

(b) October 2004

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ لِلَّهِ ، نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ ، وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا
وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا. مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ، وَمَنْ يُضِلِّ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ.
وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ.

Praise be to **اللَّهِ**.

We praise him and ask him for help and forgiveness. We ask him for protection from the evilness in ourselves and from our bad deeds. Whomever God guides to the truth no one will lead astray, and whomever He leads astray, no one will ever guide.

I testify that there is no God but **اللَّهِ** to whom there is no partner
and I testify that Muhammad **ﷺ** is his servant and messenger

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ، وَالتَّنظُرُ نَفْسٍ مَا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ ،
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ، إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴾ (الحشر ، 18)

"O you who believe, fear Allah, and let every soul look to what (provision) it has sent forth for tomorrow. And fear Allah, for Allah is well-acquainted with (all) that you do" (S59, A18)



أما بعد:

☆ فإن أصدق الحديث كتابُ الله ، وخيرُ الهدي هدي محمدٍ ﷺ ، وشرُّ الأمور محدثاتها ، وكلُّ محدثةٍ بدعة ، وكلُّ بدعةٍ ضلالةٌ ، وكلُّ ضلالةٍ في النار ☆
(مسلم ، أحمد ، النسائي)

The most truthful of words are those of the book of Allah, and the best of guidance is the guidance of Muhammad^(SAAWS), and the most evil of matters are its new innovations, for each innovation is invented, and each invention can lead astray, and each will lead to hellfire. (narrated by Muslim, Ahmad and An-Nisaa'I)

The topic of today's Khutbah is a continuation of the topic of:

"The strength of faith and of the Muslim"

العقيدة

This is the continuation of last khutbah ISA. We finished last khutbah with the following hadeeth:

عن ابن عباس قال: كنت رديف رسول الله ﷺ ، فقال: " يا غلام ، احفظ الله يحفظك : احفظ الله تجده تجاهك : تعرّف الى الله في الرخاء يعرفك في الشدة : وإذا سألت فاسأل الله ، وإذا استعنت فاستعن بالله ، فإن العباد لو اجتمعوا على أن ينفوك بشيء لم يكتبه الله لك لم يقدروا على ذلك . ولو اجتمعوا على أن يضروك بشيء لم يكتبه الله عليك لم يقدروا على ذلك . جفت الأقلام وطويت الصحف "

From Ibn Abaas, he said, I was with the Prophet^(SAAWS) when he said to me, (and Ibn Abaas a young boy at the time), Oh young boy, keep to Allah, and Allah will safe keep you. Keep to Allah and you will find him ahead of you. Get to know Allah in times of ease, and Allah will know you in times of strife. If you ask for anything, ask Allah. If you seek help, seek the help of Allah, for if all the beings have gathered to benefit you in something that Allah has not written for you, they will not be able to benefit you. And if they all gathered to harm you in something that Allah has not

written against you, they will not be able to harm you. The pens have dried and the books have been closed.”

1. Keep to Allah, and Allah will safe keep you. As part of the process of strengthening our Iman, we first need to keep close to Allah in everything that we say, everything that we do and everything that we feel.
2. Keep to Allah and you will find him ahead. Again, we are reassured that when we keep to Allah, Allah has promised us to be there for us, ahead of us when we are in his need.
3. Get to know Allah in times of ease, and Allah will know you in times of strife. We all know that we are most close to Allah when we are going through difficult times and we feel a great need to get closer to him. What about when we are in times of ease, when one is healthy, wealthy and strong, how close do we really get to Allah? Remember brothers and sisters, if you kept to Allah in times of ease, Allah will not forget you in your time of strife.
4. If you ask for anything, ask only of Allah. If something is written and destined for you, you will get it, if not, no one will ever be able to grant you that. Islam is telling us don't humiliate yourself by asking of anyone else but Allah.
5. If you seek help, seek the help of Allah. Allah and Allah alone have all power and we should only ask for help from Allah.
6. If everyone has gathered to benefit you in something that Allah has not written for you, they will not be able to benefit you. And if they all gathered to harm you in something that Allah has not written against you, they will not be able to harm you. If you believe this statement, then you should have no fear from anyone or anything. This is a profound statement and it is also a challenge. Are we true Muslims. Are we Muslims with a strong faith to accept this statement? This is what it comes down to. If we believe that all matters are in Allah's power, and that we have truly submitted to Allah's will, then we should have no fear in our hearts. That is how we strengthen ourselves. We do that in the firm belief of Allah, and in the firm belief of Allah's power and in the firm belief that what we need to do is get closer to Allah.
7. The last sentence in the hadeeth states "the pens have dried and the books have been closed". The Prophet^(SAAWS) is telling us look no further and have no doubts because this is where the truth lies.

