



Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura

Friday Sermon

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Lessons from Surah Al-Kahfi

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَحَاطَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا وَقَضَىٰ بِمَا يُرِيدُ حِكْمَةً  
وَ حُكْمًا، أَنْعَمَ بِالنِّعَمِ ابْتِلَاءً وَامْتِحَانًا، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ  
وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا  
مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَفْضَلُ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَ مَصْبَاحُ الظَّلَامِ، اللَّهُمَّ  
صَلِّ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَ عَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ وَسَلِّمْ تَسْلِيمًا  
كَثِيرًا. أَمَّا بَعْدُ فَيَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَيْثُ مَا كُنْتُمْ، فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ  
يَعْلَمُ سِرَّكُمْ وَ عَلَانِيَتَكُمْ

Blessed jemaah,

Let us instil in our hearts taqwa toward Allah s.w.t. by diligently fulfilling His commands and abstaining from what Allah has forbidden upon us. Taqwa is our shield to ward off negative influences that may damage our relationship with Allah and our relationship with His creations. Hopefully this will help us to attain a happy and prosperous life in the hereafter.

Jemaah,

Today's khutbah will be a continuation of last week's, which encouraged us to read and appreciate the meaning of Surah Al-Kahfi. One of the stories in the surah is about the young dwellers of the cave that had emphasised the importance of faith or iman. It serves as a lesson for us as we strive to strengthen our iman especially during difficult times. Allah says in the Quran, in verses 13 and 14 of surah Al-Kahfi:

نَحْنُ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ نَبَأَهُم بِالْحَقِّ إِنَّهُمْ فِتْيَةٌ ءَامَنُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ  
وَزِدْنَاهُمْ هُدًى ﴿١٣﴾ وَرَبَطْنَا عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ إِذْ قَامُوا  
فَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا رَبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَنْ نَدْعُوَ مِنْ دُونِهِ  
إِلَهًا لَقَدْ قُلْنَا إِذَا شَطَطًا ﴿١٤﴾

Which means: *"It is We who relate to you, [O Muhammad], their story in truth. Indeed, they were youths who believed in their Lord, and We increased them in guidance. And We made firm their hearts when they stood up and said, "Our Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth. Never will we invoke besides Him any deity. We would have certainly spoken, then, an excessive transgression."*

Blessed Jemaah,

The youth of kahfi were a group of young men that Allah put to sleep for 309 years. They were striving to preserve the strength of their iman, clarity of mind and their agility, despite the

conditions which they were living in. They tried to build their resilience against influences and culture that may prevent them from having firm faith in Allah the Almighty. Hence, Allah protected them and kept them safe, for Allah is The One who Protects.

Beloved jemaah,

Based on the story of the dwellers of the cave, it has been described to us how valuable the youth are in Islam. They are a generation that develops their iman based on an accurate and firm understanding, and a generation that is resilient in bringing about changes and shaping the future of the Muslim community, in line with Allah's guidance. Generally, it emphasises the need to develop a younger generation that is progressive and can bring about prosperity in life, in order to gain Allah's pleasure in this world and the hereafter.

Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. himself gave special attention to the youths and teenagers during his time. Hence, it is crucial for us to develop a generation of young Muslims that are of good calibre and able to withstand the challenges we face today. To do so, we need to provide a healthy and conducive environment to build good characters and personalities that will lead to the right actions. Developing and filling the spiritual, physical and mental should be the thrust in empowering the identity of our younger generation.

Hence, the whole society is responsible to ensure that our young can look up to the other members of society as their role models. This means that the adults in the community must first strive to be good examples and show them the ways of the faithful. For example, how can we expect the young to obey Allah s.w.t. and Rasulallah s.a.w., and their parents, if we ourselves do not do so? How can we hope for them to be successful, good mannered and with kind actions if our behaviour (be it in real life or online) does not speak for the same?

Friday jemaah,

The keys to preparing the younger generation today to face critical challenges are the right education process and a healthy environment. They need to master a body of knowledge that combines science and the foundations of Islam, and their education has to be integrated and has to be holistic with a thrust toward Tauhid. They should be armed with knowledge that imbibes in them a sense of humility (tawaddhu'); not one of arrogance, admiration other than Allah, and a sense of stubbornness toward one's own opinions.

Being careful in ensuring that the sources they read and quote from are credible sources is especially critical for the young, to ensure that the knowledge that they gain is able to point them toward the right frame of thought. This integrated, holistic knowledge will be able to mould youths who are resilient, able

to withstand challenges and guard themselves against negative influences that may lead them astray. The strength built upon the elements mentioned above will enable these youths to understand their environment and translate their knowledge to practical actions.

To the youths and all youngsters present today,  
When showing your attitude towards religion in the presence of others (whether they are Muslims or non-Muslims), present your opinion and your thoughts with wisdom. Guard your manners and respect the opinion of the others. Do not act with extremity and do not heed your desires. Ensure that you receive sound Islamic education from those who truly want to make you a better person.

When a person studies the religion in more depth, then he should become more courteous and obedient, he should become more diligent in his studies, and be a friend and neighbour who spreads more kindness. If you find a person who shows his religiosity yet only tries to plant more feelings of hatred and anger in you, or makes it very difficult for you to complete your iman, then you should be very careful. This is especially if you meet a person who teaches you to label other Muslims as kafir, then you should leave these people. Allah s.w.t. reminds us in surah Al-Maidah, verse 77:

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَا تَغْلُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ وَلَا  
تَتَّبِعُوا أَهْوَاءَ قَوْمٍ قَدْ ضَلُّوا مِنْ قَبْلُ وَأَضَلُّوا كَثِيرًا

وَضَلُّوا عَنْ سَوَاءِ السَّبِيلِ ﴿٧٧﴾

Which means: "Say, "O People of the Scripture, do not exceed limits in your religion beyond the truth and do not follow the inclinations of a people who had gone astray before and misled many and have strayed from the soundness of the way."

Let us uphold the teaching of our beloved Rasulullah s.a.w. who taught us the value of moderation. In upholding the value of moderation, it does not in any way mean that we are compromising the truth; nor does it mean that we are belittling our religion. Moderation is a *manhaj* of Islam, or the way in Islam, toward everything; be it in acts of worship (ibadah), lifestyle, actions or appearance. Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. reminded us: "And beware of going to extremes in religious matters, for those who came before you were destroyed because of going to extremes in religious matters." [Hadith reported by Ahmad, An-Nasai, Ibn Majah and Al-Hakim]

Ya Allah, forgive us of all our sins, focus our attention to doing good deeds. Develop our younger generation as a generation that soothes our hearts, shower your guidance in every step they take to uplift Your religion. Place them among your righteous servants in Your Paradise. 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، فَاسْتَغْفِرُودُ فِيَا  
فَوْزَ الْمُسْتَغْفِرِينَ وَيَا نَجَاةَ التَّائِبِينَ.