

**AVOIDING *RIYA* (SHOWING OFF) AND *UJUB* (VANITY) IN WORSHIP**  
**14 FEBRUARY 2025 / 15 SHAABAN 1446H**

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، اِنْفِقُوا لِلَّهِ 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,**

Today's *khutbah* (sermon) reminds us to avoid *mazmumah* (negative) behaviors namely *riya'* (showing off) and *ujub* (vanity) that can damage our worship. *Riya'* is the act of worshiping with the aim of being seen or praised by others, while *ujub* is the feeling of admiration for oneself for the practice done. Both of these are diseases of the heart. Allah the Almighty says in the Quran in Chapter 107 (*Surah Al-Ma'un*) Verses (*ayat*) 4 to 6:

اعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم  
فَوَيْلٌ لِلْمُصَلِّينَ . الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ. الَّذِينَ هُمْ يُرَاءُونَ

**Which means:** “So woe to those who pray but are heedless of their prayer; those who are all show”

This verse shows how dangerous it is to show off our acts of worship. Showing off not only ruins the reward of the worship, but it can also lead to punishment in the hereafter. The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him [PBUH]) said in a *hadith* narrated by Imam Ahmad:

إِنَّ أَخْوَفَ مَا أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ الشِّرْكَ الْأَصْغَرَ، قَالُوا: وَمَا الشِّرْكَ الْأَصْغَرُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ؟ قَالَ: الرِّيَاءُ

**Which means:** “The thing I fear most for you is the lesser shirk (polytheism), showing-off (of good deeds).”

This *hadith* shows that *riya*’ is a type of minor shirk that the Prophet (PBUH) greatly feared. *Riya*’ is an act that destroys sincerity in deeds, and it can lead to major sins if not avoided.

Apart from *riya*’, *ujub* is also a disease of the heart that damages our actions. *Ujub* is a feeling of admiration for oneself for the actions done, causing one to feel proud and arrogant. The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said in a *hadith* narrated by Imam At-Tabrani;

ثَلَاثٌ مُهْلِكَاتٌ: شُحٌّ مُطَاعٌ، وَهَوَى مُتَّبَعٌ، وَإِعْجَابُ الْمَرْءِ بِنَفْسِهِ

**Which means:** “As for the destructive matters, they are 1) desires which are followed, 2) miserliness which is obeyed, and 3) a person’s amazement with himself, and that is the gravest of them”

Based on this *hadith*, *ujub* is one of the destructive behaviors. It can lead to feelings of arrogance and belittling others, thus damaging our relationship with Allah and fellow human beings.

**Dear Brothers and Sisters,**

Several steps can be taken to prevent these diseases of the heart:

First, being sincere in our acts of worship. This means always renewing our intentions so that every deed done is solely for the sake of Allah the Almighty. Remember that only sincere deeds will be accepted by Allah the Almighty.

Second, practice self-examination. This means always taking stock of ourselves and reflecting on our intentions in performing acts of worship. Do we perform it because of Allah the Almighty or because we want to be seen and praised by others?

Third, being modest in deeds. Avoid showing off our deeds to others. Practice *tawadhu'* (modesty) and humility in every action we take.

Fourth, always pray to Allah the Almighty to be given the strength to avoid *riya'* and *ujub*. Ask for protection from Allah the Almighty so that our hearts are always sincere during worship.

Fifth, don't expect praise from other people. Remember that true praise comes from Allah the Almighty and not from humans.

**Dear Brothers and Sisters,**

*Riya'* is a matter of the heart that needs to be managed well so that our worship is accepted. Although we are forbidden from showing off good deeds, there are times when the community needs to be given an example by leaders or any individual in

the community to give charity, help each other, increase worship, and this should not immediately be judged as *riya*’. Allah the Almighty says in the Quran in Chapter 2 (*Surah Al-Baqarah*) Verse (*ayat*) 271:

اعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم  
إِنْ تُبْدُوا الصَّدَقَاتِ فَنِعِمَّا هِيَ وَإِنْ تُخْفُوهَا وَتُؤْتُوهَا الْفُقَرَاءَ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ وَيُكَفِّرُ عَنْكُمْ مِّنْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا  
تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ

**Which means:** “If you give charity openly, it is good, but if you keep it secret and give to the needy in private, that is better for you, and it will atone for some of your bad deeds: Allah is well aware of all that you do.”

**Dear Brothers and Sisters,**

In conclusion, we must stay away from *mazmumah* (negative) behaviors, especially *riya*’ and *ujub* because they destroy the reward of our deeds. Take steps to safeguard our deeds by doing them sincerely, reflecting on ourselves often, avoiding showing off to be praised and praying to Allah the Almighty often so that our deeds are accepted. The act of showing off goodness is not included in *riya*’ if done in the right way. Let us be reminded by the verse in the Quran in Chapter 2 (*Surah Al-Baqarah*) Verse (*ayat*) 264 which Allah said:

اعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم  
يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تُبْطِلُوا صَدَقَاتِكُمْ بِالْمَنِّ وَالْأَذَى كَالَّذِي يُنْفِقُ مَالَهُ رِئَاءَ النَّاسِ وَلَا يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ  
فَمَثَلُهُ كَمَثَلِ صَفْوَانٍ عَلَيْهِ تُرَابٌ فَأَصَابَهُ وَابِلٌ فَتَرَكَهُ صَلْدًا لَا يَقْدِرُونَ عَلَى شَيْءٍ مِّمَّا كَسَبُوا وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ  
الْكَافِرِينَ

**Which means:** “You who believe, do not cancel out your charitable deeds with reminders and hurtful words, like someone who spends his wealth only to be seen by people, not believing in Allah and the Last Day. Such a person is like a rock with earth on it: heavy rain falls and leaves it completely bare. Such people get no rewards for their works: Allah does not guide the disbelievers.”

بَارَكَ اللهُ 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 اللهَ الْعَظِيمَ لِي وَلَكُمْ، وَلِسَائِرِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ، وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ، فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ.