

Friday Khutbah Delivered at the Cornerstone, Wokingham on October 9th, 2026

Artificial Intelligence - Tool, Opportunity, or Test?

Khateeb: Mohamed Kharbouch

First Khutbah

Opening

إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ لِلَّهِ، نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَغِيثُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ، وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ
شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَسَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا، مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ
لَهُ... وَمَنْ يَضِلَّ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ

All praise is due to Allah. We praise Him, seek His help and His forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allah from the evil within ourselves and from the consequences of our bad deeds. Whomsoever Allah guides, none can misguide; and whomsoever Allah leaves astray, none can guide. I bear witness that there is no god worthy of worship except Allah alone, and I bear witness that Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and Messenger.

Dear brothers and sisters,

I advise myself and you to fear Allah. Taqwa is the provision of the believer in every age and every circumstance. The challenges may change, but the guidance from Allah remains timeless.

Today, I would like to discuss a subject that is rapidly transforming our world, our workplaces, our schools, and even our homes:

Artificial Intelligence: Tool, Opportunity, or Test?

Many of us have now heard of Artificial Intelligence, or AI. Some of us use it every day without even realising it. It helps write emails, translate languages, answer questions, recommend videos, analyse medical scans, and even generate images and computer code.

For some people, AI is exciting.

For others, it is frightening.

Many ask:

- What happens when machines can write, think, and create?
- How do we distinguish knowledge from wisdom?
- Will AI replace human purpose?

As Muslims, we should neither fear technology blindly nor embrace it blindly. Instead, we approach every new development through the guidance of Allah and His Messenger ﷺ.

Knowledge is a Blessing from Allah

In Surah Al-Baqarah verse 31 Allah says:

وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا

"And He taught Adam the names of all things."

This is a profound verse.

The first distinction Allah gave to humanity was knowledge.

- Not wealth.
- Not strength.
- Not appearance.
- **Knowledge.**

Human civilisation, science, engineering, medicine, mathematics, and technology all originate from the knowledge that Allah enabled humanity to discover.

Therefore, technological progress itself is not evil.

The Muslim civilisation once led the world in astronomy, medicine, engineering, architecture, and scientific discovery.

As Muslims, we should celebrate beneficial knowledge (One of the things that believers leave behind to work for them when they die)

Creating tools that cure diseases, improve education, reduce suffering, and solve human problems can be acts of service to humanity.

The question is not whether AI exists.

The question is how we use it.

Knowledge is Not the Same as Wisdom

Brothers and sisters,

One of the greatest dangers of our time is confusing information with wisdom.

Today, a machine can provide answers within seconds.

- A machine can search millions of documents.
- A machine can generate reports and write essays.
- But can it distinguish right from wrong?
- Can it fear Allah?
- Can it feel compassion?
- Can it make sincere tawbah?
- Can it stand before Allah on the Day of Judgment?

The answer is no.

The machine may have information. But wisdom comes from Allah.

Allah says in Surah Al-Baqarah verse 269

يُؤْتِي الْحِكْمَةَ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۚ وَمَنْ يُؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِيَ
خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا ۗ وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

"He grants wisdom to whom He wills, and whoever has been granted wisdom has certainly been given much good."

Wisdom is not merely knowing what can be done.

Wisdom is knowing what should be done.

A machine can tell us how to build something.

Only a moral human being can determine whether it ought to be built.

A machine can help generate content.

Only a believer guided by taqwa can determine whether that content is truthful, beneficial, and pleasing to Allah.

Technology Must Remain a Servant

- Every generation faces a test. **(IBTILAH)**
- Previous generations were tested with wealth, power, or political authority.
- Our generation is increasingly being tested by technology.
- Technology is a useful servant but a terrible master.
- Many people wake up and immediately reach for their phones.
- Many spend hours scrolling without purpose.
- Many feel anxious when disconnected.
- We live in an age where machines compete for our attention.
- The greatest danger may not be that AI becomes intelligent.
- The greatest danger may be that humans stop thinking deeply.

- The greatest danger may be that we become dependent upon machines while neglecting our relationship with Allah.
- The believer must remain in control.
- We use technology.
- Technology must not use us.

Human Beings Are More Than Intelligence

Allah honoured human beings in a way no machine will ever be honoured.

Allah says in (Surah Al-Isra verse 70)

وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ وَحَمَلْنَاهُمْ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ
وَرَزَقْنَاهُمْ مِّنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَفَضَّلْنَاهُمْ عَلَى كَثِيرٍ مِّمَّنْ
خَلَقْنَا تَفْضِيلًا

Indeed, We have dignified the children of Adam, carried them on land and sea, granted them good and lawful provisions, and privileged them far above many of Our creatures.

Why are humans honoured?

Because Allah gave us a soul.

Because Allah gave us free choice.

Because Allah gave us accountability.

Because Allah gave us the ability to love, forgive, sacrifice, worship, and repent.

- AI may become better than humans at some tasks.
- It may write faster.

- Calculate faster.
- Analyse faster.
- But it can never replace the human soul.
- It can never replace sincerity.
- It can never replace faith.
- It can never replace our purpose as servants of Allah.

Purpose comes from Allah, not from employment, status, or technology.

Closing Part 1

أقول قولي هذا وأستغفر الله لي ولكم، فاستغفروه إنه هو
الغفور الرحيم

I say these words of mine, and I seek forgiveness from Allah for myself and for you. Seek His forgiveness, for He is the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful.

Second Khutbah

الحمد لله ربّ العالمين، والصلاة والسلام على نبينا
محمد ﷺ، وعلى آله وصحبه أجمعين، وعلى من
اتبعهم بإحسان إلى يوم الدين.

All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the Worlds. Peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, his family, companions, and all who follow them until the Last Day.

Dear brothers and sisters,

Let us conclude with some practical lessons.

How Should Muslims Use AI?

1. Use AI for Benefit

Use it to learn.

Use it to improve productivity.

Use it to help your studies.

Use it to support your work.

Use it to solve problems and serve humanity.

قال رسول الله ﷺ

"أحبُّ الناسِ إلى اللهِ أنفعُهُم للناسِ"

The Prophet ﷺ said:

"The most beloved people to Allah are those who are most beneficial to people."

Any technology that genuinely benefits humanity can become part of this noble objective.

2. Verify Before You Trust

AI systems can make mistakes.

They can produce false information confidently.

Allah teaches us in Surah Al-Hujurat verse 6

:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِن جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا أَن
تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا بِجَهَالَةٍ فَتُصْبِحُوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نَادِمِينَ

"If a wicked person comes to you with news, verify it."

Verification is an Islamic principle.

Do not forward information simply because a machine produced it.

Truth matters.

Integrity matters.

3. Protect Our Children

Many young people are growing up in a world shaped by algorithms.

Parents and educators must teach children:

- Critical thinking.
- Islamic values.
- Digital responsibility.
- Good character.

The future challenge for our children will not be access to information.

It will be learning how to use information wisely.

4. Never Outsource Moral Judgment

- This may be the most important lesson.
- Use AI to help write.
- Help research.
- Help analyse.

- Help organise.
- But never allow a machine to replace your conscience.
- Never allow technology to determine your values.
- Never allow convenience to replace responsibility.
- Your accountability before Allah remains yours alone.

Conclusion

Brothers and sisters,

Artificial Intelligence is neither our saviour nor our enemy.

Like many things in life, it is a tool.

A knife can prepare food or cause harm.

A car can transport people or cause destruction.

Technology itself is not the issue.

The issue is the heart of the person using it.

As Muslims, let us embrace beneficial knowledge, contribute positively to society, help solve real problems, and use modern tools for good.

But let us always remember:

- Knowledge comes from Allah.
- Wisdom comes from Allah.
- Guidance comes from Allah.
- Purpose comes from Allah.

Technology may continue to advance rapidly, but our ultimate purpose remains unchanged:

To worship Allah and prepare for our meeting with Him.

In Surah Adh-Dhariyat verse 56

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ

"And I did not create jinn and mankind except to worship Me."

اللهم آتنا في الدنيا حسنة وفي الآخرة حسنة وقنا
عذاب النار
عباد الله،

إن الله يأمر بالعدل والإحسان وإيتاء ذي القربى
وينهى عن الفحشاء والمنكر والبغى، يعظكم لعلكم
تذكرون.

فاذكروا الله العظيم يذكركم واشكروه على نعمه
يزدكم، ولذكر الله أكبر، والله يعلم ما تصنعون.

Our Lord! Grant us the good of this world and the Hereafter, and protect us from the torment of the Fire." . (Baqarah verse 201)

Indeed, Allah commands justice, grace, as well as generosity to close relatives. He forbids indecency, wickedness, and aggression. He instructs you so perhaps you will be mindful

So remember Allah, the Most Great, and He will remember you. Be grateful to Him for His blessings, and He will increase you in them. Indeed, the remembrance of Allah is greater, and Allah knows all that you do. (An- Nahl verse 90)