

Those who Hasten in Doing Good Deeds

Friday Sermon Presented by

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In Suret Al Mu'minun (the believers), our Lord, Exalted He is, presents the history of all the messengers beginning from the first Messenger, Noah (PBUH), and concluding with Jesus Christ before our Master, Muhammad (PBUTH).

After this presentation, the Exalted Allah addresses the Ummah that He concludes the Time with, the Ummah that is charged with the responsibility of the message of Islam drawing their attention to the qualities that all the messengers and proselytizers are characterized by, the qualities that everyone who is desirous to carry out the message of guidance in his heart and behavior should be characterized by.

The following verses refer to the above mentioned subject:

-We sent Noah to his people: he said: O my people! Worship Allah! Ye have no other god but Him. Will ye not fear (Him?{(

-The chiefs of the Unbelievers among his people said: He is no more than a man like yourselves: his wish is to assert his superiority over you: if Allah had wished {to send messengers} , he could have sent down angels: never did we hear such a thing {as he says}, among our ancestors of old".

-{And some said}: "He is only a man possessed: wait {and have patience} with him for a time".

-{Noah} said: "O my Lord! Help me: for that they accuse me of falsehood"!

-So We inspired him {with this message}; "Construct the Ark within Our sight and under Our guidance: then when

comes Our command, and the fountains of the earth gush forth, take thou on board pairs of every species, male and female, and thy family -except those of them against whom the Word has already gone forth; and address Me not in favor of the wrongdoers: for they shall be drowned >in the Flood}.

-And when thou hast embarked on the Ark- thou and those with thee- say: "Praise be to Allah, Who has saved us from the people who do wrong".

-And say: "O my Lord! Enable me to disembark with Thy blessing: for Thou art the Best to enable {us} to disembark".

-Verily in this there are Signs {for men to understand}; {thus} do We try {men}.

-Then We raised after them another generation.

-And We sent to them a messenger from among themselves, {saying}, "Worship Allah! Ye have no other god but Him. Will ye not fear {Him}"?

-And the chiefs of his people, who disbelieved and denied the Meeting in the Hereafter, and on whom We had bestowed the good things of this life, said: He is no more than a man like yourselves: he eats of that of which ye eat, and drinks of what ye drink.

-If ye obey a man like yourselves, behold, it is certain ye will be lost.

-Does he promise that when ye die and become dust and bones, ye shall be brought forth {again}?

-Far, very far is that which ye are promised!

-There is nothing but Our life in this world! We shall die and we live! But we shall never be raised up again!

-He is only a man who invents a lie against Allah, but we are not the ones to believe in him!

-{The prophet} said: O my Lord! help me: for that they accuse me of falsehood.

-(Allah) said: In but a little while, they are sure to be sorry!

-Then the Blast overtook them with justice, and We made them as rubbish of dead leaves {floating on the stream of Time}! So away with the people who do wrong!

-Then We raised after them other generations.

-No people can hasten their term, nor can they delay {it}.

-Then sent We Our Messengers in succession: every time there came to a people their messenger, they accused him of falsehood: so We made them follow each other {in punishment}: We made them as a tale {that is told}: so away with a people that will not believe!

-Then We sent Moses and his brother Aaron, with Our Signs and authority manifest.

-To Pharaoh and his Chiefs: but these behaved insolently: they were an arrogant people.

-They said: Shall we believe in two men like ourselves? And their people are subject to us!

-So they accused them of falsehood, and they became of those who were destroyed.

-And We gave Moses the Book, in order that they might receive guidance.

-And We made the son of Mary and his mother as a Sign: We gave them both shelter on high ground, affording rest and security and furnished with springs.

-O ye messengers! enjoy {all} things good and pure, and work righteousness: for I am well-acquainted with {all} that ye do.

-And verily this Brotherhood of yours is a single Brotherhood, and I am your Lord and Cherisher: therefore fear Me {and no other}.

-But people have cut off their affair {of unity}, between them, into sects: each party rejoices in that which is with itself (Al MU'minun, 23-53).

In this Qur'anic presentation, notice how the name of the first Messenger, Noah, is mentioned but the names of the other Messengers who came after him are not. For example, the name of Hud, or Saleh is not mentioned, but the characteristics of these Messengers are only mentioned.

After this presentation, the Qur'an summarizes the subject saying:

"Then sent We Our Messengers in succession".

Then, these verses conclude with the last mission that preceded that of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), i.e., the message of Moses (PBUH) verified by that of Jesus Christ.

After mentioning a series of Messengers, the Quran presents a general address saying: **"O ye messengers! enjoy {all} things good and pure"**, i.e., the purport of the address of the Exalted Allah to all Messengers who are commanded to hold the responsibility of guiding people is: **"O ye messengers! enjoy {all} things good and pure"**.

Consequently, the Exalted Allah aims at giving man all that his humanity needs from the lawful, and allows his humanity to take hold of what the Exalted Allah makes good. The Holy Qur'an uses the idioms of good and evil. The evil is whatever is prohibited, and the good is whatever is allowed, so give humanity what it needs, because humanity consists of souls and spirits.

Then He said: **"and work righteousness"**. That is, if you give your humanity what it needs and strengthen yourself by being obedient to Allah, do not employ your strength but in whatever satisfies the Exalted Allah.

"for I am well-acquainted with (all) that ye do", i.e., make the control of the Exalted Allah ever present in your hearts.

"And verily this Brotherhood of yours is a single Brotherhood, and I am your Lord and Cherisher; therefore fear Me {and no other}", In this statement, the Exalted Allah summarizes the equality among mankind, old and small, rich or poor, ruler and ruled, white or black... because they are all the children of one father, who is Adam (PBUH), and servants of one

Lord. They are the salves of the Exalted Allah and the children of Adam. Thus, in this statement, the Exalted Allah summarizes the wide headlines in which He addresses humanity through the Messengers (PBUTH), the fact which proselytizers should be aware of and make their wide headlines.

So enjoy all good things, and avoid the evil ones, and make your humanity strong and qualified for good deeds, **"and work righteousness"**, i.e., employ all your strength, your good health and resolution to whatever satisfied the Exalted Allah.

"for I am well-acquainted with (all) that ye do", i.e., you are under the control of Allah.

"And verily this Brotherhood of yours is a single Brotherhood", i.e., all humanity are equal in obligation, address and responsibility, **"and I am your Lord and Cherisher; therefore fear Me {and no other}"**.

Then the Exalted Allah relates the attitude of mankind before the mission of our Master Muhammad (PBUH), and how they faced this fair comprehensive good address. He said: **"But people have cut off their affair {of unity} between them"** i.e., they insisted on disagreement and following their own whims.

"into zubura (sects)", *Az Zubur* means the books they composed and perverted, i.e., they got astray from the right way that the Exalted Allah set for them.

After perversion, some people said: 'let us follow the Torah', others said: 'let us follow the Scriptures', and some others said: 'let us follow the Bible'.

"each party rejoices in that which is with itself", i.e., each group are proud of their own opinion, and they follow their own whims not the One Who Addressed them, because the Latter addressed people throughout the successive epochs by sending Messages, and He joined all the previous Messages in the Holy Qur'an and said to humanity: 'This is the comprehensive address that I guarantee its preservation, so no one is able to change even a letter in it till Doomsday'. It is the Holy Qur'an that joins all

the Messages that came in the previous books, but they insist on disobedience.

"But people have cut off their affair {of unity} between them each party rejoices in that which is with itself".

Then the Exalted Allah directs the address to our Master Muhammad, peace be upon him and upon his family, his companions and whoever follows him and understands his message. The Exalted Allah said:

"But leave them be overwhelmed in ignorance for a time " (Al Mu'minun, 54). They are overwhelmed by ignorance as the one who is immersed in water, for their hearts, minds and souls are overwhelmed by aberration and whims.

The Exalted Allah addressed them aiming at saving them from this overwhelming, from this confusion, from this aberration, and from this ignorance, but they insisted on their being immersed in their ignorance, their whims and insisted on following whatever their souls order them to do.

Then the Exalted Allah said: **" Do they think that because We have granted them abundance of wealth and sons"** (Al Mu'minun, 55), i.e., do they believe that the wealth, property and children we have given them are as reward?

Certainly, they are not. They are only respite and baiting by degrees: **" Respite will I grant unto them; for my scheme is strong {and unailing}"** (Al A'raf, 183).

If the heedless finds himself given wealth, children and property, and if he has trust in the Qur'an, he will become wakeful after his being ignorant of the message and the secret that the Exalted Allah wants him to assume responsibility of. After this address, the ignorant will find himself wakeful, and he will find the eye of his heart open.

