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Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura

Friday Sermon

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Diversity – Together in Pursuit of Excellence

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ الَّذِي هَدَانَا لِهٰذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لِنَهْتَدِيَ لَوْلَا اَنْ هَدَانَا اللّٰهُ. اَشْهَدُ اَنْ
لَا اِلَهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَاَشْهَدُ اَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ.
اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ، وَعَلٰى اٰلِهِ وَاَصْحَابِهِ اَجْمَعِينَ. اَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَيَا
عِبَادَ اللّٰهِ، اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ. قَالَ تَعَالٰى: يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِ
وَلَا تُمَوِّنْ اِلَّا وَاَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ.

Dear blessed Friday congregation,

Let us strengthen our taqwa towards Allah s.w.t. by carrying out all that He has commanded and refraining from all that He has forbidden. May we be among His servants who attain His mercy, forgiveness and pleasure in this life and in the Hereafter. Amin, ya Rabbal 'Alamin.

My dear brothers,

Whenever we look upon the vastness of the heavens, the beauty of the earth, and the **diversity** of people with their **different** appearances, languages and cultures, we should be reminded

of the greatness of Allah, who created the **diversity** that surrounds us. In Surah Ar-Rum, verse 22, Allah s.w.t. says:

وَمِنْ ءَايَاتِهِ خَلْقُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافُ السِّنِّتِكُمْ وَالْوَنِكُمْ
إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٢٢﴾

*Which means: "And among His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the **diversity** of your languages and colours. Surely in this are signs for those who possess knowledge."*

Notice how Allah places the **diversity** of humankind alongside the creation of the heavens and the earth as one of His magnificent signs. This teaches us that **differences** in race, language and culture are not something to be viewed with suspicion or used as reasons for conflict and division. Rather, they are part of Allah's divine order, inviting us to recognise the greatness of our Creator.

For a believer, appreciating **diversity** is an expression of faith in Allah. When we see every human being as a creation of Allah with dignity and honour, we become more mindful of our speech, fairer in our judgement, and more respectful in the way we interact with others.

Dear congregation,

Islam does not merely ask us to acknowledge that people come from **diverse** backgrounds. It also teaches us how to manage that **diversity** through **values** that uplift and strengthen society. The Quran reminds us that a person's true honour is not determined by lineage or ethnicity, but by their consciousness of Allah.

The history of Islamic civilisation offers many lessons in this regard. Beginning with the Prophet Muhammad s.a.w., who recognised and drew upon the unique strengths and expertise of his Companions in **different** fields, even though they came from **diverse** backgrounds.

Later, during the Abbasid era, Baghdad became one of the world's leading centres of knowledge and scholarship. Scholars and intellectuals from various backgrounds worked together to study, translate and advance knowledge in fields such as philosophy, mathematics, medicine and astronomy. Their efforts produced discoveries and works which continue to benefit us to this day.

Of course, this **excellence** did not arise simply because **diversity** existed. Rather, it was achieved because **diversity** was guided by **values** upheld by our faith: honouring knowledge, upholding trust, and striving to benefit society. This offers an important lesson for us today. **Diversity** becomes a blessing

only when we choose to work together in the pursuit of what is good.

My dear brothers,

Today's khutbah proposes two practical steps to transform the **diversity** we experience today into the shared **excellence** we hope to achieve tomorrow.

First: See diversity as an opportunity for progress

Every individual is part of a wider community, and each person possesses **different** talents, experiences and abilities. Some of us educate, some offer treatment, some offer business, some contribute technical expertise, while others devote themselves to seeking and advancing knowledge. This **diversity** is a blessing from Allah that should be channelled towards the common good.

Therefore, let us not allow our **differences** or **diverse** backgrounds to become barriers to mutual understanding or shared progress. Instead, let us see them as opportunities to learn from one another, complement one another's strengths, and build a society admired for its civilisation and achievements, just as the Muslim civilisation was during its golden age.

Second: Spread mercy through cooperation

Was not the Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. sent as a mercy to all creation? Likewise, every Muslim should strive to be a source of mercy to those around them. That mercy is reflected through

honesty in our work, dedication in the pursuit of knowledge, fairness in our dealings with others, and a willingness to work together in matters that benefit all.

Dear brothers,

Let us renew our intention that every effort to build positive relationships, contribute to society, and strive for **excellence** in our respective fields be regarded as an act of worship to Allah s.w.t.

May Allah s.w.t. grant us wisdom in managing **diversity**, open our hearts to respect one another, and make us among His servants who continually bring benefit to humanity. Amin, ya Rabbal 'Alamin.

أَقُولُ قَوْلِي هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ الْعَظِيمَ لِي وَلَكُمْ، فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ
الرَّحِيمُ.

Second Sermon

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ حَمْدًا كَثِيرًا كَمَا أَمَرَ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ. اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ. أَمَا بَعْدُ، فَيَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ تَعَالَى فِيمَا أَمَرَ، وَانْتَهُوا عَمَّا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ وَزَجَرَ.

أَلَا صَلُّوا وَسَلِّمُوا عَلَى النَّبِيِّ الْمُصْطَفَى، فَقَدْ أَمَرَنَا اللَّهُ بِذَلِكَ حَيْثُ قَالَ فِي كِتَابِهِ الْغَرِيزِ: إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا. اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ وَبَارِكْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ.

وَارْضَ اللَّهُمَّ عَنِ الْخُلَفَاءِ الرَّاشِدِينَ الْمُهَدِّينَ سَادَاتِنَا أَبِي بَكْرٍ وَعُمَرُ وَعُثْمَانُ وَعَلِيٌّ، وَعَنْ بَقِيَّةِ الصَّحَابَةِ وَالْقَرَابَةِ وَالتَّابِعِينَ، وَتَابِعِي التَّابِعِينَ، وَعَنْ مَعَهُمْ وَفِيهِمْ بِرَحْمَتِكَ يَا أَرْحَمَ الرَّاحِمِينَ.

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ، وَالْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ، الْأَحْيَاءِ مِنْهُمْ وَالْأَمْوَاتِ. رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً، وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً، وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ.

عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَى، وَيَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ، يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ، فَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ الْعَظِيمَ

يَذْكُرْكُمْ، وَاشْكُرُوهُ عَلَى نِعَمِهِ يَذْكُرْكُمْ، وَاسْأَلُوهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ يُعْطِيكُمْ، وَلَذِكْرُ
اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ، وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ.