

Date: 11.09.2020

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَأَنَّ هَذَا صِرَاطِي مُسْتَقِيمًا فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا السُّبُلَ
فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ ذَلِكُمْ وَصِيكُم بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ.
وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
إِنَّ أَصْدَقَ الْحَدِيثِ كِتَابُ اللَّهِ وَأَحْسَنَ الْهَدْيِ هَدْيُ مُحَمَّدٍ.

INSIGHTFULNESS AND PRUDENCE AGAINST EXPLOITATION OF RELIGION

Honorable Muslims!

In the verse I have recited, Allah the Almighty states, “**And, [moreover], this is My path, which is straight, so follow it; and do not follow [other] ways, for you will be separated from His way. This has He instructed you that you may become righteous.**”¹

In the hadith I have read, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) says, “**The best discourse is Allah’s Book. The best guidance is that given by Muhammad.**”²

Dear Believers!

Our sublime religion Islam is revealed to teach people about their Lord (swt), inform them of their reason for existence, and ensure their happiness in this world and in the Hereafter. Islam is a complete set of values and rules formed by the guidance of the Qur’an and the example of Prophet Muhammad (saw). Muslims have held on tightly to these values and endeavored to understand, tell about, and live by Islam correctly by conforming to these rules. From past to present, however, there have been people who have tried to exploit and abuse Islam, the religion of right, truth, and true path, for worldly interests and benefits.

Dear Muslims!

Exploitation of religion means to obtain material gain, power, fame, and high ranks through using the spiritual authority of the religion. Those who exploit religion attempt to have people’s will handed over to them by claiming that they see and talk with Allah and the Prophet Muhammad. They try to show themselves as the single representative of the

truth by uttering lies that they are infallible and innocent. They aim to manage pure and innocent Muslims with so-called karamah, dreams, bid’ah, and superstitions. They derive benefits from people’s despair with promises to heal them and bring them good fortune and luck. They exploit the society’s enthusiasm, dreams and ideals, religious beliefs and emotions particularly by targeting the youth.

Exploiters of religion ostracize those who do not think the way they do. They even otherize and declare polytheist those who do not show absolute obedience to them. They weaken family, national, cultural, and identity ties by conditioning people to be unquestionably obedient to them. They take lies, hypocrisy, theft, blackmailing, and violence as legitimate for their interests. In the end, they not only drift away from the true path but also make others go astray.

Dear Believers!

What falls upon each one of us is to act in an insightful and prudent manner. We need to stay alert to distinguish the exploitation attempts from sincere efforts. We need to learn and know the strong and reliable vessels of spirituality that have been feeding our religious life for hundreds of years. We must not forget that one of the aims of those who want to distort and exploit Islam is to damage the Anatolian wisdom.

It is also a fact that deceiving people through their faith and religious values is as much an exploitation of religion as bringing Muslims under suspicion through slanders, insults, and raising fear and hatred about Islam.

Dear Believers!

As the members and followers of the final and perfected religion, we are granted reason and will by Allah the Almighty (swt). We have unchangeable religious principles, cultural values, and a 14-century old strong tradition of knowledge and wisdom. Let us know their value and not waste our treasure. Let us learn about our religion from experts, well-intended and authentic sources in order to prevent exploitation. Let us take only the unalterable truths of the Holy Qur’an and Prophet Muhammad’s sunnah as our measure.

¹ An’am, 6/153.

² Nasai, ‘Idayn, 22.