech, and said, My Lord, enable me to be grateful for Your favour which You have bestowed upon me and upon my parents and to do

righteousness of which You approve. And admit me by Your mercy into [the ranks of] Your righteous servants.”

Beloved Jemaah,

May Allah protect us and guard us against fitnah (trials), and shower His blessings and His pleasure upon all our good deeds (amal), place us among His righteous servants who were bestowed with knowledge and noble akhlak. Amin! Ya Rabbal Alamin!

بَارَكَ اللهُ لِي وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقُرْآنِ الْعَظِيمِ، وَنَفَعَنِي وَإِيَّاكُمْ بِمَا فِيهِ مِنَ
الآيَاتِ وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ، وَتَقَبَّلْ مِنِّي وَمِنْكُمْ تِلَاوَتَهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ
الْعَلِيمُ، أَقُولُ قَوْلِي هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللهَ الْعَظِيمَ لِي وَلَكُمْ، وَلِسَائِرِ
الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ، وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ، فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ فَيَا
فَوْزَ الْمُسْتَغْفِرِينَ وَيَا نَجَاةَ التَّائِبِينَ.