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**Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura**

**Friday Sermon**

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**Istita'ah in Worship**

أَحْمَدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي هَدَانَا لِهَذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لِنَهْتَدِيَ لَوْلَا أَنْ هَدَانَا اللَّهُ. أَشْهَدُ 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. أَمَّا بَعْدُ،  
فِيَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ.

**Zumratal mukminin rahimakumullah,**

Let us observe *taqwa* towards Allah s.w.t. by fulfilling all His commands and staying away from all His prohibitions. May Allah s.w.t. bless us and our beloved pilgrims who are performing **Hajj** with **istita'ah** – the **capability** and **capacity** to carry out Islam's obligations in the best manner possible, and with accepted **worship** and good deeds. Amin ya Rabbal 'Alamin.

**Dear blessed congregation,**

Allah s.w.t. says in Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 286:

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا

Which means: “Allah does not task a soul beyond its **capability...**”

Brothers, this verse is commonly associated with the context of life's trials; that Allah does not burden us with any trial except that we are **capable** of bearing it. This is an approach that focuses on spiritual development.

At the same time, the earlier exegetes, such as Imam Al-Qurtubi and Imam At-Tabari, held the view that this verse refers to one's **capability** in carrying out the acts of **worship** that have been prescribed. It is this **capability** that is referred to as *istita'ah* in matters of **worship**.

**Dear brothers,**

The concept of *istita'ah*, meaning **capability** or **capacity**, is embedded within every pillar of Islam after the two declarations of faith. For example, one is permitted to pray seated if one is unable to stand. In the act of fasting, a person who is ill is exempted from fasting. Zakat is only obligated upon those who possess the means and meet the conditions of *haul* and *nisab*. As for **Haj** — it is only obligated when a person fulfils the physical, mental, financial, and administrative **capabilities** required.

These examples show that the pillars of Islam ease the path of **worship**. Is this not a depiction of Allah's s.w.t. vast mercy?

Brothers, Allah s.w.t. reminds us of our human limitations and the vastness of His mercy in Surah an-Nisa', verse 28:

يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُخَفِّفَ عَنْكُمْ وَخُلِقَ الْإِنْسَانُ ضَعِيفًا ﴿٢٨﴾

Which means: “And Allah wants to lighten for you (your difficulties); and mankind was created weak.”

**Beloved brothers,**

When we are faced with difficulty in performing acts of **worship** due to the absence or loss of **capability** (*istita'ah*), it is important for us to keep in mind the following three reminders:

**Firstly: *Istita'ah* is part of Allah's decree**

At any age, a person may lose physical **capability**, financial stability, or mental **capacity** at any point in time. If we are faced with this trial, let us be certain that the loss of *istita'ah* is also part of Allah's decree. A believer does not meet Allah's decree with dissatisfaction, but rather with patience, gratitude for the **capability** that was once and still is possessed, and by constantly engaging in sincere supplication.

**Secondly: The lack of *istita'ah* does not mean the loss of opportunity to perform good deeds.**

The inability to perform certain acts of **worship** does not mean that one cannot get close to Allah. Likewise, having **capability** does not necessarily mean that one is closer to Allah. For

example, a person who is unable to perform the *korban* sacrifice due to financial constraints does not mean that the opportunity for reward is beyond their reach. It may well be that their patience, gratitude, and sincerity in other acts of **worship** are no less remarkable in the sight of Allah s.w.t.

### **Thirdly: Lack of *istita'ah* does not mean lack of love from Allah**

Some may feel that they are less loved by Allah when they compare their own **capabilities** to others. Limitations in **worship**, such as losing the physical ability to perform **Haj** when one's long-awaited turn finally arrives, are sometimes associated with a sign of the withdrawal of Allah's love. Wal 'iyazu Billah. Such an understanding is entirely inaccurate.

In such situations, be certain that only Allah knows the wisdom behind it. Perhaps it occurs to purify the heart, to remind of an unnoticed heedlessness, or to prepare the soul before more doors of mercy are opened. And if we are unable to comprehend the wisdom behind it, let us be certain that Allah knows best what is good for us. All of this, in truth, is a profoundly beautiful sign of Allah's love towards us.

### **Blessed congregation,**

In conjunction with the arrival of the **Haj** season, the sermon wishes to remind that the obligation of **Haj** is only upon those

who possess *istita'ah*, that is, **capability** in terms of the physical, financial, mental, and administrative aspects.

Indeed, **Haj** in its essence is an invitation from Allah. If that invitation has yet to appear, let us not despair of Allah's mercy. And let us not harbour ill assumptions of Him. Let us recall a *hadith qudsi* which means: "*I (Allah) am as My servant thinks of Me, and I am with him when he remembers Me.*" (Bukhari and Muslim).

**Dear brothers,**

In closing, let us raise our prayers to Allah that we are always granted the opportunity and *istita'ah*, the **capability** to perform acts of **worship** and do good to the best of our ability. At the same time, let us also extend our prayers for the **Haj** pilgrims in the Holy Land, that they remain always under Allah's protection, and are kept far from any hardship or harm. Finally, let us also pray to Allah 'Azza wa Jalla that we too are granted the *istita'ah* to become His guests in the Holy Land one day. 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 نَهَى عَنْهُ وَزَجَرَ.

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

وَارِضَ اللَّهُمَّ عَنِ الْخُلَفَاءِ الرَّاشِدِينَ الْمُهَدِّينَ سَادَاتِنَا أَبِي بَكْرٍ وَعُمَرَ وَعُثْمَانَ وَعَلِيٍّ، وَعَنْ بَقِيَّةِ الصَّحَابَةِ وَالْقُرَابَةِ وَالتَّابِعِينَ، وَتَابِعِي التَّابِعِينَ، وَعَنَّا مَعَهُمْ وَفِيهِمْ بِرَحْمَتِكَ يَا رَحِيمَ الرَّاحِمِينَ.

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ، وَالْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ، الْأَحْيَاءِ مِنْهُمْ وَالْأَمْوَاتِ. اللَّهُمَّ ادْفَعْ عَنَّا الْبَلَاءَ وَالْوَبَاءَ وَالْخُرْبَ وَالْإِعْتِدَاءَ. اللَّهُمَّ انصُرْ إِخْوَانَنَا الْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ فِي عَزَّةٍ وَفِي فِلِسْطِينَ، وَفِي كُلِّ مَكَانٍ يَا رَحِيمَ الرَّاحِمِينَ. اللَّهُمَّ بَدِّلْ خَوْفَهُمْ أَمْنًا، وَحُزْرَهُمْ فَرَحًا، وَهَمَّهُمْ فَرَجًا، وَاطْتَبِ السَّلَامَ وَالسَّلَامَ وَالْأَمْنَ وَالْأَمَانَ لِلْعَالَمِ كُلِّهِ وَلِلنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ. رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً، وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً، وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ.

عِبَادِ اللَّهِ، إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ، وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ  
الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ، يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ، فَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ الْعَظِيمَ  
يَذْكُرْكُمْ، وَاشْكُرُوا عَلَىٰ نِعْمِهِ يَزِدْكُمْ، وَاسْأَلُوهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ يُعْطِكُمْ، وَلَذِكْرُ  
اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ، وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ.