

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 **اللَّهِ** .

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

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ
الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا ﴿٢١﴾

“Certainly you have in the Messenger of Allah an excellent example for the one whose hope is with Allah and the final day and remembers Allah much” (S33, A21)



Dear Brothers and Sisters, ASA.

The khutbah for today is a little bit tricky. It is about our own understanding of Islam. How does the Muslim look at Islam. When one lives in a culture that marginalises “All Religion” we are constantly bombarded with concepts that claim that there should be NO relation between “religion” and “living”. Religion is between “you” and “your” god, and it should have nothing to do with anything else. Recently a Christian nurse was sacked for praying for one of her patients. As Muslims, we are not immune from these concepts, and they do have an impact on how we have come to view “our religion”.

The Muslim needs to answer this question for him or herself: Is Islam simply a religion or is Islam a way of life. This is best illustrated by the following aya from Surat Al-Ma’eda. In this ayah, understanding of the word “Deen” is extremely important.

الْيَوْمَ يَئِسَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ دِينِكُمْ فَلَا تَخْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنِ الْيَوْمَ
أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيْتُ لَكُمْ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا

“This day those who disbelieve are in despair of your religion; so fear them not but fear Me! This day I have perfected your religion for you and completed My favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as a religion” (S5, A3)

My initial appreciation of the term “Deen” in this ayah was that of “religion” as it is commonly understood. However, when we look closely at the context of the ayah, we start to realise that “Deen” in this context is not simply “religion” as it is usually translated, but it actually means “the way of living”. “Deen” literally means everything and anything to do with our living and our dying. Islam was never intended to be just “you” and “your god”.

We need to understand that **Islam** as a way of living is an integral part of **Islam** as a belief, and we need to understand that Islam as a belief is an integral part of Islam as a way of living. The two can never be separated. We cannot separate the two in “concept” and we cannot separate the two in “action”. Islam was never intended to be a belief system that is only practiced on Fridays and during the five prayer times. As important as acts of worship are in Islam, these acts of worship by themselves **are not** Islam. A Muslim cannot be a believer if he or she forfeits these acts of worship. However, and equally so, a Muslim who thinks that Islam is only about worship and not about living cannot be a believer.

We know that Muslims cannot decide for themselves whether they should or should not believe in Allah and the Prophet(SAAWS). They cannot decide for themselves whether

they should pray, fast or give Zakat. They cannot decide for themselves whether they should believe in creation, in angels and in the day of judgement. For all these issues, Muslims simply believe. This is exactly what we do when we say: “I testify that there is no god worthy of worship except Allah”.

However, when it comes to Islam as a way of living, somehow many Muslims are more than happy to live according to their wishes and their desires. Many Muslims have started to drift away from the concept that Islam is a complete way of living, and some Muslims have already given up on the idea.

We the Muslims have fallen into the same trap as most other religious groups, in that we have gradually and surely separated our living from our believing. Our **living** is defined by the way we go about our daily business, by the way we dress and eat, by the way we conduct ourselves in our routine daily affairs, by the way we set up our homes, by the way we look at money and finance, by the way we plan for the future and so on. On the face of it, none of these acts have anything to do with whether we believe in God or not. In many societies, this separation has already taken place, and there is no further role for “God” in their “routine living”. The supreme power of the human mind has been able to convince us all that this human mind can rationalise for everything and “God” is no longer necessary. It seems that we the Muslims are starting to accept this concept and we, along with all others, are drifting in the same direction: Religion is for God and life is for living.

Clear examples of this is the way we have come to reject the Islamic code of dress, the Islamic code of finance, the Islamic code of behaviour, etc. We need to ask ourselves why is this happening, why are we drifting from Islam as a way of living?

One of the most likely causes of this drift is our significant ignorance of the beauty of Islam as a way of living. We are becoming increasingly impressed and convinced that “religion is for god” and “life is for living”. We are now in the 21st century, and there is no place for “God” in this world anymore. The mysteries of life and the universe are now clear for everyone.

This is not surprising when one looks as to how Christianity in the West has become disengaged from routine living. This trend is having an impact on the Muslims, and most of us, including myself have not stopped to question myself if the way I am living is Islamicly acceptable. How can I be wrong when everyone else is doing the same?

That is why we need to re-evaluate our understanding of Islam as a complete way of living. This is why Allah(SWT) reassures us to be confident in the way Allah has perfected this way of living for us:

الْيَوْمَ يَيْسَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ دِينِكُمْ فَلَا تَخْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنَ الْيَوْمَ
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“This day those who disbelieve are in despair of your ‘Deen’; so fear them not but fear Me! This day have I perfected your ‘Deen’ for you and completed My favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as “the way of living” (S5, A3)

It is very revealing to note that these lines were revealed in Surat Al-Ma’eda. When Allah(SWT) revealed this message for us, it was not revealed in the context of believing in the One God, believing in the unknown or in the Day of Judgement. The first few ayahs in Surat Al-Ma’eda were about mundane human affairs.

