



Islamic Religious Council of Singapore

Friday Khutbah

27 December 2019 / 30 Rabiul Akhir 1441H

Optimizing The Gift Of Time

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ مُثِيبِ الطَّائِعِينَ عَلَى صَالِحِ الْعَمَلِ أَجْزَلَ الثَّوَابِ، وَمُجِيبِ
الدَّاعِينَ فَهُوَ أَكْرَمُ مَنْ أَجَابَ، وَيَهْدِي إِلَيْهِ مَنْ تَابَ وَأَنَابَ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا
إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ شَهَادَةً لَا يَجُوبُهَا عَنِ الْإِخْلَاصِ حِجَابٌ،
وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَرْسَلَهُ بِأَسْمَحِ دِينٍ وَأَفْصَحِ كِتَابٍ،
اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ أَهْلِ التَّقَى وَأُولِي
الْأَلْبَابِ. أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَيَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ
مُسْلِمُونَ.

Blessed Friday Congregation,

I advise myself and all my brothers here to have true taqwa of Allah. Let us obey His commands and abstain from His prohibitions. Let us strive to make Islam our way of life by following the guidance Allah s.w.t. and His Messenger have provided us.

My dear brothers,

Among the many things Allah s.w.t. has encouraged us to exercise is good time management. Time is a gift and blessing

which Allah s.w.t. has given to all His creation, regardless of their shape or form; race or religion. Allah s.w.t. promises great rewards for those who make good use of the blessing of time given to them. Conversely, those who waste their time idling away – or even worse, abusing it – are warned of a severe punishment from Allah. Allah s.w.t. tells us in a hadith qudsi:

يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ! تَفَرَّغْ لِعِبَادَتِي، أَمَلًا صَدْرَكَ غِنَى، وَأَسَدَّ فَقْرَكَ، وَإِنْ لَا تَفْعَلْ مَلَأْتُ يَدَكَ شُغْلًا، وَلَمْ أُسَدِّ فَقْرَكَ

Meaning: *“O son of Adam, devote yourself to My worship, and I will fill your heart with contentment and take care of your poverty; but if you do not do that, then I will fill your heart with worldly concerns and will not take care of your poverty.”* [Narrated by Imam Al-Tirmizi, Ibn Majah and Ahmad].

This hadith teaches us about the Allah’s promise to those who spend their time wisely and His warning to those who put it to waste. As for the former, their hearts will be at ease with the things they are able accomplish, whilst the latter will feel as if they never have enough time to do anything productive.

What a loss indeed! For those who have wasted their time in this world will be standing in front of Allah s.w.t. on the Day of Judgement, with little amount of good deeds and mountains of bad ones.

My brothers,

The question we must ask ourselves is: What can we do to avoid being in such an unfortunate state? How can we optimize the limited time we have in this world so that we achieve success in the hereafter?

The answer, without doubt, is to occupy our time with beneficial matters as much as possible. As Allah s.w.t. says in Surah Al-'Asr, verses 1-3:

وَالْعَصْرِ ۝١ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ ۝٢ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ ۝٣

Meaning: *“By time! Indeed, mankind is in loss. Except for those who have believed and done righteous deeds and advised each other to truth and advised each other to patience.”*

This surah, despite its brevity, contains so much depth in its guidance and meaning. It mentions four main learning points which we must ponder upon in order to avoid being among those who lose out in this world and the next.

Firstly: Our faith (iman) must be strong. This means that we must have complete trust in the Qada' and Qadr of Allah. They are both Allah's secret; none except Him know what has been predestined. We should therefore do our best to work hard and avoid being lazy. We must plan our lives meticulously and not leave everything to chance. As the saying goes, preparation is

the key to success. Those who fail to plan, in reality, are planning to fail.

Secondly: Accepting reality. Belief in Qada' and Qadr also means accepting what Allah s.w.t. has predestined for us, even if it is not what we originally planned or wanted. Instead of giving up or getting upset over our failures, we should let these life episodes drive us to succeed in the future. We should all learn from our mistakes. On the other hand, should Allah grant us the success we had been hoping for, let us not allow joy to overwhelm us. Let us understand the factors that contributed to that success.

This is the recipe for achieving success in this world and the hereafter; a result of resolute faith.

Thirdly: Increasing our good deeds. Apart from reinforcing our faith, we must also build up our good deeds. Success in this world, be it great wealth or high status – they mean nothing if we do not perform enough good deeds. Instead, we stand undignified amidst others in *Mahsyar*, and we face Allah while He is displeased with us on the Day of Judgment.

Thus, it is critical that we fill our time with good deeds so that we are not among those who are filled with regrets in the hereafter.

Fourthly: Advising one another. This is among the many good deeds we can put into practice. Surah Al-'Asr mentions advising one another to the truth. However, let us ensure that our advice is conveyed with wisdom and good manners. Let us be sure not

to impose our opinion or understanding onto others, even if we are sincere in guiding them. Most of the time, forcing others to accept our views may cause them to step further away from the truth. Let us ponder upon a hadith where the Prophet s.a.w. says:

إِنَّ الدِّينَ يُسْرٌ، وَلَنْ يُشَادَّ الدِّينَ أَحَدٌ إِلَّا غَلَبَهُ

Meaning: *“Religion is very easy and whoever overburdens himself in his religion will not be able to continue in that way.”*
[Narrated by Imam Al-Bukhari].

In addition, we are encouraged to advise those among us who have been afflicted by misfortune, grief, or overcome by anger - to persevere and have patience. Remind them that everything happens for a reason, and that there is a lesson to be learnt from it. Help them regain peace of mind so that they are able to overcome their difficulties and accomplish success in the future.

These, my brothers, are the four things we must keep in mind so that we are able to make the best use of our time.

My brothers,

The companions of the Prophet, may Allah be pleased with them, used to recite Surah Al-‘Asr at the end of every gathering. This is because the Surah reminded them of the importance to treasure and optimize the time they have been blessed with.

Let us all strive to practise the four learning points mentioned earlier. We ask Allah that the time He granted us on this earth be

put to good use and may He help us avoid becoming among those who waste their time in this world thus regret about it in the hereafter. May we spend our lives benefitting others and contributing for the greater good in this world so as to achieve success in the hereafter. Amin ya Rabbal 'Alamin.

بَارِكْ اللَّهُ لِي وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقُرْآنِ الْعَظِيمِ، وَنَفَعَنِي وَإِيَّاكُمْ بِمَا فِيهِ مِنَ
الآيَاتِ وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ، وَتَقَبَّلْ مِنِّي وَمِنْكُمْ تِلَاوَتَهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ
الْعَلِيمُ، أَقُولُ قَوْلِي هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ الْعَظِيمَ لِي وَلَكُمْ، وَلِسَائِرِ
الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ، وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ، فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ فَيَا
فَوْزَ الْمُسْتَغْفِرِينَ وَيَا نَجَاةَ التَّائِبِينَ.