

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ مَنَعَ مَسَاجِدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ يُذَكَرَ فِيهَا اسْمُهُ وَسَعَى
فِي خَرَابِهَا...

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

أَحَبُّ الْبِلَادِ إِلَيَّ اللَّهُ مَسَاجِدُهَا.

MOSQUES: THE BLESSED PLACES THAT RENDER OUR PERSONALITY PROSPEROUS

Dear Muslims!

Mosques and masjids, as sources of peace, security, mercy, and abundance of divine blessings, serve as sanctuaries where we offer our servitude to our Almighty Lord (swt), learn our life guide Qur'an, and embrace the good morals of the Prophet of Mercy, Muhammad Mustafa (saw). Mosques and masjids are centers of spirituality where we stand shoulder to shoulder in unity, strengthening our bonds of solidarity. They are centers of truth that call humanity to tawhid, salvation, benevolence, and goodness. As in the words of our Prophet (saw), **"The places that are dearest to Allah are the mosques."**¹

Dear Believers!

Mosques are not merely places where we gather for worship. Mosques are educational centers where people—men and women, young and old—come together to gain knowledge and wisdom, are shaped by these virtues, and build their personality with justice and mercy. Our ancestors have thus built a magnificent civilization, inspired by the unique spirit of mosques. At the heart of this mosque-centered civilization lies a steadfast adherence to the Qur'an and Sunnah. At the heart of this civilization lies the commitment to being a loyal spouse, a good son or daughter, a caring mother or father, a reliable neighbor, and taking responsibility for relatives, orphans, and desolate people. At the heart of this civilization lies the commitment to earning halal, avoiding haram, measuring accurately, weighing fairly, and never cheating anyone. At the heart of this civilization lies the embrace of righteousness as a guiding principle in business and professional life, along with a deep respect for the rights of people and the public. At the heart of this civilization, as reflected in the ahi tradition, lies the promotion of values such as solidarity, honesty, justice, morality, and hard work among tradesmen and craftsmen from the past to the present.

Dear Muslims!

It is a fundamental obligation of being a Muslim to build, repair, and renovate mosques and masjids, which serve as the foundation of our civilization and the heart of our cities. Destroying them, preventing worship

within them, and rendering them both materially and spiritually dysfunctional is a grave oppression. Our Almighty Lord's (swt) warning in this regard, however, is very clear: **"Who does more wrong than those who prevent Allah's Name from being mentioned in His places of worship and strive to destroy them?"**² As a matter of fact, as is the case today in Gaza, mosques have been one of the targets of the oppressors in the occupation of cities. In response to this, it is the duty of Muslims to build and revitalize mosques. The revival of mosques means preserving their identity as centers of knowledge and wisdom. It is to enrich our lives with the knowledge gained in mosques and to embody and represent Islam in the most beautiful way through the grace and blessings we receive from them.

So, Dear Believers!

Let us not leave our mosques, which we have built with great effort, without a congregation. Let us not leave them alone. As we come together for Friday prayers and Eid prayers, let us also gather in the mosques for our five daily prayers and bring our families along. Let us not deprive our children, the light of our eyes, and our youth, the promise of our future, of the spiritual atmosphere found in our mosques. Let us recognize that every step we take and every moment we spend heading to the mosque with sincere intention will contribute to the forgiveness of our sins, the tranquility of our homes, and the blessings in our earnings. Let us not forget that, as in every period in history, mosques will serve as the centers for preserving our Muslim identity today and in the future.

Dear Muslims!

Every year, the 1-7 October is observed as "the Mosques and Religious Officials Week" in Türkiye. Religious officials are exceptional individuals who serve in mosques, masjids, Qur'anic courses, and various other fields, enlighten society with authentic and accurate knowledge about religion and play an irreplaceable role in shaping our personalities, molding our character, and safeguarding our identity. They are individuals of great compassion who have devoted their lives to the service of religion, fostering the spiritual reconstruction of people of all ages and from all walks of life.

On this occasion, I would like to extend my wishes for Allah's (swt) mercy upon our deceased religious officials who have contributed to the material and spiritual construction of our mosques and dedicated their lives to religious service, upon deceased people of charity who have generously supported the building and renovation of our mosques, and upon all deceased members of our congregation, and for a healthy and peaceful life to those who are still with us.

¹ Muslim, Masajid, 288.

² Baqarah, 2/114.