

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذْ قَوْلُوا فَقَوْلًا سَدِيدًا، يُضْلِلُكُمْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرُ
 لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَمَنْ يُطِيعُ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا
 وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
 لَا يَجْتَمِعُ الإِيمَانُ وَالْكُفْرُ فِي قَلْبٍ امْرِئٍ، وَلَا يَجْتَمِعُ الصِّدْقُ وَالْكَذْبُ
 جَمِيعًا، وَلَا يَجْتَمِعُ النِّحْيَانُ وَالْأُمَانَةُ جَمِيعًا

BEING TRUE IN ESSENCE AND WORDS

Honorable Muslims!

Allah the Almighty (swt) states in the verses I have recited: “O you who have believed, fear Allah and speak words of appropriate justice. He will [then] amend for you your deeds and forgive you your sins. And whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger has certainly attained the highest achievement.”¹

Our Beloved Prophet (saw) declares in the hadith I have read: “A combination of blasphemy and faith, lying and righteousness, treason and trustworthiness cannot coexist in a person’s heart together.”²

Esteemed Believers!

Islam attaches great importance to the truth, verity, and to always telling what is right. It could be seen by the fact that al-Sidq, which means truthfulness and honesty, is the first attribute of the prophets. The first moral virtue that comes to mind when we think of Muslims is, again, truthfulness. Because truthfulness is the light of salvation, the essence of hidayah (guidance), and a requirement of high morality. True word is the voice of faith; and telling what is right is the principle of the believer. In this context, our Beloved Prophet (saw) said: “He who believes in Allah and in the last day should either speak good or keep silent.”³

Dear Muslims!

Truthfulness is goodness while lying is evil. Truthfulness is mercy while lying is a disaster. The right finds its place with truthfulness; and loses its place with lies. The property acquired by truthfulness becomes fruitful and blessed. There is no goodness in anything acquired by lies. Honor and dignity become permanent with truthfulness. One attains the countenance of Allah (swt) with truthfulness. The punishment of Hell is the only destination to be reached by lies. In the sight of Allah (swt), the value of the word is measured by the degree to which it reflects the right and the truth. Because word is the interpreter of the heart, and the mirror of our essence and soul. Our Prophet (saw) warned the Ummah in this regard with the following words: “It is obligatory for you to tell

the truth, for truth leads to virtue and virtue leads to Paradise. The person who continues to speak the truth and endeavors to tell the truth is eventually recorded as ‘truthful’ with Allah. And beware of telling a lie for telling a lie leads to obscenity and obscenity leads to Hell-Fire. The person who keeps telling lies and endeavors to tell a lie is recorded as ‘liar’ with Allah.”⁴

Esteemed Believers!

Most of the time, a lie burns the fire of discord in the society, disseminates corruption, ends friendships, causes harm to the innocent and the loss of rights. The underlying reason for the damage of trust in the family, decrease of love and respect, and eventually the destruction of the families is again, to lie. Confidence in business and trade is gained only by truthfulness. A righteous institution ultimately earns benefit for both this life and for the Hereafter. Those who deceive the society, try to cover their tricks by fancy words, and do not refrain from even giving false oath for this cause are doomed to go bankrupt in both worlds. The Messenger of Allah (saw), who is the best example for the Ummah with his words and behaviors, was so sensitive about lying that, he forbade even lying to children or joking by lying. When he saw a woman calling her child by saying, “Come here and I shall give you something.”, he asked, “What did you intend to give him?”, and as she answered, “I intended to give him some dates.”, he (saw) said, “Beware! If you were not to give him anything, a lie would be recorded against you.”⁵

Honorable Believers!

As lying is a sinful behavior, accepting any heard news to be true without searching, and causing the spread of a lie deliberately or not are the behaviors that require the same degree of responsibility in terms of religion and morality. In this regard, Allah the Exalted (swt) warns us in the Holy Qur'an as: “And 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.”⁶

Valued Believers!

Let us never talk against anyone's dignity and honor no matter what their religion, race, denomination, and lifestyle are. Let us pursue the truth and the verity. Let us adopt truthfulness, respect and kindness as our principles. Let us not forget that we will give account for each word on the Day of Judgment. Let us avoid from lie, which darkens and pollutes our hearts, and most of the time turns our lives upside down. Let us be true in our essence and our words.

¹ Ahzab, 33/70, 71.

² Ibn Hanbal, II, 349.

³ Abu Dawud, Adab, 122, 123.

⁴ Muslim, Birr, 105.

⁵ Abu Dawud, Adab, 80.

⁶ Isra, 17/36.

لِيَقُولُوا إِنَّا كُنَّا مُعْمَلَةً

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَأَخْبَرُوا إِلَى رَبِّهِمْ أُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ
الْجَنَّةِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ
وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
اللَّهُمَّ اهْدِنِي لِأَخْسَنِ الْأَعْمَالِ وَأَخْسَنِ الْأَخْلَاقِ لَا يَهْدِي لِأَخْسَنِهَا إِلَّا
أَنْتَ وَقِنِي سَيِّئَ الْأَعْمَالِ وَسَيِّئَ الْأَخْلَاقِ لَا يَقِنِي سَيِّئَهَا إِلَّا أَنْتَ

MAN'S JOURNEY TO PERFECTION: ISLAM, FAITH AND BENEFICENCE

Honorable Muslims!

One day while the Prophet (s.a.w.) was sitting with the companions, a man came up, whose clothes were extremely white, whose hair was extremely black, upon whom traces of traveling could not be seen, and whom none of the companions knew, who sat down close to the Prophet (s.a.w.) and asked, 'What is Islam?' Allah's Messenger (s.a.w.) replied: **"To worship Allah Alone and none else, to offer prayers perfectly to pay the compulsory charity (Zakat) and to observe fasts during the month of Ramadan, and you perform the hajj of the House if you are able to take a way to it."**

He said, 'You have told the truth,' Companions were amazed at him asking and [then] telling that He told the truth. Then he further asked, 'Tell me about Iman/faith.' Allah's Messenger (s.a.w.) replied: **"Faith is to believe in Allah, His angels, His Books, His Apostles, and to believe in Resurrection, and that you believe the Decree, the good of it and the bad of it."** He said again, 'You have told the truth,' Then he further asked, 'Tell me about Ihsan/ beneficence.' Allah's Messenger (s.a.w.) replied: **"To worship Allah as if you see Him, and if you cannot achieve this state of devotion then you must consider that He is looking at you."** He also asked some questions about the apocalypse and left. Our Dear Prophet (s.a.w.), told Omar (r.a.) who witnessed the event: **'That was Gabriel who came to teach you, your religion.'**¹

Valuable Believers!

Faith is the affirmation of Allah's existence and unity and what Our Prophet brought from Almighty Allah, with the heart and the language. Faith is the bond of love and trust between the servant and Allah. Faith is the loyalty and sincerity promise of man who knows the purpose of creation. What is befitting to human beings, is to stand by this promise and fulfill its requirements.

Valuable Muslims!

Islam is to live as we believe and to reflect faith on our lives. To worship Allah with complete submission, to devote all our material and spiritual existence to His way, to obey his orders, to avoid prohibitions. It is this Muslim's loyalty to Allah in His words, deeds and behaviors, and his willingness not to associate anything with Him.

Valuable Muslims!

The beneficence in the Gabriel hadith is the awareness of servitude and the peak of beautiful morality. Beneficence is to feel the presence of Our Lord in every moment of life, who declares that "...We are closer to him than [his] jugular vein."² This is to live in the presence of Our Lord in divine supervision and blessings, in accordance with the "...He is with you wherever you are. And Allah, of what you do, is Seeing"³ verse, in the spirit of needing His favors and His support.

Esteemed Believers!

To believe, to carry out the worship of Islam, and to act with the consciousness of beneficence, is like steps that complement each other. A person who believes in Allah and the verities that He has revealed will of course strive to be a sincere Muslim by not disrupting or hindering his worship. The indispensable necessity of faith and worship is to have good morals. The person who believes but does not perfect it with worship and good morality, is in a misadventure. A person who is not crowning his morality with faith and worship will be deprived of the contentment of Allah. Anyone who is worshipping, but who has a weakness in terms of faith and morals, cannot see the benefits of the worship which remains as only a form, not the full content of worship. Therefore, every person who is pleased being a servant of Allah, Islam as a religion, Muhammad (s.a.w.) as the Prophet, should beautify their faith, worship, and morality altogether. That is when the believer will receive this herald of the Holy Qur'an: **"Indeed, they who have believed and done righteous deeds and humbled themselves to their Lord - those are the companions of Paradise; they will abide eternally therein."**⁴

Honorable Muslims!

Let us not deprive our soul of a blessing such as faith, a food such as worship, a consciousness like beneficence. Because all kinds of good, auspiciousness and the base of verity, the meaning of being human, and the value of servitude are hidden in these three ores.

Let's be sincere and diligent on the road to servitude. Let us keep in mind that every word that is poured out of our tongue, every work that is out of our hands, every view we see with our eyes, every step we take has a return on the level of Supreme Allah.

I conclude my khutbah with the prayer of Our Dear Prophet (s.a.w.): **"O Allah, guide me to the best of deeds and the best of manners, for none can guide to the best of them but You. And protect me from bad deeds and bad manners, for none can protect against them but You."**⁵

¹ Bukhari, Belief, 37.

² Qâf, 50/16.

³ Hadîd, 57/4.

⁴ Hûd, 11/23.

⁵ Nasâî, Commencement of the Prayer, 16.

لِّلَّهِ الْحَمْدُ لِّلَّهِ الرَّحْمَنُ لِّلَّهِ الرَّحِيمُ

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ خَلْقَ الْأَنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلِيقٍ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ
الَّذِي عَلِمَ بِالْقَلْمَنْ عَلَمَ الْأَنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ
وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

اللَّهُمَّ افْغَنْنِي بِمَا عَلَمْتَنِي وَعَلِمْنِي مَا يَنْفَعُنِي وَرِزْنِي عِلْمًا

MUSLIMS ARE PRECURSORS OF KNOWLEDGE AND CIVILIZATION

Honorable Muslims!

The verses I have recited were the first revelation to our Beloved Prophet (saw), who was sent as a guide to humanity, and as a mercy to the worlds. These verses of the Holy Qur'an, which were the first to be revealed, invited all Muslims to the path of knowledge and wisdom in the person of our Prophet (saw) as: "**Recite in the name of your Lord who created - Created man from a clinging substance. Recite, and your Lord is the most Generous - Who taught by the pen - Taught man that which he knew not.**"¹

Esteemed Believers!

Being the addressee of the revelation and being equipped with knowledge are the most precious features of human in the realm of existence. Indeed, the Holy Qur'an informs us that Allah the Almighty (swt) taught the names and the verity of all things to the first prophet and first human Adam (as), "...And He taught Adam the names - all of them..."²

The ability to learn and teach is a rare blessing bestowed upon human by Allah the Almighty, who is "al-Aleem (the All-Knowing)". The greatest effort worthy of exhaustion for humans is to feed the soul by pursuing authentic knowledge just as they feed themselves physically by pursuing the halal (lawful) means of earning. Can one think of a more valuable effort than accumulating knowledge or a more honorable rank than being a scholar? Can those who turn their back on the light of knowledge find peace? For this reason, our Prophet (saw) warned us, "**You should be a teacher or a learner, a listener or a supporter of knowledge, and you should not be the fifth, which makes you perish!**"³

Valued Muslims!

Islamic civilization, which has been carrying justice, compassion, peace and trust to all corners of the world since 'Asr al-Sa'adah (Age of Bliss), is a civilization of knowledge. It is so because Islam commands human—who shoulders the trust of Allah (swt) on earth—to think, produce knowledge, and contribute to the improvement of themselves and the society by learning the truth.

As the adherents of a religion as such, and with the inspiration they take from the Holy Qur'an that clearly expresses, "**Those who know would not be equal to those who do not.**"⁴ Muslims have been the pioneers of knowledge in all the geographies they live. They have taken groundbreaking steps in sciences such as medicine, algebra, chemistry and geometry, physics and astronomy in particular, as well as the fields such as the Qur'anic exegesis (tafsir), hadith, Islamic jurisprudence, and kalam. They brilliantly established a bond between the unshakable principles of the

religion they believe and the marvelous rules of the universe they live. They have become the followers of a path that will lead humankind to peace in this world and to salvation in the Hereafter by combining physics with metaphysics, and knowledge with wisdom. They have authored many masterpieces that have put their stamp on history and they have enlightened both their own era and the following centuries with their knowledge and inventions.

Honorable Muslims!

With the sorrows that hurt all our hearts, the Islamic world that is going through difficult times today is paying off the price of neglecting knowledge and contenting with ignorance. Making up for being left behind in that regard and building a peaceful and safe future can only be possible through acquiring knowledge.

Knowledge is such a great force—people with good intentions can turn it into benefits for humanity while people with bad intentions can turn it into a lethal technology that can kill millions of people. Then, our duty as Muslims is to know the value of knowledge, and to introduce "ethics of knowledge" to our present day so that the knowledge can produce goodness. We need to fully grasp the sense of the responsibility that our faith and history places on us, and strive to become a society that reads, contemplates, inquires, and refers to authentic sources to acquire knowledge. We need to embrace knowledge to protect our tomorrows from material and spiritual destruction, with the awareness that we do not have even a second to waste. We need to ensure that our children who are the light of our eyes become familiar with the prominent figures of our civilization, and teach them that it was Muslim scholars who laid the foundations of modern sciences and technological discoveries hundreds of years ago. We need to introduce those prominent figures as role models, who used their knowledge, experience, reasoning, and efforts for the good of humanity.

Esteemed Believers!

Our Prophet (saw) supplicated to our Lord, as I recited at the beginning of my khutbah, "**O Allah, benefit me with that which You have taught me, and teach me that which will benefit me, and increase me in knowledge.**"⁵ It is essential for Muslims to have beneficial knowledge and do good deeds. Today, too, just as has been throughout the history, Muslims all around the world continue to acquire knowledge, carry out learning and teaching activities, and strive to be the pioneers of all kinds of charitable works, as well as reconstruction, improvement, and building activities. In 2018, we inaugurated the Imam Sarakhs Mosque in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, and the Cologne Mosque in Germany, with the help of our charity-loving nation. In 2019, inshaallah, the adhans will echo, the believing hearts will line up standing shoulder to shoulder in prayer, and the foreheads will meet the ground in prostration at the Hala Sultan Mosque in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, the Tirana Mosque in Albania, and the Sultan Abdulhamid Khan Mosque in Djibouti. May our Lord always give our noble nation all in abundance, who always support knowledge and worship places. May our Lord accept all our charitable works in the best fashion.

¹ Alaq, 96/1-5.

² Baqarah, 2/31.

³ Darimi, Muqaddimah, 26.

⁴ Zumar, 39/9.

⁵ Tirmidhi, Da'awat, 128.

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وَلَا تَقْرُبُوا الزِّنَى إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَاحِشَةً وَسَاءَ سَبِيلًا.
وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ
إِنَّ مِمَّا أَدْرَكَ النَّاسُ مِنْ كَلَامِ النُّبُوَّةِ الْأُولَى إِذَا لَمْ تَسْتَحِي
فَاصْنَعْ مَا شِئْتَ.

HAYA' (PIOUS SHYNESS): THE ESSENCE OF ISLAMIC MORALITY

Honorable Muslims!

The religion of Islam aims at directing the emotions in the essence of human towards better in line with the principles determined by Allah the Almighty. It puts universal principles in place for human to avoid evil and ugly words and deeds, abandon evil, and embrace good deeds. Haya', which also reflects conscience, compassion, and a sense of shame that motivates human to avoid misconduct, comes on top of these principles, which not only direct human closer to attaining the approval of the Lord Almighty, but also regulate human relations in the societal life.

Haya' is an inherent human emotion making human observe the boundaries of privacy and pursue good deeds. A basic inherent human quality loved greatly by Allah, it is the ornament of faith that beautifies it. It is the most robust shield that protects believers against sins. The emotion of haya' fills the hearts of believers with love, respect, and trust; prevents extremisms, thereby forming a peaceful society. In this respect, says our beloved Prophet (saw), "**One of the sayings of the early prophets which the people have got is: If you don't feel ashamed (from Haya': pious shyness from committing religious indiscretions) do whatever you like.**"¹

Valuable Believers!

Our Lord Almighty (swt) mentions living a chaste life among the most valuable qualities to lead human to eternal salvation, as expressed in the Holy Qur'an,

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِفُرُوجِهِمْ حَافِظُونَ

“And they who guard their private parts”.² Right after the command of “Tell the believing men to reduce [some] of their vision and guard their private parts. That is purer for them. Indeed, Allah is Acquainted with what they do”³, He commands, “And tell the believing women to reduce [some] of their vision, guard their private parts, and not exposes their adornment...”⁴. In presence of Allah, all believing men and women are liable to avoid haram, and pursue a chaste life.

In an environment where societies lost moral and spiritual values in the darkness of the Jahiliyyah, our beloved Prophet (saw) insistently encouraged people to live a chaste life. In addition, after taking on the duty of prophethood, he (saw) drew attention to the unbreakable bond between faith and haya' by stating, “The essence of

Islamic morality is haya’.”⁵ He further stated, “Haya' does not bring anything except good.”⁶

Esteemed Muslims!

Our sublime religion Islam enjoins haya' and modesty on the one hand, and forbids zina (fornication and adultery) that disrupts such values on the other hand. According to Islam, zina is an act that the religion regards as a grave sin, the mind as foul, and the morality as unpleasant. It is against the human nature; it damages human's honor and self-respect. It gives a feeling of worthlessness, and breaks the ties of compassion and love. It undermines the spiritual and moral values of the society by sowing the seeds of distrust, hatred, and grudge among people.

Valued Believers!

There are many wisdoms underlying all the commandments and prohibitions established by Allah. The most important wisdom underlying the commandment of being chaste and the prohibition of fornication and adultery is the protection of the family structure because extramarital relationships both causes the collapse of the institution of family and threatens the existence of uncontaminated generations.

Honorable Muslims!

Disaster for human is deprivation and lack of chastity and modesty. It is a painful situation that distances human from attaining the approval of Allah, brings them closer to the wrath, and drags them into the never-ending frustration. Therefore, Islam forbids zina and all other acts and behaviors that lead to it. No matter how small an immoral step may look in the first place, not avoiding such steps would possibly cause one's fall into haram. Our Sublime Lord warns us, **“And do not approach unlawful sexual intercourse. Indeed, it is ever an immorality and is evil as a way.”**⁷

Esteemed Believers!

Let us be meticulous in remaining within the boundaries set by our religion and distancing ourselves from the sins. Let us strive not to make even the slightest of a mistake that may lead to moral corruption. Let us put the dress of taqwa on and equip ourselves with chastity and modesty. Let us not let it slip out of our minds that the life, the property, and the body we have are what Allah has entrusted to us, and that we all will give an account for each of these blessings. Let us not fall for the deceiving colors and the short-lived desires of the life in this world. Let us never forget that a believer who follows the path of revelation and fulfills the necessity of their faith will be glorious, and those who follow their zeal and desires will be in ignominy.

¹ Bukhari, Adab, 78.

² Mu'minun, 23/5.

³ Nur, 24/30.

⁴ Nur, 24/31.

⁵ Ibn Majah, Zuhd, 17.

⁶ Bukhari, Adab, 77.

⁷ Isra, 17/32.

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وَلَا تُنْهَايِ الْحَسَنَةُ وَلَا السَّيِّئَةُ إِذْفَعْ بِالْأَتْقَى هِيَ أَخْسَنُ
فَإِذَا الَّذِي بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُ عَدَاوَةٌ كَانَةٌ وَلَئِنْ حَمِيمٌ
وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
مَنْ يُخْرِمِ الرِّفْقَ يُخْرِمِ الْخَيْرَ كُلَّهُ.

RIFQ (GENTLENESS): ALLAH LOVES GRACIOUSNESS IN ALL AFFAIRS

Honorable Muslims!

The Almighty Allah states in the verse that I have recited, “**And not equal are the good deed and the bad. Repel [evil] by that [deed] which is better; and thereupon the one whom between you and him is enmity [will become] as though he was a devoted friend.**”¹

The Prophet Muhammad (saw) stated in the hadith that I have read, “**He who is deprived of gentleness is deprived of good.**”²

Dear Believers!

Faith, worship, and good morality make the basis of Islam. Gentleness is one of the moral virtues that enables human to have higher value in presence of Allah and among the society. Being gentle means having a smiling face, a sweet tongue, and being humble. It means being someone who gets along well with others, who does not behave rudely and harshly, or break hearts. It means not falling for anger that darkens the mind and results in frustration, and being patient and calm.

Honorable Muslims!

Allah loves us to act in all our affairs with gentleness.³ He commands all believers to be forgiving and tolerant, as expressed in the verse, “**Take what is given freely, enjoin what is good, and turn away from the ignorant.**”⁴ In another verse, He counts “restraining anger and pardoning people” among the characteristics of people who have fear of Him and have the good news of forgiveness and paradise by Him.⁵

Dear Believers!

The Messenger of Allah (saw) is the finest example for us to have kind behaviors. He treated kindly and compassionately not only people, but also all that exists. He always sought to facilitate all his affairs, and avoided causing any difficulty and hurting the people around him. Instead of punishing those who made mistakes, he opted to be forgiving. He advised not being oppressive and overwhelming, but rather any constructive behavior that fostered love and respect. Thanks to such virtues bestowed upon him by Allah, Muslims held together around him.

In this respect, the Almighty Allah states in the Holy Qur'an, “**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. So, pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult them in the matter...**”⁶

Honorable Muslims!

Believers who take the Prophet Muhammad's morality as an example for themselves conduct all their relations with gentleness. Such believers do not avoid being compassionate even for the smallest living beings. With their austerity and elegance, as well as polite and considerate manners, they represent the noble values and the high morals of Islam. They refrain from any kind of extremism, rudeness, and violence. In this respect, the Prophet Muhammad said, “**Believers do not insult the honor of others, utter curses, go to extremes, or nor do they foul**”⁷

Dear Believers!

Today, at a time when neglect of responsibility and values of being human is increasing, and violence is threatening humanity regardless of religion, language, ethnicity or geography, we should know that any attempt fueling violence has nothing moral, humane, or Islamic in it. We need to refrain from committing any act that damages human honor and grace; approach and treat our parents, spouses, children, relatives, and neighbors with gentleness, compassion, and in a friendly manner; be forgiving even when we are right, and be patient even when we are angry. In this respect, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) said, “**The strong-man is not one who wrestles well, but the one who controls himself when he is in a fit of rage.**”⁸ We should also know, however, that standing up rightfully against any attack targeting our national and religious values is a noble sign of moral excitement, religious sensitivity, piety, and loyalty to homeland.

Honorable Muslims!

Who has *rifq* has compassion for others, and who has compassion for others has Allah's mercy. Who abandons *rifq* heads to violence and violence results in frustration on the Day of Judgment. Then, we should not let anger seize our mind and conscience, nor should we let impatience cast a shadow over our eternal salvation. We should always bear in mind the following saying of the Prophet Muhammad (saw), “**Allah is gentle, likes gentleness, and gives for gentleness what he does not give for harshness.**”⁹

¹ Fussilat, 41/34.

² Abu Dawud, Adab, 11.

³ Bukhari, Adab, 35.

⁴ A'raf, 7/199.

⁵ Al-i Imran, 3/134.

⁶ Al-i Imran, 3/159.

⁷ Tirmidhi, Birr, 48.

⁸ Muslim, Birr, 107.

⁹ Muslim, Birr, 77; Abu Dawud, Adab, 11.



وَاعْبُدْ رَبَّكَ حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَكَ الْيَقِينُ

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

فَإِنَّ أَحَبَّ الْعَمَلِ إِلَى اللَّهِ أَذْوَمُهُ وَإِنْ قَلَّ

ANBETUNG: BESINNUNG FÜR GLAUBENSDIENER ZU SEIN

Verehrte Gläubige!

In dem Koranvers die ich gelesen habe offenbart unser allmächtiger „Und diene Deinen Herren bis der Tod zu dir kommt.“¹

Und in dem Hadith die ich gelesen habe offenbart unser geliebter Prophet (s.a.s) wie folgt: „Vor dem Allah ist das schönste alle Taten, auch wenn wenig, die beständigen.“²

Werte Muslime!

Allah hat die Menschen um nur an Ihm zu dienen geschöpft.³ Glaubensdiener zu sein bedeutet dem Allah alle All zu erkennen, an Ihm durch Herzen verbunden zu sein, Glauben und gute Taten zu verrichten. Das Wesen Glaubensdiener zu sein besteht darin, unserem Allah mit Liebe und Wille zu gehorchen und für Dessen Gnade und Aufrichtigkeit an Anbetung zu bestehen.

Liebe Gläubige!

Anbetung ist die Auszeichnung für die Gläubiger und Vorspiegelung der Glaube im Leben. Ist ein Zeichen für die Bemühung nahe an Allah zu kommen und ein segensreicher Diener zu sein. Ist die schönste Erscheinung für die Liebe und Verbundenheit an unserem allmächtigen Allah. Ist ein Dank für die Möglichkeiten, geschenkte Gaben Allah alle All. Bedeutet Zuflucht durch den Diener an dem gnadenvollen und vergebenen Herrn zu suchen, eigene Belange darzulegen.

Verehrte Muslime!

Der anbetende Mensch gewinnt neben Gnade und Belohnung des Allahs auch zahlreiche gute Gemüte und Angewohnheiten. Anbetung gibt dem Menschen vor alle die Besinnung immer vor Allah und unter Dessen Beobachtung zu sein. Führt die Menschen zu gutes, schönes und richtiges. So fühlt der Mensch, der das Tagesgebet verrichtet hat und kurz erneut für Tagesgebet sich vor Allah stellen wird sich als verantwortlich. Andächtig verrichtete Tagesgebete halten dem fern von Unbescheidenheit und schlechte Taten.

Sogleich verstärkt auch Fasten neben erhält den Segen des Allahs unser Wille und vermehrt unser Geduld. Schützt uns ein Sklave unseres Egos, unserer Begier zu sein, verbotenes zu machen, schlecht zu sprechen.

Während uns Bewusstsein für Hadsch und Umre, Liebe für Glauben an Allah und Umma zu sein gibt erinnert uns auch an die Schwierigkeiten am Tage der Rechnungsstellung. Jeder Muslim der sich von der weltliches befreit und Ihram anzieht, erkennt, das vor

Allah wertigste nicht Vermögen, Amt und Titel sind, sind. Aus alle Ecken der Welt kommende, die Sprache, Farbe, Rasse verschiedene Gläubigern stehen Schulter an Schulter und fühlen mit **إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ** „die Gläubigern sind Geschwistern“⁴ Glaubensgeschwister zu sein im Herzen.

Zekat, Almosen (Sadaka) und Unterhaltgabe (Infak) als ein wertvollste Anbetung bereinigt das Vermögen und gibt überfülle. Bereichert dem Herzen der Mensch, vermindert die Begierde nach weltlichen Vermögen, steigert die Dankbarkeit. Der sich von Eigenliebe und Geizhaftigkeit befreierender Mensch genießt die Brüderlichkeit mit Teilen was er in der Hand hat.

Opfer, lässt die Treue des heiligen Ibrahims und die Ergebung dessen Sohn Ismail erneut erleben und vermehrt die Ergebenheit des Dieners an Allah.

Verehrte Muslime!

Der Mensch ist geschöpft um Diener zu sein und bemüht sich mit Pflichtgebete und sonstige Anbetungen sich an Allah zu nahen. Bezaock Dessen Bewilligung und Liebe zu erhalten. So bekommt er dann Erbarmen, Hilfe und Schutz des Allahs. In einem Hadith offenbart unser Allah wie folgt: „Mein Diener können nicht mehr an mir nahekommen als mit Pflichtgebete. Und nähern sich mit sonstigen Gebete noch weiter. So liebe ich dann ihn. Und wenn ich ihn dann liebe werde ich dessen hörende Ohr, sehende Auge, haltende Hand, laufende Beine. Ich gebe dann was er von Mir wünscht. Wenn er Zuflucht bei Mir findet, dann schütze ich ihn.“⁵

Werte Gläubige!

Neben durch Allah als Pflicht vorgeschriebene Tagesgebete und Fasten auch alle die um Dessen Bewilligung zu erhalten mit gute Wille und Aufrichtigkeit durchgeföhrte Taten sind zugleich eine Anbetung. Sich um eine gemütliche uns sichere Familienhaus zu bemühen, die Weisen und Alleinstehende erfreuen, bedürftige Menschen Hilfe zu bieten sind Anbetungen. Unser Unterhalt aus Helal Mitteln zu erwirtschaften zu bemühen, Menschen etwas Schönes zu sagen und friedlich zu sein sind Anbetungen. Ehrenhaft beim Handel zu sein, Gruß zu verbreiten sogar ein Hindernis aus dem Weg wegzuräumen sind Anbetungen.

Verehrte Gläubigern!

Diener zu sein als Bedeutung unserer Existenz, Zweck auf der Welt zu sein ist für uns eine Ehre. Um diese Ehe würdig zu sein sollten wir unsere Verantwortungen verdientermaßen erfüllen. Wir sollten die Besinnung Diener des Allahs zu sein lebenslang aufrichtig erhalten. Unser Leben mit guten Taten und gute Charakter schmücken. Wir sollten mit dem Bewusstsein leben, dass Allah immer mit uns ist.

¹ Der steinige Teil (Hicr), 15/99.

² Ebû Davûd, Tatavvû, 27.

³ Die Winde der Zerstreung (Zâriyât), 51/56.

⁴ Hucurât, 49/10

⁵ Buhârî, Rikâk, 38.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اسْتَعْجِبُوْا لِلَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِذَا دَعَاكُمْ لِمَا يُخْيِكُمْ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَحُولُ بَيْنَ الْمُرْءَ وَقُلْبِهِ وَأَئُنَّهُ إِلَيْهِ يُخْشِرُونَ

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: أَلَا وَإِنَّ فِي الْجَسَدِ مُضْغَةً إِذَا صَلَحَتْ صَلَحَ الْجَسَدُ كُلُّهُ، وَإِذَا فَسَدَتْ فَسَدَ الْجَسَدُ كُلُّهُ. أَلَا وَهِيَ الْقَلْبُ.

ROAD TO MAKING LIFE LIVEABLE: RELIGION AND SPIRITUALITY

Dear Muslims!

We as humans are in constant need of love, compassion, and company from the time we are born to the time we die. We are in life-long search for a company who will be there to help us when we feel spiritual gaps and have bad moments. What will enable us to reach worldly and eternal salvation is only the mercy and compassion of Allah. When we supplicate, Allah answers. He is the one who equips us with reason, heart, consciousness, and conscience, and who never leaves us alone at times of hardships. He shows us, through the life of the Prophet Muhammad, the way out when we feel down and think there is no way out

Honorable Believers!

Every stage of life brings its own specific benefits and challenges. Childhood, youth, adulthood, and old age years witness good memories at times, and troubles and sorrows at other times. Being able to stand up against the trials and overcoming them in the course of life take a dedicated heart above all. A dedicated heart is one that attains peace in submission and devotion to Allah. We as Muslims feed our heart with faith; keep our spirituality up; and take our energy from worships. Spirituality manifests itself in heart, and the Prophet Muhammad, who was a doctor of hearts, emphasizes the importance of spirituality as follows: "...Beware! There is a piece of flesh in the body if it becomes good (reformed) the whole body becomes good, but if it gets spoilt the whole body gets spoilt, and that is the heart."¹

Honorable Muslims!

People believing that they enjoy the unique compassion of Allah, are under His guardianship, and He oversees and hears them always have no fear of being alone or abandoned. They take strength from faith and spirituality in making life livable, in overcoming hardships, and in increasing the good deeds. They are able to get rid of tensions and conflicts, attain peace, and their hopes increase, as long as only the proper means power their spiritual world, because, as Islam suggests, people have spiritual needs as much as they have material needs. Spirituality is a

natural part of life, and the source of hope, patience, and tolerance.

Dear Believers!

Today, although the means of communication increases in number, people are becoming lonelier. Family ties get weaker and relations with relatives are not as lively. The culture of consumption based on excess and pompous spending has brought humanity to the threshold of spiritual and material exhaustion. At a time like this becomes an unavoidable need the spiritual support and guidance for people in all ages. Spiritual support instills perseverance in people, who are going through difficult times and need help, to stand up and survive. It prevents violence and oppression while helping compassion prevail. It functions as hopefulness in overcoming troubles and sorrows, as well as coming clear of addictions.

Honorable Muslims!

The Almighty Allah states, "O you who have believed, respond to Allah and to the Messenger when he calls you to that which gives you life. And know that Allah intervenes between a man and his heart and that to Him you will be gathered."²

Today, the duty to enlighten our society on Islam, which rejuvenates our lives, is vested in religious officials, also called as the servants of the goodness. They serve for our nation day and night with authentic religious knowledge and the deeply rooted civilizational experience. They provide spiritual support and guidance for our nation in every area of life, including prisons, nursery homes, hospitals, students dormitories, and mosques and the Qur'an course centers in particular.

Dear Believers!

Returning to our essence, searching for the truth, and keeping alive our spirituality are the only paths to salvation for us people in this world of tests and trials. Let us not forget that only faith and compassion can refresh our tired hearts. Only being conscientious can repair our worn-away values. Only by means of spiritual support and guidance can we put our derailed lives back on their track.

I would like to conclude my khutbah with the meaning of the Surah al-Sharh that the Almighty Allah revealed to the Prophet Muhammad for the inner peace of all humanity: "Did We not expand for you, [O Muhammad], your breast? And We removed from you your burden. Which had weighed upon your back. And raised high for you your repute. For indeed, with hardship [will be] ease. Indeed, with hardship [will be] ease. So when you have finished [your duties], then stand up [for worship]. And to your Lord direct [your] longing."³

¹ Bukhari, Belief, 39.

² Anfal, 8/24.

³ Al-Sharh, 94/1-8.



اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ ضَعْفٍ ثُمَّ جَعَلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ ضَعْفٍ قُوَّةً ثُمَّ
جَعَلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ قُوَّةٍ ضَعْفًا وَشَيْبَةً يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيمُ
الْقَدِيرُ.

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

مَا أَكْرَمَ شَابٌ شَيْخًا لِسَيْنَهِ إِلَّا قَيَضَ اللَّهُ مِنْ يُكْرِمُهُ عِنْدَ سَيْنَهِ.

TAKING GOOD CARE OF THE ELDERLY MAKES LIFE BLESSED

Dear Muslims!

It was the day Makkah was conquered and the longing had come to an end when the Prophet Muhammad and his companions could return to their hometown from which they were exiled years ago. Muslims were all hugging each other with joy and relief, and thanking Allah for blessing them with such a day. As soon as they arrived in the city, the Prophet Muhammad's loyal friend Abu Bakr went directly to his father. He had a great wish for his father to become a Muslim, so he took him to the Prophet Muhammad. Seeing Abu Bakr's father Abu Quhafa, with his hair and beard gray and his eyes blinded due to the old age, the Prophet Muhammad, with his usual humble and respectful manner, said, **“Would not it have been better if you had left him home and we had gone to him?”**¹

Honorable Believers!

Life is much like the seasons in a year and has its spring, summer, fall, and winter. Every stage of life has its own niceties. Each is an opportunity for Muslims as servants of Allah to add meaning and value to life through good deeds, worshipping, and servitude to Him. The most valuable stage of life, during which people attain the pleasure of feeling mature and perfectness, is the old age stage. It is the stage of full of wisdom where the body is exhausted, but the soul is stronger than ever with experience acquired until then.

Honorable Muslims!

Allah particularly answers the prayers of the elderly, and offers blessings to them. They link the past to the future, handing down our national and immaterial values and culture to future generations. They are the pillars of our homes and the source of blessings. With their hair gray and their posture arched, they are sources of mercy and compassion for the society. There is no richer and better person than an elderly who has lived a life as aware of the value of health and years gone by, as expressed in the words of the Prophet Muhammad when they asked him about who the best person among people was, **“...Whose life is long and his deeds are good.”**²

Dear Believers!

People are in constant need of keeping contact with their family and environment, and maintain relations with others. Such a need and dependency is felt even more during the old age. Excluding the elderly from the joy of life and from the society leads them to unhappiness and loneliness. On the other hand, the elderly who are respected, taken care of, and consulted to feel peaceful and secure, as well as they do not feel the distress of loneliness and abandonment.

Honorable Believers!

On top of people who deserve and need our care, love, and support come our parents, as expressed in the words of the Prophet Muhammad, **“The Lord's pleasure is in the parent's pleasure, and the Lord's anger is in the parent's anger.”**³ The compassion and affection that we will show to our parents are of particular importance in their old age when they need a peaceful home. To be by their side, to meet their needs, and to be prayed by them are among the most important opportunities for us to get the approval of Allah.

