

THE TRUE MEANING OF TAQWA (Righteousness)

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

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ
وَرَسُولُهُ. اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ وَبَارِكْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ
أَجْمَعِينَ.

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

يَتَأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِنْ تَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ فُرْقَانًا وَيُكَفِّرْ عَنْكُمْ
سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٢٩﴾
أَمَّا بَعْدُ،

فِيَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، إِتَّقُوا اللَّهَ أَوْصِيَكُمْ وَإِيَّايَ بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ، فَقَدْ فَازَ الْمُتَّقُونَ.

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

Dear brothers and sisters,

Every week we have been reminded to be righteous to Allah the Almighty. Have we put enough effort into becoming righteous? *Taqwa* literally means to protect ourselves so as to be safe in his world and the hereafter. It can also be translated as executing all the commands of Allah by avoiding all His prohibitions, and to guard ourselves from hellfire or the wrath of Allah the Almighty.

Ibn Abbas Radhiallahu anhu defines *taqwa* as "fear of shirk and obedience to Allah the Almighty." Imam al-Qurthubi concurred with Abu Yazid al-Bustami by saying that the righteous are those who when they speak, they speak because of Allah; and when they do good deeds, they do it for Allah.

Allah the Almighty explains *taqwa* in chapter 2 (surah al-Baqarah) verse 3-5:

الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ ﴿٣﴾ وَالَّذِينَ
يُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ وَبِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٤﴾
أُولَئِكَ عَلَىٰ هُدًى مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٥﴾

Which means: *Who believe in the unseen, establish prayer, and spend out of what We have provided for them. And who believe in what has been revealed to you, [O Muhammad], and what was revealed before you, and of the Hereafter they are certain [in faith]. Those are upon [right] guidance from their Lord, and it is those who are the successful.*

Dear brothers and sisters

Allah the Almighty has promised great rewards for those who are righteous. Many Qur'anic verses explain this, amongst others, Allah the Almighty mentioned in chapter 7 (surah al-A'raaf) verse 96:

وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ الْقُرَىٰ ءَامَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا لَفَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِم بَرَكَاتٍ مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ
وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَٰكِن كَذَّبُوا فَأَخَذْنَاهُم بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾

Which means: *And if only the people of the cities had believed and feared Allah, We would have opened upon them blessings from the heaven and the earth; but they denied [the messengers], so We seized them for what they were earning."*

Thus in order to protect our country from catastrophes such as floods, landslides, disease outbreaks, price hikes, crimes and etc., the solution is to become a righteous nation to Allah the Almighty.

Allah the Almighty says in chapter 65(surah al-Talak) verse 2-3:

وَمَنْ يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ تَجْعَلْ لَهُ مَخْرَجًا ﴿٢﴾ وَيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ وَمَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ
عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ ﴿٣﴾ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بَلِغُ أَمْرِهِ ۗ قَدْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدْرًا ﴿٤﴾

Which means: *And whoever fears Allah - He will make for him a way out. And will provide for him from where he does not expect. And whoever relies upon Allah - then He is sufficient for him. Indeed, Allah will accomplish His purpose. Allah has already set for everything a [decreed] extent.*

This verse is frequently hung in business premises to encourage sales but be reminded that it will be of no benefit if we do not practise it. In this verse, Allah the Almighty ordered us to do business in an honest way such as not cheating or selling damaged goods. Indeed, Allah will extend and give us sustenance from unexpected sources.

Dear brothers and sisters

To be a devout Muslim, we must work sincerely and do the following; Firstly, continue to attend functions that give knowledge and preserve our adab (etiquette) such as sitting close to the teacher and demonstrating earnestness to learn. Secondly, be steadfast in performing religious deeds such as congregational prayers and other deeds. Thirdly, avoid committing sins such as not praying, being involved in drugs, gambling, etc. Fourth, cleanse our souls by performing tawbah (*repentance*) prayers and *istighfar* (*Astaghfirullah*-seeking forgiveness from Allah) to Allah the Almighty.

Allah the Almighty says in chapter 3 (Ali Imran) verse 102:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ ۖ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٢٧﴾

Which means: *O you who have believed, fear Allah as He should be feared and do not die except as Muslims [in submission to Him].*

بَارَكَ اللَّهُ لِيْ وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقُرْءَانِ الْعَظِيمِ، وَنَفَعَنِي وَإِيَّاكُمْ بِمَا فِيهِ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ
وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ، وَتَقَبَّلَ مِنِّيْ وَمِنْكُمْ تِلَاوَتَهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ، أَقُولُ قَوْلِيْ
هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ الْعَظِيمَ لِيْ وَلَكُمْ، وَلِسَائِرِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ، وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ
وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ، فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ فَيَا فَوْزَ الْمُسْتَغْفِرِينَ وَيَا نَجَاةَ التَّائِبِينَ.