



1	 <p style="text-align: center;">SCHOLARS AS GUIDES OF THE PEOPLE 10 February 2017AD / 13 Jamadilawal 1438H</p>
2	<p>إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ لِلَّهِ، نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ وَنَتُوبُ إِلَيْهِ، وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَسَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا، مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَهُوَ الْمُهْتَدِ وَمَنْ يُضِلَّهُ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُ وَلِيًّا مُرْشِدًا.</p>
3	<p>أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ،</p>
4	<p>اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى نَبِيِّنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ وَمَنْ دَعَا بِدَعْوَتِهِ إِلَى يَوْمِ الدِّينِ.</p>
5	<p>أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَيَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ، أَوْصِيكُمْ وَنَفْسِي بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ وَطَاعَتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُقْلِحُونَ.</p>
6	<p>قَالَ تَعَالَى: أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْهُمْ أَيْمَةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا لَمَّا صَبَرُوا وَكَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾</p>
7	<p>Fellow Muslims blessed by Allah, Let us together increase the level of our faith and conviction in Allah SWT by performing all that He has commanded and avoiding all that He has prohibited. May we receive all His rewards and blessings in this world and in the Hereafter.</p>
8	<p>The <i>mimbar</i> today shall deliver a sermon entitled, "Scholars as Guides of the People."</p>
9	<p>Fellow Muslims blessed by Allah, Who are those worthy enough to be called <i>ulama'</i>, or scholars? Ibn Jarir at-Tabari, in his book of interpretations, <i>Jami'ul Bayan</i>, said the term <i>scholar</i> denotes <i>someone who has been made a leader of mankind by Allah SWT in matters of jurisprudence, knowledge, religion, and the world.</i> Meanwhile, Ibn</p>



	al-Qayyim in <i>I'lamul Muwaqqi'in</i> interprets a 'scholar' as being an expert in Islamic law, who has the right to issue <i>fatwas</i> on a point of Islamic law among the people, who concerns himself with the study of Islamic law and then summing it all to formulate the rules of what is permitted and what is prohibited.
10	In essence, an <i>ulama'</i> , or scholar, is someone who diligently explores and strives to understand the religion and then delivers it to the people. Allah SWT asserts this in Surah At-Tauba, verse 122: <p style="text-align: center;">وَمَا كَانُوا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لِيَنْفِرُوا كَآفَّةً فَلَوْلَا نَفَرَ مِن كُلِّ فِرْقَةٍ مِّنْهُمْ طَائِفَةٌ لِّيَتَفَقَّهُوا فِي الدِّينِ وَلِيُنذِرُوا قَوْمَهُمْ إِذَا رَجَعُوا إِلَيْهِمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَحْذَرُونَ ﴿١٢٢﴾</p>
11	Which means: "Nor should the Believers all go forth together: if a contingent from every expedition remained behind, they could devote themselves to studies in religion, and admonish the people when they return to them, - that thus they (may learn) to guard themselves (against evil)."
12	Generally, the <i>ulama'</i> , or scholars, have distinctive features that are not commonly possessed by the general public. Among those distinctive features are: First: Scholars possess very high knowledge, especially knowledge related to Islam as well as worldly knowledge. This is because the title of 'scholar' itself is closely related to the words 'knowledge' and 'learned'.
13	Second: Scholars are constantly committed in practicing the knowledge they possess. Scholars do not let their knowledge to just linger in their minds and tongues only, but they translate them into their daily behaviour and life. This is because society is always watching the character and behaviour of scholars, as if every step the scholars make become their statements and postulations.
14	Third: Scholars are responsible to sincerely convey their knowledge to



	everyone through existing channels. When imparting knowledge, scholars should have the courage to speak the truth and to not remain silent against any evil or injustice that occurs in plain sight.
15	Fourth: Scholars are endowed with noble characters, akin to the personality and character of Rasulullah SAW. A scholar displays humility when praised by the society, courteous when dealing with the public, and guards his tongue from uttering contemptible and despicable words. In short, the character of Rasulullah SAW is constantly emulated.
16	Fellow Muslims blessed by Allah, Today, the challenges we face are increasingly destructive. Values that are not in line with Islam is spreading through all aspects of life. Values within the spheres of leadership, administrative, social, economic, educational, family and others, are slowly moving away from the policies and tenets of Islam. Betrayal, slander, oppression, lack of transparency and a thousand other so called 'diseases' are devouring the sense and conscience of the society. Therefore, who is responsible to enlighten the people about such dangers?
17	This is where we must realize that we need an institution to act as a check and balance on the journey of our lives, so that the society shall always be on the desired path of Allah SWT.
18	That is why the Al-Quran suggests that there should be a group of people who act to resolve the problems of the society, as mentioned in Surah Ali Imran, verse 104: وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ
19	Which means: <i>“Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong: They are the ones to attain felicity.”</i>



