

## THE IMPORTANCE OF GUARDING OUR FAITH (AQEEDAH)

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 وَبَارِكْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ،

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

Let us all increase our obedience towards Allah the Almighty by doing everything that He prescribes and avoiding all that He prohibits. Hopefully, we will be blessed by Allah the Almighty in this world and in the hereafter.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

One of the reasons why Allah the Almighty sent messengers to human beings was to ensure the correct faith, based on the belief that there is only one God (Allah) that is worthy of worship. From the time of Prophet Adam, mankind was on the right path until the first shirk in history happened during the time of the Prophet Noah, when Satan succeeded in persuading people to create idols that were supposed to have the power to give benefit or harm to people.

Linguistically *Aqeedah* (faith)reed means a strong bond or knot. The Muslim scholars asserted that faith means a firm belief, without doubt, that God is One. Those who recite the declaration of faith (*syahadah*), will strive to maintain the true faith. They are *Mukmins*, those

who believe, and Muslims, the ones who surrender themselves absolutely to everything that is commanded by Allah the Almighty. Without any doubt, they practice Islam in all aspects of life including the law, marriage, commercial transactions, politics, administration, etc. Allah the Almighty says in the Qur'an, Chapter 33 (Surah al-Ahzab), verse (ayat) 36:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ  
وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَلَا مُؤْمِنَةٍ إِذَا قَضَى اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَمْرًا أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ  
وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا مُبِينًا ﴿٣٦﴾

Which means: *It is not fitting for a Believer, man or woman, when a matter has been decided by Allah and His Messenger to have any option about their decision: if any one disobeys Allah and His Messenger, he is indeed on a clearly wrong Path.*

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Before Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was sent to us, mankind who had not been receiving revelation for many years, had ruined the true faith. Then the Prophet (pbuh) reinstated the truth.

Today, the faith of some Muslims has been eroded. In the name of human rights, freedom of speech, equality and various academic terms such as liberalism, pluralism and secularism, the threat on faith is increasingly alarming.

In the past, those who were skeptical of Islam were limited to closed circles but now they have become more open in promoting their groups. Some are even proud to be known as Malay atheists. While others are proud to be Muslims but refuse to follow the teachings of Allah the Almighty by interpreting the Qur'an according to their desire. These sceptics refuse the view of the reknowned scholars by not following the established jurisprudence, by rejecting polygamy, and by believing that wives have the right to divorce. In addition, they support LGBT activities.

The threat to the faith during the Prophet's (pbuh) time involved beliefs such as idolatry and the practice of magic, but the current threats to the faith are more subtle such as putting individual freedom over religious demands by holding liquor parties, allowing sex between the same gender and cohabitating without lawful marriage. This is a movement that rejects the Qur'an and the Prophet's (pbuh) tradition (*sunnah*).

This movement is supported by certain local and international groups. The Prophet (pbuh) said in a *Hadith* which was narrated by Abu Sa'id al-Khudri:

لَتَتَّبِعَنَّ سَنَنَ مَنْ قَبْلَكُمْ شِبْرًا بِشِبْرٍ، وَذِرَاعًا بِذِرَاعٍ، حَتَّىٰ لَوْ سَلَكَوا جُحْرَ ضَبٍّ  
لَسَلَكَتُمُوهُ»، قُلْنَا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ: الْيَهُودُ، وَالنَّصَارَى قَالَ: «فَمَنْ»

Which means: “You will certainly follow the ways of those who came before you hand span by hand span, cubit by cubit, to the extent that if they entered the hole of a lizard, you will enter it too.” The companions asked: “O Messenger of Allah, (do you mean) the Jews and the Christians?” The Prophet replied: “Who else?”

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Indeed, Allah is Forgiving over the sins of His servant, but Allah will never forgive the sin of shirk. Doubting some of the Quranic verses and Prophetic *Hadith* may lead to shirk. This is a big responsibility for Muslims to confront the current threats. Parents must instill strong monotheistic belief in God to their children. Parents need to teach their children to know their Creator by introducing to them Allah's traits and characteristics. Teachers must also relate faith to the subjects taught in schools. Intellectuals need to understand that no matter how educated we are in this world, we are still subject to Allah the Almighty's rules and commands. We must not take actions that open the doors to misunderstandings and doubts about the true faith just for the sake of following our own worldly desires.

Allah the Almighty says in the Qur'an in Chapter 3 (Surah Ali Imran), verse (*ayat*) 78:

وَإِنَّ مِنْهُمْ لَفَرِيقًا يَلُودُونَ أَلْسِنَتَهُم بِالْكِتَابِ لِتَحْسَبُوهُ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَمَا هُوَ مِنْ

الْكِتَابِ وَيَقُولُونَ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ وَمَا هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ وَيَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكُذِبَ

وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾

Which means: *There is among them a section who distort the Book with their tongues: (As they read) you would think it is a part of the Book, but it is not part of the Book; and they say, "That is from Allah," but it is not from Allah: It is they who tell a lie against Allah, and (well) they know it!*

بَارَكَ اللَّهُ لِيْ وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقُرْآنِ الْعَظِيْمِ، وَنَفَعَنِي وَإِيَّاكُمْ بِمَا فِيهِ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ وَالذِّكْرِ

الْحَكِيْمِ، وَتَقَبَّلَ مِنِّيْ وَمِنْكُمْ تِلَاوَتَهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيْمُ، أَقُولُ قَوْلِيْ هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ

الْعَظِيْمَ لِيْ وَلَكُمْ، وَلِسَائِرِ الْمُسْلِمِيْنَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ، وَالْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ، فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ فَيَا فَوْزَ

الْمُسْتَغْفِرِيْنَ وَيَا نَجَاةَ التَّائِبِيْنَ.