



Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura

Friday Sermon

15 January 2016 / 5 Rabiul Akhir 1437

Seeking Allah's Forgiveness

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ، وَأَمَرَنَا
بِالتَّقْوَى وَالْخُلُقِ الْكَرِيمِ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا
شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدَهُ وَرَسُولَهُ، اللَّهُمَّ
صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ.
أَمَّا بَعْدُ فَيَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ، وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا
وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ

Respected jemaah,

Let us work toward increasing our taqwa to Allah s.w.t. Strive hard to seek His mercy and forgiveness by obeying His commands and abstaining from His prohibitions. May we become better Muslims today, than we were yesterday. Insyallah, amin ya rabbal alamin.

Friday jemaah,

We have started off the year by understanding the meaning of forgiveness. Forgiveness is a noble character that is given

much emphasis by our religion, so that people will not be thrown into despair after having committed mistakes and sins, thinking that there is no longer hope for them to repent. This also paves way for relationships to be reconciled and remain harmonious after we have erred toward others. Forgiveness, as we have heard last week, is a *rabbani* characteristic. This means, it comes directly from Allah s.w.t.

Let us study a hadith qudsi narrated by Anas bin Malik r.a., that Rasulullah s.a.w. said:

قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: "يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ! إِنَّكَ مَا دَعَوْتَنِي وَرَجَوْتَنِي غَفَرْتُ لَكَ عَلَى مَا كَانَ مِنْكَ وَلَا أُبَالِي، يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ! لَوْ بَلَغَتْ ذُنُوبُكَ عَنَانَ السَّمَاءِ ثُمَّ اسْتَغْفَرْتَنِي غَفَرْتُ لَكَ، يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ! إِنَّكَ لَوْ أَتَيْتَنِي بِقُرَابِ الْأَرْضِ خَطَايَا ثُمَّ لَقِيتَنِي لَا تُشْرِكُ بِي شَيْئًا لَأَتَيْتَكَ بِقُرَابِهَا مَغْفِرَةً". رَوَاهُ التِّرْمِذِيُّ

Which means: *"Allah s.w.t. said: O son of Adam, so long as you call upon Me and ask of Me, I shall forgive you for what you have done, and I shall not mind. O son of Adam, were your sins to reach the clouds of the sky and were you then to ask forgiveness of Me, I would forgive you. O son of Adam, were you to come to Me with sins nearly as great as the earth and were you then to face Me, ascribing no partner to Me, I would bring you forgiveness nearly as great as it."* [Hadith reported by Imam At-Tirmizi]

However, Jemaah, not everyone seeks Allah's forgiveness, or feel the need to be granted His forgiveness. What separates these two groups?

Those who are constantly seeking Allah's forgiveness realise that they are not perfect; they know they have weaknesses and shortcomings. These people seek His forgiveness because they are conscious of their shortcomings, and understand the meaning of having weaknesses. They admit to Allah s.w.t that they are far from perfect, and they feel extremely sad if The Creator does not forgive their mistakes. They worry if Allah s.w.t. is still angry with them. They fear that Allah s.w.t. does not accept their repentance when they return to Him. They are concerned if Allah s.w.t. does not look at them with His love and mercy (rahmah). They try as best as they can to fulfil what has been called upon to them, as Allah s.w.t. commands in surah Ali-Imran verses 133-134:

❖ وَسَارِعُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا
السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٣٣﴾
الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ فِي السَّرَّاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَالْكِبَاطِ وَالغَيْظِ
وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٣٤﴾

Which means: "And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord and a garden as wide as the heavens and earth, prepared for the righteous. Those who spend [in the cause of Allah] during ease

and hardship and those who restrain anger and who pardon the people - and Allah loves the doers of good.”

It was reported that Imam al-Syafi'i *rahimahullah* once made a doa that read as such: *“The burden of my sins upon me are heavy, but when I compare them with Your forgiveness, Your forgiveness is much more.”*

Blessed jemaah,

For those who understand the meaning of weaknesses in oneself, they will feel that attaining Allah's forgiveness is more valuable than anything else in the world. That will also be his doa and a sign of his love for Allah.

It is clear from the verses of Quran and the hadith of Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. that Allah's forgiveness is of utmost importance for His servants when they come before Him on the Day of Judgement. Allah s.w.t. is always giving us the opportunity to seek His forgiveness, and the door to His forgiveness is always wide open, because His mercy and love is more than everything.

Friday jemaah,

We need to understand this matter well. It is a principle and foundation of our religion. Forgiveness comes before anything else. However, we often hear and see some people portraying

Islamic law and teaching in a manner that is devoid of forgiveness.

It is as if violence, revenge, torment and punishment are synonymous to Islam. In fact, there are some groups who claim that they are upholding Islam portray such harshness and rigidity in their practice and propagation of this noble religion.

Think about it Jemaah, such “teachings” will only produce a generation that is inflexible, void of compassion and lacking in mercy, and a generation that will forget that humans are born with weaknesses. Such a generation will not lead to development, nor will they be able to improve the lives of humankind. Rather, they will be busy picking on the faults of others using their own thwarted standards.

Hence, be careful when we deal with our hearts. Enliven the values taught in the Quran and the Sunnah of Rasulullah s.a.w. Understand the meaning and concept of forgiveness. Seek Allah’s forgiveness. Work for His Mercy and His love.

Hopefully, after listening to this sermon, it will ignite the desire to seek Allah’s forgiveness, the forgiveness of the Lord of all Creations. May we be able to appreciate the true meaning of forgiveness. May our faith (iman) shine through, our good deeds and contributions become more prominent and our standing in the sight of Allah and others be elevated.

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.