



Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura

Friday Sermon

23 September 2016 / 21 Zulhijjah 1437H

Having Sabr In Obeying Allah

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي عَزَّنَا بِالْإِسْلَامِ، وَاخْتَارَنَا مِنْ أُمَّةٍ خَيْرِ نَبِيِّ أُخْرِجَ
فِي الْعَالَمِ، وَأَنْزَلَ عَلَيْهِ أَحْسَنَ الْكُتُبِ وَأَجَلَّ الْكَلَامِ، هُدًى
وَرَحْمَةً لِلْأَنَامِ، أَشْهَدُ 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 أَيُّهَا الْمُسْلِمُونَ، أَوْصِيكُمْ وَنَفْسِي بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ عَزَّ
وَجَلَّ، فَقَدْ فَازَ الْمُتَّقُونَ

Blessed Friday Jemaah,

Let us continue to strive to have taqwa in Allah. Let us obey His commands and abstain from all that He has prohibited upon us. May the taqwa in our hearts bloom with the taufiq and rahmat that Allah s.w.t showers upon us. Amin ya Rabbal alamin!

For the past few weeks, the Friday sermons have discussed on the topic of sabr or patience as a noble trait that is needed in our lives. The sermons focused on the importance of having

sabr in facing the various trials and tests in life, no matter how difficult or painful a trial can be.

However jemaah, we have to understand that sabr is not only applicable when we are facing challenges and difficulties. It is also needed for a Muslim to be obedient to Allah and to worship Him. This is because Allah created humankind as His creations with desires, or nafs. These desires will cause a person to want to indulge in activities that cause enjoyment, but at the same time, can cause one to neglect their responsibilities and obligations. Nafs that is left uncontrolled can cause a person to defy God, despite claiming to be a Muslim.

Hence jemaah, we need to develop sabr as a source of internal strength to help us tame our desires, and to continue to obey Allah. Else, our iman will not be complete, as described by Rasulullah in a hadith:

لَا يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَكُونَ هَوَاهُ تَبَعًا لِمَا جِئْتُ بِهِ

Meaning: *“None of you truly believes until his desires are subservient to that which I have brought.”* [Al-Jami’ Al-Sahih]

Blessed Friday Jemaah,

In our discussion about sabr, many scholars (ulama) emphasise that having sabr in obeying Allah is more important than having sabr in facing trials. Those who have sabr in facing trials are those who depend on their own strength, whereas those who

have sabr in obeying Allah and worshipping Him, are those who depend on The Greatest and The Mightiest Allah s.w.t., Lord of the Universe.

Those who have sabr in being true servants of Allah will definitely be bestowed with a strong iman in their hearts to face any sort of trials in life. However, those who are patient in facing the challenges in life may not have the sabr to worship Allah. That is why there are people who are able to withstand all sorts of trials in life simply to achieve their goals, but do not have the patience to spend even five minutes to perform solat. Then there are those who can withstand hunger and thirst, because they are too engrossed with work, but when it is Ramadan, they are unable to fast!

Beloved Jemaah,

It is our obligation to worship Allah, as a sign of our servitude towards Allah, The Creator. However, Allah does not burden us with any obligations that are beyond our abilities. In fact, in making fasting during Ramadan obligatory upon us, Allah does not want any difficulties for us. Allah explains this in Surah al-Baqarah, verse 185:

يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ
وَلِتُكْمِلُوا الْعِدَّةَ وَلِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدٰنٰكُمْ
وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

Meaning: *“Allah intends every facility for you; He does not want to put to difficulties. (He wants you) to complete the prescribed period, and to glorify Him in that He has guided you; and perchance ye shall be grateful.”*

There are those who may ask: If all the acts of worship that Allah has commanded upon us are easy to perform, why are there many who fail to fulfil these acts of worship? The answer is due to the lack of sabr in obeying Allah. Lack of sabr weakens the souls and causes one to drown in one’s own desires and ends up lost in enjoyment. Such individuals will feel as if they are unable to fulfil Allah’s commands. They prefer to find excuses than to strive to obey Allah. Even if they were to perform an act of worship, they do so without diligence. At times their hearts are filled with hatred and their tongues are busy whining non-stop.

Jemaah, this is similar to the traits of the munafik (hypocrites) that Allah mentions in verse 142 Surah al-Nisaa':

إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَهُوَ خَادِعُهُمْ وَإِذَا قَامُوا إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ
قَامُوا كُسَالَى يُرَاءُونَ النَّاسَ وَلَا يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿١٤٢﴾

Meaning: *“Indeed, the hypocrites [think to] deceive Allah, but He is deceiving them. And when they stand for prayer, they stand lazily, showing [themselves to] the people and not remembering Allah except a little.”*

Compare this to the exemplary character of Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. He was a noble person, chosen by Allah and was promised Allah's safety and Paradise. Yet this did not, in any way, cause Rasulullah s.a.w. to take his acts of worship lightly and be careless in performing them. In fact, it fuelled Rasulullah's diligence to obey Allah with all his heart. Does this not put us to shame, for we are steeped in mistakes and sins, yet do not show the same level of obedience to Allah! Our beloved Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. stood up in the middle of the night to perform night prayers until his feet were swollen and blistered. He would also fast often, outside the month of Ramadan. And he would make istighfar seeking Allah's forgiveness at least 70 times daily! Rasulullah was also a very generous man; he never thought twice about giving away his wealth, even though he was not a wealthy man. But what little he had, he would give to those in need. He also carried out his duties as the head of the family diligently, despite being carrying his duties as the Prophet and managing the affairs of the community.

Blessed Friday Jemaah,

Let us strive to be the ummah of Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. that seeks to emulate his noble character. Let us develop sabr in our hearts to enable us to obey Allah and seek after His pleasure. Do not become among those who are great in their worldly affairs, but are weak in fulfilling acts of worship to

Allah. Reflect upon this verse that Allah revealed in surah Maryam:

رَبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا فَاعْبُدْهُ وَاصْطَبِرْ لِعِبَادَتِهِ هَلْ تَعْلَمُ
لَهُ سَمِيًّا ﴿٦٥﴾

Meaning: *“Lord of the heavens and the earth and whatever is between them - so worship Him and have patience for His worship. Do you know of any similarity to Him.”* [Surah Maryam: 65]

In this verse, Allah underscores the need for us to have sabr in enslaving ourselves to Him, because He is the Lord of the Universe. There is none that is as powerful as Him, and none that can grant sustenance to the creations except Allah s.w.t.

If your desires or nafs are swaying you from being grateful to Allah, then ask yourself: Are you able to continue living patiently if Allah takes away all the blessings that He has bestowed upon you? If your nafs tries to sway you from worshipping Allah, ask yourself: Can I be patient on the Day of Judgement when I fail to earn a place in Allah’s Paradise? If you ever feel the urge to transgress Allah’s prohibitions, then ask yourself: Can I be patient when I am being punished in Hellfire?

Hence jemaah, if we realise that we are not able to have sabr when we are being punished in the hellfire, or when we fail to

be placed in Allah's Paradise, or if we lose all of the blessings Allah has given us, then we should have sabr in obeying Allah.

Leave behind all that Allah has prohibited upon us. Be diligent and affirm our hearts in obeying all of His commands. Do not neglect our responsibilities and obligations. Be sincere in performing acts of worship solely for the sake of Allah. Perform them to the best of our abilities. Do not ever get sick and tired of obeying Allah, and do not ever give up in making doa to Allah. May Allah grant us sabr in obeying Him and performing acts of worship, insyallah. 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.