The first ayah states:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَوْفُوا بِالْعُقُودِ

“O you who believe: Fulfil your contracts” (S5, A1)

The second ayah states:

وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ

“Help each other to enjoin what is righteous and pious, and do not help each other in sin and transgression” (S5, A2)

The third ayah opens by the prohibition of certain types of food:

حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةُ وَالدَّمُ وَلَحْمُ الْخِنزِيرِ

“Forbidden unto you (for food) are the dead animal, blood and the meat of the pig” (S5, A3)

The forth ayah states:

يَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا أُحِلَّ لَهُمْ قُلْ أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ الطَّيِّبَاتُ

“They ask you what is made lawful for them. Say: (all) good things are made lawful for you” (S5, A4)

This carries on until ayah seven. Ayah seven is an extremely critical ayah for us when we come to take on Islam as the complete way for living for us. Brothers and sisters, this is an extremely difficult ayah. Realising this ayah in our lives will not be easy. I ask Allah(SWT) the guidance to make us understand and apply what this ayah entails.

وَأذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَمِيثَاقَهُ الّذِي وَآثَقَكُمْ بِهِ إِذْ
قُلْتُمْ سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا وَأَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ ﴿٧﴾

“And remember Allah's favour upon you and His covenant by which He bound you when you said: We hear and we obey; And keep your duty to Allah. For Allah Knows what is within your hearts” (S5, A7)

In ayah seven, Allah(SWT) reminds the believers that they have taken an oath to **“hear and obey”**.

Do we remember where this oath came to be? Allah tells us, the believers, we have taken an oath to hear and to obey. We need to go back to the last ayahs of Surat Al-Baqara:

ءَامَنَ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ ۗ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ كُلٌّ ءَامَنَ بِاللَّهِ
وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ ۗ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّن رُّسُلِهِ ۗ وَقَالُوا سَمِعْنَا
وَأَطَعْنَا ۗ غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿٢٨٥﴾

“The messenger and the believers do believe in that which has been revealed unto him

from his Lord. Each one believes in Allah, His angels, His scriptures and His messengers - We make no distinction between any of His messengers - and they (the believers, “us”) say: We hear, and we obey. (Grant us) Your forgiveness, our Lord. Unto You is the destiny” (S2, A285)

“We hear and we obey”. In this ayah, “we hear and we obey” is all to do with belief. It is all to do with the unknown. It is all to do with God. The believers are taking an oath with Allah to believe. This oath had nothing to do with the way of living.

However, as we proceed with Surat Al-Ma’eda, we face our biggest challenge; we are reminded that we, the believers have taken the oath of **“we hear and we obey”**. The Quran puts it so well:

إِذْ قُلْتُمْ سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا

“That you have said, we hear and we obey” (S5, A7)

My understanding of this is clear.

1. The first thing the believers were asked to do is to gain a firm understanding of the fact that they have to believe in Allah(SWT).
2. Then they take an oath of obedience based on that belief.
3. Then Allah(SWT) perfects the way of living for the believers as demonstrated through the Quran and through the life of the Prophet(SAAWS).
4. Then we are asked to obey.

Can we the believers choose not to?

وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَلَا لِمُؤْمِنَةٍ إِذَا قَضَى اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَمْرًا أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُمُ
الْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا مُّبِينًا ﴿٣٦﴾

“And it is not permitted to the believing man or believing woman, when Allah and His messenger have made a decree, that they should choose according to their wishes; and

whoso is disobedient to Allah and His messenger, he has certainly strayed in manifest error” (S33, A36)

There we have it. Islam is for believing, and Islam is for living. NO doubt that in this day and age, fourteen hundred years later, and in a society such as the one we live in, to declare; we hear and we obey is not at all easy. Women are having great difficulty coping with the hijab. Many of us are having great difficulty keeping to money that has no “riba” in it. We have daily challenges in our lives and we know that we are all failing.

This can be very distressing. We know that as Muslims, we definitely are hearing, but we are having great difficulty obeying. Do not despair brothers and sisters. In Allah’s greatest mercy, once we have taken our oath with Allah in ayah 285: we hear and we obey, Allah immediately reminds us at the end of Surat Al-Baqara in ayah 286:

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ

“Allah will not task a soul beyond its scope. For it (is only) that which it has earned, and against it (only) that which it has deserved” (S2, A286)

Allah(SWT) knows that we will have great difficulties, and Allah(SWT) in his mercy even teaches us how to plead our case:

رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَا إِنْ نَسِينَا أَوْ أَخْطَأْنَا

“Our Lord! Do not take us to task should we forget or should we err” (S2, A286)

رَبَّنَا وَلَا تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْنَا إِصْرًا كَمَا حَمَلْتَهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِنَا

“Our Lord! Lay not on us such a burden as you have laid on those before us” (S2, A286)

رَبَّنَا وَلَا تُحَمِّلْنَا مَا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِ

“Our Lord! Do not burden us with what we have not the strength to bear” (S2, A286)

وَأَعْفُ عَنَّا وَارْحَمْنَا

“And pardon us, absolve us and have mercy on us”(S2, A286)

أقول قولي هذا وأستغفر الله لي ولكم

2nd Khutbah:

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

الْيَوْمَ يَيْسَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ دِينِكُمْ فَلَا تَخْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنِ الْيَوْمَ
أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيْتُ لَكُمْ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا

“This day those who disbelieve are in despair of your ‘way of living’; so fear them not but fear Me! This day have I perfected your ‘way of living’ for you and completed My favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as “the complete way of living” (S5, A3)

, and this is where we the Muslims need to be very clear

This statement, brothers and sisters is an incredibly important one. We need to learn this ayah by heart. It is ayah 3 from Surat Al-Ma'eda. We know as Muslims that we have taken a firm oath when we declare:

I testify that there no God worthy of worship except Allah, and I testify the Muhammad(SAAWS) is his servant and messenger. We know that there is no doubt in that. Our problem does not lie in this belief; our problem has always been the proper application of this statement of belief. In simple terms, it is not easy. We live in a very complex and changing world.

When-ever one is considering an issue about Islam, those who do not like or agree with Islam will endeavor to put Islam into their own context and try to justify their idea. Few examples will include most of what is relevant to women in Islam. Some examples will include the punitive aspect of Islamic Shari'a. When one hears the arguments presented, it does seem appealing and convincing.

وَلَنْ تَرْضَىٰ عَنْكَ الْيَهُودُ وَلَا النَّصَارَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَتَّبِعَ مِلَّتَهُمْ ۗ قُلْ إِنْ هَدَىٰ
اللَّهُ هُوَ الْهُدَىٰ ۗ وَلَئِنِ اتَّبَعْتَ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ بَعْدَ الَّذِي جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ ۗ مَا لَكَ مِنَ
اللَّهِ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ ﴿١٢٠﴾

وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَمُهَيِّمًا
عَلَيْهِ ۗ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ ۗ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ عَمَّا جَاءَكَ مِنَ
الْحَقِّ ۗ

وَأَنِ احْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ وَاحْذَرْهُمْ أَنْ
يَفْتِنُوكَ عَنْ بَعْضِ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ

وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا
بِعَاثِنَا وَالَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ وَهُمْ بِرَبِّهِمْ يَعْدِلُونَ ﴿١٥٠﴾

Anaam (150)

"The First Pledge of Aqaba".

We recall that the Prophet^(SAAWS) asked them to pledge:

- Do not associate with Allah,
- do not steal,
- do not commit adultery,
- do not kill your children,
- do not utter slander, intentionally forging falsehood and
- do not disobey me in any just matter.

He who carries it out (this pledge), Allah will reward him; and he who neglects any of it and is punished for his sin in this world, it may prove a redemption for him in the Hereafter; and if the sin remains hidden from the eyes of the people and no grief (punishment) comes to him in this world, then his affair is with Allah. He may forgive him and He may not. Ubada Bin As-Samet narrated that, and this is narrated in Al-Bukhari.

The pledge starts with the absolute message of believing in the One Allah. It then defines particular changes in one's conduct for the benefit of oneself and the benefit of society. It then gives the warning of the judgment in the hereafter and makes it clear to us that on the day of judgment our affairs and the ruling regarding reward and punishment lies solely in the hands of Allah. In essence, these pledges were about bettering the society in the context of a belief in Allah and the Day of Judgment.

We recall that the Prophet^(SAAWS) sent Mus'ab Bin Umair as the first ambassador in Islam to teach the new converts and to help with the da'wah. We heard examples of how the da'wah was being conducted in Madinah, and we should all know that Islam did not enter Madinah by force or by the sword, but it did so by the conduct and the manners of these early Muslims who knew that the message of Islam was far greater and more important than any of their personal or tribal conflicts. These early Muslims understood that the message of Islam is to deliver ***Unity and prosperity to all.***

From Abu Huraira (RAA), he said he heard the Prophet(SAAWS) say: When prayers have been raised (Iqama), do not approach it while you are hurrying, but approach it walking and with a sense of calm. Pray of what you catch, and complete what you have missed. The hadith in this format has been agreed by the Imams, but Muslim added in his narration: “for if one of you is heading towards a Salat, then he is in Salat”.

This is an important point for all to grasp.

Two recent questions:

What is the role of Islam and Muslims in the west? Why are men allowed to marry up to four wives at one time while the woman is only allowed to marry the once.

I was discussing these issues with a Sheikh, and he gave an interesting response which I would like to share with you.

The response is important because it re-enforced in me a basic principle which I have tended to ignore when considering such issues.