It is a grave act of disloyalty to leave and abandon one's parents in their old age. In this respect, the Prophet Muhammad pointed to the misfortune of a person, who would not be able to enter the heaven because of not getting the approval of either of his/her parents in old age, **“Let him be humbled into dust.”**⁴

Dear Muslims!

Being a reasonable person requires us to see the journey of our own life in those of the elderly. Just as yesterday's young people are today's elderly, today's young people will be the elderly of tomorrow. In this respect, Allah says, **“Allah is the one who created you from weakness, then made after weakness strength, then made after strength weakness and white hair. He creates what He wills, and He is the Knowing, the Competent.”**⁵

Then, let us take care of our old people who prepared us for life when we were young. Let us fulfill our responsibilities to make their lives easier, and let us benefit from their experiences. Let us not forget that respect for our elderly will bless our life. I would like to conclude my khutbah with the following hadith of the Prophet Muhammad, **“No young person honors an elder due to his age, except that Allah appoints for him, one who will honor him at that age.”**⁶

¹ Ibn Hanbal, VI, 350.

² Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 21.

³ Tirmidhi, Birr, 3.

⁴ Muslim, Birr, 10.

⁵ Qur'an 30:54.

⁶ Tirmidhi, Birr, 75.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تَنْظُرْ نَفْسُ مَا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ
 وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ
 وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
 اللَّهُمَّ بَارِكْ لَنَا فِي رَجَبٍ وَشَعْبَانَ، وَبِلْغْنَا رَمَضَانَ.

THE THREE SACRED MONTHS: THE SEASON OF BLESSINGS

Honorable Muslims!

The beginning of the three sacred months, which is the season of compassion and mercy, is just around the corner. Thanks and praise be to Allah for allowing us to make it to these blessed days. Peace and greetings be to the Prophet Muhammad (saw) who was sent as mercy to the worlds.

The Night of Ragh'aib marks the beginning of the three sacred months, which are Rajab, Sha'ban, and Ramadan. Along the way come the Night of Miraj and Bara'ah, and the peak is reached through the Night of Qadr, which is more blessed than a thousand months. Finally, the Eid al-Fitr, which cements our unity and togetherness and increases our fondness and compassion, crowns the three sacred months. The season of the three sacred months is the long-awaited sacred guest at the home of our hearts. In this respect, The Messenger of Allah used to welcome the three sacred months with the following prayers: “**O Allah! Bless the months of Rajab and Shaban for us, and allow us to reach the month of Ramadan.**”¹

Dear Believers!

The season of the three sacred months is when the divine compassion is felt all around and the hearts are filled with spiritual peacefulness and serenity. It is on these blessed occasions that we account for the deeds we do in life and make sense of the purpose of creation. We turn towards servitude to Allah, worshipping, doing charitable works and good deeds more than ever, as well as render the world of our hearts prosperous. We get to remember all the duties and responsibilities that we keep neglecting in the rush of life.

Dear Muslims!

Next week Thursday night is the Night of Ragh'aib, full of virtue and blessings. Ragh'aib means ‘the longed for, the demanded for, and the valued for’. The Night of Ragh'aib is the herald of the three sacred months and the

news-bringer of Ramadan, the month of the Qur'an. The Night of Ragh'aib reminds us that the true gain in this life that flows away is to turn towards Allah and keep our promise of servitude to Him.

Honorable Believers!

Allah the Almighty says in the verse I have recited at the beginning of the khutbah, “**O you who have believed, fear Allah. And let every soul look to what it has put forth for tomorrow - and fear Allah. Indeed, Allah is Acquainted with what you do.**”² According to this divine appeal, we as Muslims should look for opportunities to do good deeds more than ever in these three sacred months full of compassion and mercy. There are many ways to do good deeds. Sometimes it can be to show the direction for someone who lost their ways. Some other times it is to rid of an obstacle causing inconvenience for people. Still other times it is to help those people in need and give charity (infaq) to them. Infaq does not always have to be a good deed done by way of giving out an amount of money. The Prophet Muhammad (saw) pointed out to several ways of infaq, with his following saying, “**Enjoining all that is good is a Sadaqa.**”³ It is also a kind of infaq to provide a cure or remedy for a patient’s illness. What a noble act it is to be a beam of hope for patients through organ-, bone marrow-, and blood stem cell-donation without expecting anything worldly in return! These kinds of acts as required of our religious and human responsibilities are no doubt among those deeds to help us get the approval of Allah in this atmosphere of blessings and mercy of the three sacred months. As Allah clearly states in the Holy Qur'an, “...whoever saves one (soul) - it is as if he had saved mankind entirely...”⁴

Dear Muslims!

The season of the three sacred months is a door opening to many opportunities for us. We should turn such days and nights into opportunities to get Allah's approval, on condition that our efforts in this regard do not discontinue once they are past. Our ‘raghaib’ should be for the Almighty Allah for life long.

As I conclude, I would like to congratulate you all for the Night of Ragh'aib, and pray Allah that the climate of compassion, mercy, and blessedness of the three sacred months contribute to the salvation, peace, and serenity of humanity.

¹ Tabarani, Al-Mu'jam Al-Awsat, IV, 189; Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Musnad, 1, 259.

² Hashr, 59/18.

³ Bukhari, Adab, 33.

⁴ Ma'idah, 5/32.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

وَلَا تُنْسِيْي الْحَسَنَةَ وَلَا السَّيْئَةَ اذْفَعْ بِالْتَّى هٰى أَخْسَنُ

فَإِذَا الَّذِي بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ عَدَاوَةً كَانَهُ وَلِيْ حَمِيْمٌ

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللّٰهِ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

أَلْبَرُ مَا اطْمَأَنَّ إِلَيْهِ النَّفْسُ وَاطْمَأَنَّ إِلَيْهِ الْقَلْبُ، وَالْأَقْوَمُ
مَا حَالَكَ فِي النَّفْسِ وَتَرَدَّدَ فِي الصَّدْرِ وَإِنْ أَفْتَاكَ النَّاسُ وَأَفْتَوْكَ.

GOODNESS INCREASES WHEN SHARED

Dear Muslims!

Nine years had passed since the Prophet Muhammad's (saw) Hijrah to Madinah. Islam was spreading in waves, and the souls thirsty of faith was flowing toward Madinah. Among those souls heading to Madinah al-Munawwarah to enter into Islam was a man named Vabisah. Having recited the Kalimah al-Shahadah and got the honor of becoming a Muslim, he asked the Prophet Muhammad (saw) about what the good and the evil meant. The Prophet Muhammad (saw) held his three fingers together, tapped on Vabisah's chest, and said, **"Goodness is the thing that brings your heart to peace and what you are comfortable with. Evil is the thing that makes you feel uneasy, doubtful, suspicious, and anxious even if people gave you a fatwa."**¹

Honorable Believers!

Goodness means to have faith in Allah, in the Last Day, in the angels, in the divine books, and in the prophets, as expressed by the Holy Qur'an, which is the guide of our lives. It means to ensure one's faith is accompanied by good deeds. It means to spend from one's loved properties for the close ones, for the orphan, for the poor, for those who were lost in a journey, and, in short, for all those in need. It means to perform prayer, to pay alms, and to keep a given promise. It means to show patience in straitened circumstances, in illness, and in wartime, and to be thankful to Allah in wealth and health.²

Honorable Muslims!

Goodness is one's most profitable gain and the most valuable inheritance in life. It means to give an ear to the voice of a compassionate soul, to be a brother for the orphan, the source of happiness for the poor, and the helpers for the refugees and the immigrants. It means to give a hand, and open one's house and heart for the oppressed. It means to protect the environment and not even hurt an ant. It means to treat compassionately all created beings for the sake of the Creator. It means to share one's food, pray, love, and sorrow.

Dear Muslims!

Nothing can and should surpass the approval of Allah (swt) in value for Muslims. They pursue goodness and good deeds without expecting to be appreciated by other people, and falling for arrogance, boastfulness, and

pretentiousness. They seek out opportunities to be a source of goodness, motivated by the feelings of mercy and compassion as blessings by Allah (swt). To earn the approval of Allah (swt), they spend all the blessings entrusted to them by Him again in His cause.

They are aware that they can be considered good only when they spend what they love most in Allah's cause. They fight against evil by inviting to good and by increasing goodness. They take the following commandment of Allah as their mantra for life, **"And not equal are the good deed and the bad. Repel [evil] by that [deed] which is better; and thereupon the one whom between you and him is enmity [will become] as though he was a devoted friend."**³

Honorable Believers!

It is deeply saddening that evil is all over the world today and those investing in it cause great sufferings for humanity. Muslims are exposed to oppression, pressure, and violence in the oppressed corners of the Islamic geography. Particularly, women and children who are squirming in despair, imprisoned, forced to migrate are breaking our hearts despite the fact that women are our mothers who teach us the unrequited good by stretching the wings of compassion upon us. They are our spouses who work for the proliferation of goodness in our homes, for the happiness and peace to take root. They are our daughters as the light of our eyes and our prayers for goodness in both worlds. To hurt them, to condemn them to a world devoid of compassion and justice, to make them victims and oppressed are both a grave sin.

Dear Believers!

Every good deed done, even if small, is precious. One can do many good deeds with one's hand, tongue, asset, knowledge, and experience. Even if small as the size of a date palm, the Almighty Allah (swt) makes it larger as Mount Uhud, as long as humans favor the good and take the side of the good, endeavor to let the good prevail the world by standing against the evil, wars, poverty, and violence. In this respect, the Messenger of Allah (saw) says, **"He who amongst you sees something abominable should modify it with the help of his hand; and if he has not strength enough to do it, then he should do it with his tongue, and if he has not strength enough to do it, (even) then he should (abhor it) from his heart, and that is the least of faith."**⁴

Honorable Muslims!

Let us follow in the footsteps of the good, the betterment, the justice, and the compassion. Let us stand against the evil, the depravement, the oppression, the sedition, and the violence. It is the good that will change the world and save the future. Let us not forget that Allah (swt), the Lord of the Worlds, will certainly support those who endeavor to spread the good in the world, and will never leave them alone, nor unaided.

¹ Darimi, Buyu, 2.

² Baqarah, 2/177.

³ Fussilat, 41/34.

⁴ Muslim, Iman, 78.

وَلَا تَحْسِبُنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتُلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَالًا بَلْ أَخْيَاءً عِنْدَ
 رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ.
 وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
 مَا أَحَدٌ يَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ يُحِبُّ أَنْ يَرْجِعَ إِلَى الدُّنْيَا وَلَهُ مَا عَلَى
 الْأَرْضِ مِنْ شَئِءٍ، إِلَّا الشَّهِيدُ ...

THE TURKISH VICTORY OF THE BATTLE OF GALLIPOLI AND THE ESPRIT DE CORPS

Dear Muslims!

What is called as homeland is the land where people live in peace and security, enjoying the grace of independence and sovereignty. It is the home for those people who sacrifice themselves for the same values and build the future for the same ideals. It is the legacy of people who sacrifice their lives, becoming martyrs, and who give up on their physical integrities, becoming war veterans, to protect their religion, nation, honor, and dignity. As a matter of fact, the return of keeping and defending such a legacy shall be freedom.

Honorable Believers!

The martyrdom, the name for giving souls for the sake of holy values ordered by Allah (s.w.t.) to be protected, is one of the most supreme positions since a martyr takes the risk of abandoning all such beloved ones as his mother, father, wife, and children for the sake of religion, homeland, nation, state, and freedom. In return, the reward of such a unique sacrifice is to be honored by endless kind treatments and honoring of the Almighty Allah (s.w.t.). In this respect, He refers to such a supreme position to be reached by martyrs as follows: **“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, and they receive good tidings about those [to be martyred] after them who have not yet joined them - that there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve.”**¹ Moreover, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) described the rank position of martyrs in the Hereafter as follows: **“No one accepted to the Heaven shall desire turning back to earth even if everything on earth belongs to them. Only a martyr shall desire turning back to earth and being a martyr again and again thanks to the kind treatments and honoring he experienced.”**²

Honorable Muslims!

For centuries, our ancestors have protected the lands we live on through their faith in Allah (s.w.t.), their love for homeland, their courage, and sacrifice. In no period of the history have they capitulated their faith and freedom, nor have they ever surrendered to any

tyranny. They have battled for every corner of the homeland with the understanding “**I shall be a martyr if I die and a veteran if I survive,**” and under no circumstances have they let the enemies in our homeland that they took as more precious than their lives. The history is full of heroic sagas of our glorious ancestors tackling with any challenges for the sake of their homeland and sanctity. Çanakkale Victory was precisely one of such sagas in which faithful chests reared with the love for Allah (s.w.t.).

Dear Believers!

Çanakkale Victory is the name of the great battle undertaken by a whole nation including women, men, the young, and the old, standing shoulder to shoulder. Çanakkale is where the gallant Mehmetçik, the namesake of whom is the Prophet Muhammad (saw), shouted out “Çanakkale is Impassable” to the world, and where they fell on the ground upon being shot on their immaculate foreheads. Çanakkale Victory is one that was won by those with hearts full of unshakeable faith, those with hearts beating with love for homeland, against the great powers despite all poverty and unfortunateness.

Honorable Muslims!

The Battle of Çanakkale showed us that under no circumstances, those hearts beating for the purposes of getting the approval of Allah (s.w.t.) and making *i’la kalimatillah* (glorifying and disseminating the words of Allah (s.w.t.)) dominant in the world, could be enslaved. Our flag bearing the color of our martyrs’ blood will never stop waving high in the sky until as long as only one soul is left on these lands. The adhans, the shahadah of which is the base of the religion, shall always sound loud. In case of a necessity, many souls shall pass away for such sake; however, no disallowed hand shall be able to touch upon what is sacred for us. Those who have designs against damaging the unity and solidarity of our nation, in servitude to Allah (s.w.t.) only, shall never be able to succeed.

Dear Believers!

Today, what falls upon us is to comprehend the magnificent spirit having reared in Çanakkale, to gather around our values that make us ‘us’, and the nation that we are, and to transfer them to our next generations. It is our responsibility to bring the sanctity bestowed on us by our martyrs and veterans under the same awareness and ideals.

We should always remember that as long as we keep the awareness of unity, solidarity, brotherhood and sisterhood alive and preserve our values, there can be no malicious attack we cannot resist, no fight we cannot come out as victorious, and no victory we cannot gain.

¹ Ali İmran, 3/169-170.

² Bukhari, Jihad, 21.

وَمَنْ يُطِعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ
النَّبِيِّنَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ وَالشَّهِيدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ وَحَسُنَ أُولَئِكَ رَفِيقًا.
وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
إِنَّ أَخْسَنَ الْحَدِيثِ كِتَابُ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَأَخْسَنَ الْهَدِيَّ مُحَمَّدٌ.

THE QURAN AND THE SUNNAH ARE AN INSEPARABLE WHOLE

Dear Muslims!

The Almighty Allah (swt) states, “And whoever obeys Allah and the Messenger –those will be with the ones upon whom Allah has bestowed favor of the prophets, the steadfast affirmers of truth, the martyrs and the righteous. And excellent are those as companions!”¹

In this respect, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) says, “The truest word is the Book of Allah and the best guidance is the guidance of Muhammad.”²

Honorable Believers!

Allah the Most Merciful (swt) has not left humans alone and unaided in the world. He (swt) has sent prophets to show His servants the right path, and divine books to guide them to salvation. The duty of prophethood that started with the first human and the Prophet Adam ended with the Last Prophet Muhammad Mustafa (saw). The divine message that started to be revealed with the Prophet Adam was crowned by the Holy Qur'an revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (saw).

Honorable Muslims!

The Holy Qur'an is the final divine appeal by Allah (swt) to all people. It is the words and verses of the Almighty Allah (swt). It is the Book, reading which is a form of worship. It is al-Furqan to distinguish the truth from the falsity, the right from the wrong, and the halal from the haram. It is therapeutic for body and soul, and the source of remedy for moral diseases. It is the guide that shows the ways of attaining happiness in this world and in the Hereafter. It is the remembrance that remind people of the purpose of creation.

Dear Believers!

The Sunnah is the compilation of the Prophet Muhammad (saw)'s lifestyle, words, acts, and approvals. While the Qur'an enjoins people to have faith in Allah (swt) and be in servitude to Him (swt) only, the Sunnah teaches people the verities of the faith. While the Qur'an enjoins people to worship as required by the faith, the Sunnah indicates how to perform the worships. While the Qur'an enjoins people to have good morals, the Sunnah functions as the model for such a virtuous life.

Dear Muslims!

Not only did the Prophet Muhammad (saw) conveyed the revelations to him (saw) by the Lord of the Worlds (swt), but he (saw) also clarified them to people. His distinguished life is the best is the best example for us to become good Muslims and lead a life as approved by

Allah (swt). If we want to attain peace in this temporary life on earth and in the eternal life in the Hereafter, the only way is to follow the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad, and exert efforts to live, think, and behave the way he (saw) did. In this respect, Allah (swt) states, “There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is Allah and the Last Day and [who] remembers Allah often.”³

Honorable Believers!

The Prophet Muhammad lived a life under the custody of the Almighty Allah (swt), Who tasked him (saw) with the duty of prophethood, and was immediately warned by Him (swt) when he (saw) as a human being made even a small mistake. According to the Qur'an, he (saw) never said any word arising out of his own self, but only said what was revealed to him (saw).⁴ His Companions carefully observed his blessed words and behaviors, and meticulously transferred them to the future generations.

The Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah unite an inseparable whole. It is not possible to think of the Holy Qur'an that is the foundation of Islam as separate from the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (saw). Trying to put a distance between the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah, undervaluing the place of the Sunnah in Islam by claiming “The Holy Qur'an is sufficient for us”, and raising doubts about the authentic knowledge passed down on to us from the Prophet Muhammad (saw) are all far from well-intended endeavors that place a heavy burden on a person, because the traditions of the Muslim communities that have faith in the Holy Qur'an have been kneaded with the Sunnah, and the foundations of the Islamic civilization have been laid upon the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah. In this respect, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) said in the Farewell Sermon (Khutbah al-Wada), “I leave behind me two things, the Quran and my example, the Sunnah and if you follow these you will never go astray”⁵

Dear Muslims!

Then, let us hold on tightly to the Holy Qur'an, and, as it commands, follow the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (saw). Let us not leave from the guidance of the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (saw). Let us be wary against those people who pave the way for the exploitation of religion and attempt to derive fame and benefit through distancing the Qur'an from the Sunnah. Let us never respect such mindsets claiming that the entire hadith works transmitting the Sunnah to our day is not reliable. Let us be wary also against those people who exploit the sahih (authentic) Sunnah with the words and superstitions that do not belong to the Prophet Muhammad (saw). Let us exert all efforts to raise generations that align their lives with Allah (swt)'s divine revelation, the Holy Qur'an, and the Prophet Muhammad (saw)'s distinguished Sunnah.

¹ Nisa, 4/69.

² Nasai, Idayn, 22.

³ Ahzab, 33/21.

⁴ Najm, 53/3-4.

⁵ Muvatta', Qadar, 3.



**سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي أَسْرَى بِعَنْبَدِهِ لَيْلًا مِنَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ إِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ
 الْأَقْصَا الَّذِي بَارَكَهُ اللَّهُ لِرُبُّهُ مِنْ آيَاتِهِ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ.
 وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
 وَجَعَلْتُ فُرْجَةً عَيْنِي فِي الصَّلَاةِ.**

LAILAT AL-MI'RAJ

Dear Muslims!

As observed in all periods of history, the polytheists of Mecca also knew no bounds in torture and oppression. They applied social and economic boycott against Muslims in order to prevent the invitation to Islam. Shortly after the boycott ended, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) lost both his uncle Abu Talib who had protected him and his beloved spouse and our mother Khadijah who had been his supporter during troublesome days. Thinking that our Prophet Muhammad (saw) became unprotected with their demise, the polytheists increased the oppression and torment which they deemed he (saw) deserved. Looking for a remedy, the Messenger of Allah (saw) went to Ta`if in order to convey the message of Islam. However he was exposed to insults there as well. Moreover, he was lapidated and his blessed feet drenched in blood. During such a period when he (saw) was in need of consolation, the Almighty Allah (swt) guarded his Beloved one and granted al-Isra and the miracle of Mi'raj to him (saw).

Honorable Believers!

Allah the Almighty (swt) states in the verse I have recited at the beginning: **“Exalted is He who took His Servant by night from al-Masjid al-Haram to al-Masjid al-Aqsa, whose surroundings We have blessed, to show him of Our signs. Indeed, He is the Hearing, the Seeing.”¹**

Al-Isra is the night journey of our beloved Prophet (saw) from Masjid al-Haram in Mecca to Masjid al-Aqsa in al-Quds. Lailat al-Mi'raj is the name of the acceptance to the highest level from Masjid al-Aqsa.

Dear Muslims!

The Messenger of Allah (saw) returned from Lailat al-Mi'raj with three great gifts to his Ummah.² First of these gifts is the five daily prayers (salat), which is called by the Prophet Muhammad (saw) as **“the light of my eye”³**. Prayer is the manifestation of the powerful faith link between Allah (swt) and the servants. It is the spiritual rise of the believer who turns toward the qiblah and prostrates before Allah. Prayer does not consist of certain gestures and moves only. Rather, it is a worship surrounding human both in physical, mental and moral aspects. A person who performs prayer is the one who is expected to have good ethics and to be honest, modest, compassionate, and just. Therefore, Allah (swt) states, **“Indeed, prayer prohibits immorality and wrongdoing.”⁴**

Another gift of al-Mi'raj is the last two verses of Surah al-Baqarah, which we know as “Amanar Rasul” and read after the ‘isha prayer every day. These Qur’anic verses remind us the principals of faith, consciousness of servitude and the sense of responsibility. These verses state that we will give account for whatever we do in this world, and teach us how to pray and invoke Allah.

The last gift of al-Mi'raj is the herald that sins of the ones among the Ummah of Muhammad (saw) shall be forgiven if they do not associate any partners to Allah (swt) and will finally be rewarded with Jannah.

Honorable Muslims!

The bleeding trust of al-Mi'raj in our hearts is al-Quds and Masjid al-Aqsa. Called as “the land of peace and salvation (Jerusalem)” under the rule of Muslims for centuries, al-Quds now has been transformed into a land of occupation, oppression, violence, and sorrow. Those who disregard freedom of worshipping and violate the immunity of temples on one hand prevent the believers from worshipping in Masjid al-Aqsa and on the other hand brutally murder the innocent Muslims while worshipping in the mosque in New Zealand during the Friday prayer.

It should not be forgotten that any despotism cannot prevent Muslims from worshipping in unity and peace in al-Quds, Masjid al-Aqsa, and in all other mosques of the earth. The oppressors who attempt against tranquility, peace and hope will be the victims of the fire that is lighted by themselves. In this regard, Allah the Almighty (swt) expresses in the Holy Qur'an: **“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.”⁵**

Dear Believers!

May Lailat al-Mi'raj conduce to clearness in our minds, freshness in our hearts and peace in our lives. Let us stand up (for qiyam) shoulder by shoulder by obeying wholeheartedly to the call of Allah (swt) for prayer. Let us prostrate (sujud) with the fruitfulness of Lailat al-Mi'raj. Let us remember the honor of faith and the responsibility of being a servant once more. Let us not refrain our hope and pray for reaching to the nights of Lailat al-Mi'raj when al-Quds and Masjid al-Aqsa are free.

May Allah (swt) let the Lailat al-Mi'raj that we will experience in the night from next Tuesday to Wednesday conduce to the unity and togetherness, the rise and elevation of the Islamic world.

¹ Isra, 17/1.

² Muslim, Iman, 279.

³ Nasa'i, Ishrat al-Nisa', 1.

⁴ Ankabut, 29/45.

⁵ Baqarah, 2/114.

لِلشَّاهِدِينَ الْجَنِينَ

وَاعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا وَبِالْوَالِدِينِ إِخْسَانًا
وَبِذِي الْقُرْبَى وَالْيَتَامَى وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَالْجَارِ ذِي الْقُرْبَى
وَالْجَارِ الْجُنُبِ وَالصَّاحِبِ بِالْجَنْبِ وَإِنِّي السَّبِيلُ وَمَا
مَلَكْتُ أَيْمَانُكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَنْ كَانَ مُخْتَالًا فَخُورًا
وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
خَيْرُ الْجِيرَانِ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرُهُمْ لِجَارِهِ.

MUSLIMS ARE BENEFICENT NEIGHBOURS

Dear Muslims!

Allah the Almighty (swt) states in the verse I have just recited: “**Serve Allah, and join not any partners with him. And do good to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, those in need, neighbours who are near, neighbours who are strangers, the companion by your side, the wayfarer (ye meet), and what your right hands possess. For Allah loveth not the arrogant, the vainglorious.**”¹

The Messenger of Allah (saw) states in the hadith I have read: “**The best neighbour in Allah's estimation is the one who is best to his neighbour.**”²

Dear Believers!

