

Friday 25th May 2007

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.

All 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 own bad deeds. Whom-so-ever God guides to the truth no one will lead astray, and whom-so-ever 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

يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا نُودِيَ لِلصَّلَاةِ مِنْ يَوْمِ الْجُمُعَةِ فَاسْعَوْا إِلَىٰ ذِكْرِ
اللَّهِ وَذَرُوا الْبَيْعَ ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٩﴾

“O you who believe! When the call is proclaimed for the prayer of the day of congregation, hasten to the remembrance of Allah and leave your trading. That is better for you if you did but know” (S62, A9)

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

Brothers and sisters, ASA.

The topic for today's khutbah relates to spirituality. In previous khutbahs in this masjid, sometimes we leave thinking, where was the spirituality in what we have just heard. We had a khutbah on death, we had a khutbah on parents and we had khutbahs on other subjects, and somehow we ask ourselves again, why are we not dealing with spirituality?

This is not an unusual view and I think a number of us here may share it. Having thought about the subject, I realized that probably the problem is not in the fact that spirituality is not covered, but the problem probably lies in our understanding of what is spirituality.

ISA, I will try to explain what I feel about the topic, and ISA, we will discuss this in our next study circle this coming Wednesday. So, if you have questions or points of view, it will be a very good time to share it with others.

In the past, we mentioned in one of the khutbahs the concept of the dual creation of the human being as is understood in Islam, as explained by some scholars:

We read in Surat Sajda:

الَّذِي أَحْسَنَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقَهُ وَبَدَأَ خَلْقَ الْإِنْسَانِ مِنْ طِينٍ ﴿٧﴾

“He who has perfected everything that He has created, and He began the creation of the human from clay” (S32, A7)

We also read in Surat Al-Hijr:

فَإِذَا سَوَّيْتُهُ وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِي فَقَعُوا لَهُ سَاجِدِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

“So, when I have made him and have breathed into him of My Spirit, do you fall down, prostrating yourselves unto him” (S15, A29)

Two clear ayas. One defines the physical origin and the other defines the spiritual origin. It appears from these two ayas, that Islam tells us that there is a physical existence with all that it entails of needs and functions and there is a spiritual existence with all that this entails from needs and functions.

The difficulty that people find, both Muslims and non-Muslims is marrying these two aspects of our creation and fulfilling the needs of each equally without overcoming or overburdening one or the other. Islam is a wonderful religion, for it does so in an amazing manner.

Muslims know that Islam is not simply a religion, but it is a way of life. Sometimes we have the mistaken belief that to fulfil our spirituality, we need to withdraw ourselves from routine life in order to connect with Allah. In doing so, we address Islam purely as a spiritual religion rather than a way of life. It is probably this that causes some of the confusion. We need to always remind ourselves that Islam is a way of life, a total way of life.

This point becomes clearer when we acknowledge that Islam is not just about praying, fasting, zakat and Hajj, but it is about everything that we do, everything that we say and everything that we feel and think.

Is there a point in your lives that you feel Islam has no role to play? Think about it. There is not one aspect of our lives that Islam has no role in. It is therefore clear to me, that Islam is the religion of life. If that is the case, how do we match our everyday physical needs with our everyday spiritual needs? Again, let us think about it.

Muslims and non-Muslims wake up in the morning. Believers and non-believers wake up in the morning. It is a very natural process. It is a physical process. Let us ask ourselves, is there any spiritual fulfilment in waking up in the morning. Is there anything spiritual about opening our eyes, stretching our arms and legs and getting out of bed? The answer for us is absolutely YES: This simple action becomes so amazingly spiritual when the Muslim utters these words:

أصبحنا وأصبح الملك لله ، والحمد لله ،
لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له ،
له الملك وله الحمد ، وهو على كل شئ قدير

We start our day with all ownership belonging to Allah, all praise is to Allah. There is no gods but Allah to whom there is no partner. To Him belongs all ownership and all praise, and he has power over all things.

اللهم بك أصبحنا وبك أمسينا وبك نحيا
وبك نموت واليك النشور

Oh Allah, by you we awaken, and by you we sleep, by you we live and by you we die and to you we are delivered

حَسْبِيَ اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَلَيْهِ
تَوَكَّلْتُ وَهُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ

I only ask of Allah, for there is no gods but Allah, on Him I depend and He is the Lord of the Great Throne.

Suddenly, this seemingly mundane action every day in the morning becomes a very spiritual action indeed. Something that we do every morning without ever thinking about. A few simple words can transform this simple action into a very spiritual one. Do we see the picture?

The question now is why does this happen. Why is it that when we wake up in the morning and get on with our lives like everyone else, there is no spirituality. While when we utter simple words we attain spirituality. To me, this seems to be a fundamental question about our existence and about our spiritual needs.

