

SCHOLARS: THE HEIRS OF THE PROPHETS

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أَلْحَمْدُ 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،
فَيَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، اِتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَوْصِيكُمْ وَإِيَّايَ بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ، فَقَدْ فَازَ الْمُتَّقُونَ.

Let us all increase our devotion towards Allah the Almighty by performing all that He has decreed and abstaining from all that He has prohibited. Hopefully, we will be blessed in this world and in the Hereafter.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Scholars have a special position in Islam. Scholars have deep Islamic knowledge and experience and make great contributions in teaching and spreading Islam to all of us. Allah the Almighty gave them a special position by saying that only those who fear Allah are scholars as He says in the Quran in Chapter 35 (*Surah Fatir*) verse (*ayat*) 28:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ
إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ غَفُورٌ ۲۸

Which means: “...It is those of His servants who have knowledge who stand in true awe of Allah. Allah is almighty, most forgiving.”

There have been scholars since the time of the Prophet’s Companions continuing from generation to generation until today. They

have a noble task which is to inherit the knowledge of the Prophet (peace be upon him [PBUH]) and to pass it on to us. Today we are able to enjoy the blessings of Islam, to perform the proper worship and to know the laws of *halal* (permissible) and *haram* (prohibited) because of the services of the scholars who impart knowledge and preach to us. The Prophet (PBUH) mentioned the superiority of scholars in a *hadith* narrated by Abu Daud:

وَإِنَّ فَضْلَ الْعَالِمِ عَلَى الْعَابِدِ كَفَضْلِ الْقَمَرِ لَيْلَةَ الْبَدْرِ عَلَى سَائِرِ الْكَوَاكِبِ وَإِنَّ الْعُلَمَاءَ وَرَثَةُ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ
وَإِنَّ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ لَمْ يُورَثُوا دِينَارًا وَلَا دِرْهَمًا وَإِنَّمَا وَرَثُوا الْعِلْمَ فَمَنْ أَخَذَهُ أَخَذَ بِحِطِّهِ وَافِرٍ

Which means: “*The superiority of the learned man over the devout worshiper is like that of the full moon to the rest of the stars (i.e., in brightness). The learned are the heirs of the Prophets who bequeath neither dinar nor dirham but only that of knowledge; and he who acquires it, has in fact acquired an abundant portion.*”

Let us remember that through this *hadith*, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) confirmed that the scholars are the heirs of the Prophets.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Allah the Almighty and His Messenger praised the scholars. This demands that we all respect and honor them. Since the beginning of time, scholars have not only spread knowledge, but they have also been involved in struggle (*jihad*). The history of our country proves that the scholars such as Tok Gajah, Mat Kilau, Tok Janggut, Tokku Paloh, Tuan Guru Abdul Rahman Limbong, Datuk Maharajalela and Tok Kenali were also involved in fighting for the country’s independence and expelling the colonizers from our homeland. They all gave warning to the community about the obligation to liberate our homeland.

Let us all cultivate a sense of respect for the scholars because of their great contributions and services. Look at Imam Ahmad's high praise for Imam Shafie when he said:

Allah the Almighty has bestowed upon us Imam Ash-Shafie. We have studied the words of a people and written their books until Imam Ash-Shafie came to us. After we heard his speech, we knew that he is the most pious compared to others. We accompanied him day and night, and we did not see him except that everything was good.

Make an effort to be with the scholars who are close to us to obtain knowledge and advice from them. Remember that the death of the scholars is a sign of the loss of knowledge and when knowledge is lost then the people are vulnerable to deviation as stated by the Prophet (PBUH) in a *hadith* narrated by Imam Al-Bukhari which means:

Allah does not take away knowledge by snatching it from the people but He takes away knowledge by taking away the scholars, so that when He leaves no learned person, people turn to the ignorant as their leaders; then they are asked to deliver religious verdicts and they deliver them without knowledge, they go astray, and lead others astray.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

It is very sad because lately the tendency to insult scholars has become more apparent. We do not deny that scholars are ordinary human beings who are also prone to mistakes. But a small mistake should not be

magnified so that we ignore their past contributions and services and humiliate them. This situation is very worrying in the Muslim community in Malaysia. Religion is belittled and scholars are insulted for having views that are not in line with their critics. Remember! Only the ignorant, *fasiq* (sinners) and hypocrites (*munafiq*) dare to insult scholars.

When scholars remain silent, they are called silent devils, but when scholars give opinions, they are labeled as religious riders. In a situation where everything goes wrong, scholars who voice their views are criticized, and scholars who remain silent are also criticized. The critics' fingers are as quick as their tongues insulting scholars on social media.

Remember, insulting scholars is one of the major sins. Imam Ibn Hajar Al-Haitami (may Allah be pleased with him) listed the sin of insulting scholars as one of the 70 major sins. Imam Ibnu Mubarak (may Allah be pleased with him) also said, whoever humiliates the scholars, then he will lose in the afterlife. The effects of insulting scholars include losing blessings in life, diminishing sustenance and causing annoyance in society.

In conclusion, let us play our roles by putting our scholars in their proper place because they are the heirs of the Prophets. Honor the scholars by accepting their advice and attending gatherings of knowledge. Avoid insulting the scholars because it will destroy the religion and invite the wrath of Allah.

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ ٩

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.