

**DO NOT LEARN RELIGION THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA WITHOUT
A TEACHER**

January 24, 2020 \ 28 Jamadil Awal 1441H

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ
سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ وَمَنْ يَضِلَّ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ،
وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدَهُ
وَرَسُولَهُ

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ وَبَارِكْ عَلَى حَبِيبِكَ وَرَسُولِكَ سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ
وَأَصْحَابِهِ وَالتَّابِعِينَ لَهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ إِلَى يَوْمِ الدِّينِ.
أَمَّا بَعْدُ،

فِيَا 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,

With the existence of social media, the distribution of information has grown rapidly. It used to take some time before a piece of news was known to others, but now the news is known in just a few seconds. Social media has advanced the spread of information and has become an important mechanism for communication. It is also used to share information with the public which includes the sharing of religious knowledge and religious lectures. With the help of social media, the lectures conducted at mosques can be viewed by anyone from anywhere in the world

However, users need to take precautions when studying religion through social media such as verifying the information obtained from the internet before spreading it to others. This caution is important because learning about religion through unauthorized sources can lead to deviance. Allah the Almighty says in the Qur'an in Chapter 4 (*Surah An-Nisa*), verse (*ayat*) 83:

وَإِذَا جَاءَهُمْ أَمْرٌ مِّنَ الْأَمْنِ أَوِ الْخَوْفِ أَذَاعُوا بِهِ ۖ وَلَوْ رَدُّوهُ إِلَى الرَّسُولِ وَإِلَىٰ أُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْهُمْ لَعَلِمَهُ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَنْبِطُونَهُ مِنْهُمْ ۗ وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ لَاتَّبَعْتُمُ الشَّيْطَانَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا

Which means: “Whenever news of any matter comes to them, whether concerning peace or war, they spread it about; if they referred it to the Messenger and those in authority among them, those seeking its meaning would have found it out from them. If it were not for Allah’s bounty and mercy towards you, you would almost all have followed Satan.”

A Sufi scholar named Shaykh Abu Yazid al Bustamiy stated:

مَنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ شَيْخٌ فَشَيْخُهُ الشَّيْطَانُ

Which means: “Whoever does not have a teacher (in searching for knowledge) verily his teacher is Satan”

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The religious information that is available on social media such as Facebook, Instagram, Telegram and WhatsApp is vast and unfiltered. Users who have sufficient religious knowledge will be able to filter all that information based on what they know. However, those who do not have the basic knowledge of the religion will have difficulty in determining the authenticity of the source. This will cause disputes and misunderstandings in religion, which eventually leads to slander, confusion and can even break the unity of Muslims.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Islamic education requires learning that is in accordance with Islamic law. Therefore, Muslims should study the teachings of Islam with guidance from a teacher. Prophet Muhammad (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him [PBUH]) learned from the Angel Gabriel (Jibreel) and Prophet Musa (PBUH) learned from Prophet Khidir. This shows that Islam places great importance on learning from teachers. Imam Syafie once advised his students:

أَخِي لَنْ تَنَالَ الْعِلْمَ إِلَّا بِسِتَّةِ سَأْنِيكَ عَنْ تَفْصِيلِهَا بَيَانًا: ذِكَاً وَحِرْصًا
وَاجْتِهَادًا وَبَلْغَةً وَإِرْشَادًا أَسْتَاذًا وَطَوَّلَ زَمَانَ

Which means: “My brother, you will not obtain knowledge except with six things. I will explain it to you more clearly. (Those six things are)

intelligence, perseverance, determination, expense, teacher's guidance and sustained time.”

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

To end this sermon, we must remember that social media is not the primary source for seeking religious knowledge. Rather, it should be learned from a teacher; one should refer to those who are knowledgeable and qualified. The edicts (*fatwas*) issued by the State *Mufti* Department should be consulted and followed in order to avoid disunity among the community members.

Therefore, let us invite our family members, neighbors and friends to attend religious lectures, classes or gatherings wherever they are conducted. Allah the Almighty says in the Qur'an in Chapter 16 (*Surah An-Nahl*), verse (*ayat*) 43:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

﴿٤٣﴾ وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ إِلَّا رِجَالًا نُوْحِيَ إِلَيْهِمْ فَسَأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

Which means: “[Prophet], all the messengers We sent before you were simply men to whom We had given the Revelation: you [people] can ask those who have knowledge if you do not know.”

بَارَكَ اللهُ لِي وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقُرْآنِ الْعَظِيمِ، وَنَفَعَنِي وَإِيَّاكُمْ بِمَا فِيهِ مِنْ
الْآيَاتِ وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ، وَتَقَبَّلْ مِنِّي وَمِنْكُمْ تِلَاوَتَهُ، إِنَّهُ هُوَ
السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ. أَقُولُ قَوْلِي هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللهَ الْعَظِيمَ لِي وَلَكُمْ
وَلِسَائِرِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ
إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ.