

CHASING DREAMS AND HOPES

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،

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

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

Allah the Almighty says in chapter 24 (surah al-Nur) verse 44,

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

يُقَلِّبُ اللَّهُ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَعِبْرَةً لِّأُولِي الْأَبْصَارِ ﴿٤٤﴾

Which means: *Allah alternates the night and the day. Indeed in that is a lesson for those who have vision.*

Dear brothers and sisters,

Let us be grateful to Allah the Almighty for being given the opportunity by Him to welcome 2019 having good health, abundant sustenance, safe environment and loving families. The advent of a new year brings new changes and hopes. Time is of essence in Islam because it signifies that we are getting older and closer to Allah the Almighty. Age is one of the things that will be asked by the Almighty. Allah says in chapter 35 (surah Fathir) verse 37:

أَوَلَمْ نُعَمِّرْكُم مَّا يَتَذَكَّرُ فِيهِ مَن تَذَكَّرَ وَجَاءَكُمُ النَّذِيرُ

Which means: *But did We not grant you life enough for whoever would remember therein to remember, and the warner had come to you?*

Abu Darda' reminded us by saying: “*Son of Adam! You are nothing but a number of days, whenever each day passes then part of you has gone.*”

Thus, remember that the coming of the new year invites us to reflect on the practices we had done in the past. The times filled with worship and doing good deeds are great blessings from Allah the Almighty and we should be truly grateful for this. We must replace our bad deeds with repentance and *istighfar* (seek forgiveness from the almighty).

Dear brothers and sisters,

The advent of the new year should direct and motivate us to do better things. Every one needs to change to a better life. We should enhance our charitable deeds, increase our knowledge of religion. etc. We must try to keep away from

doing evil and wasteful deeds. We must also not neglect to upgrade our economic status and skills so that we will be respected. Take note of this word of wisdom: “ Do good deeds for the hereafter as if you would die tomorrow and do good deeds in your world as if you would live forever '.

Do expect any change in our lives if the change does not come from ourselves.

Allah the Almighty says in chapter 13 (surah al-Ra'd) verse 11:

إِنَّا لَا نُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ

Which means: *Indeed, Allah will not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves.*

Dear brothers and sisters,

Now we can see that Muslims all around the world are facing various religious, political, economical challenges and so on. We must be steadfast in putting ourselves ahead to protect Allah the Almighty's religion. We must believe that the glorious days of Islam will occur when we return to the true teachings of Islam. Thus, wake up and rise to uphold Islam and do not let this sacred religion be looked down upon by enemies of Islam.

Our Prophet (pbuh) has reminded us that the weakness of Islam is not due to the strength of its enemies but the weakness of its own followers. When the companions asked why Muslims became weak, the Prophet (pbuh) said in a hadith narrated by Abu Daud:

حُبُّ الدُّنْيَا وَكَرَاهِيَةُ الْمَوْتِ

Which means: *(it is because) they love this world and are scared of death.*

Dear brothers and sisters,

Muslims have been split and this situation is clearly detrimental to us Malays and Islam. In the past, we had the power to transform and develop our own country, religion and nation. But now we have to appeal and beg from non-Islamic leaders to implement matters related to the development of the Malays and Muslims. This is a clear proof when we are losing power because of disunity.

Let us pray that our leaders and scholars will work together to create unity and strength for Muslims in this country. Remember, all of us are accountable to Allah the Almighty if we allow Islam and its people to become weak and powerless. Hopefully, this new year 2019 will restore the glory of Muslims in our country and throughout the world.

Allah the Almighty says in chapter 8 (surah Al-Anfal) verse 46:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

وَاطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ، وَلَا تَنَزَعُوا فَنَفْسُلُوا وَتَذْهَبَ رِيحُكُمْ وَأَصْبِرُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾

Which means: *And obey Allah and His Messenger, and do not dispute and [thus] lose courage and [then] your strength would depart; and be patient. Indeed, Allah is with the patient.*

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 الْعَفُورُ
الرَّحِيمُ.