"But leave them in their confused ignorance for a time. Do they think that because We have granted them abundance of wealth and sons. We would hasten them on in every good? Nay, they do

not understand" (Al Mu'minun, 54-56). How poor they are! They are unaware of the crisis they are living in.

It is really a crisis, because the ignorant is confused and aberrant, but he is unaware of his crisis, nor does he feel his sickness and his disease. On the contrary, he rejoices in the material pleasures he has.

After the Exalted Allah presents briefly the history of the Messengers (PBUTH), and the brief address that contains justice and guidance humanity heard from the Messengers throughout all their history, the Exalted Allah mentions the method that may make man get out of Al Ghamrah (the pit in which man is overwhelmed by ignorance) beginning with the secret within man by which he can consider himself of those who compete and hasten to do good deeds, not with the people overwhelmed by ignorance who rejoice in the whims they follow, and the material life they have. The Exalted Allah mentions four qualities that may change man from the one of darkness into the one of light.

When the scientists of education and purification of the soul talk about the inner soul of man, and that man consists of soul, mind, heart and spirit and that by these four objects man's body moves, our Lord, Exalted He is, presents these four objects in the verses in which He directs man to get out from Al Ghamrah. He said:

- 1- Verily those who live in awe for fear of their Lord.**
- 2- Those who believe in the Signs of their Lord.**
- 3- Those who join not {in worship} partners with their Lord.**
- 4- And those who dispense their Charity with their hearts full of fear, because they will return to their Lord. It is these who hasten in every good work, and these who are foremost in them"** (Al Mu'minun, 57-61).

The Exalted Allah mentions four qualities:

The first is related to the spirit. It is the quality of awe: Awe is the result of the spirit's knowledge of Allah. The Exalted Allah said:

"Those truly fear Allah, among His Servants, who have knowledge" (Fater, 28). Knowledge of Allah is the description of the spirit.

The second is related to the mind: it is thinking thoroughly of the signs and indications, and this drives the mind to its perfection.

The third is connected with the heart: It is getting away from the interest in the others, and directing the heart to the Exalted Allah. The place of this direction is the heart.

The fourth is connected with the soul: It is the efficiency that is void of arrogance and pride. The one who has this soul is productive, active, influential and has the ability to change, but he is prostrate on the ground to the Exalted Allah. He does not feel proud of the good deeds he does. After the opening of Mecca, the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) entered it prostrating, though he had done the greatest achievement in the history of Islam.

1- **Awe: The Exalted Allah said:** "Verily those who live in awe for fear of their Lord". Their knowledge of Allah causes their spirits to have awe and glorification of the station of Divinity.

Among our pious ancestors, there was a man called Muhammad Bin Al Munkader. Once when he was praying at night, he began crying so vehemently in an unusual way. His crying increased till his family feared for him. When they asked him about the cause of his crying, he did not answer them. He went on crying. They said: "Nobody can help us in this dilemma but his friend Abi Hazem". They went to Abi Hazem, who was an intimate friend of Muhammad, and told him about the matter.

Abu Hazem asked Muhammad: "Oh dear friend, What makes you cry?"

Muhammad said: "While I was reading the Holy Qur'an, I passed by the following verse that made me cry: "but something will confront them from Allah, which they could never have counted upon" (Az Zumur, 47).

Abu Hazem began crying too. Their crying became so intense that the family of Muhammad said to Abi Hazem: "We called you to help us, but you made him increase his crying".

It is the knowledge of Allah that makes man stand in the station of awe.

2-Looking at the signs of Allah brings about consideration. This is referred to in the following verse: **"Those who believe in the Signs of their Lord"**. The signs are the indications, and looking at the indications should be a daily spiritual invocation for the believer. By indications, I do not mean to look at the sun and the moon only. It is rather to look at everything and find numberless indications in them: in the Exalted Allah's treatment to you, in what goes around you and in what you see by your eyes. It is in seeing the signs of Allah in everything as summarized by Abul Atahiya when he said:

In everything, there a sign of His \ that indicates that He is One

They are the indications that make your heart directed to Allah, and your mind have certain belief in Allah, and be submissive to Allah Who addresses you.

1-Dependence on Allah only, and turning to Him alone: The Exalted Allah said: "Those who join not {in worship} partners with their Lord". Their heart are not directed to other than their lord.

Tawoos said to Ata': "Do not appeal to the one who closed his door in your face, and put a barrier between you and him. Appeal to the One Whose door is ever open till Doomsday".

