

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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 الله .

We praise him and ask him for help and forgiveness. We ask him for protection from the evilness within ourselves and from our own bad deeds. Whom-so-ever God guides to the truth no one can lead astray, and whom-so-ever He leaves misguided, no one has the power to guide.

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

رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ
نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَىٰ وَالِدَيَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحًا
تَرْضَاهُ وَأَدْخِلْنِي بِرَحْمَتِكَ فِي عِبَادِكَ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿١٩﴾

“My Lord, grant me that I should be thankful for Your favour which you have bestowed upon me and my parents. And grant me that I should do good such that you will be pleased with, and admit me, by Your Grace, to the ranks of your righteous servants” (S27, A19)



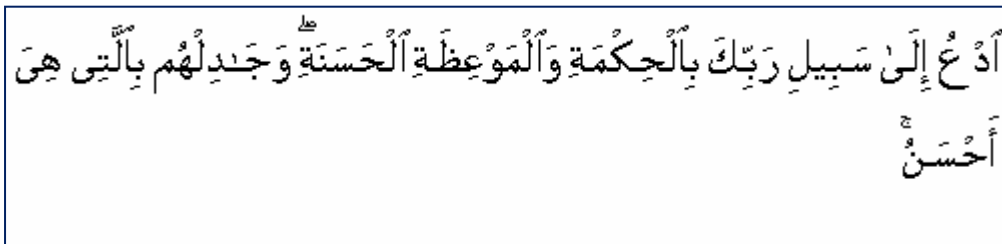
Dear brothers and sisters, ASA. First of all, can I start with a sincere apology for running late in my last khutbah. My only excuse was that we did have some unease among the community regarding recent events, and the topic was so important, it was not possible to cut it short. I am aware that autumn and winter are upon us, and the khutbahs will have to be shortened to allow for Zuhur and Assr to be prayed within the hour, so I ask you to forgive me.

As we witness the advent of autumn and winter, it may be interesting for you to know that these seasons should have a special impact on us Muslims. In these seasons, the days are short and the nights are long. It was narrated from Ibn Mass'oud(RAA) that he used to say: *Welcome to winter. The nights are prolonged to do "Quiyam", and the days are short to do "Siyam".*

If we want to take a reminder from today, it should be that we try to fast the days in these months. It will not be difficult for us to fast Mondays and Thursdays during these cold months. An easy path to Allah(SWT). It should also be possible for us to practice "Quiyam" even if it is for two rak'as. We may fall into the habit of praying Isha early and then spending the rest of the evening watching TV, or doing something else. The Prophet(SAAWS) said in saheeh Muslim: *"Of the night there is an hour. During this hour, Allah(SWT) will grant the worshiper who has submitted to Allah, all the good that he asks for".*

The autumn and winter seasons tend to have a depressing feel to them to the extent that we have coined the medical term "SAD", which stands for seasonal affective disorders. The short days and the long dark nights seem to have a negative effect on the wellbeing of some people. Islam teaches us to use each season for the benefit it brings. Let us use these coming few months to get closer to Allah(SWT). Let us encourage each other to fast as the Prophet(SAAWS) used to. I am quite sure that for most of us, we would not even get hungry or thirsty, but the fact that we have done something for the sake of Allah will give us a great boost. It is indeed a very easy way to get closer to Allah.

Brothers and sisters, now that Ramadan is over, and now that summer is also over! Some may say, what summer? Most of us are now back to our routines. The children are back to school, the study circles are now back again, the Madrassahs have started and so on. For some of us, getting back to our routines will include starting activities that promote "Da'wah" to Allah(SWT). As we do that, let us remember two very important ayas that relate to our endeavours to promote Islam to both Muslims and to non-Muslims alike:



“Call unto the way of your Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching. And reason with them in the best manner” (S16, A125)

We Muslims are aware of the beauty of this “Deen”. We also know that should Allah(SWT) wanted Islam to spread by itself, Allah would have allowed for it to be so. However, in Allah’s wisdom, all of us have been entrusted to call unto the way of our Lord. Should we decide that we want to take on this duty and this trust then we must do it in the manner that Allah has demanded.

As Muslims living in a predominantly non-Muslim society we come across opportunities for “Da’wah” on a daily basis. If we are to give justice to the call unto our Lord, we must gain adequate knowledge, and we must exercise a great deal of wisdom. Please be aware that moral and religious advice that is given **without due wisdom** may actually promote a negative response. We all need to be advised and we all need to be guided. Wisdom means that the advice given should be tailored in a way that it will make it more likely to be accepted.

As a surgeon, I can give you a clear example of what this means which has nothing to do with Islam. When a surgeon advises a patient regarding surgery, the surgeon needs to explain what is involved to the patient. No matter how eloquent the advice may be, it is worthless if the patient failed to understand. The aim of the advice is for it to be understood, and not simply for it to be given. I hope I made this point clear. The aim of “Da’wah” is for the message to be understood, and not just for it to be delivered. Worst still would be that the manner in which “Da’wah” is delivered actually drive people away from Islam.

In “Da’wah” wisdom includes gentleness, being approachable, being kind and understanding, being patient and being forgiving. The Quran clearly stated that even with the greatness of the message of Islam, the conduct of the Prophet(SAAWS) had to be of an exalted standard to promote the message:

فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانفَضُّوا مِنْ
حَوْلِكَ

“Thus it was by the mercy of Allah that you were gentle with them. Had you been rough and harsh-hearted, they would have dispersed from around you” (S3, A159)

“Had you been rough and harsh-hearted”. This aya was describing our Prophet(SAAWS). With all that Allah(SWT) has bestowed upon our Prophet(SAAWS), we are told, that should he have been rough and harsh-hearted, people would have not listened to him. We need to translate the meaning of this ayah to our every-day life brothers and sisters.

This advice does not just relate to “Da’wah”, but it relates to everything that we do. Wisdom is such a vital quality in the person, and it is indeed a gift from Allah(SWT).

يُؤْتِي الْحِكْمَةَ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا

“He grants wisdom to whom He pleases. And whoever is granted wisdom, he has indeed been given an abundance of goodness” (S2, A269)

If I can give one piece of advice today, it will be that if one has an advice to give, make sure you give it with a gentle, soft heart. Some may wrongly think that being gentle and soft-hearted is a sign of weakness, and the Muslim must be firm and strong.

فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِي اللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ يُحِبُّهُمْ
وَيُحِبُّونَهُ أَذِلَّةٍ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَعِزَّةٍ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ

“Allah will bring a people whom He loves and they love Him. Humble with the believers and stern with those who disbelieve” (S5, A54)

Sub-hana-Allah. Isn't this a lovely ayah. Allah(SWT) describes a people in the Holy Quran, a people that love Allah and Allah loves them. How are they described? They are described as humble with the believers.

Brothers and sisters, a lot of goodness within our community disappears because we forget some critical rules of association. Humility, wisdom, gentleness and soft-heartedness. These are the rules of association amongst ourselves. This is the only way forwards for us. Let us not be the opposite. Let us be among the people who Allah(SWT) loves, and they indeed love Allah.

أقول قولي هذا وأستغفر الله لي و لكم

2nd Khutbah:

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

وَأْتَقُوا يَوْمًا تُرْجَعُونَ فِيهِ إِلَى اللَّهِ ثُمَّ تُوَفَّى كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ
وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٨١﴾

“And guard yourselves from the Day when you shall be brought back to Allah. Then every soul shall be paid what it has earned, and none shall be dealt with unjustly” (S2, A281)

Brothers and sisters, this is our centre, and in here is our community. We need to move forwards together. None of us is perfect, but Allah(SWT) likes us to aim towards perfection. For us to achieve that, we need to unite in all our endeavours. This centre is the future for our children and their children. This is where they get connected to their brothers and sisters.

This is where they form strong bonds of friendship under the umbrella of Islam. For some, if not many of us, this place may well be where we may actually save ourselves and our children from the fire whose fuel is people and stone. We should all be keen that we make this place successful. We can only be successful with the blessings of Allah. We need to ask Allah(SWT) to strengthen our brotherhood and our sisterhood. We must be fully aware that our hearts will only come together by the grace of Allah:

وَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ لَوْ أَنْفَقْتَ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا مَّا أَلَّفْتَ
بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ أَلَّفَ بَيْنَهُمْ إِنَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿١٣﴾

“And He has united their hearts. Had you spent all that is in this earth, you could not have united their hearts. But Allah has united them, for He is Exalted in Might and Wisdom” (S8, A63)

Let us pray to Allah(SWT) to bless us with unity among our hearts, for this is indeed a blessing that we can never achieve by ourselves. It is only by the grace of Allah that we gain this unity. Once we know that this is the case, let us be in no doubt that if we indeed are disunited, it will be because we did not gain the grace of Allah. This can only be the case as a result of our own actions.

فَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيَظْلِمَهُمْ وَلَكِنْ كَانُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿٩﴾

“Surely Allah would not wrong them, but it was they that wronged themselves” (S30, A9)

Brothers and sisters, as a Muslim community, we have a lot to do in this society. We need to be involved in this centre, and we need to be involved with our neighbours. Now that we have a planning application to rebuild this centre, part of our endeavours should be to rebuild our association amongst ourselves and with our local neighbours and the rest of our society.

We will be displaying two suggestion boxes, one for the ladies hall, and one for this one. We welcome all advice, comments, criticisms etc. We cannot move forwards without you. This centre is not just for you to come and do your prayers and leave. This centre is for you to come and build a relationship with Allah. We need each other, and we must ask Allah(SWT) to unite our hearts.

On a practical note, I need to mention a few things that may have annoyed some of you in the past. As for the parking, we have invested a great deal of money to make sure that we do not affect our neighbours adversely on our busy occasions. However, as for this hall, we can see that it is rapidly becoming unfit for purpose. The committee has struggled with a dilemma; should we spend your donated money on maintaining this place, or would that be a wasted effort if and when we get permission to rebuild.

In view of the fact that it is becoming unacceptable, we will have to spend some money on maintaining and probably improving some of the facilities even though we know that in the long term this may be a waste. We therefore ask for your comments and your suggestions, and probably, and most important, your involvement.