

MAKING FULL USE OF THE SCHOOL HOLIDAY

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.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ،

فَيَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ أَوْصِيكُمْ وَأَيَّايَ 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 in this world and in the hereafter.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Children are the most valuable gifts from Allah the Almighty. The lyrics of a Malay *nashid* song can be loosely translated as ‘the children are the apple of the eyes, the comfort of the heart, the greatest pleasure from Allah’. The song beautifully portrays the big responsibility that lies on the shoulders of all parents to educate their children. A beautiful story of a pious father named Luqman al-Hakim who was very determined in bringing up his children in a way that was pleasing to Allah the Almighty is preserved in the Qur'an in Chapter 31 (Surah Luqman), verse (*ayat*) 13:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

وَإِذْ قَالَ لُقْمَنُ لِابْنِهِ، وَهُوَ يَعِظُهُ، يَا بُنَيَّ لَا تُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٣﴾

Which means: *Behold, Luqman said to his son by way of instruction: "O my son! join not in worship (others) with Allah: for false worship is indeed the highest wrong-doing."*

Therefore, every parent should be determined to educate their children so that they will become righteous servants of Allah the Almighty who will be beneficial to Islam and the country.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was very concerned about children's education from when they were very young. He always taught them with noble character and brought them closer to Allah the Almighty. The Prophet (pbuh) taught his young step son Umar bin Abu Salamah to eat politely as mentioned in a *Hadith* which was narrated by Imam al-Bukhari:

يَا غُلَامُ سَمِّ اللَّهَ وَكُلْ بِيَمِينِكَ وَكُلْ مِمَّا يَلِيكَ

Which means: *"Mention Allah's Name (i.e., say Bismillah before starting eating), eat with your right hand, and eat from what is near you."*

The sincerity of the Prophet (pbuh) can also be seen through his reminder to Ibn Abbas who was still small at that time in the following *Hadith* which was narrated by *Imam* al-Tirmizi:

يَا غُلَامُ إِنِّي أُعَلِّمُكَ كَلِمَاتٍ إِحْفَظِ اللَّهَ يَحْفَظَكَ

Which means: *"O my child! I will teach you some matters. Be watchful of your relationship with Allah, He will safeguard you. "*

This *Hadith* clarifies that children should be raised with a strong faith. Children must be taught from an early age not to associate partners with Allah the Almighty. They also need to be educated so they will not be influenced by negative elements such as the liberal belief that has recently questioned the sacrifice of animals as allegedly causing harm to animals and spoiling the environment.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

School holidays have arrived. Wise parents need to make plans so that the holidays will be beneficial for children's education. Encourage the children to help with household chores so that they will be prepared with knowledge of how to manage their own home when they have their own family. Encourage the children to help with garden work and to wash the family's vehicles in order to foster a sense of responsibility towards themselves and their family. They must also improve their Quranic reading skills, personal religious obligations, and other beneficial skills.

Parents need to constantly remind their children to perform their five daily prayers and to bring them to the mosque. How lucky for those parents whose children grow up in an atmosphere and environment of worshipping Allah the Almighty. May these children be among those who will be under the shade of Allah's throne on the Day of Resurrection as mentioned in the Prophet's *Hadith* which was narrated by Imam al-Bukhari:

وَشَابَّ نَشَأً فِي عِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ

Which means: *A young man who grew up in the worship of his Lord.*

At the same time, this long holiday season can be used by parents to strengthen their relationship and love with their children. This is also a great opportunity for parents to take their children on a vacation. Parents must express love and affection towards their children. One day, a companion was amazed when he saw the Prophet (pbuh) kissed his grandson because he (the

companion) never kissed his children. Then the Prophet (pbuh) said in a *Hadith* which was narrated by Imam Muslim:

إِنَّهُ مَنْ لَا يُرْحَمُ لَا يُرْحَمُ

Which means: *Indeed a person who does not love others will not be loved.*

Dear Brother and Sisters,

Let us all work hard to teach Islam to our children in a loving way. Parents must not let children wander around at night which might lead them to delinquency like the youths who were recently involved in arson of the *Maahad tahfiz*. We must be aware that many negative influences are available to our children through mass media such as television and the internet. If we do not guide them properly, they will be influenced by the negative elements around them. As Muslims we are taught to seek protection from Allah the Almighty through prayers and supplications and one of the best supplications is the one that was recited by Prophet Ibrahim which is mentioned in the Quran in Chapter 14 (Surah Ibrahim), verse (*ayat*) 40:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

رَبِّ اجْعَلْنِي مُقِيمَ الصَّلَاةِ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي رَبَّنَا وَتَقَبَّلْ دُعَاءِ ﴿٤٠﴾

Which means: *O my Lord! Make me one who establishes regular Prayer, and also (raise such) among my offspring O our Lord! And accept Thou my Prayer.*

بَارَكَ اللهُ لِيْ وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقُرْءَانِ الْعَظِيْمِ، وَنَفَعَنِيْ وَإِيَّاكُمْ بِمَا فِيْهِ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ
وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيْمِ، وَتَقَبَّلَ مِنِّيْ وَمِنْكُمْ تِلَاوَتَهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيْعُ الْعَلِيْمُ، أَقُولُ قَوْلِيْ
هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللهَ الْعَظِيْمَ لِيْ وَلَكُمْ، وَلِسَائِرِ الْمُسْلِمِيْنَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ، وَالْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ
وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ، فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ فَيَا فَوْزَ الْمُسْتَغْفِرِيْنَ وَيَا نَجَاةَ التَّائِبِيْنَ.