Al Juneid said: Nothing is despicable in the eye of Allah than the religious scholars in whose hearts greed exists.

Do you seek the one who can neither do harm nor can he benefit, and he can neither divide nor can he gather?!

Do you seek an impotent creature like you?! Do you seek a poor needy creature like you?!

Even if you find him wealthy and wear expensive clothes, you and him are under the control of Allah. You and him are in need for Allah.

The Umayyad Caliph Hisham Bin Abdul Malek called Ibrahim Bin Abla who was one of the greatest people of knowledge and piety and said to him:

"We have known you since you were a child, and test you when you became young, and we are satisfied with you behavior and state. Therefore I appoint you as an official for the land taxation of Egypt and a ruler as well of this country".

Ibrahim said: "I am not well qualified for the land taxation", i.e., I do not have enough experience in collecting the taxes. Besides, I am a weak man. I am not well qualified for this responsibility.

Hisham became angry and his face trembled with rage. He had known that Ibrahim was a strong man and that he had ample knowledge. He said to him: "You will accept this position willy-nilly. This is a case that has no relationship with your choice.

Would that the seekers of governorship listened to such an example of a man who coveted nothing but Allah's satisfaction.

Ibrahim kept silent for a long time, but when he found that Hisham's anger had been alleviated, he said to him: "The Exalted Allah said in His Book: **"We did indeed offer the Trust to the Heavens and the Earth and the Mountains; but they refused to undertake it, being afraid thereof: but man undertook it; he was indeed unjust and foolish"** (Al Ahzab, 72). The Exalted Allah was not angry with the heavens and earth when they refused His order, nor did He force them to do that".

Hisham laughed and said: "Oh Ibrahim, you insist on being a jurist. We have exempted you".

Where are such examples who knew that there is no provider of subsistence but Allah, no elevator but Allah, no glorifier but Allah, and no disgracer but Allah...?

Where are such examples who direct their hearts to Allah and are indifferent to any other thing?

Do not have the illusion that the state the Exalted Allah puts his beloved in is one and the same. Certainly not, for He put Solomon in the position of kingdom and tested him with it, he tested Job with illness, Joseph with imprisonment, and some other Messenger with murder, and so on.

I even found among the men of knowledge who said: The chosen people by Allah are in one of the following three states: some are veiled from adversity because of Allah's mercy of them, as He knew that they are impatient to bear adversity; others are inflicted with adversity but He makes them satisfied and patient so their love of Him increase and their satisfaction of His fate also increase; others are given continual renewed favors and they are given inner and outer knowledge, but He makes people unaware of them, so they are hardly known among people for their goodness.

The fourth quality which has the ability of change that makes man prepared to assume the responsibility of the message mentioned in the Holy Qur'an is:

1-Practical efficiency that is able to change reality and has influence on it: but it is far away from pride, arrogance and self-conceit. The Exalted Allah said: "And those who dispense their Charity". In another reading by A'isha and Ibn Abbas: "And those who do good deeds".

"And those who dispense their Charity", i.e., all the favors the Exalted Allah bestowed upon them, wealth, leisure time, health and good health.... are given away by them for the sake of Allah. They give away what Allah has bestowed on them.

" with their hearts full of fear, because they will return to their Lord". Their souls do not have the authority to control the hearts, because the hearts are in the status of fear of Allah. Thus the ruling is not that of the souls.

When man gives away a lot of things in charity, he feels self-conceit and says: "I have given, and I have done", but when he feels awe in his heart, his self-conceit will be concealed and his

feeling of awe will prevent him from bragging. Consequently, the soul will be kept within the boundaries of humbleness and submission. It will be qualified by poverty to its Lord.

These four issues are:

-Awe because of the knowledge of the spirit.

-Learning a lesson from the signs and indications that leads to perfection of the minds.

-Dependence only on Allah and turning to Him, the One to Whom hearts should turn to, not to any other object.

-Efficiency in which the slave obliges himself with his servitude.

"O ye messengers! enjoy {all} things good and pure, and work righteousness; for I am well-acquainted with {all} that ye do"

Shall we comprehend this address?

Shall we try to renew our interior so that we assume the responsibility of the message in our activity and behavior, the message that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) assumed.

Allahum... verify us by that and make us from those who listen to wisdom and follow the best of it.

I say my words and ask Allah's forgiveness.