



Islamic Religious Council of Singapore

Friday Sermon

24 November 2023 / 10 Jamadil Awal 1445H

Exercising Wisdom in Understanding Religious Texts

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي يُرِيدُ بِعِبَادِهِ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِهِمُ الْعُسْرَ، وَحَذَّرَهُمْ مِنَ التَّشَدُّدِ وَالتَّنَطُّعِ
وَالكُفْرِ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ شَهَادَةً كَافِلَةً لِحُسْنِ الْخِتَامِ، وَأَشْهَدُ
أَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ مَبْلَغُ الشَّرَائِعِ وَالْأَحْكَامِ وَمُبَيِّنُ الْحَلَالِ وَالْحَرَامِ، اللَّهُمَّ
صَلِّ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ أَفْضَلَ صَلَاةٍ وَأَزْكَى سَلَامٍ، فَيَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ،
اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ

Dear beloved Friday congregants,

Let us continue to elevate our taqwa towards Allah (S.W.T.) by obeying all His commands and abstaining all His prohibitions. May we obtain beneficial knowledge and remain guided on the path that pleases Him. Amin.

Dear congregants,

Our Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) left us teachings that serve as invaluable guidance for humankind in navigating life in this world, as a bridge to the hereafter.

As Muslims, we are constantly reminded to strive for a proper understanding of our religious texts. The Quran and Hadith are not merely religious scriptures written on the pages of a book; but a proper understanding of the essence and meanings of these texts is also necessary as outlined in the Quran and Hadith.

My beloved Friday congregants,

The ongoing conflict in Palestine that we are witnessing has resulted in the loss of thousands of innocent lives. This is due to the aggression and excessiveness of those in power who disregard or disrespect international laws. This is entirely unacceptable. We pray that Allah (S.W.T.) guides the world leaders to put serious effort towards finding a solution and bring an end to the suffering of the people of Gaza and Palestine.

While we feel sad and helpless, and rely on the power of prayers and provide whatever aid that is possible, there are some Muslims who are witnessing these events and making assumptions and interpretations of religious texts in a manner that is simplistic and one-dimensional. This can be observed in the social media where they directly link these events to narrations about the trials of end times. Such interpretations can lead to a misunderstanding of religious texts if they are not based on clear and accurate sources.

Sometimes, such misunderstandings can lead someone to feel despair and begin neglecting their worldly responsibilities, in order to focus solely on religious deeds in preparation for the impending Day of Judgement.

It is clear that what is happening in the Middle East currently cannot be definitively interpreted and linked to specific verses in the Quran and Hadith which mention about the trials related to living in the end of times. In fact, there are irresponsible groups attempting to utilise such events to advance their extremist agendas, misusing religious texts to justify their excessive actions.

It is still fresh in our memory the events that took place a few years ago, where the radical ISIS group used verses related to the "black flag" to support their agenda, as an attempt to justify their brutal actions that are entirely condemned in the religion.

Therefore, the Muslim community needs to be cautious when they face simplistic and unclear interpretations. These interpretations should not be considered as the absolute truth. We should know that being cautious about religious interpretations does not mean rejecting authentic religious teachings. What is being questioned is the misinterpretation and contextual understanding of these verses, especially if it does not align with the explanations of credible scholars and established interpretations.

My beloved brothers and sisters,

There are many lessons that can be taken from verses related to the end of times. Today, allow me to share two main points that we can reflect upon when discussing these religious narratives:

First: The tribulations or trials of the end of times are the forms of tests in life that have been predetermined by Allah (S.W.T.) upon His servants. Allah (S.W.T.) intends to test which of His servants have better deeds. Allah (S.W.T.) says:

الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ
الْغَفُورُ ﴿٢﴾

Which means: *"He who created death and life to test you [as to] which of you is best in deed - and He is the Exalted in Might, the Forgiving."* (Surah Al-Mulk, verse 2)

Our journey in this world is a place for us to strengthen our faith, increase our righteous deeds and build resilience, enabling us to face any form of difficulty or trial with complete obedience and patience. As believers, we should not complain or blame fate; instead, we should strengthen our relationship with Allah (S.W.T.) and seek solutions with wisdom and patience.

My beloved brothers and sisters,

The second point that we can learn from the guidance of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) regarding the end of times is that it serves as a reminder for us to prepare ourselves for the hereafter. We are reminded to increase our good deeds, perform acts of kindness, and bring benefit to all of humanity. The spirit of contributing and doing good must be maintained even if we were to know that the Day of Judgment is imminent.

In this regard, our Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) reminded us in a hadith narrated by Imam Ahmad, which means: *"If the Day of Judgment is imminent, and in the hand of one of you is a seed, and if he can plant it before the occurrence of the Day of Judgment, then let him do so."*

Our Prophet (S.A.W.) left us with an invaluable guidance. He encouraged and instilled a positive and optimistic spirit in his community to continue doing good and righteous deeds at all times and in any circumstances.

Therefore, my brothers and sisters, let us deepen our knowledge and understanding of our religious texts. Seek guidance from our experts and scholars. As we navigate these challenging times, let us strengthen our faith, increase our piety, and continue doing good for all of humanity. We submit only to Allah, seek His assistance, and to Him, we shall return.

May Allah (S.W.T.) grant us strong faith, unwavering patience, and steadfastness to continue planting seeds of goodness until our last breath. 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. أَمَّا 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 الْعَزِيزِ: 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.

وَارِضَ اللَّهُمَّ عَنِ الْخُلَفَاءِ الرَّاشِدِينَ الْمَهْدِيِّينَ أَبِي بَكْرٍ وَعُمَرَ وَعُثْمَانَ وَعَلِيٍّ، وَعَنْ بَقِيَّةِ الصَّحَابَةِ وَالْقَرَابَةِ وَالتَّابِعِينَ، وَتَابِعِي التَّابِعِينَ، وَعَنَّا مَعَهُمْ وَفِيهِمْ بِرَحْمَتِكَ يَا أَرْحَمَ الرَّاحِمِينَ.

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ، وَالْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ، الْأَحْيَاءِ مِنْهُمْ وَالْأَمْوَاتِ. اللَّهُمَّ اذْفَعْ عَنَّا الْبَلَاءَ وَالْوَبَاءَ وَالزَّلَازِلَ وَالْمِحْنَ، مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَنَ، عَن بَلَدِنَا خَاصَّةً، وَسَائِرِ الْبُلْدَانِ عَامَّةً، يَا رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ. اللَّهُمَّ انصُرْ إِخْوَانَنَا الْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ فِي غَزَّةٍ وَفِي فِلِسْطِينَ وَفِي كُلِّ مَكَانٍ

عَامَّةً، يَا أَرْحَمَ الرَّاحِمِينَ. اللَّهُمَّ بَدِّلْ خَوْفَهُمْ أَمْنًا، وَحُزْنَهُمْ فَرَحًا، وَهَمَّهُمْ
فَرَجًا، يَا رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ. رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً، وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً،
وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ.

عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَى، وَيَنْهَى عَنِ
الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ، يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ، فَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ الْعَظِيمَ
يَذْكُرْكُمْ، وَاشْكُرُوهُ عَلَى نِعَمِهِ يَزِدْكُمْ، وَاسْأَلُوهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ يُعْطِكُمْ، وَلَذِكْرُ
اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ، وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ.