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Friday Sermon

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Preserving the Integrity of Our Religious Lives

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 تُمُوتُوا اِلَّا وَانْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ.

Dear blessed Friday congregation,

Let us embody taqwa towards Allah s.w.t. with full awareness and consciousness. Let us carry out all His commands and abstain from all His prohibitions. May Allah grant us guidance and wisdom to remain on the straight path. Amin, ya Rabbal 'Alamin.

My dear brothers,

Islam places immense weight on **preserving** the **integrity** of **religious** life. This refers to an attitude of caution and wisdom in dealing with **religious knowledge**. Through **religious**

knowledge, we come to understand Allah's commands, prohibitions, and guidance, which in turn shapes the identity of our **religious** life.

It must be understood that any knowledge which we are uncertain of its authenticity, and is spread in the name of **religion**, is extremely dangerous. For example, **interpreting** verses of the Quran freely without considering their context, or practising a deed or placing belief in something based on fabricated hadith; all of these can shape beliefs that later become practices. Eventually, these practices may become a reference for those around us, when in truth, they are not accepted in Islam.

Recognising that this danger is increasingly spreading in our lives, whether in the real world or online, abroad or locally, this sermon wishes to share three guidelines to help us **preserve** the **integrity** of our **religious** life:

Firstly: Being careful in choosing sources of religious knowledge

Brothers, when we seek medical advice, we go to doctors, and when we seek legal advice, we go to lawyers. In meeting any doctor or lawyer, we aspire to find the best one. The same approach must be taken when it comes to **religious** advice; a matter that determines our standing before Allah, both in this world and the hereafter.

Imam Ibn Sirin said: *“Indeed, this knowledge is **religion** itself, so look carefully at from whom you take your **religion**”*

This is a reminder for us to scrutinise the sources of **religious knowledge** we receive. This means our understanding of Islam must be shaped by teachers who are properly qualified, possess good credibility, display humility, and whose actions align with their teachings and calling.

Secondly: Verify the content of religious knowledge

Brothers, as a precautionary step, even though we are careful in choosing our sources, there is much benefit in **verifying** the authenticity of the knowledge we receive. Allah s.w.t. says in Surah Al-Isra, verse 36:

وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَٰئِكَ

كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْئُولًا ﴿٣٦﴾

Which means: *“And do not follow that of which you have no knowledge. Indeed, the hearing, the sight, and the heart – all those will be questioned (and held accountable on the Day of Judgment).”*

Dear brothers, **verifying** the content of **religious knowledge** involves several layers. We need to **verify** whether a piece of knowledge or **religious** content has a strong basis. Therefore, ensure that the **religious** basis and evidence is authentic,

because every piece of **religious knowledge** must be grounded in **religious** evidence. We also need to **verify** whether that basis is understood according to its true **intended** meaning.

Thirdly: Understand that the application of fiqh may change according to context

Brothers, there is a Malay proverb that says, “*lain padang, lain belalang*” – meaning different places have different circumstances. The same applies to rulings in fiqh. It is true that many foundational or core (*usul*) matters in fiqh do not change, such as the five daily prayers. However, there are also branch or secondary (*furu'*) rulings that change according to context.

For example, the minimum amount of dowry or *mahr mithl* differs from one country to another. It would be inappropriate for the people of one country to adopt the dowry rate of a neighbouring country and apply it in their own, because of differences in economic realities, customs, and practices between the two countries.

With this, it becomes clear that fiqh rulings on branch matters of **religion** can be influenced by context; whether of place, time, or local community customs. This is among the reasons we see a diversity of fatwas and fiqh views on branch matters among scholars from different countries, even though they refer to the same sources, namely the Quran and Sunnah.

Beloved congregation,

Let us together **preserve** the **integrity** of our **religious** life by relying on authentic sources, for indeed the **integrity** of our **religious** life today will determine our standing before Allah s.w.t. tomorrow.

Every piece of knowledge we receive, and every practice on which that knowledge is built upon, will become provisions for us when we stand before Allah in the field of Mahsyar. Therefore, let us ensure that the knowledge we learn and the practices we carry out remain true and authentic, to the very best of our ability.

Ya Allah, show us the path of truth, grant us the ability to follow it, and protect us from ignorance and heedlessness. 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 الْمُهْدِيِّينَ سَادَاتِنَا أَبِي بَكْرٍ وَعُمَرُ وَعُثْمَانُ وَعَلِيٌّ، وَعَنْ بَقِيَّةِ الصَّحَابَةِ وَالْقُرَابَةِ وَالتَّابِعِينَ، وَتَابِعِي التَّابِعِينَ، وَعَنْ مَعَهُمْ وَفِيهِمْ بِرَحْمَتِكَ يَا أَرْحَمَ الرَّاحِمِينَ.

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ، وَالْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ، الْأَحْيَاءِ مِنْهُمْ وَالْأَمْوَاتِ. اللَّهُمَّ ادْفَعْ عَنَّا الْبَلَاءَ وَالْوَبَاءَ وَالزَّلَازِلَ وَالْمَحَنَ، مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَنَ، عَنِ بَلَدِنَا خَاصَّةً، وَسَائِرِ الْبُلْدَانِ عَامَّةً، يَا رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ. اللَّهُمَّ أَنْصُرْ إِخْوَانَنَا الْمُسْتَضْعِفِينَ فِي عَزَّةٍ وَفِي فَلَسْطِينَ وَفِي كُلِّ مَكَانٍ عَامَّةً، يَا أَرْحَمَ الرَّاحِمِينَ. 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، وَاشْكُرُوا عَلَى نِعَمِهِ يَزِدْكُمْ، وَاسْأَلُوهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ يُعْطِكُمْ، وَلَذِكْرُ
اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ، وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ.