Friday Khutbah (Sermons) : Earning Lawfully

Dear Faithfuls! Islam has come to guarantee a good and clean life that leads Muslims to the highest degree of prosperity in this life and the life to come. It is a principle of this great religion that nothing suits the Good Lord and pleases Him but good. That is why prosperity and success dictate that Muslim should be good, do good and behave good. A Muslim is suppossed to be clean inwardly and outwardly. It is then that he becomes one of those Allah describes thus:

“Those whose lives the angels take while they are in a pious state (i.e. pure from all evil, and worshipping none but Allah Alone) saying (to them): Salamun ‘Alaykum (peace be on you) enter you paradise, because of (the good) which you used to do (in the world).” (Surah Al Nahl 16:32)

Brothers in Islam! Among issues of paramount importance to Islam is that of clean source of income. Our Prophet Muhammad (SAW), while explaining the way that leads to success and Pleasure of Allah said:

“O you people! Indeed, Allah is Good and does not accept except which that is good. Allah has also commanded the believers with which He has commanded the Prophets.”

Allah said:

“O (you) Messengers! eat of the Taiyibat [all kinds of Halal (legal) foods which Allah has made legal (meat of slaughtered eatable animals, milk produts, fats, vegitables, fruits, etc.)], and do righteous deeds.” (Surah Al Mu’minun 23:51)

Allah also says:

“O you who believe (in Oneness of Allah – Islamic Monotheism)! Eat of the lawful things that We have provided you with, and be grateful to Allah, if it is indeed He whom you worship.” (Surah Al Baqarah 2:172)

Also among the teachings with which Allah sent His Messengers is to make good things lawful for their people and to make forbidden to them filthy things. He says while commending the Prophet Muhammad (SAW):

“He allows them as lawful At-Taiyibat [(i.e. all good and lawful) as regards things, deeds, beliefs, persons, foods, etc.] and prohibits them as unlawful Al-Khabaith (i.e. all evil and unlawful as regards things, deeds, beliefs, persons, foods, etc.).” (Surah Al A’raaf 7:157)

Fellow Muslims! Seeking for pure earnings is compulsory rather, an incontrovertible issue among the Muslims. Happiness in this world and safety in the hereafter depend on good sayings and deeds, and clean earnings. At-Tirmidhi reported on the authority of Abu Sa‘eed Al-Khudree (RA) that the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said:

“Whoever eats what is pure, acts in accordance with the Sunnah and from whose evil people are save, will enter paradise.”

If the uncontestable basis of well-being and safety in Islam is pure and unadulterated earnings, the basis for misery and disgrace should also be indulging in filthy sayings and deeds, and earning from sources which are unlawful. Allah says:

“And do not exchange bad things for good ones; and devor not their substance (by adding it) to your substance. Surely, this is a great sin.” (Surah Al Nisa’ 4:2)

Fellow Muslims, unlawful earnings causes the severance of one’s ties with the Lord – Most Exalted – and causes lack of acceptance of one’s supplications. The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) has mentioned:

“The man with an unkempt hair and is dust-covered who is on a long journey. He raised up his hands to the heaven (in supplication) saying: ‘O my Lord! O my Lord!’ While sources of his food, drink and cloth are haraam and he is nourished by haraam. How then could his supplication be accepted?”

The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) also said in a Hadeeth:

“No prayer without purification will be accepted nor a charity from an ill-gotten wealth.”

Maalik bin Deenaar said:

“Some people among the Israelites were afflicted with drought and they went out seeking for rain many times. Allah then sent to their prophet to inform them that: ‘You only came out to me with filthy bodies and raise unto Me hands that are covered with the blood of the innocent and you have filled your stomachs with forbidden things. Now My wrath has become severe on you and you shall never increase except in farness from Me.”

