



Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura

Friday Khutbah

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Empowering Oneself With Knowledge

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 .

Dear Friday Congregation,

Let us heighten our takwa for Allah s.w.t. through concrete knowledge. Let us carry out what Allah s.w.t. has commanded upon us, and avoid all that He has prohibited. And may Allah always shower upon us His hidayah.

My beloved brothers,

The noble message that Rasulullah s.a.w. had brought to us was one that emphasised on the importance of knowledge in our lives. The Islamic civilisation that we inherited today was

also one that placed great importance in mastering knowledge and its application for the benefit of humankind in its entirety.

Islamic scholars of the past, like Al-Khawarizmi, Ibn Sina and Omar Khayyam are amongst the great intellectuals who are revered for their scholarly contributions to the global community. They were equipped with a deep understanding of our religion, but they were also dedicated in studying astronomy, sciences, geography, mathematics and other fields of knowledge. Their admirable efforts were guided by the spirit of the noble message brought by Rasulallah s.a.w.

The first revelation that was received by Rasulallah s.a.w. was to call for humanity to deepen their knowledge through the notion of *Iqra'*. Allah s.w.t had revealed in Surah Al-Alaq, verse 1-5:

أَقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ ﴿١﴾ خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ
عَلَقٍ ﴿٢﴾ أَقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ ﴿٣﴾ الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ
﴿٤﴾ عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ ﴿٥﴾

Which means: *“Read! In the Name of your Lord who created. Created man from a clot. Read! And your Lord is the Most Generous. He who taught by the pen; taught man what he never knew.”*

Blessed congregation, it is interesting that Allah s.w.t. – right after setting the command for us to read – chose to explain the process of the creation of humankind, and the fact that we are created by a Supreme Creator. It is as if to signal that it is important for a Mukmin, in his/her process of learning, to go beyond just reading what is contained in the Quran and the Prophetic hadiths; by also observing the signs and evidences of Allah's power over His creations. Only when we understand the intricacies of how our bodies work and the marvels of nature that surrounds us, it is then that we are better able to better appreciate the existence of a Supremely Knowledgeable God. It is then, that we become more certain of all the promises and cautions that Allah has given to us through His revelations.

Beloved jemaah,

The goal of learning in Islam is to develop individuals that are ethical, in order to achieve success both now and in the hereafter. Education in Islam is intended to bring a slave closer to his/her Lord, and to produce individuals that are able to bring benefit to the human civilisation.

And this is precisely why every Muslim should equip him/herself with both the religious sciences, and what is commonly referred to as the 'temporal knowledge' of humanities and hard sciences.

Enhancing our understanding of the religion is imperative in strengthening a family's spirituality. We have to ensure that our children will receive sufficient Islamic education. Equip ourselves and our children with the basic knowledge in performing rituals. We should also not forget to nourish ourselves and our families with a good understanding of the pillars of iman, in the hope that this would be one of our defences in preserving our faith. We should also ensure that in practising Islam, we must not forget the spiritual and compassionate aspects of our beautiful religion. Let us study and appreciate the sirah of our Prophet s.a.w., so as to emulate his values and characteristics. Hopefully, this will inspire us further to become ethical and gracious human beings.

Friday congregation,

Besides religious knowledge, we must also acquaint ourselves with other fields of knowledge like sciences, mathematics, geography, and literature studies. Learning these with the intent of attaining Allah's blessings, and to bring benefit to the lives of humanity, is also a form of ibadah. In fact, we should nurture in our kids the understanding that learning sciences or other fields of knowledge, should serve as a medium for them to further appreciate the existence of God. Teach them that in observing the animal kingdom, the plants and the universe, they are in fact bearing witness to God's power and sovereignty. Guide them to understand that the definition of knowledge in Islam is encompassing, and it includes the skills and knowledge that

they learn daily in school, for the purpose of these knowledge is to bring benefit to themselves, their families, and the community. Assure them that their going to school every day is a medium for them to attain Allah's paradise. This is in line with what the Prophet s.a.w. had said, "*Whoever treads a path seeking knowledge, Allah will make easy for him the path to Paradise*". [Hadith narrated by Imam Muslim]

Islam does not limit us to only preparing ourselves spiritually, but it also seeks to call us to fulfil the needs and demands of this world (*al-ardh*). Imam Al-Ghazali in his book *Ihya' Ulumuddin* had divided knowledge into two categories: *Al-Ulum Al-Diniyyah* which is the religious knowledge that is obtained through divine revelations, and knowledge for the temporal world, which is knowledge attained through the human endeavour. According to Imam Al-Ghazali, both are equally important to ensure success both in this world and the hereafter. The attitude of a minority of the Muslim community that seeks to label the sciences of the temporal world as deceitful and misleading is hence in contrary to the teachings of the Quran.

My beloved brothers,

As the ummah of Rasulullah s.a.w., it is crucial for us to continuously strive to attain knowledge, so that we can be the best community in the eyes of Allah s.w.t. May Allah bestow upon us, and our families, knowledge that is beneficial both now

and in the hereafter, and may He guide us in becoming those who apply and carry out the knowledge that they have attained with His will. Amin, Ya Rabbal 'Alamin.

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