I feel that answering this question for ourselves is probably one of the key factors for us all in understanding what spirituality in Islam is about. To answer this question, we need to look back at the aya:

فَإِذَا سَوَّيْتُهُ وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِي

"So, when I have made him and have breathed into him of My Spirit" (S15, A29)

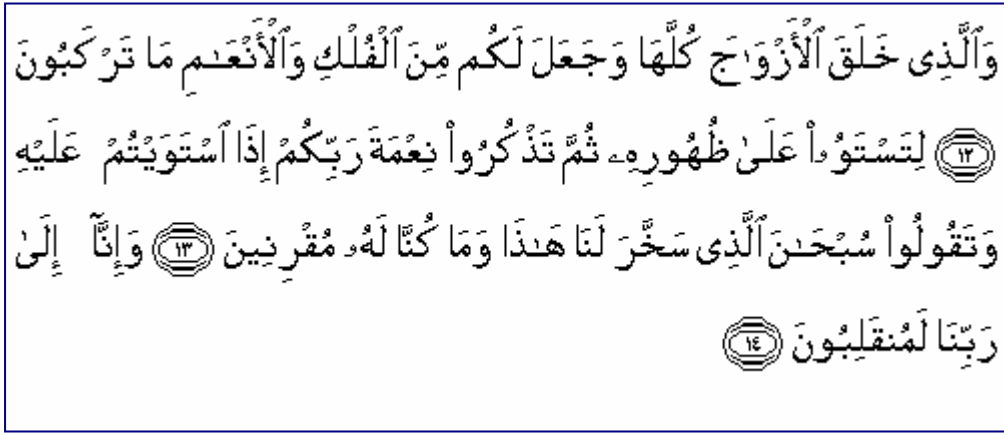
This is probably the main clue to spirituality. *"Have breathed into him of My Spirit"*. The one sure way of getting in touch with our spirituality is to get in touch with our creator. Fulfilling our spirituality is based on fulfilling this aspect of our dual creation. Spirituality is us getting in contact with our creator. It is linking every earthly action with a spiritual one. If we are very lucky, we may occasionally have our creator getting in touch with us.

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ

“And when My servants ask you concerning Me, then surely I am very near” (S2, A186)

Does it now make sense? In Islam, every single physical action that we do during the day there is a potential spiritual connection. We know this spiritual connection as “a Dua’ or a Zikr”.

When we enter the car, or a train or a plane, are we aware of these ayas?



“And He Who created pairs of all things, and made for you of the ships and the cattle what you ride on. In order that you may sit firm and square on their backs, and when so seated, you may remember the favour of your Lord, and say, "Glory be to Him Who has made this subservient to us for otherwise we were not able to do. And to our Lord we surely must return” (S43, A12-4)

Again, a simple physical act that we do everyday and think very little about. There is absolutely nothing spiritual about sitting in a car until you utter these words: **“Glory be to Him Who has made this subservient to us for otherwise we were not able to do. And to our Lord we surely must return”** and Lord behold, suddenly, sitting in a car becomes spiritual. Through these words you made contact with your creator. Allah indeed is teaching us what to say to fulfil this connection.

In Islam, there is a “Zikr” in everything that we do. When we wake up, when we wash, when we sit down to eat, when we drink, when we finish eating and drinking, when we leave the house, when we enter the car, when we arrive to work, when we start an action, when we enter the shop, when we see something beautiful, when we enter our homes, and so on and so on. Allah has given us through the teachings of The Prophet(SAAWS) an

endless amount of “Zikr” to help us in fulfilling all our spiritual needs while we get on with our physical needs.

Some of you may say, I am not strong in Arabic, and I will never be able to learn all these Dua’s, so how can I fulfil my spiritual needs if my Arabic is poor. Praise be to Allah, even in this situation, The Prophet(SAAWS) instructed us fully. Few simple words that keeps us in contact with our creator. Simple sentences, easy on the tongue but very heavy in our balance on the day of judgement:

سبحان الله ، أأحمد لله ، الله أكبر ، لا اله الا الله

These words are unique. They are very easy to learn, very easy to say and repeat, and ISA will keep us in contact with Allah.

Another equally amazing aspect of Islam is the issue of “Ni’ya”, intention. When ever we intend to do something, we are asked to set our intentions clearly and make a clear intention that what we are about to do, we will do for the sake of Allah. Again, mundane daily actions that are seemingly totally empty of spirituality suddenly take on a completely different flavour. We have again made contact with our creator.

What is even more incredible is that when you make the intention to do something for the sake of Allah, you are in Allah’s protection.

ISA, in future khutbahs we can cover various Dua’s and Zikr to help us consolidate our physical existence with our spiritual one.

Now for a confrontation. Some of us come to this mosque on a Friday, sit and listen to the khutbah, do the salat and then leave thinking I did not sense spirituality in this. The khutbah was bland, there was no emotion in it, I did not feel spirituality in it. The Imam was talking about death, or the day of judgement, or the importance of Salat, and I did not sense the spirituality in it. I was not moved by what the Imam had to say, and so on. When we are faced with such a question, where do you think the answer lies?

I thought a lot about this mater, because I feel that one of our greatest problems as Muslims is indeed being spiritual. With all that Islam has to offer, we tend to have some difficulty connecting with our spirituality. Why is that?