We understand from this hadeeth is that an important part in strengthening our faith is to believe that whatever good, and that whatever bad, that becomes us has been decreed by Allah and Allah alone. A strong believer would clearly understand what is meant by this hadeeth, but many Muslims and many non-Muslims would look at this hadeeth and come out with the idea of **Fatalism**. That is, what ever we do, and indeed not do, the outcome will be the same, the outcome has been pre-determined, **so what is the point**. The person may become passive and accepts what ever comes his or her way, and then say this is Allah's will. We do hear it, day in and day out, in our Muslim communities, we hear these words:

إن شاء الله

Imagine if one is ill, goes to the doctor for an appointment, and the person is told:

إن شاء الله

We do however hear this in our communities. The unfortunate understanding and outcome of this expression is that nothing gets done, and we just wait for Allah's will.

Well, Islam is not about Fatalism, and it is certainly not about being passive in the way we accept all that comes one's way. It is about accepting the Will of Allah and **working** within this will. What does this mean?

A strong believer is someone who has a strong determination, a strong will to achieve his or her aims in an acceptable manner to Islam. A strong believer is one who will put his utmost efforts in achieving his or her goals, leaving nothing to chance, and leaving nothing to fate to give you what you have failed to gain yourself. This, brothers and sisters, is one of the most difficult concepts to understand in Islam by both Muslims and non-Muslims.

On the one hand, non-Muslims see a determined person is one who wants to shape his or her future and there is no room for Fate or Qadar and no dependence on God. If he succeeds, it is because he deserves to do so. He must have been good enough, and even sometimes one might admit and say "I was lucky", but no thanks to Allah. If he doesn't succeed, we might hear, "well he was just not good enough", or even "tough luck", but we do not hear that this was God's will.

On the other hand there are Muslims who think that whatever I do the outcome is already pre-determined by Allah, so why bother. I will simply depend totally on Allah, as Allah wants us to depend on Him:

إن الله يحب المتوكلين

"God loves those who depend on Him". What ever happens, they will say it is Allah's will and nothing to do with me. Don't blame me. These are the Muslims that hide their poor will and poor Iman behind this concept.

Well brothers and sisters, both are wrong. Islam is unique in this concept. Islam demands that you put all the effort and capacity that Allah has given you, but then you have to depend on the outcome on Allah. This is indeed very unique. This may be exemplified by the following incident.

عن عوف بن مالك قال: قضى رسول الله ﷺ بين رجلين. فلما أدبرا قال المُقضى عليه: حسبي الله ونعم الوكيل. فقال ﷺ: ☆ إن الله يلوم على العجز، ولكن عليك بالكَيْسِ. فإذا غلبك أمر فقل: حسبي الله ونعم الوكيل. (أبو داود)

The Prophet^(SAAWS) passed a judgement between two people. The person who was on the wrong side of the judgement said:

حسبي الله ونعم الوكيل

As if to say that I accept Allah's verdict and I depend on him. The man was putting the judgement that went against him as if it was from Allah, and he accepted that. Now, under normal circumstances, this is admirable, but the Prophet^(SAAWS) responded: Allah will blame for lack of effort (which probably was the case in this judgement), and that we must work to our utmost capacity. If having done so, if we have worked to our utmost capacity and then the judgement goes against us, then one can say:

حسبي الله ونعم الوكيل

(Narrated by Abu Dawood)

Here we are asked not to instinctively put the outcome to Allah before we look at what we have done or failed to do, and learn from our mistakes. If we put it down to Allah before we do that we will not improve. (Take the example of a natural disaster and poor building construct).