Dear brothers! The results of unlawful earnings is disastrous. Most dangerous among it is that it leads to Hell and Allah’s wrath. Al-Bukhari reported that the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said:

“There are some men who take Allah’s money unlawfully. Theirs will be Hell on the Day of Resurrection.”

He (SAW) also said to Ka‘ab ibn ‘Ujrah (RA):

“O Ka‘ab ibn ‘Ujrah! A flesh will not grow from an unlawful food except that Hell is its deserving abode.” (At-Tirmidhi)

Unlawful earning is devoid of Barakah (blessing), satisfaction and rest of mind. Abu Sa‘eed Al-Khudree (RA) said: The Messenger of Allah (SAW) delivered a speech to the people in which he said:

“No, By Allah! What I fear for you people is what Allah is going to bring out for you of the beauties of this world – until he said: ‘Whover takes a wealth rightfully, it will be blessed for him and whoever takes it unlawfully his example is like someone who eats but is never satisfied.” (Al Bukhari and Muslim)

You should therefore, beware of earning wealth from unlawful means, for, unlawful earnings have demolished lives of its earners. I wish I knew what is going to be the reply of these unlawful earners when they stand tomorrow in front of the Best of all judges and He asks them about these wealths as to where they got it and under which religion they deemed it lawful.

Abstain therefore, dear brethren, from crooked and unlawful ways in all your financial dealings. Be cautious of that, especially in these days that there are many attractive things and different tricky avenues to get unlawful wealth. The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said:

“A time will come upon people that a man will no longer care about whether he gets his money by halaal or haraam means.” (Al Bukhari)

In view of this, you should examine carefully the sources from which you want to get your earnings and endeavor to know the Islamic legal rules regarding it by consulting the authorised sources and trustworthy and pious scholars. Know that whoever fears Allah, Allah protects him and provides for him from unexpected sources and that whoever leaves something for the sake of Allah, He will provide him with a better substitute.

Brothers in Islam! Among the most dangerous things is fraud and deceit in all its forms and shapes. The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said:

“Whoever deceives us is not of us.” (Muslim)

It is compulsory for the seller to explain to the buyer whatever defect that is in his waresto regardless of the loss it may cause him for, the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) has said:

“It is unlawful for a Muslim to sell a defective ware to his brother without exposing the defect to him.”

Dear brothers! There are some people who think wrongly that the judge’s decision, whenever it is declared in their favor, makes what is decided in their favor lawful for him even though they actually know that the thing is really not theirs. This assumption is false. The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said:

“I am only a human being. You may bring your disputes to me for settlement while one of you is likely to be more intelligent in proofing his case than others thereby causing me to rule in his favor based on the argument that I hear. So, whoever I rule in his favor over rights belonging to his brother, I only cut a portion of Hellfire for him.” (Al Bukhari and Muslim)

He (SAW) also said regarding one who swears falsely in order to snatch another Muslims property:

“If it is that he has sweared falsely in order to get another person’s property in a wrongful way, Allah will turn away from him (on the Day of Judgement).” (Muslim)

Muslim also reported on the authority of Abu Umamah (RA) that the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said:

“Whoever wrongfully takes possession of the right of a Muslim by (false) oath, Allah has made the Hell his abode and has forbidden him Paradise.” A man then asked: ‘Even if it is an insignificant thing?’ The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) replied: “Even if it is (as insignicant as) a stick of Araak (a tree from which branches tooth cleaning sticks are plucked).”

The ‘Ulamaa says:

“Judge’s ruling does not make a forbidden thing lawful, a false thing true, nor does it make any change in the reality of things; and all disputes will be revisited on the Day of Judgement.”

Brothers in Faith! Give rights fully to whom they are due without any delay for, the Almighty Allah says:

“Verily! Allah commands that you should render back the trusts to those, to whom they are due.” (Surah Al Nisa’ 4:58)

The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) also said:

“Whover takes people’s money with the aim of paying it back, Allah will pay on his behalf; and whoever takes it with the aim of destroying it, Allah will destroy him.”