

BEING THANKFUL FOR ALLAH'S SUSTENANCE AND AVOIDING CORRUPTION

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 عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، يَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَوْصِيكُمْ 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,

It is compulsory for all followers of islam to seek lawful and good sustenance in terms of its source and the way it is being obtained. We are also commanded to give thanks for all the blessings and favors granted by Allah the Almighty as stated by Him in chapter 16 (surah al-Nahl) verse 114:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ
فَكُلُوا مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ حَلَالًا طَيِّبًا وَاشْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ
إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ

Which means: *Then eat of what Allah has provided for you [which is] lawful and good. And be grateful for the favor of Allah , if it is [indeed] Him that you worship.*

Among the major issues discussed in our country today is corruption. Corruption is not new in our country and every year the government through the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) has been reporting worrying news about corruption. Malaysian citizens from all walks of life were found to be involved in corruption, including professional and advocacy groups, politicians and the public. What is more distressing is that many of those who are involved in corruption are the Muslims.

Corrupt practices include requesting and offering favors, accepting bribes, false claims, abuse of office for personal, family and certain group gains. It also includes what is referred to by the public as accepting cash or gifts in exchange for favors such as changing car tyres for free, receiving paid for vacations, payment of bills, sexual favors, free home renovations, etc.

Dear brothers and sisters,

There exists voracious and greedy humans whose pursuit for wealth make them willing to commit the crime of corruption as stated Allah the Almighty in chapter2 (Surah al-Baqarah) verse 188:

وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتُدْلُوا بِهَا إِلَى الْحُكَّامِ لِتَأْكُلُوا فَرِيقًا مِّنْ أَمْوَالِ النَّاسِ
بِالْإِثْمِ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

Which means: *And do not consume one another's wealth unjustly or send it [in bribery] to the rulers in order that [they might aid] you [to] consume a portion of the wealth of the people in sin, while you know [it is unlawful]*

Rampant corruption will cause injustice, indiscipline, neglect of duties and responsibilities, malpractice, negligence, breach of trust, forgery, betrayal and the like. Among the serious crime of corruption is the practice of delaying decision-making in the implementation of a project. For example each party involved in the approval of the implementation of planned projects, will ask for favors be it given to a specific individual or certain groups. This phenomenon is damaging the country's administrative system leading the country to become chaotic and eventually the glory of the country will be destroyed.

Allah the Almighty's retribution toward those who give and receive corruption is hellfire. The Prophet (pbuh) said in a hadith narrated by al-Tabrani:

الرَّاشِي وَالْمُرْتَشِي فِي النَّارِ

Which means: *Hellfire is the place for one who offers a bribe and the one who takes it.*

Taking bribe is likened to eating prohibited food. Every part of the body that develops or grows from prohibited sustenance will be placed in hell in the hereafter. The Prophet (pbuh) said in a hadith narrated by Imam Ahmad:

لَا يَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ مَنْ نَبَتَ لَحْمُهُ مِنْ سُحْتِ النَّارِ أَوْلَى بِهِ

Which means: *The flesh and body that is raised on unlawful sustenance shall not enter Paradise. Hell is more deserving to the flesh that grows on one's body out of unlawful sustenance.* [Ahmad].

Dear brothers and sisters,

As Muslims we should have a firm stand about corruption. It is an unacceptable practise, whatever the reason may be such as ignorance about law and religion, tradition of receiving gifts, etc. Rising costs of living, debts and low incomes does not condone one to practice bribery. Islam does not tolerate nor compromise in allowing corrupt practices because it is strictly prohibited by Allah the Almighty. It also involves the morality of the country in terms of race and religion.

The most saddening thing is that, in an effort to curb corruption, there are still some Muslims who take a stand to protect the corrupt practices that occur for

several reasons. The reasons include compassion, not wanting to burden themselves, afraid of threats, not wanting to meddle in other peoples' affairs and self-centered attitude which lead to uncontrolled corruption. Lack of responsibility, honesty and not cooperating with enforcement parties particularly the MACC makes it difficult to bring the perpetrators of corruption to justice.

To end the sermon today, lets us fight against corrupt practices and lead our lives according to the right path. Let us be among those who enjoin others to do good so as to avoid corruption and the need to ask for favors, and protect ourselves from wrongdoings as commanded by Allah the Almighty in chapter 3 (Surah Ali Imran) verse 104:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ
وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ
الْمُفْلِحُونَ

Which means: *And let there be [arising] from you a nation inviting to [all that is] good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, and those will be the successful.*

بَارِكْ اللهُ لِيْ وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقُرْآنِ الْعَظِيْمِ، وَتَفَعَّلِيْ وَإِيَّاكُمْ بِمَا فِيهِ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيْمِ، وَتَقَبَّلَ مِنِّيْ
وَمِنْكُمْ تِلَاوَتَهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ. أَقُولُ قَوْلِيْ هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللهُ الْعَظِيْمَ لِيْ وَلَكُمْ، وَلِسَائِرِ الْمُسْلِمِيْنَ
وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ، وَالْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ، فَاسْتَغْفِرُوْهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَفُوْرُ الرَّحِيْمُ.