Here, we are asked to make full use of all that we are capable of to deal with every day to day struggles. If we succeed, then we have done our duty. If we, however, fail and failure is but a normal part of our daily life, then a strong Muslim will say I have done my best, and I accept Allah's verdict. In either case, the Muslim remains strong. He or she is strong by the fact that they have put all their efforts, the efforts that Allah has bestowed on them, in what they wanted to achieve, and then they put all their faith in Allah for the outcome. The strong Muslim is able to deal with success and failure as if they are the same, as long as he or she has tried their best. This is what this concept is about.

A strong Muslim should not be hesitant. He or she should be positive and forward. A strong Muslim should not let opportunities pass him by, opportunities that Allah has opened for him, but he was too hesitant to take them. As long as you have the knowledge of Islam and you apply yourself in accordance with Islam, do not be afraid. Put your faith in Allah and depend on him for the outcome. What is so amazing brothers and sisters, is that if we are truly strong Muslims, we already have accepted the outcome whatever it is going to be.

A strong Muslim does not wallow in the past, does not live in what has happened, and does not keep wallowing as to what it could have been. A strong Muslim faces success and failure and thanks Allah for both.

قال رسول الله ﷺ: ☆ المؤمن القوى خيرٌ وأحب إلى الله من المؤمن الضعيف.
وفى كل خير. احرص على ما ينفعك واستعن بالله ولا تعجز وإن أصابك شيء
فلا تقل: لو أنى فعلت كذا لكان كذا، ولكن قل: قدر الله، وما شاء فعل، فإن
(لو) تفتح عمل الشيطان ☆ (مسلم)

The Prophet^(SAAWS) said "the strong faithful is better and more loved by Allah than the weak faithful, and in both there is goodness. Take care of what is of benefit to you and depend on Allah and do not give up. If you are afflicted by something, do not say if only I did this then the outcome would have been different, but say, Allah has decreed and what Allah has willed has happened. For the saying of "if only" opens the work of the devil" (Narrated by Muslim)

Part of the devil's work here is to keep that person indulging and wallowing in the past and not getting on with his life. We often hear in the non-Muslim society the expression of a successful businessperson, "cut your losses", and get on with it. Experience tells you "GET ON", and don't look back, for doing so will only make you lose more. Only look back to learn from the experience and get better, and then move on. Praise be to Allah, we have been told to adopt this attitude hundreds of years ago, and we all know how many people entered Islam through the conduct of the Muslim traders in those days.

This strength of Iman will get the Muslim to face difficult situations and difficult losses but still let him get on with his life fully aware that it is all in Allah's hands. What is required of the Muslim is **knowledge of Islam and application of effort**. Imagine brothers and sisters how easy our lives will be if we can accept all that comes our way.

Depending on Allah and accepting his will is the sign of a strong Muslim, a Muslim with strong faith, a Muslim with a strong Iman.

☆ **ولقد جاء في الحديث: ☆ من أحب أن يكون أقوى الناس فليتوكل على الله ☆**

The following has been narrated in a hadeeth: "he who wishes to be the strongest of people, then let him depend on Allah".

أقول قولي هذا وأستغفر الله لي ولكم

2nd Khutbah:

الحمد لله ثم الحمد لله. الحمد لله نستعينه ونستغفره، ونعوذ بالله من شرور أنفسنا وسيئات أعمالنا. أما بعد:

Another sign of a strong Muslim is that he is frank, open and sincere. Once you are able to face all that life throws at you, a strong Muslim faces people with a firm will, an open heart and with strong, established principles. The example given is when the Prophet's^(SAAWS) son Ibraheem died. On that day, there was an eclipse of the sun, and the people said the sun was eclipsed for the death of Ibraheem, for that was indeed a very grave event. That is what ordinary people, even at the time of Prophet^(SAAWS) said.