Neighbourhood is an inseparable part of our social life. Our neighbours are the people with whom we encounter every day, to whose soothing and assuring salaam we are accustomed, and who stand by us when we need. Our village, quarter, district, province, and country also have neighbours. The main principle in all neighbourhood relations is equity, kindness, respect, and mercy. A neighbour who has ethical virtues, respects humanitarian values and protects honour and dignity of his neighbour is one of the biggest blessings of the life in this world.

Honorable Muslims!

So many rights have neighbours upon each other that Our Beloved Prophet (saw) states: “**Gabriel kept on commanding the neighbour to me so that I thought he would make an heir.**”³ Favouring the neighbours and being nice to them, with the expression of Our Prophet (saw), is a necessity of being a believer.⁴

Believers do not leave their neighbours alone and helpless, in accordance with the maturity of their faith. They support their neighbours both materially and spiritually for whatever they need. So much so that a believer woman knows while even cooking that it is the Prophet's (saw) recommendation to add some

extra water to the soup for the favour of her neighbour. It is a neighbourhood duty to share good and bad days, visit them when they are sick, be present at their funeral and look out for their family members in case of their death.

Dear Believers!

How sorrowful it is that so many neighbours who live under the roof of the same apartment building and lean on the same wall in the evenings do not know each other today. Neighbours deny each other to even a salaam, the pains suffered are heard after days and happiness stays within the walls of houses. Today's people neglect their souls and hearts and fail to notice the neighbourhood relations that can help to solve their problems. With the weakening of neighbourhood relations, unfortunately, our good characteristics such as knowing, understanding, tolerating, and forgiving each other are disappearing.

Honorable Believers!

Let us this Friday, we the believers, question to what extent we comply with neighbourhood ethics and rights. Let us not neglect to salaam our neighbours warmly and sincerely, ask how the children are, and smile to the young people. Let us share grieves and happiness of our neighbours. Let us pay attention to the graveness of the warning of Our Prophet (saw) who says: “**He will not enter Paradise whose neighbour is not secure from his wrongful conduct.**”⁵ Let us show ultimate sensitivity not to damage our neighbours by our hands or words. Let us accept the hadith of Our Prophet (saw), “**A man is not a believer who fills his stomach while his neighbour is hungry**”⁶ as touchstone. Who was the last neighbour of ours that we visited or hosted in our house? Let us ask ourselves.

Dear Muslims!

Establishing good relations with neighbours is a necessity of our faith just like worship. Our ethics require making the senses of love, respect, cooperation and solidarity dominant in our neighbourhood relations.

Let us ask the goodness of our neighbour just like we ask it for ourselves. Let us protect our neighbour from the evil that we do not desire for ourselves. Let our hearts be neighbour, as well as our bodies.

¹ Al-Nisâ, 4/36.

² Dârimî, Siyer, 3; Tirmizî, Birr, 28.

³ Tirmizî, Birr, 28.

⁴ İbn Mâce, Zühd, 24; Tirmizî, Zühd, 2.

⁵ Muslim, İmân, 73.

⁶ Beyhakî, es-Sünenü'l-kübrâ, X, 7.

لِلّٰهِ الْحُجَّةُ

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَى وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيهِ حَيَاةً طَيِّبَةً وَلَنَتْجُزِّئُهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ.

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللّٰهِ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

إِيمَانٌ يُضْعُفُ وَسَبْعُونَ شَعْبَةً أَفْصَلُهَا لَا إِلٰهَ إِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَأَوْضَعُهَا إِمَاطَةً الْأَذَى عَنِ الظَّرِيقَ وَالْحَيَاةُ شَعْبَةٌ مِنَ الْإِيمَانِ.

IMAN AND ITS REFLECTIONS ON OUR LIVES

Dear Muslims!

Iman means to believe in heart in the existence and oneness of Allah (swt), His angels, divine books, prophets, the Last Day, and that qada and qadar are controlled by Him. It means to acknowledge through heart and testify through tongue all the verities conveyed to people by the Prophet Muhammad (saw).

Honorable Believers!

In the case of the Prophet Adam (as), iman means not losing one's hope and not giving up on the struggle to deserve the Heaven despite failure. It means the spirit to stand up on one's feet again to make it to the end of the road despite toppling down along the way. It means constructing the ship of survival and salvation in the case of the Prophet Nuh (as). For a Muslim who gets on the board of the ship of iman, just by having faith in their Lord, will reach the eternal salvation after dropping anchor by the port of peace.

Iman is the remedy in the Prophet Ayyub's (as) house of suffering. It is the justice manifested at the Prophet Dawud's (as) tribunal. It is the knowledge and wisdom in the Prophet Sulayman's (as) realm. A person who is put on a trial through dire straits sometimes and wealthiness other times, should not forget that they have the capability to pass through those trials. For Allah (swt) holds a person responsible only to the extent they can afford. He certainly provides a way out when there appears to be no way out.

Honorable Believers!

Iman is manifested in the morals and manners of the Prophet Yusuf (as), and in the patience and prayers of the Prophet Yaqub (as). Iman is the source of the submission exhibited by the Prophet Ismail (as) through agreeing to his life being sacrificed by his father, and by the Prophet Ibrahim (as) through agreeing to sacrificing the life of his beloved son. It is a great uncompromisable and indispensable cause like in the case of the Prophet Muhammad Mustafa (saw), in whose right hand the Sun is offered and the Moon in his left hand.

Dear Muslims!

Iman is not a set of words, or emotions that cannot be manifested in the course of life. It is a unique power, springing up in heart and spreading all over the body, and being exhibited in the actions. There is a strong tie between iman and all the aspects of life. In this respect, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) referred to this fact when he said, "Iman has seventy something branches. **'The most virtuous of them is 'La ilaha illallah (there is none worthy of worship except Allah)' and the least of which is removing something harmful from the road.** **لَا إِلٰهَ إِلَّا اللّٰهُ** And modesty (al-haya') is a branch of faith."¹

Dear Believers!

Iman is reflected on the essence of a person. It adds meaning to life. It draws a direction to follow. It helps to establish good relations with oneself, their family, society, and all the world of existence. It instills the consciousness to live a life in accordance with the purpose of creation.

It is manifested in one's words and actions. Mu'min (believer) is a good-mannered person from whose tongue and hand people are safe. They speak the truth when they talk. They have good intentions, are humble, honest, and merciful. They know that only that way they can get to and keep on the right path.

Iman is reflected on the face of a Muslim. A mu'min who is aware that exchanging a smile with people is regarded as sadaqa looks through loving and compassionate eyes. It refers to barakah (abundance) when manifested in one's livelihood, happiness in one's home, and salvation in the entirety of life.

Dear Muslims!

Having iman in heart truly and living a life in fulfillment of what iman requires one to do is the only way of becoming a Muslim and of having rewards in the Hereafter. Then, let us embellish our iman with good deeds and good morals, which will turn the world into a peaceful place, and the Hereafter into paradise. Let us endeavor to live up to and keep up the values we believe.

I would like to conclude this khutbah with the following statement of Allah the Almighty (swt) in which He gives glad tidings to people who have iman and live up to the requirements of it, **"Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer - We will surely cause him to live a good life, and We will surely give them their reward [in the Hereafter] according to the best of what they used to do."**²

¹ (Nasa'i, Iman, 16)

² Nahl, 16/97.

لَيْلَةُ الْمِرْأَتِ الْجَنِينِ

وَإِذَا جَاءَكَ الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاِيمَانِنَا فَقُلْ سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ
 كَتَبَ رَبُّكُمْ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ الرَّحْمَةَ أَنَّهُ مَنْ عَمِلَ مِنْكُمْ
 سَوْءًا اِبْجَاهَةً ثُمَّ تَابَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَأَضْلَحَ فَآتَاهُ عَفْوُرُ رَحِيمٌ
 وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
 إِذَا كَانَتْ لَيْلَةُ النِّصْفِ مِنْ شَعْبَانَ فَقُومُوا لَيْلَهَا
 وَصُومُوا يَوْمَهَا...

LAILAT AL-BARA'AH

Dear Muslims!

Time is one of the greatest blessings granted by the Almighty Allah (swt) to His servants. Time is a field of possibilities and opportunities which surrounds a man's life story entirely. Therefore, it is a unique wealth, every moment of which is precious and worthy of spending well. The ones who value and do not waste their time and the ones who are subject to the guidance of the Messenger of Allah (saw) by pursuing Allah's (swt) consent at every stage of their lives are going to be honoured with the gift of the Almighty Allah (swt). Wasting time is the biggest loss and the biggest frustration for a man.

Honorable Believers!

Regardless of any specific month, day or hour, every moment of ours spent with the awareness of servitude to Allah (swt) is valuable. But there are certain times that are bestowed as the times of divine grace and are conducted to the acceptance of prayers and the absolution. These periods of time are signs of the infinite mercy of Allah (swt) on the people. Here is the Lailat al-Bara'ah that we shall comprehend this evening, it is one of such valuable times.

Dear Muslims!

The sacred months of Rajab and Shaban prepare us for the month of Ramadan, both spiritually and physically. The first one, the month of Rajab, is blessed with Lailat al-Ragaib and Lailat al-Mi'raj. The middle one, the month of Shaban, leads to forgiveness and mercy by means of Lailat al-Bara'ah. The Messenger of Allah (saw) gave us the glad tidings that the worship, pray, and entreaty to be performed on Lailat al-Bara'ah are going to conduct to our absolution by saying, “Spend the fifteenth day of the month of Shaban by observing a fast. And its night in prayer. Because, when the sun sets at that night, Allah

Ta'ala manifests Himself at the nearest heaven in a state which we cannot know of, and until the time of dawn He says, ‘Is there nobody asking for forgiveness? Forgive I shall! Is there nobody asking for sustenance? Sustenance I shall give him! Is there nobody suffering a calamity? Felicity I shall give him!...’¹

Honorable Believers!

Lailat al-Bara'ah is a time to open a path towards al-Rahman (swt) from the deepest part of our hearts. Lailat al-Bara'ah is high time for us to repent and seek Allah's (swt) mercy and forgiveness by turning to Him.

The most basic requirement of benefitting from this blessed night is to get ourselves away from the turmoil of life a bit and question our servitudes. It is to ask ourselves the questions of ‘What I am busy with, which goal do I live for, and where do my intentions and deeds bring me to?’ It is to turn to our inner world, review our past, and contemplate. It is to promise the Almighty Allah (swt) to be an obedient servant and a good person. It is to ensure redemption from the cravings of our nafs and to repent of our mistakes and sins. Then, tonight is going to turn into an opportunity in real sense for us and salvation is going to be our bara'ah. Thus, the Almighty Allah (swt) states in the Holy Qur'an by addressing to the Prophet Muhammad (saw), “When those come to thee who believe in Our Signs, say: ‘Peace be on you; Your Lord hath inscribed for Himself (the rule of) mercy: verily, if any of you did evil in ignorance, and thereafter repented, and amended (His conduct), lo! He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.’”²

Dear Believers!

Let us benefit from the teaching and barakah (abundance) of this night to receive the bara'ah of salvation in eternal life. Let us pursue Allah's (swt) consent in each breath. Let us shape our lives according to the guidance of the Qur'an and the Sunnah. Let us remember that every moment of ours that we do not spend with the awareness of servitude to Allah (swt) is going to return to us as damage and loss.

With this occasion, I would like to congratulate your Lailat al-Bara'ah. May the Almighty Allah (swt) let this holy night bring prosperity to our noble nation, to the Islam world and to all humanity.

¹ Ibn Majah, Iqamat, 191.

² An'am 6/54.

لِّذِكْرِ الْمُحَمَّدِ

أَهُمْ يَقْسِمُونَ رَحْمَتَ رَبِّكُمْ تَخْنُقُ قَسْمَنَا بَيْنَهُمْ مَعِيشَتَهُمْ فِي
**الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَرَقَعْنَا بِعَصْنَهُمْ فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ دَرَجَاتٍ لِيَتَحَدَّدَ
 بِعَصْنَهُمْ بَعْضًا سُخْرِيًّا وَرَحْمَتَ رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ مِمَّا يَجْمَعُونَ.
 وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
**كَلَّا كَيْفَ أَنَا حَضِيمُهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ رَجُلٌ أَغْطَى بِي ثُمَّ عَذَّرَ ،
 وَرَجُلٌ بَاعَ حُرًّا فَأَكَلَ كُمَّةَ ، وَرَجُلٌ اسْتَأْجَرَ أَجِيرًا فَاسْتَوْكَى
 مِنْهُ وَلَمْ يُغْطِهِ أَجْرَهُ.****

THE BARAKAH OF BUSINESS LIFE: WORK ETHICS

Dear Muslims!