One possible answer is that we are probably being affected by the culture around us in which there is strong emphasis on the speaker and the atmosphere to create a sense of spirituality. To get a sense of spirituality it is important to set the scene. I remember not too long ago, attending the funeral of one of my colleagues at a local church in Cheadle, and I listened to some of the hymns, and undoubtedly they were moving. I think probably some of you may be familiar with hymns like “amazing grace” which can be very moving indeed. The atmosphere, the hymns, the singing, the setting, all creating an air of spirituality.

Well, in a masjid, we do not have such a scene. We do not have an organ, we do not have a choir and we do not have hymns. There is no “scene” as such. Our hearts are not being shaken. If that is the case, then listen to these words from the Holy Quran:

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ
آيَاتُهُ زَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ﴿٢﴾

“It is indeed the believers whose hearts become fearful with the mention of Allah, and when His revelations are recited to them, they elevate them in faith, and on their Lord do they depend” (S8, A2)

Three sections to this aya:

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ

“It is indeed the believers whose hearts become fearful with the mention of Allah”

وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ

آيَاتُهُ زَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا

“and when His revelations are recited to them, they elevate them in faith”

وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ

“and on their Lord do they depend”

Do we now see the problem with us? When we enter the masjid, are we in awe of Allah. When we open the Quran to read, are we in awe of Allah and is our faith elevated. When the “Azan” is being announced, are we in awe of Allah.

When the Imam opens the khutbah by saying “Al-Hamdu Lil-Llah”, are we awe of Allah. When we recite “Al-Fatiha”, are we in awe of Allah and is our faith elevated. When we prostrate, are we in awe of Allah. If not, how can any Imam stand here and with a few words infuse spirituality.

Do we now see where true spirituality in Islam lies? It lies with every single person here. When the Imam says “Al-Hamdu Lil-Llah”, if we do not respond in our hearts by repeating: indeed its is “Al-Hamdu Lil-Llah”. Yes, all praise be to Allah for everything that I am, everything that I have and everything that I know, how can we connect with Allah. How can we ever connect with our spirituality?

أقول قولي هذا وأستغفر الله لي ولكم

2nd Khutbah:

الحمد لله ثم الحمد لله. الحمد لله نستعينه ونستغفره، ونعوذ بالله من شرور
أنفُسنا وسَيِّئات أعمالنا. أما بعد:

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ
آيَاتُهُ زَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ﴿٢﴾

“It is indeed the believers whose hearts become fearful with the mention of Allah, and when His revelations are recited to them, they elevate them in faith, and on their Lord do they depend” (S8, A2)

Brothers and sisters, we need to get back in touch with our spiritual existence in the manner defined to us by Islam. This is not easy and we need to make an effort. We need to increase our understanding of Islam. We need to learn a few more ayas and more dua'. We need to keep the remembrance of Allah in our hearts and on our tongues more often.

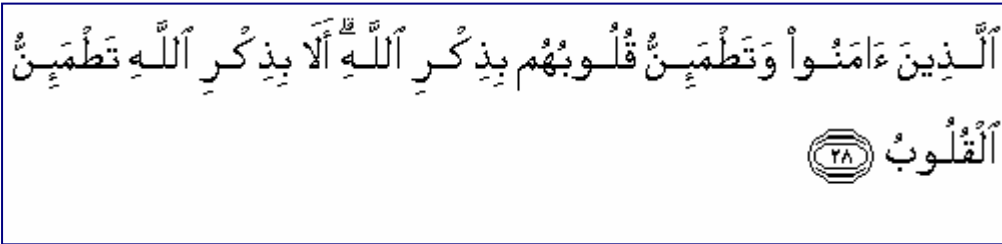
As for the Friday prayers, we need to stop chatting during the khutbah. We need to get a real sense of entering the house of Allah when we enter this masjid. We need to realize that the spirituality that we seek lies within us and will not come from the Imam. If all that does not get our spirituality going, then we are in trouble.

I end with part of the hadeeth on the seven that will be shaded on the Day of Judgment when there is no shade but that of Allah:

رجل ذكر الله خالياً ففاضت عيناه

“A man who remembered Allah in seclusion, and his eyes overflowed with tears.” This to me defines one of the moments of spirituality. Simply by the remembrance of Allah, our hearts are moved and our eyes flow with tears. No organs, no singing, no choir, no scene. Just the contact of the created with his creator.

And I end with this aya:



"Those who believe, and whose hearts find security in the remembrance of Allah: for indeed it is in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find tranquility and peace" (S13, A28)

اللَّهُمَّ اعْنِي عَلَى ذِكْرِكَ وَشُكْرِكَ وَحُسْنِ عِبَادَتِكَ
اللَّهُمَّ أَرِنَا الْحَقَّ حَقًّا وَأَرِزُقْنَا اتِّبَاعَهُ، وَأَرِنَا الْبَاطِلَ بَاطِلًا وَأَرِزُقْنَا اجْتِنَابَهُ
رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيَّ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَوْمَ يَقُومُ الْحِسَابُ

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ
رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَا أَنفُسَنَا وَإِنْ لَمْ تَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ
رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