

Date: 16.12.2022

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا آمَاكُمُ وَأَوْلَادُكُمُ فِتْنَةٌ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ عِنْدَهُ
أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ.

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
...وَإِنَّ لَوْلَدِكَ عَلَيْكَ حَقًّا.

CHILDREN: OUR LORD'S (SWT) PRECIOUS GIFT IN OUR TRUST

Dear Muslims,

In the verse I have recited, our Lord Almighty (swt) states, "**And know that your wealth and your children are only a test and that with Allah is a great reward.**"¹

In the hadith I have read, our Prophet (saw) says, "**You have a duty which you owe your child.**"²

Dear Believers!

Our children are a precious trust bestowed upon us by Allah the Almighty (swt). They are the joy of our lives and the blessing of our homes. They are the hope of our family and the guarantee of our future. Our primary duty is to raise our children in a healthy family environment, with love and good morals. It is our religious, moral, legal, and human responsibility to protect them from all forms of neglect and abuse.

Dear Muslims!

Unfortunately, we are going through times when pieces of news about our children that deeply wound our consciences are high on the agenda. Sadly, it is children who pay the highest price for corruption, loss of morality and lawfulness, and lack of conscience. Children are the biggest victims of wars and tragedies, refugee camps and poverty on the one hand, and neglect, abuse and inhuman behavior on the other. One of these victimizations is the extremes that are being put on the agenda with expressions such as "underage marriages", "child marriages" and "child brides".

Dear Believers!

Forcing girls and daughters into marriage before they have the responsibility of being mothers and starting families and trying to legitimize it on the basis of Islam is a grave sin. This wrong attitude and discourse have nothing to do with Islam's understanding of marriage. The abuse of children's labor, body, and future is an indication that humanity is bankrupt. No matter where, how, when, and by whom it occurs, the neglect and abuse of children is

an inhuman act that is incompatible with reason, conscience, and morality. There can be no excuse or justification for any words or behavior that victimizes children and darkens their future. Destroying a child's life is the greatest crime against humanity and conscience. It is a grave crime that one cannot give an account of before Allah the Almighty (swt) and humanity.

Dear Believers!

It is unacceptable that cases of child marriage and child abuse are associated with our sublime religion, Islam, and turned into a process in which Muslim identity is damaged. According to Islam, a man and a woman cannot be married until they have reached the age of maturity, both emotionally and physically, spiritually and mentally, and before they have reached the age of majority to understand the meaning and responsibility of starting a family. This is because it is not enough to reach puberty for marriage. Puberty is a biological process. Marriage, on the other hand, requires coming of age. As a matter of fact, the minimum age of marriage in Türkiye is set by law at eighteen. It is both a religiously required behavior and the most fundamental condition for ensuring lasting peace and happiness in the family for everyone, especially parents, to respect the limits regarding the age of marriage.

Dear Muslims!

Our children, who are Allah's gift bestowed in our trust, are the most sensitive balance of humanity and society in terms of conscience and mercy. So, let us be aware of our responsibilities towards our children, the hope of our future. Let us pay attention to their education, their psychological, social, cultural development, and their religious and moral upbringing. Let us fight together against all forms of neglect and abuse against our children. Let us also be vigilant against those who try to associate an extremely sensitive issue such as child abuse with Islam and Muslims through subliminal messages. Let us not forget that humanity will never achieve goodness unless it ensures the peace and security of children. I would like to conclude this Friday's khutbah with the following supplication we are taught in the Holy Qur'an:

رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّاتِنَا فُرْقَةً أَعْيُنٍ وَاجْمَعْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا

"Our Lord! Bless us with pious spouses and offspring who will be the joy of our hearts, and make us models for the righteous."³

¹ Anfal, 8/28.

² Muslim, Siyam, 183.

³ Furqan, 25/74.