Humans pursue their rizq (sustenance) in order to ensure the nafaqah (maintenance) of their own and their dependents. With this aim, each person works in jobs in compliance with the sunnatullah imposed by the Almighty Allah (swt). Some people work as employees, others as employers, some others as public servants, and still others as supervisors. There is much wisdom underlying this obligatory division of labor in life. In this regard, the Almighty Allah (swt) states, **"Is it they who would portion out the Mercy of thy Lord? It is We who portion out between them their livelihood in the life of this world: and We raise some of them above other ranks, so that some may command work from others. But the Mercy of thy Lord is better than the (wealth) which they amass."¹**

Honorable Believers!

All people are equal like the teeth of a comb, regardless of their financial status, authority or duty. No one is privileged or superior to the other in terms of being servants of Allah. The superior-subordinate relationship in business life does not give a specific rank to the humans before Allah the Exalted (swt). What makes a person worthy in the presence of Allah (swt) is nothing but his iman, worship, morals, and taqwa (piety). The Prophet Muhammad (saw) warns us, **"Allah does not look at your outward appearance and your wealth but He looks only at your hearts and your deeds."²**

Dear Muslims!

It is a great favor to provide a job for somebody and help them earn their rizq in a halal way and maintain their family. However, this also brings along mutual rights and responsibilities. When these responsibilities are complied with and mutual rights are protected, the people are going to gain the consent of Allah (swt) and the society is going to live in peace and prosperity.

The Messenger of Allah (saw) qualifies the relation between workers and employers, and supervisors and public servants as "brotherhood relation". Love and respect, compassion and mercy, and solidarity and cooperation are essential elements in the relationship between brothers.

Employers who heed the warnings of the Messenger of Allah (saw) observe the rights of their employees. They provide them with a peaceful working environment. They offer them opportunities necessary for their needs such as worship and rest. They pay the amount they deserve on time. They do not task them with duties that they cannot perform. They do not endanger their health and life. They take all necessary measures for occupational safety. They see their employees as a trust and act by knowing that they are accountable to Allah (swt) for them. They establish a brotherly, merciful, warm, and sincere relation with their employees. They do not deprive their employees of their social rights nor victimize them, or employ unregistered workers.

Honorable Believers!

Business life also lays some responsibilities on employees. Muslims work properly in accordance with the advice of the Prophet Muhammad (saw). They protect their workplace, its properties, and materials as their own goods. They do not utilize the facilities of the workplace to satisfy personal needs. They know that when they do not deliver an efficient and a high-quality job this will result in undeserved earning.

Anyone who works for the public service should also see it as entrusted to them by our nation. They should never forget that just as every good deed has its rewards, every negligence and mistake will cause the violation of the rights of individuals and the public.

Dear Muslims!

The Almighty Allah (swt) states in the Holy Qur'an, **"It was We who created man, and We know what dark suggestions his soul makes to him: for We are nearer to him than (his) jugular vein. Behold, two (guardian angels) appointed to learn (his doings) learn (and note them), one sitting on the right and one on the left."³**

In accordance with this warning of Allah (swt), we need the awareness of servitude in our business life as well as in every area of our lives. Let us all work to produce and earn in halal way. As handicraftsmen and craftsmen, let us not only teach the profession to our apprentices, journeymen, and masters. Let us teach them virtue, honesty, loyalty, and the value of elbow grease and halal earnings at the same time. Let us promote modesty and good morals. Thus, let us hand the business ethics based on Islamic brotherhood and prophetic wisdom down to our generations.

I would like to conclude my khutbah with this hadith qudsi, **"Allah the Exalted (swt) states, 'There are three whose adversary I shall be on the Day of Resurrection: a man who has given his word by Me and has broken it; a man who has sold a free man and has consumed the price; and a man who has hired a workman, has exacted his due in full from him but has not given him his wage.'"⁴**

¹ Zukhruf, 43/32.

² Muslim, Birr, 34.

³ Qaf, 50/16-17.

⁴ Bukhari, Ijarah, 10.



**شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِنَ
 الْهُدَى وَالْفُرْقَانِ فَمَنْ شَهَدَ مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلَيَصُمُّهُ...
 وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
 مَنْ صَامَ رَمَضَانَ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا عُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ.**

WELCOME, THE MONTH OF RAMADAN!

Dear Muslims!

We will have reached Ramadan, the Sultan of the Months, with the tarawih prayer following the isha prayer the next Sunday. The same night we will wake up for sahur to start fasting, and enter the season of blessing and mercy, inshaallah.

May endless praise be to Allah (swt) who have allowed us to reach Ramadan. May salat and salam be to the Prophet Muhammad (saw), of whose ummah we are honored to be members.

Honorable Believers!

The month of Ramadan is the month of blessing that we have for one year longed for. It is an unprecedented period of time in which faith, worship, good morality, consciousness of being ummah, and brotherhood in Islam are consolidated. It is the time for Muslims to review their relationship with Allah on the one hand, and with their brothers and sisters on the other, thereby questioning their own selves. With the peacefulness of reaching such a sacred month, the Prophet Muhammad said to his companions, **"The month of Ramadan has come with its blessings. Allah enriches you, blesses you, conceals mistakes, and accepts your prayers and du'as in this month. The Almighty Allah (swt) takes into account rather your competition in benevolence, and praises you to His angels. Then, do your best to be prominent in your efforts in good deeds and benevolence. The miserable is whoever is deprived of Allah (swt)'s mercy in Ramadan."**¹

Honorable Believers!

Ramadan is the month in which the worship of fasting, which turns us into pious Muslims as patient and contented, was made obligatory. It is the month in which the Holy Qur'an, our guide to true path and salvation, was started to be revealed. Allah the Exalted (swt) refers to it as follows, **"Ramadan is the month in which the Qur'an was revealed as a guide for humanity with clear proofs of guidance and the standard to distinguish between right and wrong. So, whoever is present this month, let them fast..."**²

Ramadan is the month of repentance which purifies Muslims from sins like autumn rains at the end of summer washing the dirt and dust away from the earth. Likewise, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) says, **"Whoever observes fasts during the month of Ramadan out of sincere faith, and hoping to attain Allah's rewards, then all his past sins will be forgiven."**³

Honorable Muslims!

The Month of Ramadan is the most valuable harvest season of our lives and an opportunity of material and spiritual renewal for all of us. It is a hope, excitement and awakening for Muslims. It is the mobilization of hearts, during which the poor, the almsman, the needy and the lonely are remembered and protected by means of infaq (spending in the way of Allah (swt)). Those people who do not know the value of Ramadan though reaching it will be deprived of a great treasure!

Dear Believers!

The places where the sacred month of Ramadan is best experienced are the mosques in which the hearts of Muslims are filled with peacefulness as they stand in prayer. The mosques, in which we as Muslims purified of all our senses of self-centrism submit our servitude to Allah, are the heart of the Islamic civilization. Our mosques are constructed thanks to the efforts, sacrifices, material and non-material support of our noble nation. The adhans echoing around over ninety thousand mosques today in our country are the symbols of our independence and of our future. One such mosque is the Istanbul Great Çamlıca Mosque, which is Turkey's greatest and will be opened officially today. I would like to take this opportunity to commemorate, in gratitude, all those charitable people who have lead the way for, and supported, the construction, maintenance, and rendering prosperous of mosques, from the past to the present.

Honorable Muslims!

Let us try to benefit from the barakah of Ramadan. Let us bring our houses and hearts together with Qur'an in the month of Qur'an. Let us try to maintain the tradition of gathering for reciting the Qur'an, as done by the Prophet Muhammad (saw). Let us try to attend the sermons and the tarawih prayers altogether, men and women, children and youth. [i] Let us make those people in need smile with the zakat and sadaqah that we will give. Let us try to be among those people to spend this sacred month in the best way, as expressed by the Prophet Muhammad (saw), from the first night of which the devils are chained up, the gates of the Hell are closed, of the Heaven are opened, and countless Muslims are saved from the fire of the Hell.⁴

¹ Haythami, Majmua al-Zawaiid, III, 344.

² Baqarah, 2/185.

³ Bukhari, Iman, 28.

⁴ Tirmidhi, Sawm, 1; Ibn Majah, Siyam, 2.



أَمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَأَنْفَقُوا مِمَّا جَعَلَكُمْ مُسْتَحْلِبِينَ فِيهِ قَالَ الَّذِينَ
أَمْنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَأَنْفَقُوا لَهُمْ أَجْرٌ كَبِيرٌ.
وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
قَالَ اللَّهُ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ أَنْفِقْ أَنْفِقْ عَلَيْكَ.

RAMADAN AND INFaq

Honorable Believers!

The Almighty Allah (swt) states in the verse I have just recited: **“Believe in Allah and His Messenger, and donate from what He has entrusted you with. So those of you who believe and donate will have a mighty reward.”¹**

The Prophet Muhammad (saw) informs us in the hadith qudsi I have recited that the Almighty Allah (swt) states: **“O, Children of Adam, Spend (on charity) and I shall spend on you.”²**

Dear Muslims!

Infaq means that believers spend out of their wealth to have the consent of Allah (swt). It is to help spouses, fellows, relatives and needy people. It is to let others benefit from the wealth bestowed to him by Allah (swt). It is to win the heart of his brother, to help the ones who are in need, and to offer the ones who are not in need. Prophet Muhammad (saw) points out in a hadith that infaq and sadaqah will not be unreciprocated and will be rewarded: **“Without doubt sadaqah eases the wrath of Allah and saves you from dying in a bad way.”³**

Honorable Muslims!

Infaq enables humans to adopt a balanced attitude towards wealth. It prevents both being stingy due to ambition of owning property and squandering unwisely. It develops the feelings of brotherhood and sharing. The happiness and satisfaction of the needy people turn into peace and relief in the heart of the people who spend in charity. Therefore, believers reach to benevolence truly. In this regard, Allah the Exalted (swt) states in the Holy Qur'an: **“You will never achieve righteousness until you donate some of what you cherish. And whatever you give is certainly well known to Allah.”⁴**

Dear Believers!

Islamic civilization that is built on iman, knowledge, wisdom and skill is also a civilization of infaq. Sharing, collaboration, solidarity and infaq are at the center of the lives of Muslims. Because our Beloved Prophet Muhammad (saw) advised this ummah to be like bricks of a building, organs of a body, and teeth of a comb. Muslims share their savings with their relatives, neighbors, close or distant coreligionists and the needy members of the family of humanity. They live by the principle in the verse of **“Those who (in charity) spend of their goods by night and by day, in secret and in public, have their reward with their Lord: On them**

shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.”⁵ They think of both their and the society's goodness while working by day and night.

Honorable Muslims!

How sad it is that today we are combating with the disease of secularization which makes wealth the objective of life and fails to use it as a means. Selfishness, fondness for property, passion of power and interest, and lives based on show-off have been the disasters of this age. The virtues such as collaboration, solidarity and making sacrifice for others have been damaged. In such an age, the interminable desires and ambitions into which humanity is dragged can only be overcome by means of the awareness of infaq and collaboration. Those who are stingy and do not give the poor, needy, orphan, almsman, and people who are in financial difficulties and stranded their due will drag themselves and the humanity into calamity. Our Beloved Prophet (saw) warns us in his hadith: **“Children of Adam say: ‘My wealth, my wealth.’ Do you own of your wealth other than what you eat and consume, and what you wear and wear out, or what you give in sadaqah (charity) (to those who deserve it), and that what you will have in stock for yourself?”⁶**

Dear Muslims!

The month of Ramadan is a unique opportunity for infaq, collaboration and sharing. In these days of Ramadan when we show our servitude to our Almighty Allah (swt) by means of various deeds, let us take needy people under our wings with our financial worships such as zakat and sadaqah al-fitr. Let us ease the pain of our brothers and sisters. Let us give our charity without show-off and only for having the consent of the Almighty Allah (swt). Let us avoid the attitudes that may hurt honor of our brothers and sisters while giving charity to them. Let us pay attention to the statement of Allah the Exalted (swt): **“O believers! Donate from the best of what you have earned and of what We have produced for you from the earth. Do not pick out worthless things for donation, which you yourselves would only accept with closed eyes. And know that Allah is Self-Sufficient, Praiseworthy.”⁷**

Honorable Believers!

