



Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura

Friday Sermon

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Knowledge That Enlive The Faith

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الْمَلِكِ الْحَقِّ الْمُبِينِ الَّذِي أَبَانَ لِعِبَادِهِ مِنْ آيَاتِهِ مَا
بِهِ عِبْرَةٌ لِلْمُعْتَبِرِينَ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ
لَهُ إِلَهَ الْأَوَّلِينَ وَالْآخِرِينَ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ
وَرَسُولُهُ الْمَبْعُوثُ رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ. اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا
مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ وَسَلِّمْ تَسْلِيمًا كَثِيرًا . أَمَا بَعْدُ فَيَا
عِبَادَ اللَّهِ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ.

Blessed Jemaah,

Let us increase our taqwa to Allah s.w.t. With the blessings of the month of Syaaban, let us renew our determinations to be close to Allah s.w.t, by obeying His commands and abstain from His prohibitions.

Dear Jemaah,

Throughout this month, we have listened to several *khutbah* on the importance of iman and taqwa, and how it should improve our quality of life, in this world and the hereafter. Faith is an

entity that can fade and disappear if we do not make efforts for it to be renewed and to be strengthened.

In reference to a hadith of Nabi s.a.w. which means: *“Faith wears out in the heart of any one of you just as clothes wear out, so ask Allah to renew the faith in your hearts”* [Hadith reported by Al-Hakim and At-Thabrani]

Therefore my dear brothers, we should constantly monitor our state of iman in our hearts. Contemplate, what will increase our faith, what will fertilize our faith, what will strengthen our faith. Why do we need to contemplate over this, my dear brothers? This is because there are among men and women who seek to bring discords and destructions in the name of faith. They are convinced that their acts are part of their faith. With distorted knowledge, and erroneous understanding, it will lead to self-conviction that they thought as part of the faith. In reality, a true iman will not lead one to commit atrocities and evil acts. It will only bring goodness and peace.

Allah s.w.t. revealed in surah As-Saba' verse 6:

وَيَرَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ
وَيَهْدِي إِلَى صِرَاطٍ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَمِيدِ ﴿٦﴾

Meaning: “*And those who have been given knowledge see that what is revealed to you from your Lord is the truth, and it guides to the path of the Exalted in Might, the Praiseworthy.*”

Through our knowledge, we will be able to strengthen our akidah (creed) and the integrity of our iman in our hearts. Knowledge provides us the capacity to be astute and the ability to identify truth from falsehood, the clear from the indistinct. This is the role of religious knowledge. The kind of knowledge that makes our life guided and not that leads us to disarray and lost. Therefore, our *ulama* have reminded us that knowledge is essentially a religion, hence let us ponder where we study our religion.

However my dear brothers, the question is, how do we obtain such religious knowledge? The *ulama* reminded us that there are 4 main elements of knowledge, which comprise of an intelligent teacher who is competent in delivering the knowledge, books that are verified, and continued efforts (in seeking knowledge). If any one of these aspects is not given attention or are non-existent, therefore the journey towards knowledge will be corrupted. If we are careless in our process of understanding the religious teachings, the end result will be detrimental. There are times where families and couples become fragmented and constantly exchanging negative vibes as a result of different religious views. There are still various

types of deviant teachings that are accepted by the Muslim community. There are those who continue to believe that there are individuals who continue to receive revelation from Allah s.w.t. after the demise of Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. We have heard of those who claimed that they are the reincarnation of God. And there are also propagations of extremist teachings which focus on distorting religious texts for the purpose of terrorism. This is getting more amplified with the proliferation of borderless marketplace of information that is hard to be controlled on the internet. Therefore, groups whose aims for ultimate destructions are utilizing the internet as a platform to propagate their teachings and ideologies.

We definitely need to be resilient. Deviant teachings will always be able to garner supports. Otherwise, there will be no followers. What is their main attraction? Generally, their distorted teachings and propaganda invoke the narrative that we are indeed special and exclusive. When we start to be convinced with them, we will be in their exclusive club that can only be joined by those selected by them. Therefore, they will be more convinced that they are indeed 'the chosen one', and only they are in the right path and others are deviant and need to be fought or wiped off. Be very careful my dear brother on the danger of these teachings.

Muslims have maintained the existence of unity and solidarity. This means that, as long as the doctrine or teachings are known, studied, and followed by the community collectively, hence it is a positive and guided teaching. These teachings will not make us feel more superior or better than others. Therefore, we must ensure that the knowledge that we seek is something that is accepted and practiced by the mainstream community and agreed upon by the credible *ulama*. This is in accordance with the Prophet's hadith which means, “*My ummah will not agree on an error*”. [Hadith reported by Imam Ahmad and Thabrani]

Just because a person can speak publicly does not mean that they are a religious teacher who has the authority to teach/preach. Check their background beforehand. Compare their teachings with what is being taught by other recognized religious teachers. Expand and diversify our reading materials. Finally, brothers, we do not want to be like those who Allah s.w.t referred in Surah Al-Kahf verse 103-104, which means: “*Say, [O Muhammad], “Shall we [believers] inform you of the greatest losers as to [their] deeds? [They are] those whose effort is lost in worldly life, while they think that they are doing well in work*”.

Let us increase our doa as taught by Prophet Muhammad s.a.w:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ لَا يَنْفَعُ، وَدُعَاءٍ لَا يُسْمَعُ، وَقَلْبٍ لَا
يَخْشَعُ، وَنَفْسٍ لَا تَشْبَعُ، اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ هَؤُلَاءِ الْأَرْبَعِ

Which means: “I seek Your refuge of knowledge that is not useful, not prayer that not heard by You and from hearts that are not khusyu’ and from soul that is never satisfied. O Allah, I seek refuge from You from the four matters.”

May Allah grant us with forgiveness and the ability to obtain true and beneficial knowledge. May Allah continue to bless us with guidance and direction in safeguarding our iman until we meet Him. Amin Ya Rabbal ‘Alamin.

بَارَكَ اللَّهُ 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 اللَّهَ الْعَظِيمَ لِي وَلَكُمْ، وَلِسَائِرِ
الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ، وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ، فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ فَيَا
فَوْزَ الْمُسْتَغْفِرِينَ وَيَا نَجَاةَ التَّائِبِينَ.