20	In fulfilling these requirements, the community should lend a hand to the scholars, offer assistance and cooperation in enjoining good and forbidding evil. The cooperation between scholars and the public would definitely produce the maximum positive impact that would benefit the society and the country. Among the matters that the society can contribute in assisting the scholars are:
21	First: Accord scholars with the appropriate level of respect. There are those within the society who feel irritated with scholars, due to various unreasonable excuses, when in fact, Rasulullah SAW had ranked these scholars above others.
22	At-Tirmidhi recorded a narration by Abu Al-Bahili Umamah RA where Rasulullah SAW was reported to have said: فَضْلُ الْعَالِمِ عَلَى الْعَابِدِ كَفَضْلِي عَلَى أَدْنَاكُمْ، ثُمَّ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ وَأَهْلَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِينَ حَتَّى النَّمْلَةَ فِي جُحْرِهَا، وَحَتَّى الْحُوتَ لِيُصَلُّوا عَلَيَّ مُعَلِّمِ النَّاسِ الْخَيْرِ.
23	Which means: "The superiority of the learned over the devout worshipper is like my superiority over the most inferior amongst you (in good deeds)." He went on to say, "Allah, His angels, the dwellers of the heaven and the earth, and even the ant in its nest and the fish (in water) supplicate in favour of those who teach people knowledge."
24	Second: Reprimand scholars through good and wise admonition. Scholars are also human beings who are not above any wrongdoing. They also have a soul and feelings to be given the courtesy of positive criticism. Abu Bakr and Umar RA, when appointed Caliph, had called on the scholars to censure and advise their leadership if their leadership and administration were not in line with the laws of Allah SWT and the Sunnah of Rasulullah SAW.
25	Nowadays, there are times when social media is used as a weapon



	brandished against scholars, in an attempt to advise and admonish them. Rest assured, this will only satisfy the desires of the criticizer, while a bigger problem will arise, which is the persecution and slander of religious institutions, which in turn, will generally fester. Eventually, scholastic institutions will no longer be fairly respected.
26	Third: Support the scholars in fighting evil and upholding justice.
27	<p>Surah At-Tauba, verse 71 states this support:</p> <p>وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَيُطِيعُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ أُولَئِكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ</p>
28	Which means: “The Believers, men and women, are protectors one of another: they enjoin what is just, and forbid what is evil: they observe regular prayers, practise regular charity, and obey Allah and His Messenger. On them will Allah pour His mercy: for Allah is Exalted in power, Wise.”
29	Of late, there are those who, without proper manners and civility, openly criticize scholars. They expose the shortcomings of some scholars, to the point where all scholars are seen as irrelevant and are of no benefit to the society. The scholars are even highlighted as dangerous and harmful, and are to be shunned.
30	It would be proper if such criticisms were made privately or through the proper channels, in order to maintain harmony and respect of religious institutions in the public eye. We should not forget that scholars are much respected even by Allah SWT. And, it is most appropriate that we should honour them, and be more civilized towards them.
31	<p>Fellow Muslims blessed by Allah,</p> <p>The takeaways of this sermon are as follows:</p> <p>First: The Scholars, or <i>ulama'</i>, are those who are knowledgeable,</p>



	<p>who practice and impart their knowledge with courage, based on truth and justice.</p> <p>Second: People need to believe and respect the <i>ulama'</i>, as it is an institution that continues the struggles of Rasulullah SAW.</p> <p>Third: Being disrespectful and not following the lead of scholars will increase our tendency to deviate from the truthful path.</p>
32	<p>To conclude today's sermon, let us reflect upon the words of Allah SWT in Surah An-Naml, verse 15:</p> <p style="text-align: right;">أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ</p> <p style="text-align: center;">وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا دَاوُدَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ عِلْمًا وَقَالَا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي فَضَّلَنَا عَلَى كَثِيرٍ مِّنْ عِبَادِهِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ</p> <p style="text-align: right;"></p>
33	<p>Which means: "We gave (in the past) knowledge to Daud and Sulaiman: And they both said: "Praise be to Allah, Who has favoured us above many of his servants who believe!"</p>
34	<p>بَارَكَ اللَّهُ لِي وَلَكُمْ بِالْقُرْآنِ 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 الْأَحْيَاءِ مِنْهُمُ وَالْأَمْوَاتِ فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ.</p>