

THE DANGERS OF *FITNAH*

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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 وَبَارِكْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ،

فَيَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ أَوْصِيكُمْ 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,

Lately, *fitnah* (slander/tribulation) in society is spreading. With the development of the internet and the emergence of social media, more people are neglecting the commands of Allah the Almighty. *Fitnah* can be interpreted as disbelief, test, damage or chaos. In *Kamus Dewan* (The Institute Dictionary), *fitnah* is defined as an accusation made up to discredit or sabotage someone.

Among the causes of widespread *fitnah* are having negative thoughts of others, looking for people's weaknesses, and making fun of people. There are people who are not satisfied in life, until they see the worst for others. They will dig up dirt on other people before spreading it to others. Remember the words of Allah the Almighty in the Quran in Chapter 2 (*Surah Al-Baqarah*) verse (*ayat*) 191:

وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَشَدُّ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ

Which means: “...for persecution is more serious than killing...”

This verse explains that *fitnah* which leads to shirk is a greater sin than murder. Apart from shirk, *fitnah* is also considered an accusation made up to discredit or harm someone and it is one of the major sins. Unfortunately, some of us do get involved and believe in *fitnah*.

In fact, there are some of us who feel happy when we hear about misfortunes that befall others, then we add stories and *fitnah* to make it more sensational and viral. Even worse, in social media, there are WhatsApp groups and other platforms that are created solely to spread *fitnah*, for crimes that are still being investigated as well as against those who have been charged or sentenced. There are also certain groups that are willing to hire ‘cyber soldiers’ to spread *fitnah* on social media. It is no wonder that cases of cyber bullying are becoming more and more common so that some become depressed, ostracized by society, disconnected from their families, or even worse, decide to commit suicide.

Remember, whatever we utter, whether verbally or in writing, such as gossiping and spreading *fitnah* about others, is recorded and will be judged by Allah the Almighty as mentioned in the Quran in Chapter 50 (*Surah Qaf*) verse (*ayat*) 18:

مَا يَلْفِظُ مِنْ قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ ١٨

Which means: “not a word does a person utter without having a ‘vigilant’ observer ready to write it down.”

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Let us be determined to avoid spreading *fitnah*, because this act can divide society, create enmity and ultimately weaken the *ummah* (community). The Prophet (peace be upon him [PBUH]) said in a *hadith* narrated by Imam Muslim:

كَفَى بِالْمَرْءِ إِثْمًا أَنْ يُحَدِّثَ بِكُلِّ مَا سَمِعَ

Which means: “*It is enough for a man to prove himself a liar when he goes on narrating whatever he hears.*”

The Quran provides guidance on how to maintain morals in this matter. Among them is to not be hasty by easily believing and spreading any newly obtained news and not to mention wanting to be the first in spreading an issue. The validity of the issue should be first investigated and referred to the relevant party. Allah the Almighty says in the Quran in Chapter 49 (*Surah Al-Hujurat*) verse (*ayat*) 6:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِن جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا أَن تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا بِجَهْلَةٍ فَتُصِحُّوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نُدِيمِينَ

Which means: “*Believers, if a troublemaker brings you news, check it first, in case you wrong others unwittingly and later regret what you have done,*”

In addition, Allah the Almighty also forbids us from being easily influenced by and trusting groups that make strange claims to the point of being willing to swear to defend something that is not true. Allah the Almighty says in the Quran in Chapter 68 (*Surah Al-Qalam*) verses (*ayat*) 10 to 11:

وَلَا تُطِعْ كُلَّ حَلَّافٍ مَّهِينٍ هَمَّازٍ مَشَّاءٍ بِنَمِيمٍ

Which means: “*And do not obey the despicable, vain oath-taker, slanderer, gossip-monger, ”*

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Remember that a very painful punishment will await those who spread *fitnah*. The slanderer may feel victorious and safe in this World, but they shall face punishment in the afterlife. The Prophet (PBUH) said in a *hadith* narrated by Imam Al-Bukhari:

“ لَا يَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ نَمَّامٌ ”

Which means: “*The tale-bearer shall not enter Paradise.*”

In the authentic (*sahih*) *hadith* book of Ibn Hibban, it is narrated that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

“*The angel who accompanied the Prophet (PBUH) said, ‘As for the man you came upon, whose sides of mouth, nostrils and eyes were torn off from front to back, he is the symbol of the man who goes out of his house in the morning and tells lies that are spread all over the world.’*”

In conclusion, the act of *fitnah* is a great sin and is cruel to the person being slandered and can divide society. *Fitnah* in this day and age can occur in various forms whether through words, writings, pictures, videos, voicemail recordings and others. So we should be careful in accepting *fitnah*. Do not believe easily and investigate any information received. Remember the threat and heavy retribution from Allah the

Almighty against slanderers and those who spread the words of slanderers as mentioned in the Quran Chapter 24 (*Surah An-Nur*) verse (*ayat*) 19.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُحِبُّونَ أَنْ تَشِيعَ الْفَاحِشَةُ فِي الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

Which means: “Indeed, those who love to see indecency spread among the believers will suffer a painful punishment in this life and the Hereafter. Allah knows and you do not know.”

بَارَكَ اللَّهُ لِي وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقُرْآنِ الْعَظِيمِ. وَنَفَعَنِي وَإِيَّاكُمْ بِمَا فِيهِ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ. وَتَقَبَّلَ اللَّهُ 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