

SPECIAL SERMON OF PRISONS DEPARTMENT MALAYSIA

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ. وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ
أَعْمَالِنَا. مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ وَمَنْ يُضِلِّ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ.

أَشْهَدُ 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،

فِيَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَ أُوصِيكُمْ وَآيَايَ بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ، فَقَدْ فَازَ الْمُتَّقُونَ.

Let us increase our righteousness to Allah the Almighty by doing all that He prescribes and avoiding all that He prohibits. May we be blessed by Him in this world and the hereafter.

Dear brothers and sisters

This special sermon is held in conjunction with the Prisons Department of Malaysia's celebration which takes place annually in March. This year's theme is Leading Corrective Services (Rehabilitation). This sermon is for us to get to know better the Prisons Department which is under the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Prison is defined as a place or building where criminals are locked up as punishments for the various crimes they have committed. The establishment of prisons is not a new thing. The Al-Quran explains about this in chapter 12 (surah Yusuf) verse 33, where prophet Yusuf (pbuh) was imprisoned by the ruler of that time. Allah the Almighty says:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

قَالَ رَبِّ السِّجْنُ أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِمَّا يَدْعُونَنِي إِلَيْهِ وَإِلَّا تَصْرِفْ عَنِّي كَيْدَهُنَّ أَصْبُ إِلَيْهِنَّ وَأَكُن مِّنَ الْجَاهِلِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾

Which means: *Yusuf said, "My Lord, prison is more to my liking than that which they invite me. And if You do not avert from me their plan, I might incline toward them and [thus] be of the ignorant."*

Keep in mind that Prophet Yusuf (pbuh) was put in jail not because he made a mistake or committed a crime, but because he refused to bend to the wishes of the Egyptian government at the time.

Dear brothers and sisters

Over the past 227 years, the prisons in our country has gone through ups and downs of history that goes on behind the high walls. Millions of experiences have been witnessed behind the stone walls that are not easily unraveled with

words. At its inception, the roles and functions of prison institutions were to punish their inhabitants so that the inmates will not commit crimes anymore.

Past history has recorded that prisons were places where abuse, torture and death took place. Our country is no exception when during the colonial period, prison institutions were the places to keep people who resisted colonialism and some of them even died during their detention. During the colonial time, prisons were used as a place for execution of the dissidents and traitors of the colonials.

The concept of detention and abuse were replaced with the concept of rehabilitation. The rehabilitation concept practised today is based on two approaches which are in prison and outside the prison. Rehabilitation in prison is based on the human development plan with emphasis on the construction of discipline, strengthening the personality, skills and relationships in the community, while rehabilitation outside the prison is carried out through the parole system where inmates serving sentences outside prison is placed under the supervision of the prison.

Dear brothers and sisters

The Prisons Department would like to express their sincere appreciation for the contributions of dedicated service given by all levels of society including religious agencies that provide rehabilitation to the prison employees and inmates.

It is undeniable that the Prisons Department is a critically essential organization for the safety of any country especially to combat global modern age crimes. Currently, the Prisons Department are housing various categories of inmates and detainees. Thus, it would require all sorts of rehabilitative approaches to

handle these inmates and detainees. Among those detained are radical prisoners who are imprisoned under the Internal Security Act (Special Measures) i.e. SOSMA and Terrorism Prevention Act (POTA) and Crime Prevention Act POCA.

The Ministry of Home Affairs (KDN) in general and specifically the Prisons Department are aware that the public has high expectations on the Prisons Department to rehabilitate, build character and develop healthy ideology to the inmates, prisoners and detainees. Thus, in able to succeed in its mission, all employees of the Prisons Department and all levels of society are encouraged to cooperate with each other to ensure that the inmates, prisoners and detainees realise their mistakes and repent. The Prophet (pbuh) said in a hadith narrated by Ibnu Majah:

التَّائِبُ مِنَ الذَّنْبِ كَمَنْ لَا ذَنْبَ لَهُ

Which means: *The one who repents from his sin is as if he had never sinned at all.*

To end the sermon today, lets us follow these guidelines:

Firstly: Prepare ourselves, our family members and the entire communities to be righteous by increasing good deeds, performing all that Allah the Almighty prescribes and leaving all that He prohibits in order to be safe this life and in the hereafter.

Secondly: Ensure that we, our families and whole communities always comply with the laws that have been designated by the government as Allah the Almighty says in chapter 4 (Surah An-Nisa) verse 59

يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِيَ الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ

Which means: *O you who have believed, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you.*

Thirdly: Do not look down on people who have been sentenced by the law. Remember that we are respected in society today because Allah the almighty protects us from shame. So, give these people a chance and help them to change.

Allah the Almighty says in chapter 5 (surah al-ma'idah) verse 2:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالنَّقْوَىٰ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ﴿٢﴾

Which means: *And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression.*

بَارَكَ اللَّهُ لِي وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقُرْآنِ الْعَظِيمِ، وَنَفَعَنِي وَإِيَّاكُمْ بِمَا فِيهِ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ

وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ، وَتَقَبَّلَ مِنِّي وَمِنْكُمْ تِلَاوَتَهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ. أَقُولُ

قَوْلِي هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ الْعَظِيمَ لِي وَلَكُمْ، وَلِسَائِرِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ،

وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ، فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ.