



**Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura**

**Friday Sermon**

**6 May 2016 / 28 Rejab 1437H**

**“Developing Good Relations with Others”**

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الْغَنِيِّ الْحَمِيدِ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ الْمَبْعُوثُ بِالرَّحْمَةِ وَالْقَوْلِ السَّدِيدِ، اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ وَسَلِّمْ وَسَلِّمْ تَسْلِيمًا كَثِيرًا. أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَيَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ.

Blessed Friday Jemaah,

Let us have taqwa in Allah with the highest sense of taqwa by obeying all of His commands and abstaining from His prohibitions. May Allah s.w.t. grant our families the strength of iman and taqwa, insyaAllah.

Jemaah,

Since the very first revelation through surah al-‘Alaq, Rasulullah s.a.w was already asked to read. However, it is important to note that the command is not limited to merely reading, but it includes the mastery of two important types of reading: Reading

the what is written in the book of Allah (المسطور) and reading what is seen and observed (المنظور).

Reading the written book (Al-Masthur) can be done by reading the noble Quran. On the other hand, reading the visual and the observed (Al-Manzur) is done by studying and deliberating on the signs of God's greatness in this universe, as well as reflecting on sunnatullah or the cause and effect behind every incident that takes place. And indeed, both types of reading were mastered by our beloved Muhammad s.a.w.

Reading the observed (Al-manzur) encourages and motivates us to study and research further. What we learn from our research should then be applied in our lives, to help us as we face the various tests and challenges in life. Among the examples of how we should read the visual book or the book of Al-Manzur is explained by Allah in the Quran, in surah Fatir, verses 27 and 28:

الْمُرْتَانِ أَنَّ اللَّهَ أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجْنَا بِهِ ثَمَرَاتٍ مُخْتَلِفًا أَلْوَانُهَا  
وَمِنَ الْجِبَالِ جُدَدٌ بَيْضٌ وَحُمْرٌ مُخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهَا وَغَرَابِيبُ  
سُودٌ

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ وَالْدَّوَابِّ وَالْأَنْعَامِ مُخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهُ، كَذَلِكَ  
إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ غَفُورٌ ﴿٢٨﴾

Which means: *“Do you not see that Allah sends down rain from the sky, and We produce thereby fruits of varying colours? And in the mountains are tracts, white and red of varying shades and [some] extremely black. And among people and moving creatures and grazing livestock are various colours similarly. Only those fear Allah, from among His servants, who have knowledge. Indeed, Allah is Exalted in Might and Forgiving”*.  
[Surah Fāthir: 27 – 28]

If we reflect deeply upon the verses that have just been recited, it will definitely inspire us to think. It will also move our hearts to ponder upon Allah’s greatness – how He creates everything with so much beauty and intricacy.

Through these verses, Allah addresses several important issues, prominently on how He creates humankind to be diverse – different sizes, skin colour, race, language and so on. However, many of us tend to overlook another aspect of diversity when interacting with others. We tend to forget that humans hold on to different beliefs and principles.

This aspect of different belief systems can only be understood by those who understand the social phenomenon and how nature works. They are hence more ready to accept this fact of life, and try to celebrate and cherish this very diversity.

Blessed Friday Jemaah,

The sad state of the current global situation, uncertainty of economic outlook and the ongoing wars that violate humanity in several parts of the world, can indeed distract us in appreciating one of God's greatest signs, which is the existence of diversity and disuniformity amongst humankind.

Indeed jemaah. What happens outside Singapore can still have significant impacts on the daily lives of Singaporean Muslims; be it socially, emotionally, spiritually and religiously.

Jemaah,

Just as how Rasulullah s.a.w was commanded to read in Surah Al-Alaq, this command also applies to us as the ummah of Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. Our reading, or assessment, of our inter-faith and intra-faith interactions will greatly influence our reactions and behaviors. If we are guided and careful, then the community becomes stronger and united. But if we are filled with hatred, anger and emotions, we would lose the mercy in our hearts; and this is a great loss for the community.

A plural society is like a white cloth that is painted with different colours – it fascinates everyone who looks at it. However, the painting is fragile – it must be handled with much care and balance. If one colour is given more emphasis, then it will drown the other colours and destroy the beauty of the painting. If the fabric is not given due care and attention, it will get spoiled and the painting will be destroyed. The fabric of the painting I am referring to is Singapore, and the plethora of colours are the Singaporeans.

Allah s.w.t. says in the Quran:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ  
لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتَقْوَاهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٣﴾

Which means: “O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted”. [Surah Al-Hujurāt: 13]

In this verse, Allah is teaching us three lessons. The first is to reflect upon the fact that the creation of all humankind is from the same source. Thus, we are all brothers and sisters, whether we like it or otherwise. We are also taught to get to know each other and enjoy good relations. This will help us to develop good relations and to be kind to one another. It is also a

reminder that people should not live in enmity and hostility. And the last lesson is a reminder that we should strive to be servants of Allah who have taqwa in Him.

Hence, through this verse, we understand that the ones with the most taqwa among us are those who strive to enjoin good relations, do good to others and are constantly contributing to the greater good.

This, my dear jemaah, is the principle and basis of our religious life which we need to cherish and protect. It is on this basis too, that we must strongly reject any attempts to threaten the harmonious religious life in our country, as attempted by some radical and extremist groups that have been arrested recently. May Allah s.w.t. bestow upon us and our families with resilient iman and beneficial religious knowledge.

Blessed Friday jemaah,

That was a brief insight into our religion's teachings on human relations. If what we see happening around us today differs from the religious guidance that we have been taught, then the one who is at fault is the doer and not Islam as a religion.

May Allah grant us the ability to be grateful and appreciative for the diversity existing around us. May Allah grant us taufiq to

spread these messages in a bid to spread harmony and for the betterment of humankind, Amin Ya Rabbal 'Alamin.

بَارِكْ 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.