

PROTECTING SELF-DIGNITY (AVOIDING FORBIDDEN RELATIONSHIPS)

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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 عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ.
أَمَّا بَعْدُ،
فَيَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأُوصِيكُمْ 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 forgiven in this world and in the Hereafter.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Every Muslim has their own dignity. Dignity means honor or self-respect. It is the fortress that protects a person from falling into sin and disgrace. Among the major threats to dignity today are forbidden relationships, whether through free mixing with the opposite sex (*ikhtilat*), fornication, homosexual relationships, or any relationships that violate Islamic law.

Allah the Almighty strictly prohibits fornication and all paths that lead to it as stated in the Quran in Chapter 17 (*Surah Al-Isra*) verse (*ayat*) 32:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

وَلَا تَقْرُبُوا الزَّوَاجَ إِنَّمَا كَانَ فُحْشَةً وَسَاءَ سَبِيلًا

Which means: “*And do not go anywhere near fornication: it is an outrage, and an evil path.*”

Through this verse, we can understand that Allah the Almighty not only forbids fornication, but also forbids approaching it, by committing any act that can lead to this sin such as free mixing with the opposite sex, clandestine relationships, close proximity (dating), as well as any actions that lead to sexual stimulation and moral degradation.

Sometimes, adultery and illicit relationships start with things that are considered trivial such as not lowering one’s gaze, exchanging messages between non-*mahrams* (people you are allowed to marry) and surfing social media without limits. It can also start through socializing while studying or being overly friendly with coworkers who are other’s husbands or wives. The media reports that some divorce cases stem from cheating or scandals with third parties.

The act of going out alone between a man and a woman who are not *mahram* should be discouraged by parents. It should not be normalized even among engaged couples because the relationship is not yet *halal* (permissible)

and is still subject to the limits of Islamic relationships. The failure of parents to control and educate children about the dangers of free mixing with the opposite sex is one of the reasons why fornication has become increasingly widespread. Likewise, parents and guardians need to advise their children to always dress to cover their *awrah* (body parts that Islamic law requires to be covered). Do not dress sexily or upload indecent videos and pictures on social media.

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him [PBUH]) gave a very clear warning about the dangers of fornication and illicit relationships. He said in a *hadith* narrated by Imam Al-Bukhari and Imam Muslim:

لَا يَزْنِي الزَّانِي حِينَ يَزْنِي وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ

Which means: *“The one who commits illegal sexual intercourse is not a believer at the time of committing the illegal sexual intercourse.”*

This *hadith* shows that fornication can weaken one’s faith and soul, as well as invite the wrath of Allah the Almighty. Among other side effects are the collapse of the family institution and the corruption of offspring. This is because illicit relationships lead to the birth of children out of wedlock and cases of baby abandonment. Based on official data reported in the Parliament, there were more than 68,000 illegitimate children of Malaysian citizens born in Malaysia from 2020 to October 2024. This number is very worrying.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Maintaining self-respect is not only an individual responsibility, but also a collective responsibility of society. Indeed, the *halal* (permissible) path is through marriage. It is a solution blessed by Allah the Almighty to fulfil human nature. The Prophet (PBUH) said in a *hadith* narrated by Imam Al-Bukhari and Imam Muslim:

Which means: “*O young men! You should marry, for indeed it helps in lowering the gaze and protecting the private parts...*”

Stay away from all forms of forbidden relationships. Islam teaches us to control our desires, maintain boundaries in our social interactions and always seek Allah the Almighty’s protection so that we are all protected from the temptations of lust.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

A few important conclusions can be made to end today’s *khutbah* (sermon):

First, dignity is a gift from Allah the Almighty to every human being and Muslims are obliged to protect it.

Second, Allah the Almighty commands us to never approach fornication because it is a heinous act and brings many bad consequences.

Third, the solution to fornication, immorality and forbidden relationships is to lower the gaze, to maintain one's dignity, and to get married (for those who can afford it).

أَعُوذُ بِاللّٰهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ ذَلِكَ أَزْكَى لَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ

Which means: *[Prophet], tell believing men to lower their glances and guard their private parts: that is purer for them. Allah is well aware of everything they do. (Quran An-Nur 24:30)*

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 الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ.