

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ ثُمَّ رَدَدْنَاهُ أَسْفَلَ سَافِلِينَ
إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فَلَهُمْ أَجْرٌ غَيْرُ مَمْنُونٍ.
وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

ذَاقَ طَعْمَ الْإِيمَانِ مَنْ رَضِيَ بِاللَّهِ رَبًّا وَبِالْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا وَبِمُحَمَّدٍ رَسُولًا.

HUMAN, FAITH AND LIFE

Honorable Muslims!

In the verse I have recited, Allah the Almighty (swt) states, **“We have indeed created man in the best of moulds, then do We abase him (to be) the lowest of the low, Except such as believe and do righteous deeds: for they shall have a reward unfailing.”**¹

The Prophet Muhammad (saw) said in the hadith I have read, **“Those who are content with Allah as their Lord, with Islam as their religion, and with Muhammad as their Prophet has found the taste of faith (iman).”**²

Dear Believers!

Allah the Exalted (swt), the one and only Owner of the earth and the heavens, has created human in a perfect form. He has bestowed upon them a mind to distinguish between right and wrong, and a conscience to guide them on the path to goodness. As a strong and conscious being with free will and sense of responsibility, human is the treasure of the universe.

Allah the Almighty (swt), who has created human from nothing, bestows upon them blessings to feed them, and protects them, and wants them to have faith and do good deeds. The reason for the existence of humans is to bear the *amanah* as a servant, and to make the world a peaceful, fair, and livable home for humanity.

Dear Muslims!

Humankind has quite superior qualities, privileged power and abilities. They can intend to do good and manage life in a good way thanks to those qualities. But they can also desire evil and spread cruelty around the world. As they can build a happy world with their patient, determined, peaceful and fair attitudes, they can also endanger both themselves and their surroundings with their ignorant, selfish, ambitious, hasty, and ungrateful attitudes.

Therefore, our Lord (swt) never gives rein to human. He has not abandoned the universe after creating it. Allah (swt) always sees, looks after, and manages. He never leaves human alone, deprived of blessings, and helpless in the life. He is with us each moment; closer to us than our jugular vein. The greatest support of Allah the Almighty (swt) to us is the guidance He gives us through His Prophet and His Book.

Dear Believers!

The divine law that is sent by Allah (swt) to humanity as a guide, a light of life, and a source of salvation which invites men of understanding to accept

the guide of salvation brought by our Prophet is called religion. Religion came into being with the first human, and will exist until the last day. We all know as believers who came together in this holy masjid in this hour of Friday that **“The Religion before Allah is Islam.”**³ All humans until the Day of Resurrection are obliged to be one of the Ummah of our Beloved Prophet (saw), and to respond to his invitation. Because, **“If anyone desires a religion other than Islam, never will it be accepted of him; and in the Hereafter he will be in the ranks of those who have lost (all spiritual good).”**⁴

Religion is the soundest source of knowledge where people can find answers to their questions, and solutions to their problems. Those who believe by responding the invitation of the religion have given the best decision of their life. They have been honored by becoming Muslims. They turned to Allah (swt) with their own choice voluntarily without being forced. They have sincerely accepted the commands and prohibitions of Him. From that moment on, they are expected to fulfill the requirements of their faith, and to live as a believer does.

Dear Muslims!

Islam is a unique system of faith, worship, and morality.

Taking the kalimah al-shahadah by uttering these words is to open the gate to faith, hope, and happiness both for the world and the Hereafter. Those who enter through this gate perform their prayers regularly and meticulously. Prayer (salah) is the pillar of our religion and the light of our hearts. They fast zestfully and patiently. Fasting is the shield protecting us from being captive to our nafs and to Satan. They pay their alms (zakat) sincerely and kindly. Zakat is the bridge turning the ephemeral worldly belongings into eternal gain and brotherhood. They fulfill their duty of hajj devotedly and submissively. Hajj is the holy journey which makes people meet with themselves and other faithful hearts around the Ka'bah.

The aim of worship in Islam is to enable people to establish a sound communication with themselves, with Allah (swt), and with all other beings. For this reason, each worship requires to be completed with good morality. A way of life befitting to Muslims can be lived by observing the moral principles as well as the worships. It is an indispensable requirement of being Muslim to observe the rights, to not let cruelty and oppression, to spread mercy and prevent violence. Making life blessed with justice, honesty, humbleness and generosity is the essential of a Muslim's personality. Let us not forget that those whose minds are with the truth, whose hearts are with goodness and whose possibilities are with beneficial deeds will fulfill the requirement of their faith.

May the Almighty Allah (swt) accept all the donations we have made up to now and we will make from now on.

¹ Tin, 95/4-6.

² Muslim, Iman, 56.

³ Al-i 'Imran, 3/19.

⁴ Al-i 'Imran, 3/85.

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ

فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ.

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

لَيْسَ شَيْءٌ أَكْرَمَ عَلَى اللَّهِ تَعَالَى مِنَ الدُّعَاءِ.

SOME DU'AS IN THE WORDS OF PROPHET MUHAMMAD (SAW)

Honorable Muslims!

In this temporary world we have some days we show gratitude for the blessings we are bestowed upon and some other days we show patience for the troubles we have to endure. We try our best to welcome sorrow and hardships as would be appropriate for a Muslim just like we do so when it comes to success and happiness. We are blessed with a unique blessing that strengthen our faith in and reliance upon Allah (swt), gives us hope and a spirit to try better. That blessing is what is the essence of the whole worships: du'a.

It is our sincere entreaty and appeal to Allah (swt). It is our confession that we are weak before His omnipotent power. It is our seeking refuge in His grace and forgiveness. It is our submission of servitude to Him and asking help from Him.

Dear Believers!

In the verse I recited as I began the khutbah the Almighty Allah (swt) states, **"And when My servants ask you, o Muhammad, concerning Me - indeed I am near. I respond to the invocation of the supplicant when he calls upon Me. So let them respond to Me by obedience and believe in Me that they may be rightly guided."**¹

One of the names of Allah (swt), al-Mujib, means the answerer of du'as. He is Who is closer to us than even our own self, and hears, knows and responds to all our du'as, whether implied or express.

Dear Muslims!

Prophet Muhammad (saw), in all actions of whom we see his love and loyalty to Allah (swt), was in a constant state of invocation to Him. Day or night, with people around or by himself, when happy, afraid, or sad, when lost in thoughts about the Hereafter, in his home, by the minbar of the masjid, during travel, in short in all instances of life he would make du'a. Du'a in his life was like threads interlaced in a piece of fabric. It was he who taught us how to make du'a.

Waking up in the morning, he would start his day with the following du'a, **"O Allah! With Your Power we have come to the morning, with Your Power we come to the evening, with Your Power we live, and we die, and to You will we return."**²

In observance of the approval of Allah (swt) all day long, he would always rely on and trust in Him, and pray, **"O, Allah! Give me what is good for me and choose what is best for me."**³

اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ
"O, Allah! Grant us good both in this world and in the Hereafter. Save us from the torment of of hellfire!"⁴
was how he supplicated to Allah (swt).

When by gone is the day and down falls the night, he would pray, **"O, Allah! I want from You the good out of what will happen tonight and in its aftermath. I seek refuge in You from the evil of what will happen tonight and in its aftermath."**⁵When he would go to sleep, he would pray, **"All praise and thanks be to You, Who provides us with food and drink, covers our needs and shelters us while there are countless people who has no place for accommodation and no person to provide for them."**⁶

Dear Believers!

Du'a is the servant's search for refuge in Allah (swt) for remedy to sorrows, for protection from all evils, and for safety against troubles whether visible or invisible. In this respect Prophet Muhammad (saw) would seek refuge in Allah (swt) as follows: **"O, Allah! Verily, I seek refuge in You from weakness, laziness, senility (of old age), cowardliness, stinginess and the torment of the grave. Give my soul its good and purify it, for You are the best to purify it. You are its Guardian and Master. Verily, I seek refuge in You from a heart that is not humble, a soul that is not satisfied, knowledge that does not benefit and a supplication that is not answered."**⁷

Honorable Muslims!

Muslims should never give in to the thought that their supplication is not responded to. In this respect, Prophet Muhammad (saw) states, **"The supplication of every one of you will be granted if he does not get impatient and say, 'I supplicated to Allah, but my prayer has not been granted.'"**⁸ This is because sometimes Allah (swt) gives us countless blessings for the sake of our du'a. Some other times He takes our troubles away. Sometimes He forgives our sins. Some other times He gives us something better than what we actually want.

Let us then have faith that all our heartfelt du'as will be certainly responded to. Let us not be bereft of abundance of divine blessings, peace, and confidence. Let us not forget to pray for our families, loved ones, Muslim brothers and sisters, and the oppressed, as much as we pray for our own selves. Let us try to deserve the du'a of our parents, the patients, the elderly, and those people in need.

I would like to conclude this khutbah with Prophet Muhammad's (saw) following du'a:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الْهُدَى وَالتَّقَى، وَالْعَفَافَ وَالْغِنَى

"O, Allah! I ask you to bless me with guidance, piety, chastity, and contentment."⁹

¹ Baqarah, 2/186.

² Tirmidhi, Da'wat, 13.

³ Tirmidhi, Da'wat, 85.

⁴ Abu Dawud, Witr, 26.

⁵ Muslim, Dhikr, 72.

⁶ Tirmidhi, Daawat, 16.

⁷ Muslim, Dhikr, 73; Nasa'i, Isti'adha, 13.

⁸ Abu Dawud, Witr, 23.

⁹ Muslim, Dhikr, 72.

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ

كُلُّ أُولَئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْئُولًا.

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

نِعْمَتَانِ مَغْبُورُونَ فِيهِمَا كَثِيرٌ مِنَ النَّاسِ، الصِّحَّةُ وَالْفَرَاغُ.

TECHNOLOGY ADDICTION AND SOCIAL MEDIA ETHICS

Honorable Muslims!

Islam primarily aims to ensure that the lives, properties, mental health, dignity, and faith of human, created to be the most honorable being on earth, are protected. It regards these five values inviolable. It does not approve in any manner these values being undermined for any reason. Binding all spheres of life, this fact is also applicable to using technology, and the Internet and social media.

Dear Believers!

What fits a Muslim is to use the technology properly as approved by the religion, ethics, and common sense. To consider the Internet as a purposeless, useless and uncontrolled medium means to violate the five fundamental values Islam wants protected. This is because the inconsiderate use of technology harms human life by exposing threat to human health and inflicts costly damage to property by causing financial loss. It erodes human dignity through unethical orientations and human faith through radical and perverse ideologies. It impairs the ability to think and comprehend, and challenges the mental faculties.

Dear Muslims!

People who produce technology using the reason and material given by Allah (swt) are accountable to use it in good cause. By using technology if they go after gambling instead of halal earning, extravagance instead of moderate spending, morally ill practices instead of honorably living, and violence instead of compassion, then greatly mistaken are they. It means they spread sedition by their own hands, and put their future in danger. Moreover, if they kill their time behind a television or computer screen, then they become accountable against themselves, their families, and

Allah (swt). It is unfortunate that the number of families living under the same roof unaware of each other is increasing day by day. The technology, expected to buy time by speeding up the processes for human, has turned into the most deceiving trap for waste and loss of time today. Prophet Muhammad (saw), however, warned us as follows, **“There are two blessings that many people lose: Health and free time.”**¹

Dear Believers!

Occupying a great place in the lives of everyone, the Internet and social media should be prevented from turning into an area uncontrolled, unprincipled, and free of responsibility. What suits a Muslim is to always act responsibly observing the boundaries set by Allah (swt), and to uphold the truth and the right at all times. Let us not forget that just as in the offline life, it is haram to violate the rights and privacy of people on the social media as well. Any step in disrespect of privacy of people contradicts the divine commandment of Allah (swt), **“Do not spy or backbite each other.”**² Just as it is a sin to tell a lie, defame people, and utter slanders at them in offline life, it is also a sin to do so online. Allah (swt) as the Lord of the Worlds watches us over online, too. He will bring us to account for all our words and acts online, too. In the verse I recited as I began the khutbah, Allah (swt) states, **“Do not pursue that of which you have no knowledge. Indeed, the hearing, the sight and the heart - about all those one will be questioned.”**³

Dear Muslims!

Today it is not possible to live in a way completely isolated from technology. In fact, Islam does not want such a thing either. However, it is the primary responsibility of all of us to use the technology as aware of halal-haram, paying attention to protecting moral principles, without violating human rights and liberties. That way we might have more productive time and more meaningful efforts. We might render the world better and peaceful... As long as we use the technology in accordance with the limits and boundaries set by Allah (swt) as in all His blessings.

¹ Bukhari, Riqaq, 1.

² Hujurat, 49/12.

³ Isra, 17/36.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَإِذْ قَالَ لِقْمَنُ لِابْنِهِ وَهُوَ يَعِظُهُ يَا بُنَيَّ لَا تُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ

إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ . . .

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

مَا نَحَلَ وَالِدٌ وَلَدًا مِنْ نَحْلِ أَفْضَلَ مِنْ أَدَبٍ حَسَنِ.

TO BE A RESPONSIBLE FATHER

Honorable Muslims!

Being a family is one of the greatest blessings granted for human by Allah (swt). This is so because family means trust, shelter, and refuge. It refers to joining hands all together to foster the good and prevent the evil. It is also the most important institution that prepares human for the future. The first education ever is given within family. Within family is formed the personality. Before everyone else, from parents are taught love, respect, and honesty.

Important duties fall upon the father in family as well as the mother. A father's responsibility is not limited to the financial satisfaction of the family's material needs only. It is the primary responsibility of all fathers to rear children who are aware of the significance of mercy, equipped with good morals and values. In the hadith I recited as I began the khutbah, Prophet Muhammad (saw) says, **"No father can leave a better heritage to his children than good manners."**¹

Dear Believers!

To be a father means to strive that his child is honored with iman, like Prophet Nuh. It is to make every effort so that the child could be happy in this world and in the Hereafter. Prophet Nuh called out to his son, who refused to get aboard the ship to tawhid, with his final hope, **"...O my son, come aboard with us and be not with the disbelievers."**²

Dear Muslims!

To be a father means to be in a state of constant supplication like Prophet Ibrahim. It is to seek refuge with Allah (swt) to be an obedient servant of His. It is to pray earnestly to Him (swt) for good children. In this respect, Prophet Ibrahim prayed to Allah (swt) as, **"Our Lord! Make us Muslims in submission to You and from our descendants a Muslim nation in submission to You. And show us our rites and accept our repentance. Indeed, You are the Accepting of repentance, the Merciful."**³ **"O Allah! Make me an establisher of prayer, and many from my descendants. O Allah, accept my supplication."**⁴

Dear Believers!

To be a father means to preserve one's perseverance in the face of hardships, like Prophet Yaqub. It is to bear the tests and trials of the world, however heavy they may be, with patience and reliance on Allah. It is to continuously instill love, mercy, justice, and compassion in one's children. It is to warn them when they fail, but not ever give up hope in them. Prophet Yaqub said to his children who, out of jealousy, threw their brother Yusuf in a well, **"...Rather, your souls have enticed you to something, so patience is most fitting. And Allah is the one sought for help against that which you describe."**⁵

Dear Muslims!

To be a father means to give advice to one's child in a compassionate manner, like Luqman. It is to teach them what is right and what is wrong, as well as what is haram and what is halal. Luqman advised his child so finely, **"O my son, do not associate anything with Allah. Indeed, association with Him is great injustice."** **"O my son, establish prayer, enjoin what is right, forbid what is wrong, and be patient over what befalls you."** **"And do not turn your cheek in contempt toward people and do not walk through the earth exultantly. Indeed, Allah does not like anyone self-deluded and boastful."** **"And be moderate in your pace and lower your voice..."**⁶

Dear Muslims!

To be a father means to follow the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (saw), who was sent as mercy to the worlds. He (saw) was an exemplary father. He would not make any discrimination among his children. Seeing his daughter Fatima, he would stand up, let her have his seat, kiss and hug her mercifully. He would treat considerately not only his own children but all children. Grown up under Prophet Muhammad's (saw) supervision, Anas said about him, **"I served him for ten years. He never said 'uff' to me."**⁷

Honorable Believers!

Our children expect care and compassion from us. They want to feel they are valued around us. They need us to be the compass guiding them on their way and the safe harbor taking shelter in as they learn the life. Then, let us not neglect our children in the busyness of the daily life and the rush of earning livelihood. Let us make every effort to raise children who help their religion, homeland, and all humanity. Let us not leave our children deprived of our love, care, and du'a for them.

¹ Tirmidhi, Birr, 33.

² Hud, 11/42.

³ Baqarah, 2/128.

⁴ Ibrahim, 14/40.

⁵ Yusuf 12/18.

⁶ Luqman, 31/13, 17, 18, 19.

⁷ Muslim, Fadail, 51.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ
مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ
وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
وَاللَّهُ فِي عَوْنِ الْعَبْدِ مَا كَانَ الْعَبْدُ فِي عَوْنِ أَخِيهِ.

FOSTERING A GREATER AWARENESS OF NATURAL DISASTERS

Honorable Muslims!

A powerful earthquake hit our country last week. The sorrow and pain it caused broke our hearts. Tens of our brothers and sisters lost their lives. We all rushed for those people who got injured and lost their homes. Once again we came face to face with the reality of natural disasters. We all wish the Almighty Allah's mercy upon our brothers and sisters who lost their lives in this calamitous event, may He grant their families and loved ones with the best of patience. May He bless the injured with a speedy recovery. May He enable the victims of the earthquake to recover, get better, and hold on to life soon. May He protect our people from such natural disasters.

Dear Believers!

The universe runs in an order based on the divine laws and rules called "Sunnat al-Allah". The Almighty Allah has put these laws in place with His omnipotent power and knowledge. Earth, air, water, and fire each has its specific nature and balance. People need to live in such a way as to protect such nature and balance.

Earthquakes, too, happen in accordance with the divine laws. People are not able to prevent earthquakes, nor are they able to change their time and magnitude. They can, however, take certain measures not to get harmed in them. Only by taking necessary measures is it possible to minimize the loss of life and property caused by natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods, and fires.

Dear Muslims!

The Almighty Allah states in the Holy Qur'an, "We will surely test you with something of fear and hunger and a loss of wealth and lives and fruits. Give good tidings to the patient!"¹ Muslims, then, live in the know that they will face various troubles in this world of tests and trials. They are aware of their limits and incapacities, and are, as servants of Allah, in need of Him. They

make every effort practicably possible to endure the troubles to come their way. They use their mind, knowledge, and experience, and take necessary precautions. Thereafter, they submit themselves to and rely on Allah (swt), as required by the iman they have. Even stronger than before, they come out of the troubles they are hit by through patience. They pass the divine test and trial by showing gratitude for the blessings and patience for the hardships. Prophet Muhammad (saw) describes this situation of Muslims as, "How wonderful is the case of a believer; there is good for him in everything and this applies only to a believer. If prosperity attends him, he expresses gratitude to Allah and that is good for him; and if adversity befalls him, he endures it patiently and that is better for him."²

Dear Believers!

What suits a Muslim is to have a sense of responsibility against natural disasters. What Allah (swt) has ordained is meant to happen; and, what falls upon us is to take necessary measures and rely on Him. In this respect, Prophet Muhammad (saw) describes the stance Muslims should have against troubles, "Allah dislikes negligence and idleness. You should behave reasonably. However, once there is nothing left that you can do, then say, *حَسْبِيَ اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ* 'Sufficient is Allah for me. He is the Best Disposer of affairs.'"³

So, let us draw lessons from bitter experiences. Let us all get prepared against natural disasters for a safe and secure life. Let us make right and proper moves in accordance with the balances of the nature and the realities of the region we live in. Let us inform our family members on disasters and emergencies.

Dear Muslims!

Alhamdulillah, today, too, just as in the past, we heal our wounds together as a nation regardless of differences in faith, sects, ethnic origins, and ideologies. It is never enough to express our appreciation for the support of our state and the solidarity of our nation. Our noble, sacrificing, and generous nation are thankfully the addressee of the good news given by the Prophet Muhammad (saw), "Allah will help His slave so long as His slave helps his brother."⁴

¹ Baqarah, 2/155.

² Muslim, Zuhd, 64.

³ Abu Dawud, Aqdiyya, 28.

⁴ Abu Dawud, Adab, 60.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ مَنَعَ مَسَاجِدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ يُذَكَّرَ فِيهَا اسْمُهُ وَسَعَى
فِي خَرَابِهَا أُولَئِكَ مَا كَانَ لَهُمْ أَنْ يَدْخُلُوهَا إِلَّا خَائِفِينَ
لَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا خِزْيٌ وَلَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ.
وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
لَا تُشَدُّ الرَّحَالَ إِلَّا إِلَى ثَلَاثَةِ مَسَاجِدَ
الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ، وَمَسْجِدِ الرَّسُولِ، وَمَسْجِدِ الْأَقْصَى.

AL-QUDS (JERUSALEM) IS AN ISLAMIC LAND AND BELONGS TO ISLAM

Honorable Muslims!

One day Prophet Muhammad's wife Maymunah asked him, "Tell us something about Bayt al-Maqdis." He (saw) said, "That is the place of resurrection. Go and pray there! For one prayer performed there is like one thousand prayers performed elsewhere." When she asked him, "What if I cannot travel and go there?", he replied, "Then send a gift of olive oil to light its lamps. For whoever does that is like one who goes there."¹

Dear Believers!

Al-Quds is a universal value that bears witness to the most deeply-rooted human heritage. It is the symbol of a stance that reflects faith, a direction that is aligned with the divine revelation, and a turn towards affection. It is an Islamic city, home to countless memories of many prophets. The first qibla of Muslims, al-Masjid al-Aqsa, is there. In the hadith I recited as I began the khutbah, Prophet Muhammad (saw) says, "Mounts are not saddled for except to travel to three masjids for worship: Al-Masjid Al-Haram, this Masjid of mine, and al-Masjid Al-Aqsa."²

Dear Muslims!

Al-Quds is referred to as "dar al-salam (Jerusalem)", namely the land of peace. Al-Quds has been the symbol of freedom and justice under the Muslim rule for centuries. It was ruled as a land on which not only Muslims but also all people of any faith could freely perform their worships and live in peace.

Since its invasion and occupation, however, al-Quds has lost its peaceful and tranquil atmosphere. Al-Quds is woeful. Overshadowed by conflicts,

insults, and oppression, al-Masjid al-Aqsa is in sorrow. This occupation actually targets the unity, solidarity, and sacred values of Muslims. It prevents Muslims from worshipping in their own land and in their own mosques. However, in the Holy Qur'an it is stated of those who damage the masjids of Allah and prevent Muslims from worshipping, "And who are more unjust than those who prevent the name of Allah from being mentioned in His mosques and strive toward their destruction. It is not for them to enter them except in fear. For them in this world is disgrace, and they will have in the Hereafter a great punishment."³

Dear Believers!

To occupy Palestine and al-Quds means actually to prevent peace not only in the region but also across the world by creating chaos. To fuel the turmoil and feed on war-waging means actually to turn one's back on mercy, conscience, and compassion. To force Muslims out of al-Quds, a city that has throughout the history embraced all humanity, means actually to disregard the laws, rights and honor of all humanity.

As the cry-outs of the oppressed people reach the clouds, the only solution is for Prophet Muhammad's ummah to come together and stand against the oppression and occupation. For only when they unite their faithful stances and capabilities, Muslims will form the fairest and most merciful force in the world. They will be the shared hope of all humanity that is in search of fairness and trust. Let us not forget that, for Prophet Muhammad's ummah, al-Quds is an opportunity to save Muslims' untouchable land and their distorted unity. Al-Quds is also the cause for rendering prosperous the devastated life in the world, in all quarters of which run blood and tear.

Honorable Muslims!

Jerusalem (al-Quds) is an Islamic land and belongs to Muslims. Our honorable nation has a deep love for al-Quds and takes Masjid al-Aqsa dearer than their own life and property. Just as in the past, today, too, the helping hand of our nation is extended out for our oppressed Palestinian brothers and sisters who have for years been safeguarding the Masjid al-Aqsa.

¹ Ibn Majah, Iqamah, 196; Abu Dawud, Salat, 14.

² Bukhari, Fadhl al-Salat, 1.

³ Baqarah, 2/114.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَمَنْ يُسَلِّمْ وَجْهَهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ فَقَدِ اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَىٰ
وَأَلَى اللَّهِ عَاقِبَةُ الْأُمُورِ.

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

مَنْ أَحَبَّ لِقَاءَ اللَّهِ أَحَبَّ اللَّهُ لِقَاءَهُ، وَمَنْ كَرِهَ لِقَاءَ اللَّهِ كَرِهَ اللَّهُ لِقَاءَهُ.

THE BOND BETWEEN ALLAH AND HIS SERVANTS

Honorable Muslims!

In the verse I have recited, Allah (swt) states, **"And whoever submits his face to Allah while he is a doer of good - then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold. And to Allah will be the outcome of all matters."**¹

In the hadith I have recited, Prophet Muhammad says, **"Whoever wants to meet Allah, Allah wants to meet him, too. Whoever does not want to meet Allah, Allah does not want to meet him, either."**²

Dear Believers!

Allah the Almighty is the only reason for our existence. Upon His command "Be!", all creations between heavens and earth find their place in the world. It is Allah, Who creates us from nothing, makes us live through His might, bounty and help, and puts us to a test through His blessings.

We are responsible against Allah, from the moment we wake up in the morning till we go to sleep at night, in every breath and every step we take, and in every decision we make. Prophet Muhammad (saw) refers to this responsibility in one occasion, **"The right of Allah over His slaves is that they should worship Him and not associate anything with Him."** Then they show they believe in tawhid and build their lives based on it. Then Allah promises them, **"He shall not punish them, and He shall put them in paradise."**³

Dear Muslims!

When the servants of Allah have sincere faith in Him, He becomes pleased with them. Having sincere faith requires wholeheartedly worshipping and living in accordance with good morals. Muslims show their love, respect, and obedience to Allah not only through worships but also their moral behaviors.

Allah responds to the prayers and supplications of His believing servants. He (swt) does not leave those, who try to obtain His consent, alone and unaided. Whenever His servants ask,

مَتَى نَصْرُ اللَّهِ "When is the help of Allah?", He

(swt) welcomes their question with,

إِلَّا إِنَّ نَصْرَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ

"Unquestionably, the help of Allah is near."⁴ In a hadith qudsi, Prophet Muhammad (saw) says, **"I am just as My servant thinks I am, (i.e. I am able to do for him what he thinks I can do for him) and I am with him if He remembers Me. If he remembers Me in himself, I too, remember him in Myself; and if he remembers Me in a group of people, I remember him in a group that is better than them. If he comes one span nearer to Me, I go one cubit nearer to him; and if he comes one cubit nearer to Me, I go a distance of two outstretched arms nearer to him; and if he comes to Me walking, I go to him running."**⁵

Dear Believers!

People can sometimes be ungrateful and egoistic, and pushy and careless. We are merely servants. Sometimes we happen to forget that Allah sees, hears, and expects good deeds from us at all times. We find ourselves committing sins, and making mistakes, knowingly or forgetfully. We happen to do things we would greatly regret when the dark clouds set down on our way, when our foot slips, and when our eyes are closed.

No matter what, our only shelter is Allah, Who is the Most Merciful of all the Merciful. Allah is forgiving and loves to forgive. He (swt) keeps open the door of mercy and forgiveness until our last breath. It is stated in the Holy Qur'an, **"O My servants who have transgressed against themselves [by sinning], do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Indeed, Allah forgives all sins. Indeed, it is He who is the Forgiving, the Merciful."**⁶

Dear Muslims!

Allah warns us in the Qur'an, **"And be not like those who forgot Allah, so He made them forget themselves."**⁷ Let us heed this warning. Let us properly protect and strengthen the bond of servitude between Allah and us. Let us duly worship Him and let us ask for help from Him (swt) only. Let us wholeheartedly pray to Him. Let us repent for all our sins. Let us not forget that if we forget Allah and lose our bond with Allah, then He pushes us away from His mercy. He (swt) instills fear in hearts in the world, and He does not care about us and puts us in a great punishment in the Hereafter.

¹ Luqman, 31/22.

² Bukhari, Riqaq, 41; Muslim, Dhikr, 14.

³ Muslim, Iman, 48; Bukhari, Jihad, 46.

⁴ Baqarah, 2/214.

⁵ Bukhari, Tawhid, 15.

⁶ Zumar 39/53.

⁷ Hashr, 59/19.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَسَارِعُوا إِلَى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا

السَّمَوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ .

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ عَفُوٌّ كَرِيمٌ تُحِبُّ الْعَفْوَ فَاعْفُ عَنِّي .

TOWARDS THE SPIRITUAL CLIMATE OF THE THREE HOLY MONTHS

Honorable Muslims!

In the verse I have recited, Allah the Almighty states, **“And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord and a garden as wide as the heavens and earth, prepared for the righteous.”**¹

In the hadith I have read, the Prophet Muhammad teaches us the following du'a: **“O Allah, You are Most Forgiving, and You love forgiveness, and so forgive me.”**²

Dear Believers!

Over us is the shade of the three holy months that bring barakah to our life and peace to our soul through the countless blessings and ikhsan of Allah the Almighty. We will have reached the month of Rajab the next Tuesday. Next Thursday night turning to Friday, we will be enjoying the Raghaib, inshallah.

Endless praise be to Allah the Almighty for allowing us to reach these spiritual days, and salat and salam be upon the Prophet Muhammad for teaching his ummah the worship and obedience, tawbah and istighfar, and du'a and supplication.

Dear Muslims!

The three holy months denote waking up from heedlessness (ghaflat) and getting oneself purified through the awareness of servitude to Allah. The three holy months are among the rare times the coming of which we long for every year. These are the months in which the divine mercy and forgiveness embrace all creation and Muslims gravitate toward worshipping together.

The first door opening to Allah the Almighty's endless blessings for His servants is the month of Rajab. It is the sign of Muslims' iman and seeking refuge in Allah; and their loyalty and affection to Prophet Muhammad (saw).

Dear Believers!

Two holy nights in the month of Rajab come over in our hearts as guests. One of them is the Raghaib night. Raghaib refers to our efforts to direct all our wishes and desires to obtaining the consent of Allah. The Raghaib night teaches us that our only true achievement in this life that slips away is to turn to Allah and keep our promise of servitude to Him.

The other holy night in this month is the Mi'raj night that brings to mind the Masjid al-Aqsa as Prophet Muhammad's entrustment to his ummah. The Mi'raj night reminds us to move ourselves from material desires to spiritual values and lifting ourselves up from what is temporary to what is eternal.

Honorable Believers!

After the month of Rajab welcomes us the month of Sha'ban in which we prepare ourselves spiritually and physically for the month of Ramadan. Shining in the middle of the month of Sha'ban, the Bara'ah night makes us think that saving ourselves from sorrow and divine punishment and attaining forgiveness and peace lie in the servitude to Allah (swt).

Ramadan, the beginning of which denotes mercy, the middle of which forgiveness, and the end of which salvation from hell, is the last of the three holy months. Ramadan is the month of fasting, Qur'an, spending in the cause of Allah, zakat, purification, and contemplation. Towards the end of Ramadan we celebrate the Laylat al-Qadr, which is better and more bountiful in divine blessings than a thousand months for those who know its value. And finally, with the happiness of being obedient servants of Allah, we make it to the Eid al-Fitr.

Dear Muslims!

Let us regard the three holy months as an opportunity to be attached to Allah from heart, duly worship Him, and lead a life in accordance with good morals. Let us repent for our wrongs and sins. Let us quit our bad habits if we have any. Let us open a brand new page for the right, truth, good, and nice. Let us carry joy and happiness to sad hearts. Let us purify ourselves from the feeling of “I” and get the feeling of “we”. Let us thus attain peace in this world and in the Hereafter.

I would like to take this opportunity to pray to Allah that the three holy months and the Raghaib night may lead to good developments for our nation and the ummah of Prophet Muhammad. May Allah make Rajab and Sha'ban blessed and allow us to reach Ramadan.

¹ Al-i 'Imran, 3/133.

² Tirmidhi, Da'awat, 84.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ رِجَالٌ صَدَقُوا مَا عَاهَدُوا اللَّهَ عَلَيْهِ فَمِنْهُمْ مَن قَضَىٰ نَحْبَهُ وَمِنْهُمْ مَن يَنْتَظِرُ وَمَا بَدَّلُوا تَبْدِيلًا
وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

مَنْ قَاتَلَ لِتَكُونَ كَلِمَةُ اللَّهِ هِيَ الْعُلْيَا فَهُوَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ.

OUR FIGHT, AND SPIRIT OF UNITY AND SOLIDARITY IN THE CAUSE OF ALLAH Honorable Muslims!

In the verse I have recited, Allah the Almighty states, **“Among the believers are men true to what they promised Allah. Among them is he who has fulfilled his vow [to the death], and among them is he who awaits [his chance]. And they did not alter the terms of their commitment by any alteration.”**¹

In the hadith I have read, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) says, **“He who fights that Allah's word should be superior fights in Allah's cause.”**²

Dear Believers!

We as a nation are facing great challenges and going through heavy tests today, just as we did in the past. Today, too, we are putting up a restless fight against those powers, who has their conscience blinded and lost their mercy and humanity, and aims to remove us from the stage of the history, just as in the Battle of Gallipoli and the War of Independence in the past. Today, too, we, together with each and every individual of our noble nation regardless of man, woman, young, or elder, will not let anybody pull our national flag down the post, silent our adhans, or tread on our homeland.

It is the unshakable faith we have in Allah (swt) that will allow us to come out as victorious. It is our unconditional love for our homeland, our adhan, our national flag, and our independence. It is the desire to fall martyr in the cause of Allah or live on as a veteran that we have deep in our hearts. This is such a great faith and love for homeland that Allah the Almighty gives the good news to those who, with this great love, have sacrificed their lives in this cause, **“And never think of those who have been killed in the cause of Allah as dead. Rather, they are alive with their Lord, receiving provision, rejoicing in what Allah has bestowed upon them of His bounty.”**³

Dear Muslims!

Our soldiers has been and will always be standing by the oppressed against the oppressors. They are at the battlefronts for the good of the world and shield their chests for humanity. They are mobilized to rush to help of those whose rights are infringed and removed from them.

Our soldiers place faith in the following verse and stand firm by the side of the truth against the falsehood,

“And say, ‘Truth has come, and falsehood has departed. Indeed is falsehood, [by nature], ever bound to depart.’”⁴

Our soldiers run from victory to victory with the heartfelt committment to the verse,

وَلَا تَهِنُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَنْتُمُ الْأَعْلَوْنَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ

“So do not weaken and do not grieve, and you will be superior if you are true believers.”⁵

They say “Stop!” to the graceless attacks of the enemy, satisfying the Prophet Muhammad's call,

جَاهِدُوا بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنْفُسِكُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ

“Fight in the cause of Allah with your wealth and lives.”⁶

Dear Believers!

Yesterday an atrocious attacked targeted our soldiers who were mobilized to bring peace to the terror-torn geographies, hope to those whose hopes were aimed to be destroyed, and stability to those whose lives were set upside down. Our pain is unbearable, our heart broken. May the noble souls of our martyrs be blessed by Allah (swt). May Allah bless our nation with patience for our losses. May Allah bless the injured with a speedy recovery. May Allah never ever let any such sorrow hit us.

Let us not forget this important point that there is no fight out of which we cannot come out as victorious as long as we as a nation clamp tightly together with each other around the values that make us ‘us’. There is no heinous attack that we cannot bear against or no victory that we cannot win as long as we keep alive our spirit of unity, solidarity, and brotherhood. There is no doubt that with the help of Allah, the plans of treachery will be disrupted, the traps and cheats of the oppressors will become thorn in their own sides. Today, too, it will be our noble nation standing by the truth and the right that will be victorious just as in the past. As expressed in the Holy Qur'an, **سَيُهْزَمُ الْجَمْعُ وَيُوَلُّونَ الدُّبُرَ**,

“Their assembly will be defeated, and they will turn their backs in retreat.”⁷

Honorable Muslims!

Let us open our hands and hearts to pray Allah in this hour when prayers are accepted. Let us all beg our Exalted Lord (swt).

O Allah! Bestow Your help and victory upon our heroic army, and Your grace and barakah upon our heavenly homeland!

O Allah! Bless our martyrs with Your mercy, our veterans with Your grace, and our nation with Your compassion!

O Lord! Do not let our adhans be silenced! Do not let anybody or anything divide our homeland! Do not let anybody pull our flag down the pole, o Allah! Do not make us bow down before anybody! Protect our soldiers from any kind of evil and harm!

O Lord! Strengthen our unity and solidarity and increase our patience and resoluteness! Ease our pains and griefs and bless our hopes with victory! Amin!

¹ Ahzab, 33/23.

² Bukhari, Tawhid, 28

³ Al-i 'Imran, 3/169-170.

⁴ Isra, 17/81.

⁵ Al-i 'Imran, 3/139.

⁶ Nasa'i, Jihad, 48.

⁷ Qamar, 54/45.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

لَا تَقُمْ فِيهِ أَبَدًا لَمَسْجِدٍ أُسِّسَ عَلَى التَّقْوَى مِنْ
أَوَّلِ يَوْمٍ أَحَقُّ أَنْ تَقُومَ فِيهِ فِيهِ رِجَالٌ يُحِبُّونَ أَنْ
يَتَطَهَّرُوا وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُطَهَّرِينَ.
وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
إِنَّ اللَّهَ طَيِّبٌ يُحِبُّ الطَّيِّبَ تَطْيِيفُ يُحِبُّ النَّظَافَةَ
كَرِيمٌ يُحِبُّ الْكَرَمَ.

ALLAH IS CLEAN AND LOVES CLEANLINESS

Honorable Muslims!

The Prophet Muhammad (saw) received a revelation for the first time in the Cave of Hira. Overwhelmed with the heaviness of the duty he assumed, he returned home, and asked his beloved wife Khadijah, "Cover me!" She put a garment on him to cover, tried to calm him down, and uttered comforting words. A while later, Allah the Almighty revealed the following verses, "O you who covers himself with a garment. Arise and warn. And glorify your Lord. And purify your clothing. And avoid uncleanness."¹

Dear Believers!

These first verses of the Surah al-Muddaththir tell Prophet Muhammad (saw) to keep his clothing and body clean in the material sense, and purify himself in the spiritual sense by avoiding superstitions and committing sins. This is because cleanliness, which is one of the most fundamental qualities of Muslims, denotes having a clean body, clothes free from dirt, as well as a peaceful heart. Therefore, the Prophet Muhammad explains the relation between cleanliness on the outside and faith in heart as follows, "Cleanliness makes up half of the faith."²

Dear Muslims!

People who are not clean and who wear unclean clothes, have disorderly hair and beard, and untidy homes although they have the necessary means to clean themselves are not only welcome by other people but also by Allah (swt). This is because it is only possible through being clean to duly worship Allah and obtain His approval. Let us not forget that wudu and ghusl make up a unique system of cleanliness and the prerequisite for many worships, particularly salah. Paying due attention to cleanliness after using the toilet, mouth and nail care, and having a bath at least once a week on Fridays are among the Sunnah of our Prophet (saw).

Allah's love encompasses clean, pure, and pious people. In this respect, it is stated in the Holy Qur'an, "...A mosque founded on righteousness from the first day is more worthy for you to stand in. Within it are

men who love to purify themselves; and Allah loves those who purify themselves."³

When Prophet Muhammad asked the people of Quba', praised in the above verse, "How do you purify yourselves that Allah praises you in the Qur'an?", they replied "We use water to clean ourselves off any impurity."⁴

Dear Believers!

On top of every good and nicety comes being healthy, and being healthy requires being clean. Today epidemics wander the earth, just as in the past. Viruses that threaten all corners of the world cause mass casualties. Alhamdulillah, there has been no case identified in our country so far. We all have, however, our responsibilities to take care of ourselves and our loved ones.

Honorable Muslims!

Let us ensure that we have taken every measure to protect ourselves against the epidemic of coronavirus. Let us pay attention to the principles of cleanliness more than ever. Let us wash our hands with soap and water several times a day. Let us not touch our eyes, nose, or mouth if our hands are not clean. Let us stay hydrated for our body not to get weak. Let us follow a balanced diet and take enough sleep. Let us cover our mouth with a piece of tissue while sneezing or coughing, or use the inside of our elbow otherwise. Let us keep well ventilated the indoors we live in. Let us stay away from alcohol, drugs or other harmful substances that are not only considered haram by the religion but also make our body prone to several diseases.

Honorable Muslims!

The Prophet Muhammad (saw) advises, "Know the value of your health before an illness."⁵ Sometimes we fail to heed this warning of him. We happen to better understand the value of having a healthy body only after we lose our health. However, it is our duty to live cleanly and protect our health. We need to take our precaution and then rely on Allah the Almighty for the rest. Let us not forget that our Prophet (saw) says, "Allah is good, loves what is good; He is clean, loves cleanliness; He is generous, loves generosity."⁶

O Allah! Protect our country and all Islamic lands primarily, and all humanity from epidemics, troubles, and disasters.

O Allah! Bless our gallant army with victory, which is currently engaged in a heroic cross-border struggle for our independence and future existence. Amin!

¹ Bukhari, Tafsir, 74; Muddaththir, 74/1-5.

² Muslim, Taharah, 1.

³ Tawbah, 9/108.

⁴ Ibn Kathir, 4, 213-214.

⁵ Hakim, Mustadrak, IV, 341.

⁶ Muslim, Iman, 147; Tirmidhi, Adab, 41.

DATE: 13.03.2020

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الَّذِي خَلَقَنِي فَهُوَ يَهْدِينِ وَالَّذِي هُوَ يُطْعِمُنِي وَيَسْقِينِ
وَإِذَا مَرِضْتُ فَهُوَ يَشْفِينِ وَالَّذِي يُمِيتُنِي ثُمَّ يُحْيِينِ
وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ دَاءً إِلَّا أَنْزَلَ لَهُ شِفَاءً.

MUSLIMS TAKE PRECAUTION AND RELY ON ALLAH FOR HIS DISCRETION

Honorable Muslims!

Illnesses, whether minor or major, are among the tests for people in this world. Throughout the history, many illnesses have been treated with the help of Allah (swt) and the effortful researches of people. Inshallah, the cure will also be found for the pandemic coronavirus spread all around the world today. In this respect, as the Prophet Muhammad (saw) stated, **“There is no disease that Allah has created, except that He also has created its treatment.”**¹ Our responsibility is to take all precautions not to contract the illness.

Dear Believers!

In order to be safe from this pandemic, let us first pay attention to bodily, clothing, food, and environmental cleanliness. Let us frequently ventilate the places we live in. When we cough or sneeze, let us cover our mouth and nose with single-use tissues or with the inside of our elbow. Let us try to stay out of crowded places.

Let us keep clean particularly lavatories, toilets, places to perform ablution, door handles, and desktops with which our hands contact frequently. Let us wash clean our hands with soap and water by rubbing better than ever. Let us not touch our eyes, nose, or mouth if our hands are not clean. Let us use our fingers or personal misbaha instead of using the shared misbaha in mosques.

If we have recently returned from abroad, let us pay attention to staying home and not going out for fourteen days. If you have returned from umrah, make sure you pay attention to this issue and try not to receive guests.

Dear Muslims!

We are a sincere and warm-blooded nation. We love shaking hands and hugging each other. These practices are, of course, fine and valuable. However, it is a requirement of being responsible and taking precautions to avoid such practices at a time like this, when contagious illnesses are widespread. Let us particularly suspend the commonly practised handshaking after the prayers in mosques. Let us greet each other and have our conversations from a distance without shaking hands.

People above a certain age are in the risk group and more vulnerable to coronavirus. Therefore, our elderly people had better have a rest at their homes and avoid crowded places.

Dear Believers!

Health is a blessing entrusted to us by Allah (swt). What falls upon Muslims is to preserve what is entrusted to them and do their best to look after their health. This way we attain peace thanks to the help of Allah. And this way we find solutions to our problems and cure to our illnesses. In this respect, the Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) speaks of Allah in the Holy Qur'an as follows: **“It is He who created me and guides me. It is He who feeds me and gives me drink. When I am ill, it is He who cures me. It is He who will cause me to die and then bring me to life.”**²

So, let us be precautionous to look after our health and that of the people around us in the face of this pandemic. Let us not forget that, otherwise, we endanger both our health and that of others, which means a violation of their rights.

Without a doubt, Allah has a decree in this regard. The responsibility of Muslims is to take precautions. Muslims are moderate and balanced in all situations. It is a duty upon all of us to fight, in a calm manner and using our reason and knowledge, against this pandemic, without downplaying it or getting panicked about it.

¹ Bukhari, Tibb, 1.

² Shu'ara, 26/78-81.

Date: 29.05.2020

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَذْهَبَ عَنَّا الْحَزْنَ إِنَّ رَبَّنَا

لَغَفُورٌ شَكُورٌ .

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

اللَّهُمَّ أَعِنِّي عَلَى ذِكْرِكَ وَشُكْرِكَ وَحُسْنِ عِبَادَتِكَ .

PRAISE BE TO ALLAH

Honorable Muslims!

Jumu'ah mubarak! In this hour when prayers are accepted, may your hearts, homes, lives, and sustenance be filled with the abundance of divine blessings of Friday. On this most blessed day the sun rises over, may endless thanks and praise be to our Lord (swt), who has welcomed us in rows here before Him and enabled us to relive the joy of praying in congregation. **“Praise to Allah, who has removed from us all sorrow. Our Lord is indeed Oft-Forgiving and Most Appreciative.”**¹

May salat and salam be upon the Prophet Muhammad the Most Beloved, who taught his ummah about cleanliness, tazkiyah (purification) and staying away from all kinds of dirt and dirty acts.

Dear Believers!

Friday is an eid day (festival) for Muslims and it has been celebrated since the 'Asr al-Sa'adah in congregation at mosques in the best way. What other venues on earth are able to provide the peace and trust felt in the masjids of Allah the Almighty? As hearts beating with tawhid are reaching to sajdah in unity, where else can this joy of brotherhood be felt? Where else can hope and faith, comfort and submission, and affection and sincerity be enhanced this

much as in the mosques? In mosques, knowledge and wisdom come in, and adab and ikhsan spread out. Adhans call Muslims of all ages to unity and togetherness. Praise be to Allah, we have heeded this call. We have been waiting for this day with longing and desire. Now is the time to unite. Words fail to adequately describe our feelings! It is the time to submit our servitude, gratefulness, prayers, and supplications to our Lord (swt).

My Brothers and Sisters!

Through a grand conquest on May 29, 1453, the gates of great Istanbul were opened to Islam and our glorious civilization. We remember our ancestors with gratitude. Closed for a while due to the pandemic disease, the doors of our mosques also open to our glorious nation and our dear congregation today. We live the vigor of the conquest and the joy of being able to go to our mosques at the same time. Let us know the value of this great blessing. Let us not forget our responsibility. Let us duly observe the measures.

Now, with the permission of Allah, we will perform the fardh rakats of the Friday prayer. Afterwards, we will leave from here without shaking hands, by paying attention to the physical/social distancing, and in compliance with the guidance provided by our officials. We will perform the sunnah rakats of the Friday prayer at our homes. May Allah the Almighty accept our worships. May He (swt) save us from this pandemic disease in the shortest time possible. I would like to conclude this khutbah with Prophet Muhammad's (saw) following du'a: **“O Allah! Help me to remember You, express gratitude to You, and worship You in the best manner!”**²

¹ Fatir, 35/34.

² Abu Dawud, Witr, 26; Nasa'i, Sahw, 60.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَمَنْ أَرَادَ الْآخِرَةَ وَسَعَىٰ لَهَا سَعْيَهَا وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُولَٰئِكَ

كَانَ سَعْيُهُمْ مَشْكُورًا.

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

الْكَيْسُ مَنْ دَانَ نَفْسَهُ وَعَمِلَ لِمَا بَعْدَ الْمَوْتِ وَالْعَاجِزُ

مَنْ أَتْبَعَ نَفْسَهُ هَوَاهَا وَتَمَنَّى عَلَى اللَّهِ.

A MUSLIM WITH BELIEF IN THE HEREAFTER

Honorable Muslims!

Allah the Almighty states in the verse I have recited, **“But whoever desires the Hereafter and exerts the effort due to it while he is a believer - it is those whose effort is ever appreciated by Allah.”**¹

The Prophet Muhammad (saw) advises in the hadith I have recited, **“A wise man is the one who calls himself to account (and refrains from doing evil deeds) and does noble deeds to benefit him after death; and the foolish person is the one who subdues himself to his temptations and desires and seeks from Allah the fulfillment of his vain desires.”**²

Dear Believers!

One of the fundamental principles of Islam is the belief in the Hereafter. It is to believe in the Last Day, the Resurrection, the Reckoning, and the eternal life. The belief in the Hereafter is a unique strength that influences one’s intentions, words, behaviors and, in short, all moments and steps. Having an awareness of the Hereafter shapes a Muslim’s life, their relations with family, neighbors, colleagues, and all beings in their surroundings, whether living or non-living.

Muslims who wholeheartedly embrace the belief in the Hereafter observe the boundaries set out by Allah and the appreciation of Him (swt) in all their acts. They do good deeds (amal al-salih) as their faith requires and grow in maturity through high morality. They always call themselves to account. They refrain from uttering bad words and doing evil acts.

Muslims look at the universe in such a way as to draw lessons from it. They see life and death, health and illness, wealth and poverty, and joy and sorrow as part of a world full of tests and trials. All their experiences and the events they encounter mean an opportunity for benevolence and reward for them. They show gratitude for the blessings granted to them, which is more virtuous for them, as expressed by the Prophet Muhammad. They show patience with troubles, which is also more virtuous for them.³

Dear Muslims!

The last stop and destination of our journey of servitude is the life in the Hereafter. The Hereafter for us is our true homeland and eternal residence. It is the place where we will reap what we have sown in this world and definitely give account for everything, whether big or small, or good or evil. Then, let us live a life with the awareness that we will face the Day of Akhirah. Let us not neglect making our preparations for that great day. I would like to conclude the khutbah with the following verses of our Lord (swt), **“So whoever does an atom’s weight of good will see it, and whoever does an atom’s weight of evil will see it.”**⁴

¹ Isrâ, 17/19.

² Tirmidhi, Sifat al-Qiyamah, 25.

³ Muslim, Zuhd, 64.

⁴ Zalzalâh, 99/7-8.

Date: 12.06.2020

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوا

فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ .

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

قُلْ أَمَنْتُ بِاللَّهِ ثُمَّ اسْتَقِم .

BE ON THE TRUE PATH, STAY SAFE

FROM ANY WORRIES!

Honorable Muslims!

One of the Companions went near the Prophet Muhammad (saw) and said, “O Messenger of Allah! Give me a piece of advice about Islam so that I will not need to ask anybody else about it.” Then, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) said, “Say, **‘I have believed in Allah’, and be steadfast.**”¹

Dear Believers!

Human’s reason for existence is servitude to Allah, and the most important duty of human is to believe in the existence and oneness of Allah, and live steadfastly as required by such iman (faith). This is because once iman is absorbed in heart, it is manifested in feelings, thoughts, and behaviors. It leads one to the truth and truthfulness as well as honesty and steadfastness. Only then Muslims have a peaceful and honorable life. They become assured of troubles and sorrows both in this world and in the Hereafter. They attain taqwa and divine blessings.

Dear Muslims!

Istiqamah (the true path) means perseverance in faith and commitment to

promises. It means to obey Allah the Almighty and follow the Prophet Muhammad (saw). It means to be the same on the inside and on the outside, and either seem as you are or be as you seem.

Istiqamah means to be clear of blasphemy and polytheism, and stay away from committing sins and going against Allah. It means to stay away from sedition and corruption, and fight against the extreme desires of the self and the whispers of the Satan.

Dear Believers!

Muslims on the true path do not make any concessions on righteousness. They do not bend their words and never tell a lie. They observe justice and do not gravitate towards injustice. They are well-intended and sincere, and are not ostentatious. They pay due diligence in their work and do it finely, and do not resort to deception. They, with their love and respect for the Creator, show mercy and compassion to the created beings and do not hurt any living being. In short, they live on the sirat al-mustaqim (the straight path). They see the consent of Allah greater than any gain or profit. They lead a life as aware that Allah (swt) sees and hears all things, concealed or open, and that He will call His servants to account.

I would like to conclude the khutbah with the following good news of our Lord (swt), **“Indeed, those who have said, ‘Our Lord is Allah,’ and then remained on a right course - there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve.”**²

¹ Ibn Hanbal, III, 413.

² Ahqaf, 46/13.

DATE: 19.06.2020

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ فَاعْبُدِ اللَّهَ
مُخْلِصًا لَهُ الدِّينَ
وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَقْبَلُ مِنَ الْعَمَلِ إِلَّا مَا كَانَ لَهُ
خَالِصًا وَابْتِغَى بِهِ وَجْهَهُ.

PURE INTENTIONS AND SINCERITY

Honorable Muslims!

In Islam, the recognition of faith, worship, and good behaviors in the sight of Allah (swt) depends on pure intentions and sincerity. Having an intention comes on top of every act and is the essence of servitude to Allah. It is the desire to obtain the appreciation of Allah (swt). Sincerity, on the other hand, refers to devoting one's faith and deeds to Allah only. It means that one is the same on the inside and on the outside, as well as demonstrating the same qualities in one's intentions and behaviors.

Dear Believers!

Intentions and deeds are like soul and body that complete one another. What distinguishes praying from physical movements, fasting from remaining hungry and thirsty, and hajj and umrah from traveling is one's intention.

Sincere are Muslims in their faith. They wholeheartedly obey the divine commandment, **"Indeed, We have sent down to you the Book, [O Muhammad], in truth. So worship Allah, [being] sincere to Him in religion."**¹ They worship Allah only, and only Him they ask for help. They live as aware that their Lord oversees and is near them always.

Sincere are Muslims in their worship. They express gratitude for the blessings of Allah with their tongues, bodies, and hearts. They confess how weak they are in the face of His might and magnificence. They remain loyal and committed to the verse, **"Say, "Indeed, my prayer, my rites of sacrifice, my living and my dying are for Allah, Lord of the worlds."**²

Sincere are Muslims against people in their surroundings. They establish good relations with their families, relatives, and neighbors. They have a smiling face, speak the truth, and are humble. They have a sense of loyalty and are helpful. They spread trustworthiness and honesty. They prevent evil. They stand by oneness and unity and stand against discord. In short, Muslims live in accordance with good intentions and sincerity in every sphere of their lives.

Dear Believers!

In this respect, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) says, **"Allah does not accept any deed except that which is purely for Him and for His sake."**³

Right! The value of people's deeds and actions are measured by their intentions. Everybody gets the reward of their deeds depending on their intentions.⁴ Deeds done insincerely have no value before Allah (swt). Let us not forget that only through good intentions and sincerity can people attain the deliciousness of faith, the awe of worship, the peacefulness of good deeds, and the appreciation of Allah the Almighty (swt). I would like to conclude today's khutbah with the Prophet Muhammad's following supplication: **"O Allah, the Lord of all things! Make me and my family sincerely devoted to You in this world and in the Hereafter."**⁵

¹ Zumar, 39/2.

² An'am, 6/162.

³ Nasa'i, Jihad, 24.

⁴ Bukhari, Bad al-Wahy, 1; Muslim, Imara, 155.

⁵ Abu Dawud, Witr, 25.

Date: 26.06.2020

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الرَّكِتَابُ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ لِتُخْرِجَ النَّاسَ

مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ...

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

مَا نَحَلَّ وَالِدٌ وَلَدًا مِنْ نَحْلِ أَفْضَلَ مِنْ أَدَبٍ حَسَنٍ.

**MAY OUR HOMES BE ENLIGHTENED
BY THE QUR'AN**

Honorable Muslims!

Our children who open their eyes to the world in a spotlessly clean natural disposition are the rare entrustment of our Lord (swt) to us. They are the most lovely blessing of our lives, and the most valuable adornment of our homes. They are the divine blessing of our lives, and the joy of our hearts.

They are our future and our windows of prayer opening to al-Rahman. It is our most fundamental responsibility to raise them as good individuals and Muslims, as well as feeding them with halal earnings and teaching them about the truth. It is our top priority duty to instill the love of Allah and the Prophet in their hearts, and help them develop their fresh minds with beneficial knowledge and good morals. In this respect, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) said in one occasion, **“There is no gift that a father gives his child more virtuous than good manners.”**¹

Dear Believers!

Our children have recently completed another school year. Our mosques used to be turned into a hub of education and become joyous with the voice of our children ever summer. This summer we will host the Summer Qur'an Courses at our homes.

Dear Muslims!

The Summer Qur'an Courses will enable our children to know more about Allah (swt), to recite the Holy Qur'an and enter into its world of meaning. They will learn about the principles of faith and worship, and the exemplary life of the Prophet Muhammad (saw). They will comprehend the importance of being a servant of Allah useful to our homeland, nation, and all humanity.

Dear Believers!

Allah the Almighty states in the Holy Qur'an, **“Alif, Lam, Ra. [This is] a Book which We have revealed to you, [O Muhammad], that you might bring mankind out of darknesses into the light by permission of their Lord - to the path of the Exalted in Might, the Praiseworthy.”**²

Then let us prosper our lives with the Qur'an that adds relief to our hearts and barakah to all our endeavors. Let us mobilize ourselves to imprint faith, Islam, and good morals on the fresh minds and spotlessly clean natural dispositions of our children. Let us not cause them to be deprived of the light of the Qur'an and the guidance of the authentic religious knowledge.

¹ Tirmidhi, Birr, 33; Ibn Hanbal, IV, 77.

² Ibrahim, 14/1.

Date: 03.07.2020

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
إِنَّهُ مَنْ يَتَّقِ وَيَصْبِرْ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ
الْمُحْسِنِينَ.
وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
مَنْ يَصْبِرْ يُصْبِرْهُ اللَّهُ وَمَا أُعْطِيَ أَحَدٌ مِنْ عَطَاءٍ
خَيْرٌ وَأَوْسَعُ مِنَ الصَّبْرِ.

AFTER PATIENCE COMES EASE AND RELIEF

Honorable Muslims!

Every human being is, in a manner of speaking, a passenger in this worldly life. In this temporary and mortal life, whoever comes in goes out one day. The path to paradise for each of us passes through ups and downs, and joys and hardships. As we continue our journey while enduring the sorrows and at the same time keeping up our hopes, our Lord (swt) grants us a unique blessing that saves our heart from haste, our tongue from complaints, and our body from malevolent conducts. Patience is the name of that blessing.

Dear Believers!

Patience does not mean contempt or apathy. It does not mean weariness or helplessness either. It means forbearance, continuing worship and obedience to Allah with the awareness of servitude to Him. It means endurance, breasting numerous tests and trials of the world. It means discernment, making the effort to carry on living without heeding the whispers of the Satan and falling for the desires of the nafs. It means resoluteness, demonstrating a moderate and cold-blooded stance against occurrences of unexpected events. It means *tawakkul* (reliance on Allah): being satisfied and contented with the divine decree after making every effort and taking all necessary measures. And patience means, a requirement of faith, a gate

to salvation, and a heavenly treasure.

Dear Muslims!

Sometimes people fail to display patience even in the face of trivial problems. Some other times they lose patience due to great calamities and fall into the swirl of hopelessness. They think their illnesses will never heal, financial problems will not be over, and family problems will not be solved. They are drawn into the delusion that peace, success, and health are far away from them. The good news in the Qur'an, however, is quite clear: **"For indeed, with hardship [will be] ease."**¹ Many a grace is hidden in many a trouble. An evil-looking and foul matter may bring about unexpected auspicious and fair outcomes. What matters most is that the servants of Allah should keep their patience and resoluteness. What matters most is that people should keep up the faith that Allah is always with the patient.

Dear Believers!

On one occasion, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) said, **"Whoever remains patient, Allah will make him patient. Nobody can be given a blessing better and greater than patience."**²

Then, let us know the value of such a rare blessing as patience. Let us keep in mind that Allah will test us with both the existence and lack of something and that every test and trial can be overcome with effort and patience. Let us never give up our hopes that Allah (swt) shall help us and be merciful to us.

As I conclude the khutbah, I would like to share the following verse in the Holy Qur'an, **"Whoever fears Allah and is patient, then indeed, Allah does not allow to be lost the reward of those who do good."**³

1 Sharh, 94/5-6.

2 Muslim, Zakat, 124.

3 Yusuf 12/90.

DATE: 10.07.2020

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُدَافِعُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ
خَوَّانٍ كَفُورٍ.

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

الْمُسْلِمُ أَخُو الْمُسْلِمِ لَا يَخُونُهُ وَلَا يَكْذِبُهُ وَلَا يَخْذُلُهُ

كُلُّ الْمُسْلِمِ عَلَى الْمُسْلِمِ حَرَامٌ عِرْضُهُ وَمَالُهُ وَدَمُهُ.

JULY 15 AND SPIRIT OF UNITY

Honorable Muslims!

The Almighty Allah (swt) states in the verse I have just recited, **“Indeed, Allah defends those who have believed. Indeed, Allah does not like everyone treacherous and ungrateful.”**¹

The Prophet Muhammad (saw) warns us in the hadith I have just read, **“A Muslim is the brother of a Muslim. He does not betray him, lie to him, or leave him faced-down. The chastity, wealth, and honor of all Muslims are inviolable for other Muslims.”**²

Dear Believers!

It has been four years since our nation had to face a high treason and a treacherous attempt of invasion. Our great nation, with the help of Allah the Almighty, defended their homeland, flag, adhan, and will. Our nation thwarted the aspirations of those who have for years derived benefits under the guise of serving the religion. Alhamdulillah, our nation set the traps of the oppressors upside down!

Dear Muslims!

It is stated in the Holy Qur’an, **“And when it is said to them, ‘Do not cause corruption on the earth,’ they say, ‘We are but reformers.’ Unquestionably, it is they who are the corrupters, but they perceive [it] not.”**³

It should be known very well that the FETO, which attempted against the sovereignty and future of our nation on July 15, is a network of corruption and corruptors. It is not a religious group, but rather a home to sedition. They abused and exploited our devoutness to Allah, our love for His Messenger, our sadaqah, our qurbani on Eid al-Adha, and many values of ours we consider sacrosanct. They turned our young people, the apples of our eyes, into enemies against their parents and their nation with their insidious plans. Those who think they succeeded and turned out victorious by deceiving naive and sincere Muslims deceived only themselves in reality.

Dear Believers!

Let us remember the loud-and-clear and timeless warning of Prophet Muhammad (saw): **“The believer should not be stung from the same hole twice.”**⁴

Then, let us remain conscious, have common sense, and be resolute. Let us not give any opportunity to those who try to abuse and exploit our national and spiritual values. The guidance of the Holy Qur’an and the example of Prophet Muhammad will direct our life into the right path. Let us live by the authentic religious knowledge we will learn from reliable sources. Let us protect and defend our unity and solidarity for the prosperity of our land, the survival of our state, and the peace of our nation.

As I conclude this Friday’s khutbah, we pray that the mercy of Allah be upon our martyrs, who have from the past to the present sacrificed their lives for our homeland, and remember both our martyrs and veterans with gratitude.

¹ Hajj, 22/38.

² Tirmidhi, Birr, 22/38, 18.

³ Baqarah, 2/11,12.

⁴ Bukhari, Adab, 83.

وَلِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ جَعَلْنَا مَنْسَكًا لِيَذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللَّهِ عَلَىٰ مَا رَزَقَهُمْ مِنْ بَهِيمَةِ

الْأَنْعَامِ فَإِلَهُكُمْ إِلَهُ وَاحِدٌ فَلَهُ أَسْلِمُوا وَبَشِّرِ الْمُخْبِتِينَ ۝

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

مَا عَمِلَ آدَمِيُّ مِنْ عَمَلٍ يَوْمَ النَّحْرِ أَحَبَّ إِلَى اللَّهِ مِنْ إِهْرَاقِ الدَّمِ.

QURBANI SHARED, BROTHERHOOD CHERISHED

Honorable Muslims!

In the verse I have recited, Allah the Almighty states, **“And for all religion We have appointed a rite [of sacrifice] that they may mention the name of Allah over what He has provided for them of [sacrificial] animals. For your god is one God, so to Him submit. And, [O Muhammad], give good tidings to the humble [before their Lord].”**¹

In the hadith I have read, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) states, **“The son of Adam does not do any deed on the Day of Sacrifice that is dearer to Allah (swt) than sacrificing an animal for Him.”**²

Dear Believers!

We as the Muslim world are feeling the joy of reaching the Eid al-Adha once again. May our Almighty Lord allow us to welcome the Eid in health, wellness, and peace!

Dear Muslims!

Qurbani is an ancient form of worship that is commanded and granted to us by our Lord (swt), and taught by the Prophet Muhammad (saw) by practicing himself. It is the finest expression of sincerity, devotion, and generosity in the cause of Allah.

Qurbani means closeness. It is the effort made to be close to our Lord and obtain His appreciation. It is the symbol of devoutness in His cause, of piety and loyalty, and obedience and submission to Him. In

this respect, Allah the Almighty states in the Holy Qur'an as follows, **“Their meat will not reach Allah, nor will their blood, but what reaches Him is piety from you”**³

Dear Believers!

Qurbani also means getting closer to our brothers and sisters. It means expressing our gratitude for the blessings with a sense of loyalty, and sharing the blessings with the manner of spending in the cause of Allah. It means spreading the good. It means keeping the spirit of solidarity alive, and consolidating love and friendliness. It means building bridges of compassion that extend beyond geographies. It means carrying the joy of eid to the hearts we do not know. It means strengthening our unity and solidarity, and comprehending the meaning of being an ummah.

Dear Muslims!

The Presidency of Religious Affairs, in cooperation with the Türkiye Diyanet Foundation, continues to carry out its organization of qurbani by proxy this year, too, just as it has been for the past years. We will deliver the entrustment of Muslims to those in need, with the motto **“Qurbani shared, brotherhood cherished!”** A single share of qurbani will turn back to us as thousands of prayers uttered for us, inshaallah. We invite our brothers and sisters, who can afford it, to this race in charity and benevolence.

I would like to conclude this Friday's khutbah with the Prophet Muhammad's following hadith, **“Be a shelter for someone who seeks shelter in you. If anyone begs in Allah's name, give him something. If anyone gives you an invitation, accept it; and if anyone does you a kindness, recompense him. But if you do not have the means to do so, pray for him until you feel that you have compensated him.”**⁴

¹ Hajj, 22/34.

² Tirmidhi, Adahi, 1.

³ Hajj, 22/37.

⁴ Abu Dawud, Zakat, 38.

Date: 24.07.2020

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

إِنَّمَا يَعْمُرُ مَسَاجِدَ اللَّهِ مِنْ أَمَنِ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ
وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَى الزَّكَاةَ وَلَمْ يَخْشَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ فَعَسَى
أُولَئِكَ أَنْ يَكُونُوا مِنَ الْمُهْتَدِينَ.
وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
مَنْ بَنَى مَسْجِدًا لِلَّهِ بَنَى اللَّهُ لَهُ فِي الْجَنَّةِ مِثْلَهُ.

HAGIA SOPHIA: THE CONQUEST'S SYMBOL, THE CONQUEROR'S ENTRUSTMENT

Honorable Muslims!

Today is the day the recitations of takbir, tahlil, and salawat echo again around Hagia Sophia's domes, of adhan and salat rise from its minarets. The longing of the descendants of Mehmed the Conqueror and the silence of the grand temple have come to an end. Today, Hagia Sophia is meeting its mu'min and muwahhid congregation again.

Endless thanks and praise be to Allah (swt) who enabled us to gather here on such an honorable and historic day today. Salat and salam be upon Prophet Muhammad (saw) who gave the good news about the conquest by saying, "Verily you shall conquer Constantinople. What a wonderful leader will he be, and what a wonderful army will that army be!"¹

Salam be to the spiritual architect of Istanbul, who hit the roads to become the addressee of this glad tidings, Abu Ayyub al-Ansari in particular, the Companions of the Prophet, and those who followed their blessed footsteps, and all our martyrs and veterans who made Anatolia our homeland, defended it, and entrusted it to us.

Salam be to that young and determined ruler Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror, who produced the most advanced technology of his era, had the ships move over land, conquered Istanbul with the permission and help of Allah, and then did not allow anybody to cause even the slightest harm to even a piece of rock in this honorable city.

Hagia Sophia is a rose-colored good news from centuries ago. Hagia Sophia is the conquest's

symbol and the entrustment of its Conqueror who endowed it on condition that it remains a mosque until the Last Day. Salam be to our authorities, scholarly and intellectual people, leaders full of wisdom and benevolence, and all our brothers and sisters who have from past to present worked with their heart and soul for this rare and precious entrustment to meet its congregation.

Dear Believers!

Hagia Sophia's reopening to worship means the reinstatement of this holy place, which embraced Muslims for five centuries as a mosque, to its original function.

The reopening of Hagia Sophia to worship means all crestfallen and oppressed masjids on earth, first and foremost Masjid al-Aqsa, to have their hopes up again.

The reopening of Hagia Sophia to worship means that our civilization, the foundation of which is tawhid, the building block of which is knowledge, and the cement of which is virtue, continues to rise.

Dear Muslims!

The Islamic civilization is centered around the mosque. Our mosques are the source of our unity and amity, and knowledge and wisdom. The Almighty Allah (swt) states regarding those who build and maintain mosques and masjids, "The mosques of Allah are only to be maintained by those who believe in Allah and the Last Day and establish prayer and give zakat and do not fear except Allah, for it is expected that those will be of the [rightly] guided."²

The Prophet Muhammad (saw) gives glad tidings that people who make any effort for construction of a mosque and its maintainance will be rewarded with Paradise, "Whoever builds a masjid for (the sake of) Allah, be it small or large, then Allah will build a house for him in Paradise."³

Dear Muslims!

Now, what falls upon us is to make our mosques vivid with our sense of unity and brotherhood. Our duty is to center our lives around the mosques. We all must fill mosques and spring to life with mosques, regardless of gender or age. We need to work more with greater belief, ambition, determination, excitement, and devotion in order to uphold the divine meaning of the Hagia Sophia Mosque.

¹ Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Musnad, IV, 335.

² Tawbah, 9/18.

³ Muslim, Zuhd, 44.

Date: 31.07.2020

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

إِنَّا أَعْطَيْنَاكَ الْكَوْثُرَ فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّكَ وَأَنْحَرْ إِنَّ شَانِكَ هُوَ
الْأَبْتَرُ.

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

إِنَّ أَوَّلَ مَا نَبْدَأُ بِهِ فِي يَوْمِنَا هَذَا أَنْ نُصَلِّيَ، ثُمَّ نَرْجِعَ فَنَنْحَرُ،
فَمَنْ فَعَلَ فَقَدْ أَصَابَ سُنَّتَنَا.

EID AL-ADHA: JOURNEY TO PIETY

Honorable Muslims!

In the Surah al-Kawthar I have just recited, Allah the Almighty (swt) states as follows: **“Indeed, We have granted you, [O Muhammad], al-Kawthar. So pray to your Lord and sacrifice [to Him alone]. Indeed, your enemy is the one cut off.”**¹

In the hadith I have just read, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) states, with reference to the first day of the Eid al-Adha, as follows: **“Today, we will first perform the eid prayer, and then return to perform the worship of qurbani. Whoever does so indeed performs our sunnah.”**²

Dear Believers!

Today is the Eid al-Adha that strengthens our faith, unites our hearts, and increases our gratitude. Today is the day when the worship of qurbani is performed, and supplications and efforts are consolidated with piety and submission. Endless thanks and praises be to Allah the Almighty (swt) who has enabled us to welcome this exceptional day. Salat and salam be to Prophet Muhammad (saw) who declared days of eid to be days of peace and joy.

Dear Muslims!

As in all forms of worship we perform, our goal in performing the worship of qurbani is to express our servitude, praise, and reverence to our Lord (swt). It is to acquire the sense of piety and hope to be included among the people who have attained the appreciation of Allah. We will

perform the worship of qurbani with this sense insha Allah. We will take as example for ourselves Prophet Ibrahim’s loyalty to his promise and Prophet Ismail’s submission to Allah.

Dear Believers!

On Eid al-Adha this year, we need to pay better attention to cleanliness and hygiene more than ever. We need to recall Prophet Muhammad’s (saw) hadith, **“Cleanliness makes up half of the faith.”**³, and act with sensitivity as would suit a Muslim. In these days when we fight against the coronavirus pandemic, we have to observe the measures, and protect ourselves and our environment while sincerely performing our worships.

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

The animals to be sacrificed as qurbani are entrusted to us. Let us not hurt them. Let us treat them with mercy and care.

Days of eid are days of joy. Let us join our neighbors, relatives, the sick, the elderly, and the lonely brothers and sisters in this joy. Let us put an end to hard feelings and resentments on these blessed days. Let us all enjoy the peacefulness of the eid. But let us also not cause the spread of diseases and turn these valuable days into days of sorrow. Let us observe the mask-wearing and social distancing rules. Let us avoid handshaking and hugging on the days of eid and during the pandemic. Let us bear in mind that we must recite the tashrik takbir, starting from the morning prayer on the Day of Arafat and ending with the asr prayer on the fourth day of the Eid.

Dear Believers!

As I conclude this Eid al-Adha khutbah, I call on all of you to be considerate and patient in the performance of the worship of qurbani, in paying visits, and especially in traffic, during the eid. May our Lord Almighty (swt) protect us from all kinds of accidents and troubles. May He (swt) keep us clear of pandemic diseases, wars, and sufferings. May He (swt) enable us to come together again on many occasions of blessed eids. May Allah’s (swt) peace, mercy, help and blessings be upon you! Eid Mubarak!

¹ Kawthar, 108/1-3.

² Bukhari, ‘Eidayn, 3.

³ Tirmidhi, Da’awat, 86.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ
وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ.
وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
تَرَكْتُ فِيكُمْ أَمْرَيْنِ لَنْ تَضِلُّوا مَا تَمَسَّكْتُمْ
بِهِمَا كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَسُنَّةَ نَبِيِّهِ.

THE FAREWELL SERMON (KHUTBAH AL-WADA): A TIMELESS PROPHETIC BEQUEST

Honorable Muslims!

Endless thanks be to our Lord Almighty who deserves all kinds of thanks, praises, glories, and honors. Allah (swt) enabled us to enjoy anew the joy of welcoming Eid al-Adha and Friday. We performed the eid prayer and the worship of qurbani in comprehension of the fact that we, with all our material and spiritual selves, demand His appreciation. We are enjoying the divine abundance of blessings of the eid together with all Muslims on the face of the earth.

Dear Believers!

Every year until this year, our joy of the eid would be accompanied by the chants of “Labbayk, Allahumma labbayk” by our pilgrimages. But this year we could not go to Bayt Allah, Arafat, Muzdalifah, and Mina. Our prospective pilgrims are saddened, our hearts broken. We pray to Allah that He (swt) may enable us, as soon as possible, to go to those holy places in health, wellness, and safety; and perform tawaf around the Ka’bah and attain peace by the Masjid al-Nabawi.

Dear Muslims!

In order to sooth our longing for the holy lands even a little, let us recall our Prophet’s Farewell Pilgrimage (Hajj al-Wada) today. Let us take a look at some of the timeless messages that he (saw) bequeathed to all humanity in the khutbas he delivered during the Farewell Pilgrimage. Let us all contemplate and attain ease of heart as if living that moment again.

Dear Believers!

Addressing a large mass at Arafat, the Prophet of Mercy (saw) first extended thanks and praises to Allah (swt) and said:

“O people! Know it well that your Lord is one and your father is one. You all are from Adam, and Adam is from dirt. The Arab has no superiority over the non-Arab nor the non-Arab over the Arab nor the white over the black nor the black over the white. The superiority in the presence of Allah is by piety and piety alone.

“Verily! Your blood, property and honor are sacred to one another (i.e. Muslims) like the sanctity of this day of yours (arafa), in this month of yours (Dhu al-Hijjah) and in this city of yours (Mecca).”

That day, Prophet Muhammad (saw) declared that he trodden down all kinds of interest and blood feud.

From centuries ago, he warned Muslims about the women’s rights, their respectability, and inviolability by stating, “Beware! Just like you have rights over women, they have rights over you.”

Let us continue with the Farewell Sermon:

“O people! Listen to me in earnest. Learn that every Muslim is a brother to every Muslim. Nothing shall be legitimate to a Muslim which belongs to a fellow Muslim unless it was given freely and willingly. Do not do injustice... Whatever is borrowed should be returned, and all debts should be paid off. Return the goods entrusted to you to their rightful owners.”¹

“I leave behind me two things, the Qur’an and my example, the Sunnah, and if you follow these you will never go astray.”²

Dear Muslims!

These honorable words make the Final Prophet’s bequest to humanity, entrustment to his ummah, and the assurance of a safe future. And the guidance for our lives filled with the love of him... I would like to conclude this Friday’s khutbah with the following verse: “Say [O Muhammad]! ‘If you should love Allah, then follow me, [so] Allah will love you and forgive you your sins.’ For Allah is the Oft-Forgiving and Most Merciful.”³

¹ Musnad, VII, 307, 330, 376; Bukhari, Hajj, 132, Maghazi, 78; Muslim, Hajj, 147.

² Muwatta’, Qadar, 3.

³ Al-i ‘Imran, 3/31.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ

وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

مَنْ رَأَى مِنْكُمْ مُنْكَرًا فَلْيُغَيِّرْهُ بِيَدِهِ فَإِنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ

فَبِلِسَانِهِ فَإِنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَبِقَلْبِهِ وَذَلِكَ أَضْعَفُ الْإِيمَانِ

A MUSLIM SENSITIVITY: ENJOINING THE GOOD AND FORBIDDING THE EVIL

Honorable Muslims!

What lies in the essence of the creation of universe and the relations in the world of existence is the good and benevolence. Accordingly, Islam, our sublime religion, was revealed to ensure that good prevails on and evil is removed from the face of the earth.

A Muslim needs to be a good person, a truthful servant of Allah (swt), and a virtuous individual. But at the same time there is also the responsibility to reflect on the society their inherent good intentions and their spirit to fight against evil. That responsibility is called “amr bi al-ma’ruf wa nahy an al-munkar”, which means to enjoin the good and forbid the evil.

The Almighty Allah (swt) describes the Muslim ummah, consisting of believing, conscientious, and sensible members, in the Qur’an as follows: **“You are the best nation produced [as an example] for mankind. You enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and believe in Allah.”**¹

Dear Believers!

Faith and good are inseparable parts of each other. **“The essence of virtue is good morals.”**, as expressed by the Prophet Muhammad (saw).² Therefore, all that there is to good morals, such as justice, respect, honesty, loyalty, and tolerance, etc. are related to the good. A Muslim is a representative of the good. On the one hand, they keep the good alive with their behaviors and, on the other hand, invite others to the good by using a tongue of wisdom, good advice, and authentic knowledge. By heeding Prophet Muhammad’s advice, they make

life easier and not difficult, and they give good tidings and not repulse them.³

They have good thoughts (husn al-dhann) about their Muslim brothers and sisters, and know that it is a requirement of faith to think good and speak good. They assume positive intent in others and treat them compassionately. They uphold purity, honesty, and righteousness in all spheres of life.

They make the utmost effort in their power for evils to disappear. They do not turn a blind eye to evil, nor do they corrupt their tongues with lies and slanders, their minds with bad suspicion. They do not believe in unfounded claims that feed wood to the flames of sedition and gossip. For they know that people’s honor and dignity are entrusted to one another. And any betrayal of entrustment is a branch of evil.

Dear Muslims!

Prophet Muhammad (saw) says, **“Whosoever of you sees an evil, let him change it with his hand; and if he is not able to do so, then [let him change it] with his tongue; and if he is not able to do so, then with his heart — and that is the weakest manifestation of faith.”**⁴

So, let us always enjoin the good and prevent the evil to the extent that our knowledge, experience, means and capabilities allow. Let us not forget that this is a religious obligation and human duty upon each one of us. Let us have the heartfelt belief that every step we take in the cause of enjoining the good and preventing the evil will have its merits.

Honorable Muslims!

As I conclude this Friday’s khutbah, I would like to remind you of an important issue. Let us not fail to observe the measures in the fight against the pandemic so as to protect our health and that of our loved ones and the society. Let us not downplay the pandemic and let us show due care. Let us strictly and steadfastly observe the mask-wearing, social distancing, and hygiene rules. Let us not make it harder for our selflessly working brothers and sisters for our own good, health, and safety. Let us not forget that neglect and failure in such an important matter as this will hold us responsible both towards other people and towards Allah the Almighty.

¹ Al-i ‘Imran, 3/110.

² Muslim, Birr wa Sila, 14.

³ Bukhari, Jihad, 164.

⁴ Muslim, Iman, 78.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

فَاذْكُرُونِي أَذْكُرْكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لِي وَلَا تَكْفُرُونِ

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ :

مَنْ لَا يَشْكُرِ النَّاسَ لَا يَشْكُرِ اللَّهَ .

WITH GRATITUDE COMES PEACE

Honorable Muslims!

One night while performing prayer, Prophet Muhammad (saw) cried so much that the tears running down his beard reached his chest and fell off to the ground. Seeing this, Aisha (ra) was surprised and asked him, “O Messenger of Allah! Allah the Almighty forgave your past and future sins. Why do you still cry?” Thereupon replied the Prophet Muhammad, “**Should I not be a servant of Allah who shows gratitude to Him?**”¹

Dear Believers!

The sense of gratitude behind Prophet Muhammad’s tears means to know the value of favor done and reciprocate a favor with another favor. Gratitude embedded in the meaning of prayer means to comprehend that the true owner of all blessings, material or spiritual, is Allah the Almighty. Gratitude constantly expressed in a servant’s words means to admit being indebted for the blessings by obeying Allah from deep in heart and staying away from committing sins.

Dear Muslims!

Allah the Almighty states in the Holy Qur’an as follows: “**So remember Me and I shall remember you; give thanks to Me and do not be ungrateful to Me for My favors!**”²

Allah is al-Wahhab, al-Razzaq, al-Malik, and al-Karim. Every human being, whether young or old, rich or poor, strong or weak, sustain their lives only through the means and offerings bestowed by Allah (swt). It is an indispensable requirement of being a

believing servant of Allah to be aware of this fact, to know its value, and to express gratitude to the Owner of Blessings.

A Muslim feels, expresses, and demonstrates his gratitude to Allah thoroughly. They are thankful in heart, and know that they are indebted to Allah by always feeling Him in their hearts. They express their gratitude in words by always praising Allah. They demonstrate their gratitude physically by using their hands, tongues, eyes, and ears in good and keeping them clear off any kind of evil.

They know that the gratitude for mind is expressed through having faith and producing beneficial knowledge; gratitude for knowledge through teaching and implementing what is known; gratitude for wealth through sharing it with those in need; and for health through making all the efforts to become a benevolent human.

Dear Believers!

The Prophet Muhammad (saw) says, “**Those who do not thank people do not show gratitude to Allah.**”³ Then, a Muslim never underrates a favor done to them, nor do they show ungratefulness or arrogance. They get happy by giving thanks to all people who have done a favor for them, including primarily their parents, their spouses, and their children.

Dear Muslims!

Allah is al-Shakur, Who rewards any beneficial work done. He (swt) loves the servants who are not desirous and greedy but on the contrary are contented and satisfied with the available blessings. I would like to conclude this Friday’s khutbah with a verse expressing this truth: “**Also call to mind when your Lord proclaimed: “If you give thanks, I will certainly grant you more; but if you are ungrateful for My favours, My chastisement is terrible.”**”⁴

¹ Ibn Hibban, Sahih, II; Bukhari, Tahajjud, 6; Muslim, Sifat al-Munafiqin, 79.

² Baqarah, 2/152.

³ Tirmidhi, Birr, 35.

⁴ Ibrahim, 14/7.

Date: 21.08.2020

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

يَا أَيُّهَا الْمُدَّثِّرُ قُمْ فَأَنْذِرْ وَرَبِّكَ فَكَبِيرٌ .
وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ :
يَسِّرُوا وَلَا تُعَسِّرُوا وَبَشِّرُوا وَلَا تُنْفِرُوا .

MUSLIMS: REPRESENTATIVES OF RIGHTEOUSNESS AND INVITERS TO TRUTH

Honorable Believers!

Our Lord Almighty (swt) states in the Holy Qur'an as follows: **“O you who covers himself [with a garment], arise and warn! And your Lord glorify.”**¹ The verses above that were revealed on the first days of Islam in Mecca call on the Prophet Muhammad (saw) to ready himself and rise, assume responsibility and communicate Islam, the religion of tawhid, to people. The name of this sacred duty that the Prophet Muhammad honorably assumed and bequeathed to his ummah is called tabligh.

Dear Muslims!

Allah the Almighty wants us to continue the duty of tabligh with an awareness extending beyond time and place by stating, **“And let there be [arising] from you a nation inviting to [all that is] good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong.”**² Then, we must invite people to the truth and righteousness undauntedly and tirelessly.

Allah the Almighty informs that tabligh requires common sense and sensitivity by stating, **“Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in a way that is best.”**³ Then, we must employ a peasant discourse and behave patiently and politely while inviting people to the truth.

Dear Believers!

Each of us is as much tasked with the duty of tabligh as representation. Every Muslim is

responsible to live by the high values they disseminate, by firstly observing the boundaries of Islam in their own lives, and by being coherent in their words and actions. In this regard, our Lord's warning is quite clear: **“O you who have believed, why do you say what you do not do? Great is hatred in the sight of Allah that you say what you do not do.”**⁴

Dear Muslims!

Our Lord states, **“And who is better in speech than one who invites to Allah and does righteousness and says, ‘Indeed, I am of the Muslims.’”**⁵

Let us make the utmost effort to tell about the unshakable truths of the sublime religion Islam and live by them in order to be the addressee of the above appraisal. Let us take as example the Prophet Muhammad's method of tabligh who says, **“Make it easy, and not difficult. Give good news, and not cause hatred.”**⁶ Let us act sensibly in our invitation and guidance efforts in order not to cause damage unintentionally while working to uphold the good through good intentions.

Dear Believers!

As I conclude this Friday's khutbah, I pray to Allah the Almighty that the Hijri year 1442 that started yesterday may bring along health, peace, and abundance of divine blessings for our great nation and all humanity. Also, I would like to point out to another issue that requires us to be sensible about. Let us behave in a way that would best suit a Muslim in order to protect both ourselves and the people around us from the pandemic disease facing us. Let us be role models with our carefulness and seriousness in observing the measures. Let us politely warn people against neglectful behaviors. Let us not forget that it is a great irresponsibility before Allah and a violation of the rights of other people to act carelessly while this disease, which we can beat together, is still among us.

¹ Muddaththir, 74/1-3.

² Al-i 'Imran, 3/104.

³ Nahl, 16/125.

⁴ Saff, 61/2-3.

⁵ Fussilat, 41/33.

⁶ Bukhari, 'Ilm, 11.

Date: 28.08.2020

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَأُخْرَى تُحِبُّونَهَا نَصْرٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَفَتْحٌ قَرِيبٌ وَبَشِيرٌ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ.

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

مَنْ قَاتَلَ لِتَكُونَ كَلِمَةُ اللَّهِ هِيَ الْعُلْيَا، فَهُوَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ.

ENDEAVOR TO HONOR THE RELIGION OF ALLAH

Honorable Muslims!

In the verse I have recited, Allah the Almighty states, “**And [you will obtain] another [favor] that you love - victory from Allah and an imminent conquest; and give good tidings to the believers.**”¹

In the hadith I have read, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) says, “**He who fights that Allah’s word should be superior fights in Allah’s cause.**”²

Dear Believers!

The month of August has witnessed numerous victories that our glorious nation, who opened the gates of Anatolia towards peace and justice, has won in a bid to ensure that the truth prevails on earth. We have breasted many challenges for our faith, independence, homeland, and future. We have shown patience and fought with our heart and soul, but have never given up, fallen down, or lost our hope. In Allah we have trusted, and with His help, we have made history with many of our glorious victories from Malazgirt (Manzikert) to Mohacs (Mohaç), and from Sakarya to Dumlupınar.

Dear Muslims!

One of the most valuable blessings bestowed by Allah the Almighty upon people is to have a homeland. For a homeland means trust, peace, hope, and honor. This beloved homeland of ours is a sacrosanct entrustment to us by our martyrs who have sacrificed their lives in keeping their promise to Allah and our veterans who have run from one battlefield to another. This fact is explained in Turkish National Anthem as follows:

See not the soil you tread on as mere earth, But think about the thousands beneath you that lie without even shrouds. You’re the noble son of a martyr; take shame, hurt not your ancestor! Unhand not, even

when you’re promised worlds, this paradise of a homeland.

Therefore, let us know the value of this heavenly homeland, on the chest of which we go to sleep safely every night and we wake up to freedom every morning. Let us work day and night for the good, happiness, and prosperity of our nation with the strength coming from our love of homeland. Let us protect and keep our unity, solidarity, and brotherhood over any kind of interests. Let us not forget that it is a binding duty upon us to defend every inch of our homeland and every individual of our nation.

Dear Believers!

Last week marked the beginning of a new year in hijri calendar. Tomorrow we will welcome 10th of Muharram, namely the Day of Ashura. The Prophet Muhammad (saw) says, “**I hope that Allah may make fasting on the day of Ashura an expiation for the sins of the preceding year.**”³ He (saw) recommends Muslims to fast two days by also adding either the 9th or 11th of Muharram to the Day of Ashura.⁴

The Day of Ashura is also the day when Husayn the Master of Martyrs and about seventy people from the family of Prophet Muhammad along with him were martyred in Karbala. This sinister and sorrowful incident is a wound in the hearts of all Muslims whose hearts burn with the love of Prophet Muhammad (saw). Today, what falls upon us not to get heavily wounded like that in Karbala is to become knowledgeable and act consciously. We, like Husayn (ra), need to remain committed to the guidance of the Holy Qur’an and to Prophet Muhammad’s sunnah until our last breath.

Let us not forget that no benefit to be obtained in this mortal life can be superior to the abundance of divine blessings and benevolence that come with brotherhood in faith. No fortune, fame, wealth or rank can be ever more valuable than being the subject of a Muslim’s supplication to Allah, touching upon a heart, and being sacrificing for the same high ideals.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish Allah’s mercy upon Husayn (ra) particularly and all martyrs of Karbala. I remember with gratitude all noble martyrs of our homeland, particularly our brave soldiers who sacrificed their lives, our veterans, and our heroic commanders in the War of Independence on August 30 when we as the entire nation won a victory.

¹ Saff, 61/13.

² Bukhari, Tawhid, 28.

³ Tirmidhi, Sawm, 48.

⁴ Ibn Hanbal, I, 240.

Date: 04.09.2020

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ.

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

الطُّهُورُ شَطْرُ الْإِيمَانِ.

ISLAM ENJOINS CLEANLINESS

Honorable Muslims!

In the verse I have recited Allah the Almighty states, “Indeed, Allah loves those who are constantly repentant and loves those who purify themselves.”¹

In the hadith I have read the Prophet Muhammad (saw) says, “Cleanliness makes up half of faith.”²

Dear Believers!

Cleanliness is an inherently human need that is also present in the essence of nature. What befits a person is to be clean, decent, pure, and elegant. Our sublime religion Islam considers cleanliness as an irreplaceable component of faith. It enjoins Muslims to purify themselves of material and spiritual impurities, and be clean and pure in all spheres of life.

Dear Muslims!

Cleanliness means to attain beauty not only materially but also spiritually. To distance oneself from spiritual impurities that exhaust the soul and blacken the mirror of heart... To reach peace by keeping clean both our inner and outer world...

To abandon any wrongful attitude that makes us forget our servitude and reason for

existence... To keep ourselves away from sin and haram... To purify ourselves from spiritual illnesses, such as anger and envy, grudge and hatred, lie and slander, and conceit and arrogance... To gravitate ourselves toward attaining the consent of Allah, good morals, and halal...

Dear Believers!

Muslims who make efforts to be spiritually purified also pay attention to their physical cleanliness. It is a virtue of Muslims to live clean and protect their health as something that is entrusted to them. Muslims who, by performing wudu (ablution), prepare for salah (prayer), which is the pillar of the religion and the apple of our eyes, happen to clean their limbs, which get dirtied the most, at least five times a day. They take care of personal hygiene as required by Prophet Muhammad’s teachings. They keep their bodies, clothes, homes, and surroundings clean.

Dear Believers!

The Prophet Muhammad refers to health as one of the two blessings, the value of which people are aware the least.³ Regret is naturally the ultimate feeling that haunts people who jeopardize their health because of carelessness.

Therefore, let us pay even better attention to cleanliness these days when we are going through a fight against the pandemic disease. Let us show our respect for our surroundings, love for our loved ones, and responsibility to Allah by observing the mask-wearing and social distancing rules. Let us regard public health as valuable as that of our own. Let us not forget that neglect in taking and observing measures is an undesired act before Allah (swt).

¹ Baqarah, 2/222.

² Muslim, Taharah, 1.

³ Bukhari, Riqaaq, 1.

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.

Date: 18.09.2020

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ الْقُرَىٰ آمَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا لَفَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِم بَرَكَاتٍ مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ .

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

إِنَّ هَذَا الْمَالَ خَصْرَةٌ حُلُوءٌ فَمَنْ أَخَذَهُ بِسَخَاوَةِ نَفْسٍ

بُورِكَ لَهُ فِيهِ وَمَنْ أَخَذَهُ بِإِشْرَافِ نَفْسٍ لَمْ يُبَارَكْ لَهُ فِيهِ.

BARAKAH: DIVINE ABUNDANCE

Honorable Muslims!

Our Lord Almighty (swt) states in the Holy Qur'an as follows: **“And if only the people of the cities had believed and feared Allah, We would have opened upon them blessings from the heaven and the earth.”**¹

The Prophet Muhammad (saw) warns us as follows: **“The goods of this world are attractive and pleasant. Whoever owns a portion of them with peace of heart, his property gets barakah. But whoever desires such with heart full of greed, the barakah of his property disappears.”**²

Dear Believers!

The verse and hadith I have recited reveal the secret of barakah for us: If one wants abundance of blessings in life, then they should focus on sharing other than accumulating and stockpiling what they have in their possession. For wealth, knowledge, sustenance, and love get abundant only when shared. With richness of heart and generosity comes barakah. Stay away from wastefulness, greediness and avarice, ungratefulness for blessings, and stinginess! For barakah is the peace attained through living without being captivated by one's possessions. Stay away from lying,

hypocrisy, pomposity, deception, and unfairness! For sins and moral weaknesses cause barakah to disappear. Barakah is attained through submission to Allah, contentedness and gratefulness, righteousness and honesty, and humility and reliance on Allah.

Dear Muslims!

Faith, worships, good deeds, and good morals constitute the barakah of our life. The barakah of our heart is the Holy Qur'an. The barakah of our home is affection, love, and compassion. The barakah of our wealth is zakat, infaq, and sadaqah. The barakah of our business is honesty, the sweat of the brow, and halal earning. The barakah of our work is to work duly and diligently and to be selfless. The barakah of our knowledge is to apply our knowledge into our life and share it with others. The barakah of our time is to not waste it and rather use it by knowing its value. The barakah of our children is to raise them in such a way for them to be useful to Islam and humanity.

Dear Believers!

Allah the Almighty is the only source of barakah and the loftiest of the lofty. He (swt) is al-Dhu al-Jalal wa al-Ikram, the Mighty and Generous. Then, let us turn toward our Lord (swt), Who placed barakah in the essence of all existence, through our servitude, worship, supplication, and prayers. Let us search for peace and happiness not in what is abundant in quantity but in what is available in barakah. Let us not forget that if we base our intention on the consent of al-Rahman, then He (swt), the Owner of Power, will open the doors of barakah for us.

¹ A'raf, 7/96.

² Bukhari, Zakat, 50.

Date: 25.09.2020

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ. خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ. اقْرَأْ
وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ. الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ. عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ.
وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
أَحَبُّ الْبِلَادِ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَسَاجِدُهَا.

MOSQUES AND KNOWLEDGE

Honorable Muslims!

Upon the Hijrah from Makkah to Madinah, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) had a masjid built as the first thing. He also had a shady structure built adjacent to the masjid for accommodation and education for his companions. The Prophet of Mercy (saw), who was sent as a teacher, thus united knowledge and worship at the Masjid al-Nabawi, and made it the heart of Madinah. In this respect, the first revelation read as follows: **“Recite in the name of your Lord who created. He created man from a clinging substance. Recite, and your Lord is the most Generous, Who taught by the pen and taught man that which he knew not.”**¹

Dear Believers!

According to our sublime religion Islam, faith and good morals, worship and manners, and knowledge and wisdom are integral to one another. Mosques are not only the center of life and the heart of a city, but they are also a hub of knowledge and guidance. Mosques, where we submit our servitude to the Lord of Worlds, enable us to grasp the sense of oneness, unity, and brotherhood under the same dome. They

strengthen our faith and hope with their minaret calling to tawhid and adhan to worship. We prostrate for the consent of Allah (swt) facing the same mihrab. Khutbah and sermons that enjoin the good and forbid the evil and teach about the truth of Islam give direction to our lives. The Prophet Muhammad (saw) gives glad tidings that peace and mercy would be rained over those who gather in one of the masjids of Allah, recite the Holy Qur’an, and discuss about it there.²

Dear Muslims!

The 1-7 October Week is celebrated as “the Mosques and Religious Officials Week” every year in Turkey. The theme of this year is “Mosques and Knowledge”. Throughout the week we will remember again the place of mosques in our civilization and their meaning in our lives. We will remember with gratitude our sacrificing religious officials who have devoted their lives to serving for religion, and our great nation who have constructed and improved mosques. We will organize a symposium on the place of the Grand Hagia Sophia Mosque in our worship and knowledge history, the opening of which we celebrated with great enthusiasm and happiness.

I pray to Allah (swt) that the Mosques and Religious Officials Week be auspicious. I would like to conclude this Friday’s khutbah with the following hadith of Prophet Muhammad (saw): **“The places most favorable to Allah are mosques.”**³

¹ Alaq, 96/1-5.

² Muslim, Dhikr, 38.

³ Muslim, Masajid, 288.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَهُوَ مَعَكُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

الْإِحْسَانُ أَنْ تَعْبُدَ اللَّهَ كَأَنَّكَ تَرَاهُ فَإِنْ لَمْ تَكُنْ تَرَاهُ فَإِنَّهُ يَرَاكَ.

THE SENSE OF MURQAQABAH AND MUHASABAH

Honorable Muslims!

In the verse I have recited, Allah the Almighty states, **“He is with you wherever you are. And Allah, of what you do, is Seeing.”**¹

In the hadith I have read, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) says, **“Ihsan is to worship Allah as if you see Him, and if you do not achieve this state of devotion, then (take it for granted that) Allah sees you.”**²

Dear Believers!

Allah the Almighty has not left human, as the apple of the eye of the universe, on their own and unattended. Human is always under a divine inspection and supervision. All our deeds keep being recorded for us to give an account of them when the time comes. This fact is referred to in the Holy Qur’an as follows: **“Man does not utter any word except that with him is an observer prepared [to record].”**³

Dear Muslims!

The world is the cropland of the Hereafter. Whoever comes here leaves one day and every servant of Allah reaps what they sow. So, whoever does an atom’s weight of good will see it. And whoever does an atom’s weight of evil will see it in the Hereafter.⁴ Our Lord (swt) commands us to prepare for the Hereafter by stating, **“O you who have believed, fear Allah, and let every soul look to what it has put forth for tomorrow.”**⁵ He (swt) calls on us to muraqabah (to be self-aware), namely question ourselves (through muhasabah) by turning to our inner worlds.

Muraqabah means to ask ourselves why we are created, where we come from, and where we are

going. It means to put effort to keep a record of our mistakes and sins, and to make up for them. It means to live with the awareness that Allah is with us at all times. It means to derive strength from our faith, use our reason, and control our nafs. It means to always stay alert in order not to lose ourselves in Satan’s traps and the world’s unending desires. Muraqabah means to attach our hearts to Allah, worship sincerely, and race in benevolence and piety.

Dear Believers!

The capital of a Muslim’s life is to live by knowing oneself and relying on Allah (swt). Those who draw lessons from the past, know today’s value, and plan their future with faith and ihsan reach maturity. In this respect, Prophet Muhammad’s following words call on us to self-questioning: **“The feet of the son of Adam shall not move from before his Lord on the Day of Judgement, until he is asked about five things: about his life and what he did with it, about his youth and what he wore it out in, about his wealth and how he earned it and spent it upon, and what he did with what he knew.”**⁶

Dear Muslims!

As I conclude this Friday’s khutbah, I would like to remind you that we also need to question ourselves about the fight against the pandemic disease. What falls upon us in this fight is to act conscientiously. This is because both the measures taken and our determination to observe them are critically important. Let us not fall into complacency and negligence. Let us heed the warnings so that we can be sure not to have violated the rights of other people. Let us not waste all the efforts made from the onset of the pandemic to the present. I would like to take this opportunity to pray that Allah the Almighty may accept all our brothers and sisters, particularly our health professionals, who have passed away during the fight against the pandemic, as martyrs, and wish that He (swt) may grant our patients speedy recovery.

¹ Hadid, 57/4.

² Bukhari, Tafsir, Luqman, 2.

³ Qaf, 50/18.

⁴ Zalzalah, 99/7-8.

⁵ Hashr, 59/18.

⁶ Tirmidhi, Sifat al-Qiyamah, 1.

Date: 09.10.2020

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظًا
الْقَلْبِ لَآنْفَضُّوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ.

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

الْمُؤْمِنُ مُؤَلَّفٌ وَلَا خَيْرَ فِيمَنْ لَا يَأْلَفُ وَلَا يُؤَلَّفُ.

MUSLIMS AND BEING MILD-MANNERED

Honorable Muslims!

Faith, worship and good morals are components of a whole in Islam. Our sublime religion Islam teaches us Muslims to not only continue worship sincerely but also to have good morals and be one of those people with whom it is easy to get along well. It asks us to establish relations based on good faith, fairness and compassion with particularly our families, neighbors, relatives and friends. It recommends that we treat everybody, with whom we are in just any kind of relationship, with respect and courtesy, having the awareness that Allah (swt) has created and oversees every person.

Dear Believers!

The Prophet Muhammad (saw) is the finest role model for humanity. He (saw) taught us how to be a virtuous servant of Allah and the ways to get along well with people by personally practicing in his life. He (saw) was a mild-tempered, graceful and refined person. He (saw) had good manners, decency, and humility. He (saw) would instill peace and trust in people around him and would not cause any fear or doubt. He (saw) had a heart full of love and compassion for his family and companions. He was patient, tolerant and forgiving in bad times just as in good times. Allah the Almighty (swt) praises this quality of his as follows: **“So by mercy from Allah, [O Muhammad], you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in**

heart, they would have disbanded from about you.”¹

Dear Muslims!

We as Muslims who take the Prophet Muhammad as the role model should take as our principle to behave sincerely and without expecting anything in return. Let us strive to be loyal, sacrificing, well-intended and truthful. Let us not forget that people who are hypocritical, self-interested, arrogant, and double-faced are not loved and valued both by Allah and other people. No place do bad words, rude behavior, violence, and hatred have in a good-tempered Muslim’s life. For such good-tempered Muslims always keep in mind the following words of Prophet Muhammad: **“The believer is friendly, for there is no goodness in one who is neither friendly, nor befriended.”² “Shall I not inform you for whom the Fire is unlawful and who is unlawful for the Fire? Every person who is close (to people), is amicable, and is easy (to deal with).”³**

Dear Believers!

Let us know the value of this great nation and exceptional society in which we live. Let us share joy and sorrow, and abundance and poverty. Let us instill peace, serenity, and affection in each other with our attitudes and behaviors. Let us not restrain our smiling face, nice words, conscientiousness and tolerance from primarily our spouse and children, and all other people. This way we can make life easier both for ourselves and for the people around us.

Dear Muslims!

As I conclude this Friday’s khutbah, I would like to wish the Almighty Allah’s mercy upon our Azerbaijani brothers and sisters who were martyred, and speedy recovery for those injured in the struggle to liberate the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.

¹ Al-i ‘Imran, 3/159.

² Ibn Hanbal, II, 400.

³Tirmidhi, Sifat al-Qiyamah, 45.

Date: 16.10.2020

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

إِنَّمَا يَعْمُرُ مَسَاجِدَ اللَّهِ مَنِ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ

وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَى الزَّكَاةَ وَلَمْ يَخْشَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ فَعَسَى

أُولَئِكَ أَنْ يَكُونُوا مِنَ الْمُهْتَدِينَ.

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

مَنْ بَنَى مَسْجِدًا لِلَّهِ بَنَى اللَّهُ لَهُ فِي الْجَنَّةِ مِثْلَهُ.

MOSQUE:

HOUSE OF ALLAH, WORK OF MUSLIMS

Honorable Muslims!

In the verse I have just recited the Almighty Allah (swt) states, **“The mosques of Allah are only to be maintained by those who believe in Allah and the Last Day and establish prayer and give zakah and do not fear except Allah, for it is expected that those will be of the [rightly] guided.”**¹

In the hadith I have just read, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) says, **“Whoever builds a mosque for the sake of Allah, Allah will build for him a house in Paradise.”**²

Dear Believers!

Mosques, where we come together to submit our servitude to our Lord (swt) in this hour of Friday when prayers are accepted, are the houses of Allah and work of Muslims. Mosques provide cure for our souls depressed by loneliness and peace for our hearts tired in the busyness of life. Mosques are the heart of our residential areas, the spirit of our cities, and the safe haven for our noble nation and the Muslim ummah.

Dear Muslims!

We as a nation have made the finest examples of sharing, solidarity, mercy and brotherhood during the fight against the pandemic. We have experienced the excitement and joy of helping in Allah’s cause. Today we will also start an aid campaign under the coordination of the Presidency of Religious Affairs for mosques whose construction works are ongoing at home and abroad. With your prayers and supports, we will complete their construction and open them to worship. At these mosques whose construction is completed, the sound of adhan will be heard, Muslims will stand shoulder to shoulder in prayer, and foreheads will meet the ground in prostration, inshaallah. I invite you, our valuable congregation, to join the race for charity, small or big alike, after the Friday prayer.

May Allah the Almighty accept and welcome our aid, infaq and sadaqah. May He (swt) enable our charities to contribute to our protection from any kind of trouble and particularly the pandemic disease as soon as possible. May His (swt) mercy be upon the deceased brothers and sisters of ours, from past to present, who have had a leading role in the construction and improvement of our mosques, as well as those who have provided support, aid, and service to them with the love of worship. May He (swt) grant those still alive a healthy and peaceful life.

¹ Tawbah, 9/18.

² Muslim, Zuhd, 44.

General Directorate of Religious Services

Tarih: 23.10.2020

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

لَقَدْ مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ بَعَثَ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِنْ
أَنْفُسِهِمْ يَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ
وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ.
وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
مَنْ أَطَاعَنِي فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ، وَمَنْ عَصَانِي فَقَدْ عَصَى اللَّهَ.

MAWLID AL-NABI Honorable Muslims!

In the verse I have recited, our Lord Almighty (swt) states: **“Certainly did Allah confer [great] favor upon the believers when He sent among them a Messenger from themselves, reciting to them His verses and purifying them and teaching them the Book [i.e., the Quran] and wisdom.”**¹

In the hadith I have read, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) says: **“Whoever obeys me, obeys Allah, and whoever disobeys me, disobeys Allah.”**²

Dear Believers!

Allah the Almighty (swt) has sent many prophets since Adam (as) as warners and heralders of glad tidings. Through prophets, He (swt) has invited people to tawhid and servitude, embracing the truth and living in a virtuous way. Prophets have communicated the religion of Allah (swt) for centuries and set an example for people in the cause of enjoining the good and preventing the evil. This chain of honorable messengers who have received divine revelations was complete with Prophet Muhammad Mustafa (saw).

Dear Muslims!

The Prophet Muhammad is the hope of humanity, the beloved of believers, and a reason for mercy for the universe. It is he (saw) who has conveyed and explained the message of the Qur'an to us as well as teaching through living by it. The key to a peaceful and safe life in the world and to eternal happiness in the Hereafter is

to take him (saw) as a role model and exert efforts to live like he did. In this regard, he addresses us as follows: **“He has found the taste of faith (iman) who is content with Allah as his Lord, with Islam as his religion (code of life) and with Muhammad as his Prophet.”**³

Dear Believers!

It is our beloved Prophet Muhammad who has told us about the meaning of faith and taught us how we should perform each and every worship, as a requirement of being a Muslim, from establishing prayer to fasting and from performing hajj to paying zakat. It is he (saw) who has taught us how to be a good human being, a benevolent servant of Allah (swt), and a mature Muslim. In fact, he (saw) describes himself as follows: **“I was sent to perfect the good moral character.”**⁴

Looking at the life of the Last Prophet, we see that faith and worship are perfected only by good morals. Just like we inherited performing the sunnah prayers from him, it is also his sunnah to be sincere and honest, to treat every living being in a compassionate and merciful way, to uphold justice, to know the value of family, and to take the utmost care of being brothers and sisters in religion.

Honorable Believers!

Throughout next Wednesday night we will enjoy the Night of Mawlid al-Nabi, the anniversary of Prophet Muhammad's honoring the world. We will observe the Mawlid al-Nabi Week this year, too, as we do annually. This year's theme of the Mawlid al-Nabi Week is set to be “Prophet Muhammad and Child” by the Presidency of Religious Affairs. Within this framework, we will try to get to know our Prophet better, understand him better, particularly recall the manner of his communication with children, and reflect it on our lives. I hereby congratulate you all on the occasion of the Night of Mawlid al-Nabi, and pray to Allah that He may enable the Week to be auspicious for the Muslim world and all humanity.

¹ Al-i 'Imran, 3/164.

² Muslim, Ijarah, 33.

³ Muslim, Iman, 34.

⁴ Ibn Hanbal, II, 381.

Tarih: 30.10.2020

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْمَالُ وَالْبَنُونَ زِينَةُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَالْبَاقِيَاتُ

الصَّالِحَاتُ خَيْرٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ ثَوَابًا وَخَيْرٌ أَمَلًا.

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

مَا نَحَلَ وَالِدٌ وَلَدًا مِنْ نَحْلٍ أَفْضَلَ مِنْ أَدَبٍ حَسَنٍ.

THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD (SAW) AND CHILDREN

Dear Muslims,

Allah the Almighty states in the Holy Qur'an: **"Wealth and children are [but] adornment of the worldly life. But the enduring good deeds are better to your Lord for reward and better for [one's] hope."**¹

Honorable Muslims,

A child is the loveliest of all blessings bestowed upon us. They are the most innocent guests of our homes, and the barakah of our families. They are the joy of our lives, and the light of our eyes as expressed in our Sublime Book, the Qur'an. They are the sources of benevolence that will keep our book of deeds always open for record of good deeds. They are the most precious treasure entrusted to us, and a reason for test with their existence and absence.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The most valuable guide for us in shaping our relations with children is our Beloved Prophet (saw), who was sent as a mercy to the worlds. He loved children the most among all the creatures. His merciful heart was opened to children most. He showed his vast compassion by caressing children's heads, embracing them, and kissing them. Not only his own children and grandchildren but all children around him took their share from his compassion.

Dear Muslims,

The Messenger of Allah (saw) would value children, and made them feel that they were valuable. He would give seat to them right beside himself, and he would begin with children while offering something to eat. He would greet them and ask about how they were while passing by them. He would sometimes joke with them, and even accompany them in their games. He (saw) would never let them to be sad or their sense of confidence to be damaged. He would listen to them patiently and give advices no matter what mistake they made. He would attach special importance to girls and orphans; he would cherish them as beloved entrustments, and would never let them be insulted. All the efforts of our Prophet (saw) were for the children to grow up with strong personalities as a generation with sound faith and good morals.

Honorable Muslims,

Today, humanity needs the timeless exemplary character of the Prophet Muhammad (saw) more than ever. Then, let us give an ear to our beloved Prophet (saw) who says, **"There is no gift that a father gives his child more virtuous than good manners."**² Let us set an example for our children with our words, behaviors, and personalities. Let us not deprive them of our care and love. Let us raise them with mercy and compassion, and with the awareness of servitude and responsibility to Allah (swt). Let us take care of their spiritual needs as well as the material ones. Let us never forget that the love and attention shown to children, and the moral and value education given to them are the best investment for our life both in the world and in the Hereafter.

¹ Kahf, 18/46.

² Tirmidhi, Birr, 33; Ibn Hanbal, IV, 77.

Date: 06.11.2020

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

أَيَحْسَبُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنْ يُتْرَكَ سُدًى.

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

مَثَلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فِي تَوَادِهِمْ وَتَرَاحُمِهِمْ

وَتَعَاطُفِهِمْ مَثَلُ الْجَسَدِ إِذَا اشْتَكَى مِنْهُ عُضْوٌ

تَدَاعَى لَهُ سَائِرُ الْجَسَدِ بِالسَّهْرِ وَالْحُمَّى.

BEING RESPONSIBLE MUSLIMS

Honorable Muslims!

Allah the Almighty (swt) has created human with such attributes as having reason, being worthy of respect, and having responsibilities. Our Almighty Lord (swt) specified, among the principles of Islam, the rights that every human being has by birth and some responsibilities. He (swt) has given the glad tidings of happiness in this world and in the Hereafter for those people who observe these responsibilities, on top of which comes iman (faith).

We as Muslims are responsible, first and foremost, to our Lord Almighty, to Whom we owe all our existence. It is one of our most important duties as Muslims to believe in Him (swt) wholeheartedly, be connected to Him with love, obey Him, and duly observe His commandments and prohibitions.

After that, we have responsibilities towards ourselves and the people in our surroundings. We strive to include in our life all that is halal, fine, right and good, and stay away from all that is haram, unpleasant, wrong and evil. We know that the appreciation and consent of our Lord, as well as the peace of heart that He (swt) has entrusted to each one of us, are rested in our sense of responsibility.

Dear Believers!

The Almighty Allah (swt) states in the Holy Qur'an as follows: **“Does man think that he will be left neglected?”**¹ It is clear, therefore, that a life without responsibility, thought, principles and ideals does not fit the essence of being a human. Every

deed has its consequences in this world and rewards or punishment by Allah in the Hereafter.

Just as establishing prayers is a responsibility of Muslims, so too is being merciful. Just like fasting, extending a helping hand to those in need is also a human and Islamic duty. Just like giving zakat, being honest and free from fraud in all our affairs is also a duty of our servitude to Allah.

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

The Messenger of Allah (saw) describes Muslims in a hadith as follows: **“The similitude of believers in regard to mutual love, affection and fellow-feeling is that of one body; when any limb of it aches, the whole body aches because of sleeplessness and fever.”**²

Last week we were hit by an earthquake that struck our beautiful İzmir. We kept waiting by the rubble with pain in our hearts, prayers by our tongues, and hope inside us. With the help of our Lord (swt) and the support of our state, we all were mobilized as a nation to cure our wounds.

It is naturally impossible to prevent an earthquake. Let us not forget, however, that it is a requirement of the responsibility of being a Muslim to take precautions and reduce the damage of natural disasters to minimum levels. May Allah protect our great nation against all kinds of disasters! May Allah treat our deceased brothers and sisters with mercy. May Allah grant their grieving families patience and quick recovery to the injured.

Dear Believers!

As I conclude this Friday's khutbah, I would like to bring an issue to your attention. Next Wednesday, a sapling planting event will be held in predetermined localities across our country with the theme **“Breath of the World, Breath for the Future”**. In addition, at the request of our citizens who want to beautify their environment, a sapling will be granted free of charge by the provincial/district directorates of Agriculture and Forestry. I would like to take this opportunity to invite all members of our congregation of all ages to the sapling planting event that will contribute to the forestation of our heavenly homeland.

¹ Qiyamah, 75/36.

² Muslim, Birr, 66.

Date: 13.11.2020

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا قُمْتُمْ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ فَاغْسِلُوا
وُجُوهَكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ إِلَى الْمَرَافِقِ وَامْسَحُوا بِرُءُوسِكُمْ
وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ إِلَى الْكَعْبَيْنِ.
وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
مِفْتَاحُ الْجَنَّةِ الصَّلَاةُ وَمِفْتَاحُ الصَّلَاةِ الْوُضُوءُ.

