

Date: 29.10.2021

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ وَحَمَلْنَاهُمْ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ
وَرَزَقْنَاهُمْ مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَفَضَّلْنَاهُمْ عَلَى كَثِيرٍ مِمَّنْ
خَلَقْنَا تَفْضِيلًا.

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

مَا أَكْرَمَ شَابٌ شَيْخًا لِسِنِّهِ إِلَّا قَبِضَ اللَّهُ لَهُ مَنْ
يُكْرِمُهُ عِنْدَ سِنِّهِ.

LOYALTY TO THE ELDERLY: A REASON FOR ALLAH'S MERCY AND GRACE

Honorable Muslims!

It was the day Mecca was conquered. The longing had come to an end and the Prophet Muhammad and his dear companions could return to Mecca after years. Muslims were all hugging each other with joy, and thanking Allah for blessing them with such a day. Our Prophet's (saw) loyal friend Abu Bakr (ra) hurried to his father Abu Quhafa as soon as he arrived in the city. He brought his father, whom he so wholeheartedly wanted to embrace Islam, to have him meet with the Messenger of Allah (saw). When the Messenger of Allah (saw) saw the gray haired and bearded, visually impaired old man in front of him, he humbly told his Hijrah companion, **"Would not it be better if your old father stayed home and I visited him?"**¹

Dear Believers!

Our elderly people are those people whose prayers Allah answers and whom He (swt) grants blessings abundantly. They are our most valuable bridges connecting our past with our future. We learn from them about how to love our Lord (swt) and have a fondness of our Prophet (saw). It is they who passed our national and spiritual values, customs and traditions down on us. They are the ones who are the pillars of our homes and the source of blessings.

Dear Muslims!

The Prophet Muhammad (saw), who attached special importance to the elderly all his life, calls on us as follows, **"If a young man honors an older person on account of his age, Allah appoints someone to show reverence to**

him in his old age."² What befits us as the ummah of the Prophet Muhammad is to not abandon our elders, who are sources of mercy and blessings, and our sacrificing and enduring parents as they reach old age. What befits us is to stand by their side and meet their needs in the most vulnerable stage of their lives. What befits us is to speak pleasantly with them and to not even say "fie" to them. What befits us is to treat them compassionately and mercifully, and strive to be the addressees of their prayers. For respect for the elderly is a reason for the pleasure of Allah the Almighty.

Dear Believers!

Our Lord (swt) states as follows, **"And We have certainly honored the children of Adam. And carried them on the land and sea and provided for them of the good things and preferred them over much of what We have created, with [definite] preference."**³ Right, all humans, men or women, are valuable, have dignity, and deserve respect. Moreover, our elders with their gray hair and in need of assistance are our opportunities to attain the grace and mercy of Allah (swt) and our sources who pray for us. Our Prophet's (saw) word is clear: **"Allah the Almighty shies away from not answering the prayers of a gray-haired, elder Muslim on the true path."**⁴

Then, let us make no mistake in showing respect to our elders who held our hands when we were young and brought us to these days. Let us ask them how they are and if they need any help, and heartily run to serve them in any way. Let us not forget that respect for the elderly is a means for peace in our homes and blessings in our lives.

Dear Muslims!

Today is the October 29 Republic Day. I would like to use this opportunity to commemorate with mercy and indebtedness our glorious martyrs and heroic veterans as well as the statesmen who have long made these lands our homeland with their life and blood in the Independence War. May Allah the Almighty (swt) make our unity, solidarity, peace, and brotherhood permanent on these beloved lands until the end of time.

¹ Ibn Hanbal, VI, 350.

² Tirmidhi, Birr, 75.

³ Isra, 17/70.

⁴ Tabarani, al-Mu'jam al-Awsat, V, 270.