But what did the Prophet^(SAAWS) say, and he said that at a very sad point in his life, when his son died. He said "the sun and the moon do not eclipse for anyone's life or anyone's death. They are but two signs of Allah Almighty that he demonstrates to people. Should you witness them, then perform salat" (Narrated by Al-Bukhari)

This was how the Prophet^(SAAWS) responded to that claim. His knowledge told him otherwise, and he did not buckle under the grave affliction of losing one's son. That is what a strong faith is about.

So far we are told how a strong Muslim should face adversity. But what about facing success. Praise be to Allah, many of us here have faced a great deal of success, as the blessings of Allah have been showered on us, despite our weak Iman. This is an important point that we need to be clear on. The strong Muslim is also strong when things go his way.

We are not talking about adversity only. A non-Muslim or a Muslim with a weak faith may think that when something good happens to them, it is because they deserved it and it was the result of their efforts, and their efforts only. So we see wealthy people saying I earned my money with my sweat and blood. I made myself from nothing, and so on. I think we all come across such examples every day. This is again the sign of weak faith, and it manifests itself as **arrogance**. A strong Muslim, brothers and sisters, is never arrogant, whatever heights of wealth, strength or fame he or she achieves, for they know it is all from Allah, and from Allah alone. We are warned that those of us who have arrogance in ourselves will be denied paradise.

لا يدخلها من فيه ذرة من كبرياء

He will not enter paradise he who has an ounce of arrogance.

So brothers and sisters, be careful not to be weak, and be even more careful not to be conceited and arrogant, for in doing so you deny the will of Allah and his blessings on you.

In Surat Al-Kahf, we have a good example of that:

وَكَانَ لَهُ ثَمَرٌ فَقَالَ لِصَاحِبِهِ وَهُوَ يُحَاوِرُهُ أَنَا أَكْثَرُ
مِنْكَ مَالًا وَأَعَزُّ نَفَرًا ﴿٣٤﴾ وَدَخَلَ جَنَّتَهُ وَهُوَ ظَالِمٌ لِنَفْسِهِ قَالَ مَا
أَظُنُّ أَنْ تَبِيدَ هَذِهِ أَبَدًا ﴿٣٥﴾ وَمَا أَظُنُّ السَّاعَةَ قَائِمَةً وَلَئِنْ رُودتُ
إِلَى رَبِّي لَأَجِدَنَّ خَيْرًا مِّنْهَا مُنْقَلَبًا ﴿٣٦﴾

"And he had an abundance of produce. He said to his companion "I have more wealth than you and more honour and power in my following of people. He went

into his gardens while he wronged himself: he said I do not think that this will ever perish, nor do I deem that the hour of judgement will ever come, and even if I am brought back to my Lord, I shall surely find something better in exchange" (S18, A34-36)

The success of this man has led to be arrogant, initially against his fellow man. He believed that it was all his ability and his doing that crated his wealth. He was so arrogant that this soon lead him to disbelief even in the day of judgement. Be careful brothers and sisters of falling down this path when success befalls you. It is all from Allah, and all praise be to Allah, and Allah alone.

الحمد لله

Let us brothers and sisters recap on how we strengthen our character through our understanding of Islam:

Firstly we need to have knowledge of what Islam is about. This comes through learning and learning and learning about Islam. There is no substitute for that. A Muslim that is ignorant of Islam will not be able to strengthen his or her character though Islam.

Secondly, we have to apply this knowledge using our utmost efforts and capacity that Allah has bestowed on each and every one of us.

Thirdly, and most important, we have to establish a firm practising belief that there is no will and no power except through Allah, whether in adversity or in success.

لا حول ولا قوة إلا بالله

We accept this in adversity, and we accept it in success.