ABLUTION (WUDU): HEALTH FOR BODY, PEACE FOR SOUL

Honorable Muslims!

The Almighty Allah (swt) states in the verse I have recited, **“O you who have believed, when you rise to [perform] prayer, wash your faces and your forearms to the elbows and wipe over your heads and wash your feet to the ankles.”**¹

In the hadith I have read, Prophet Muhammad (saw) says, **“The key of paradise is prayer, and the key of prayer is wudu (being purified).”**²

Dear Believers!

According to Islam, cleanliness is an indispensable responsibility that has its root in faith. Our sublime religion calls on people to purification who want to have a clean body, a peaceful heart, and a soul purified of sins. It therefore asks servants of Allah to stand before Him (swt) in a clean and pure form and manner through getting rid of material and spiritual impurities.

Dear Muslims!

Muslims view wudu both as an act that earns them merits of worship and as a blessing that protects them from uncleanness and

contamination. They start preparing for prayer, the pillar of the religion and the ascent of the soul, with wudu. They perform wudu before reciting the Holy Qur'an. They do not perform tawaf around the Ka'bah without wudu in place. Muslims thus clean, at least five times a day, their parts that get dirtied most, and become the addressee of the following glad tiding of Prophet Muhammad (saw): **“Whoever performs wudu and performs it well, their sins leave the body, through their fingers.”**³

Dear Believers!

We are in an all-out fight as a nation against the COVID-19 pandemic that affects the whole world. The key to success in this struggle is through hygiene, wearing face masks, and observing social distancing. Let us not forget that wudu is the best opportunity for us to ensure regular and careful hygiene. We are the members of a very clean culture who grew up with the habit of performing wudu since childhood. The phrase “breaking the wudu” widely used in our language is an expression of the importance attached by our people to “being in state of wudu” all day.

Wudu, which gives cleanliness to our body and peace to our soul, is also the best protection against pandemic diseases. It helps us become a healthier society due to natural purification that comes with water. Then, let us make hygiene and purity ensured by wudu a part of our lives. As expressed in the Holy Qur'an, **“Allah loves those who are constantly repentant and loves those who purify themselves.”**⁴

¹ Ma'idah, 5/6.

² Tirmidhi, Taharah, 1.

³ Muslim, Taharah, 33.

⁴ Baqarah, 2/222.

Date: 20.11.2020

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتُ النَّعِيمِ

خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَعَدَّ اللَّهُ حَقًّا وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ .

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

قَالَ اللَّهُ أَغَدَدْتُ لِعِبَادِي الصَّالِحِينَ مَا لَا عَيْنٌ رَأَتْ،

وَلَا أُذُنٌ سَمِعَتْ، وَلَا خَطَرَ عَلَى قَلْبِ بَشَرٍ .

HEAVEN: AN ENDLESS BLESSING TO WELCOME MUSLIMS

Honorable Muslims!

Allah the Almighty (swt) states in the verse I have recited as follows: **“Indeed, those who believe and do righteous deeds - for them are the Gardens of Pleasure. Wherein they abide eternally; [it is] the promise of Allah [which is] truth. And He is the Exalted in Might, the Wise.”**¹

Our Lord, the Owner of Glory, Majesty, Honor, and Perfection, has granted us all a life that starts with coming into this world and extends into the Hereafter. He (swt) has informed us that we will either have the reward or the punishment in the Hereafter, the land of eternity, for the deeds we do in this world that is in effect a testing phase. He (swt) has given the glad tiding of entry into heaven for those who mobilize their mind, heart, skills, wealth, and capabilities to have faith and do righteous and beneficial deeds. But He (swt) also has warned those who deny and turn their back at the truth and spend their lives doing evil about a severe punishment.

Dear Believers!

Heaven, which is embellished with unique blessings, is the land of eternity where peace and serenity prevail always. It is the reward for those servants of Allah (swt) who have spent their lives seeking for His appreciation, performed their worships with ikhlas, and made no concessions on good morals. It is the home of joy and happiness where we will meet our Lord (swt) and our loved ones.

Dear Muslims!

Muslims, who avoid crossing the boundaries set out by Allah (swt), are given their book of

deeds from their right hand side upon the Resurrection.

The divine sound of

أَدْخُلُوهَا بِسَلَامٍ أَمِينٍ

“Enter it in peace, safe [and secure]!”² echoes. The state of the would-be residents of heaven who have left behind any kind of pain, suffering, illness, and trouble is described in the Holy Qur’an as follows: **“When they reach it, its gates will be opened and its keepers will say: Peace be upon you! You have done well, so come in, to stay forever!”**³ Now there will be neither sorrow nor longing or hardships. The Almighty Allah (swt), Who has welcome His servants with His boundless mercy and bounty, has now granted in full their reward for their efforts in the world.

Dear Believers!

There are vivid descriptions of various heavenly blessings in the Holy Qur’an and in the hadiths that inspire believers for the good. Prophet Muhammad (saw) narrates what our Lord states about those niceties that could not be described enough as follows: **“I have prepared some blessings for my righteous servants in heaven that no eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no human has ever dreamed of.”**⁴

So, let us continue showing patience and perseverance, doing charitable works and good to reach heaven even if the path to it is a challenging one. Let us strive with faith and hope to enter into heaven with our Lord pleased with us and us pleased with Him (swt).

Dear Muslims!

Just like the whole world, we as a nation also are going through a big fight against the pandemic. It is a duty upon all of us to observe all the measures put in place for our health, in addition to mask-wearing, social distancing and hygiene rules. We kindly ask honorable elder members of our congregation over 65 years of age and our brothers and sisters with chronic health problems, both of whom are in risk groups, to continue performing their prayers at their homes throughout this period. Let us not forget that inshaallah we will come out victorious from this challenging test and be the addressees of rewards as long as we observe the measures taken.

¹ Luqman, 31/-8-9.

² Hjr, 15/46.

³ Zumar 39/73.

⁴ Bukhari, Bad’ al-Khalq, 8.

Date: 27.11.2020

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَإِذَا سَمِعُوا اللَّغْوَ أَعْرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَقَالُوا لَنَا أَعْمَالُنَا

وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَالُكُمْ سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ لَا نَبْتَغِي الْجَاهِلِينَ.

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

مِنْ حُسْنِ إِسْلَامِ الْمَرْءِ تَرْكُهُ مَا لَا يَعْنِيهِ.

**AVOIDING PURPOSELESS AFFAIRS
BEAUTIFIES SERVITUDE TO ALLAH
(SWT)**

Honorable Muslims!

In the verse I have recited, our Lord Almighty (swt) states, “**And when they hear ill speech, they turn away from it and say, ‘For us are our deeds, and for you are your deeds. Peace will be upon you; we seek not the ignorant.’**”¹

In the hadith I have quoted, Prophet Muhammad (saw) says, “**Indeed among the excellence of a person's Islam is that he leaves what does not concern him.**”²

Dear Believers!

Our sublime religion Islam orders us to be engaged in useful, auspicious and meaningful affairs in all stages of our lives. It recommends us to speak in the truest manner and follow the finest of all words. It advises us that we stay away from pointless affairs that cause loss of time and labor and serve no purpose in our life in this world and in the Hereafter.

Dear Muslims!

The values we have and the blessings our Lord (swt) has bestowed upon us are too precious to waste unnecessarily and purposelessly. All Muslims who have this awareness stay clear of useless affairs that benefit neither themselves nor the people around them. They do not give credit to unfounded words and unnecessary thoughts. They use their mind and heart in the way of good and in works that are appropriate in terms of the appreciation of Allah (swt).

Dear Believers!

According to the Holy Qur'an, one of the most common qualities of Muslims who attain salvation is to avoid affairs that are not their business and are purposeless.³

Then, let us strive to be perfect Muslims with our words, thoughts, conscience and morals. Let us not forget that our quality as a Muslim will become finer and our servitude to Allah (swt) will become more valuable in the presence of Allah to the extent that we stay away from purposeless activities. Happy are those who are not able to notice the flaws of others because of being busy minding their own flaws!

¹ Qasas, 28/55.

² Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 11; Muwatta, Husn al-Khulq, 1.

³ Mu'minun, 23/3.

General Directorate of Religious Services

Date: 04.12.2020

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَىكُمْ.

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَنْظُرُ إِلَى صُورِكُمْ وَأَمْوَالِكُمْ، وَلَكِنْ يَنْظُرُ

إِلَى قُلُوبِكُمْ وَأَعْمَالِكُمْ.

BEING A PERSON WITH DISABILITIES:

A TRIAL THAT LEADS TO HEAVEN

Honorable Muslims!

The Almighty Allah (swt) states in the verse I have recited as follows: **“Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you.”**¹

In the hadith I have read, Prophet Muhammad (saw) says: **“Allah does not look at your outward appearance and your wealth but He (swt) looks only at your hearts and your deeds.”**²

Dear Believers!

What makes the human notable in the sight of our Lord Almighty is not fame, might, beauty, health, or wealth. Humans as the most honorable of all creation are already valuable before Allah and the way to increase this value is possible only through faith, worship, good deeds and good morals. Therefore, health conditions and disabilities, present at birth or developed later, are a reality of life and cannot be referred to as an imperfection of people. Quite the opposite, they are means of trial and tribulation that lead to

heaven in the end with patience, perseverance and endeavor.

Dear Believers!

It is a commandment of Allah (swt) and a sunnah of our Prophet (saw) to protect our health and seek treatment when needed. The pandemic facing us today reminds us one more time of this responsibility. Each and every one of us is responsible for observing the measures and protecting ourselves and our nation from the pandemic. But if we contract the disease decreed by Allah despite all our efforts, then we need to get treatment, remain spiritually firm and be patient.

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

Like all blessings in our possession, all hardships on our way are means for us to earn Allah’s (swt) appreciation. Let us not forget that every person’s responsibility is only to the extent he or she is able. It is a duty upon all of us to support our ill brothers/sisters and their families and have them feel, through our prayers and aids, that they are not alone and helpless. In the same way, it is a duty upon all of us to instill hope in our brothers/sisters with disabilities through the love we nurture in our hearts, and facilitate their lives. Regardless of the nature of their problems, it is a source of honor, peace and merit for us to be an eye for those who are not able to see, a tongue for those who are not able to speak, an ear for those who are not able to hear, a pair of feet for those who are not able to walk, and a pair of hands for those who are not able to take hold.

¹ Hujurat, 49/13.

² Muslim, Birr, 34.

DATE: 11.12.2020

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَأَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً بِقَدَرٍ فَأَسْكَنَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ

وَأَنَا عَلَى ذَهَابٍ بِهِ لِقَادِرُونَ.

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَطْعَمَنَا وَسَقَانَا وَكَفَانَا وَأَوَانَا.

WATER: SOURCE OF LIFE AND HEALING

Dear Muslims!

Water is one of the most precious blessings bestowed upon us by Allah (swt). As expressed in the Holy Qur'an, "every living thing was made from water"¹ and lives a life dependent on water. Water is the source of our life and the abundance and fertility of our land. Through water comes health and cleanliness to our bodies, mercy and beauty to our environment.

Honorable Muslims!

Our exalted religion Islam commands us not to waste water but to use it in moderation. As a matter of fact, the Messenger of Allah (saw) warned a Companion who was using too much water while performing ablution saying, "What is this extravagance?" When the Companion asked "Can there be any extravagance in ablution?", he (saw) replied as, "Yes, even if you are on the bank of a flowing river."² This warning of the Prophet (saw) reminds us that water is a rare blessing that should never be wasted even for the purpose of worship.

Dear Muslims!

Allah the Almighty states in the Holy Qur'an: "And We have sent down rain from the sky in a measured amount and settled it in the earth. And indeed, We are Able to take it away."³

We all know that the treasure of water is priceless. If our water is taken away to the depths of the earth, no one can bring it back to us but our Lord (swt).

While there are millions of people on earth devoid of a drop of clear and fresh water, what falls upon us is endless gratitude only. "Praise is due to Allah Who fed us, provided us drink, sufficed us and provided us with shelter!"⁴

As a requirement of our gratitude, let us appreciate the value of the blessing and act consciously while using water. Let us not jeopardize our future by consuming more water than we need. Let us not fall into sin by violating the rights of other living beings.

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

As you know, our country needs water and rain nowadays when we are going through the driest year of the recent times. I would like to invite you, our beloved congregation, to the rain prayer we will be doing after performing the fardh of Friday prayer.

¹ Anbiya, 21/30.

² Ibn Majah, Taharah, 48.

³ Mu'minun, 23/18.

⁴ Muslim, Dhikr, 64.

General Directorate of Religious Services

Date: 18.12.2020

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَابْتَغِ فِيمَا آتَاكَ اللَّهُ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ وَلَا تَنْسَ نَصِيبَكَ
مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَأَحْسِنْ كَمَا أَحْسَنَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ وَلَا تَبْغِ
الْفَسَادَ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُفْسِدِينَ.
وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ عَلَيْكُمْ بِالْقَصْدِ.

A MUSLIM OBSERVES MODERATION IN ALL MATTERS

Honorable Muslims!

In the verse I have recited, Allah the Almighty (swt) states as follows: **“But seek, through that which Allah has given you, the home of the Hereafter; and [yet], do not forget your share of the world. And do good as Allah has done good to you. And desire not corruption in the land. Indeed, Allah does not like corrupters.”**¹

In the hadith I have read, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) says, **“O people! You should observe moderation!”**²

Dear Believers!

Islam is the religion of temperance. It orders us to be restrained and balanced in all spheres of life. It advises us to avoid extremes, to remain firm on the true path, and to behave with common sense and consistently.

Dear Muslims!

People will be happy as long as they are able to maintain the balance between matter and meaning, body and soul, and life in this world and life in the Hereafter. Peace and tranquility can prevail on earth only through the maintenance of the divine equilibrium. Going to extremes in shopping, entertainment, eating, drinking, dressing, speaking and writing, and even in religious matters will inflict harm both on the individuals and on the society.

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

What befits us as Muslims is to emulate in our life the perfect balance Allah (swt) has embroidered in every bit of the universe. To hold on to the middle path without ifrad and tafriid (extremes on both sides of the equilibrium)... To never lose balance in sorrow and joy, or anger and happiness...To heed Prophet Muhammad’s (saw) advice that reads **“Do not go to extremes; hold on to the straight path; and rejoice for the reward you will get in return for doing so.”**³

How happy are those who lead a life in moderation as commanded by our Lord (swt)! And who avoid extremes and remain firm on the straight path!

¹ Qasas, 28/77.

² Ibn Majah, Zuhd, 28.

³ Bukhari, Iman, 29.

Date: 25.12.2020

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ يُوقِعَ بَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ
وَالْبَغْضَاءَ فِي الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ وَيَصُدَّكُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ
اللَّهِ وَعَنِ الصَّلَاةِ فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ مُنْتَهُونَ.
وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
كُلُّ مُسْكِرٍ خَمْرٌ، وَكُلُّ خَمْرٍ حَرَامٌ.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES: EVIL'S TOXIC FRIEND

Honorable Muslims!

Islam sets out rules to ensure the safety and security of our life, wealth, mind, faith, and generation. It also commands us to protect these fundamental values. It forbids all kinds of bad habits that endanger our health, disturb our mental balance, waste our wealth, and damage our family. This is why alcohol is haram. In this regard, Prophet Muhammad (saw) says in a hadith, “Every kind of drink that intoxicates one is deemed khamr (alcoholic beverage) and every kind of khamr is forbidden.”¹

Dear Believers!

Alcohol or alcoholic beverages distort the mind, soul, and body that are each precious entrustments to and blessings for us from Allah (swt). They cause the wealth to be thrown away for nothing and the subsistence to be wasted

while it should be spent for halal means. The peace of the family, the hopes of the children, and the future of the youth are darkened because of alcohol. While the doors leading towards the good get shut, the paths to the evil increase because of alcohol. While friendships come to an end, animosities are fueled. Every year thousands of tragic incidents, including traffic accidents, take place because of alcohol.

Allah the Almighty (swt) warns us in the Qur'an against alcohol as follows: “Satan only wants to cause between you animosity and hatred through intoxicants and gambling and to avert you from the remembrance of Allah and from prayer. So will you not desist?”²

Dear Muslims!

Let us use our mind and will for halal and pleasant things that Allah (swt) will be pleased with. Let us strive to be such Muslims as those who endeavor by holding on to their faith and hope, defend their virtues, reflect, and produce. Let us never allow alcohol to take our society captive that numbs people, drags them into laziness and despair, and makes them a tool for the evil. Let us build a healthy, peaceful and happy future together.

¹ Muslim, Ashribah, 74.

² Ma'idah, 5/91.