Our Presidency of Religious Affairs determined this year's theme of Ramadan as “Ramadan and Infq”. With this occasion, the subject of infaq is going to be kept on the agenda in all aspects with the activities to be organized in homeland and abroad and it will be tried to create sensitivity about this subject. Thus, it will be tried to keep the awareness of collaboration and sharing alive and to expand the ethics of infaq further. Let us remember that the charities we give by observing the consent of our Almighty Allah (swt) are going to be our most beautiful food in the Hereafter.

¹ Hadid, 57/7.

² Muslim, Zakat, 36.

³ Tirmidhi, Zakat, 28.

⁴ Ali 'Imran, 3/92.

⁵ Baqarah, 2/274.

⁶ Muslim, Zuhd, 3.

⁷ Baqarah, 2/267.



يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذْ قَاتَلُوكُمُ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ فَلَا يَأْتُوكُمْ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ.
 وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
الْمُسْلِمُ مَنْ سَلَّمَ الْمُسْلِمُونَ مِنْ لِسَانِهِ وَيَدِهِ.

A GOOD MUSLIM ACCORDING TO THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD (SAW)

Honorable Muslims!

The Almighty Allah (swt) states in the verse I have just recited: “**O ye who believe! Fear Allah as He should be feared, and die not except in a state of Islam.”¹**

Prophet Muhammad (saw) says in the hadith I have recited: “**A Muslim is he from whose hand and tongue the Muslims are safe.”²**

Dear Muslims!

The most precious treasure of Muslims is their iman. Iman is the biggest blessing that will rejoin us with peace in this world and with salvation in the Hereafter. The Prophet Muhammad (saw) gives glad tidings to the ones who own this blessing: “**Whoever testifies sincerely that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah, Allah would prohibit the fire of hell for him.”³**

Iman is an unequalled jewel and a unique opportunity. Iman is recovery for sorrows and shield against sins. It is a power that protects Believers from evil under any circumstances and that leads them to benevolence. A person who values iman should preserve his iman and exercise due care to live a life suitable to his iman. Then he will be closer to the Almighty Allah (swt) and will be released from being slave of the meaningless desires and nine days’ wonders.

Honorable Muslims!

The way of strengthening the iman in our hearts is not to skip our worships, because iman is fed with worship. Worship is the essence of servitude and the purpose of the creation of human. It is to submit our condition to the Almighty Allah (swt) without any mediator and means. The Messenger of Allah (saw) advices believers on this issue: “**Keep worshipping, establishing fard (obligatory) prayers, giving fard zakat and observing the fasting in Ramadan without assigning partners to Allah. Behave towards people in a way you would like to be behaved.”⁴**

Then the requirements of your loyalty to tawhid and the iman to Allah (swt) are primarily to perform the fard worships such as prayer, fasting, zakat and hajj. It is the virtue of Muslims to try to receive consent of their Almighty Allah (swt) by means of nafl (supererogatory) worships.

Honorable Believers!

What completes iman and worship is only the good morals. The Messenger of Allah (saw) states in a hadith, “**The most complete of the believers in faith are those with best character.”⁵** To adopt moral virtues and to stay away from ill tempers are essential responsibilities of believers.

Believers take our Prophet Muhammad (saw) “who was only sent to perfect good character”⁶ as an example at every stage of their lives. They have mercy on the young people and show respect to the elders. They assure the people around

them and observe whatever entrusted to them. They are truthful and do not resort to lies. They are generous and do not be stingy. They behave towards their mother, father, spouse, children and all creatures animate or inanimate with affection and never resort to violence.

Honorable Believers!

What a great honour to be a member of the ummah of Muhammad (saw)! However, being the members of the best ummah selected out of the family of humanity requires responsibility at the same time. When we read the hadiths of our Beloved Prophet (saw) we see that he describes a Muslim as follows: A Muslim is person who knows that he will not enter Paradise until he have faith and will not have faith until he loves his brothers.⁷ Muslim is a person who becomes happy when he does a favour and gets sad when he does an evil.⁸ Muslim does not defame and curse people, does not use rude and bad words and does not be shameless.⁹ He stays away from alcohol, the mother of evils, from gambling, which wastes his life, and from adultery, which requires the wrath of Allah (swt).¹⁰ Muslim avoids assigning partners to Allah (swt), does not murder people, does not utilize interest and does not take advantage of the wealth of an orphan. Muslim does not slander his brothers and sisters, does not be talebearer and does not take part in fitnah and mischief.¹¹

Dear Muslims!

The Messenger of Allah (saw) says in a hadith: “**The best of you is the one from whom people expect good deeds, and from whose evil deeds people are safe; the worst of you is the one from whom people expect good deeds but from whose evil deeds people are not safe.”¹²** Then, let us exert efforts to be a good Muslim as our Prophet Muhammad (saw) taught us. Let us enlighten our hearts with iman. Let us feed them with worships. Let us polish them with good deeds and good morals. Let us be the key for goodness and the lock against evil at every stage of our lives.

Honorable Believers!

While ending my khutbah I would like to share an issue with you. Under the leadership of our Presidency of Religious Affairs and our Turkiye Diyanet Foundation, services are taken to every corner of our country and to every part of the world thanks to the support of our self-sacrificing nation. Healthy accommodation environments are prepared for our students, they are provided with scholarship and educational and cultural support, our orphan and poor brothers and sisters are supported with free education. In this unique climate of the month of Ramadan, you can be light of hope for thousands of young people by means of zakat, sadaqah al-fitr and donations and cover for their needs. Within this scope, following the Friday prayer, we will resort to your aids full of love, affection and brotherhood. May the Almighty Allah (swt) accept all of our previous and future aids in the presence of Him.

¹ Ali Imran, 3/102.

² Muslim, Iman, 65; Bukhari, Iman, 4.

³ Bukhari, IIm, 49.

⁴ Ibn Hanbal, VI, 384.

⁵ Abu Dawud, Sunnah, 15.

⁶ Ibn Hanbal, II, 381.

⁷ Muslim, Iman, 93.

⁸ Ibn Hanbal, IV, 399.

⁹ Tirmidhi, Birr, 48.

¹⁰ Ibn Majah, Ashriba, 1; Abu Dawud, Ashriba, 5; Bukhari, Qusuf, 2.

¹¹ Bukhari, Wasaya, 23; Tabarani, al-Majmua al-Qabir, XII, 340.

¹² Tirmidhi, Fitan, 76; Ibn Hanbal, II, 368.

وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنْوَا الزَّكُورَةَ وَمَا تُفْدِمُوا لِأَنْفُسِكُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ
 تَجِدُوهُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ.
 وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
 دَأْوُا مَرْضًا كُمْ بِالصَّدَقَةِ، وَحَصَّنُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بِالزَّكَاةِ...

ADDING BARAKAH TO OUR BROTHERHOOD WITH ZAKAT AND SADAQAH AL-FITR

Honorable Believers!

As required by our iman, we sincerely love our believer brothers and sisters and have respect and affection for them. We support each other just like the organs of a body. Sometimes we ease the hearts of our brothers and sisters with a conversation, sometimes we help them with their problems. We provide financial assistance to the believers along with standing by them spiritually with our prayers. Because our source of honor, the supreme religion Islam, commands us to be in solidarity. The Almighty Allah (swt) wants us to be conscious of cooperation under favor of our different worships, primarily zakat and sadaqah al-fitr.

Dear Muslims!

Zakat is one of the five basic pillars on which the clear and righteous religion of Islam is built. It is a fardh (obligatory) worship which is strictly commanded by Allah (swt) to be fulfilled. It is an essential responsibility of the people who are considered as rich according to religious criteria to share a certain part of their wealth with the ones in need once a year.

Zakat is a financial worship and an expression of gratitude to Allah for all the blessings He bestowed upon us. Zakat prevents the accumulation of wealth in a manner useless to anybody. It establishes love and trust between the rich and the poor by reinforcing the feelings of brotherhood. It protects believers against several bad traits, particularly such as stinginess and hunger for property. It purifies the properties and hearts of believers. It adds barakah to both the donor and donee's lives. Thus, the Almighty Allah (swt) commands in the Holy Qur'an, "**Of their goods take alms, that so thou mightest purify and sanctify them.**"¹ Accordingly, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) instructs us, "**Ask recovery of your patients from Allah by giving sadaqah and protect your properties by giving zakat.**"²

Honorable Muslims!

The sadaqah al-fitr is a display of gratitude of being created honorable as human, of reaching the month of Ramadan, the most profitable times of our lives, and of finally reaching the Eid al-Fitr. Every Muslim who lives until the end of the month of Ramadan should give a certain amount of donation to those people in need, for himself and on behalf of his dependents before the Eid al-Fitr. Thus, they reach the end of the blessed month of Ramadan, which invites

people to worship day and night, with benevolence. The sadaqah al-fitr helps the people in need to get prepared for the Eid al-Fitr, and to share the peace and joy of the Eid with others.

Honorable Believers!

It is completely natural that people of different financial status live together in the society. Not turning this difference into a huge gap is only possible if the rich take care of the poor. The rich who cannot understand that there is a share for the poor in their wealth are in loss unless they give this share to its owner. To neglect zakat and sadaqah al-fitr is a major sin. Allah the Exalted (swt) warns the believers in the Holy Qur'an as follows, "**O ye who believe! Spend out of (the bounties) we have provided for you, before the day comes when no bargaining (will avail), nor friendship nor intercession...**"³

Dear Believers!

Let us add barakah to our brotherhood by means of zakat and sadaqah al-fitr. As in every moment of our lives, let us be pioneers in charity and goodness in this month of Ramadan as well. Let us make sure that our sadaqah al-fitr is delivered to our brothers and sisters in need before the morning of the Eid. Let us not hurt and break hearts of anyone while giving our charities. Let us always remember that we will never be able to reach goodness unless we spend in the way of Allah (swt) out of our beloved things.

Dear Muslims!

The Presidency of Religious Affairs and Türkiye Diyanet Foundation say, "**Let Our Brotherhood Get Barakah By Means Of Zakat**". As it was in the previous months of Ramadan, we are going to deliver donations of you, our benefactor nation, to the needy people both in homeland and abroad in this month of Ramadan, too. You will make the orphans and the poor smile with your food packages. You will help thousands of children to wear new clothes special for the Eid. You will lay iftar tables for immigrant families. You will conduct to the needy people's, who are entrusted to us by Allah (swt), waking up happily and peacefully in the morning of the Eid within our country, the Muslim world and all over the world.

I would like to invite you to be a part of the mobilization of benevolence by applying to our province and district mufti's offices and to our representative offices of Türkiye Diyanet Foundation. May the Almighty Allah (swt) accept all of our previous and future aids. I would like to conclude my khutbah with a verse, "**And be steadfast in prayer and regular in charity: and whatever good ye send forth for your souls before you, ye shall find it with Allah: for Allah sees well all that ye do.**"⁴

¹ Tawbah, 9/103.

² Bayhaqi, al-Sunan al-Kubra, III, 542.

³ Baqarah, 2/254.

⁴ Baqarah, 2/110

لِيَالِيَّ الْمُرْتَبَةِ

**إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ وَمَا أَذْرِيكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ
تَعْلُمُ الْمُلْكَةَ وَالرُّوحُ فِيهَا يَادُنْ رَبِّهِمْ مِّنْ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ سَلَامٌ هِيَ حَسْنٌ مَطْلُعُ الْفَجْرِ
وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ
مِنْ قَامَ لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا غُفرَانًا مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنِيْهِ.**

LAILAT AL-QADR:**THE NIGHT HONORED BY THE QUR'AN****Honorable Muslims!**

Let us give ear to these verses of Allah the Almighty (swt) on this blessed Friday while we are approaching the end of the month of Ramadan: “We have indeed revealed this (message) in the Night of Qadr (Power). And what will explain to thee what the Night of Qadr is? The Night of Qadr is better than a thousand months. Therein come down the angels and the Spirit by Allah’s permission, on every errand: Peace!.. This until the rise of the Morn!”¹

Let us set our hopes on the glad tidings of Prophet Muhammad (saw) in this sacred time of Friday: “Whoever passes Lailat al-Qadr in prayer with faith and seeking his reward from Allah will have his past sins forgiven.”²

Dear Believers!

We are going to attain the Night of Qadr tonight insha’Allah. It is a unique night which brought the forgiveness of al-Rahman and the light of the Qur’an to humanity. Every believer who appreciates the value of this exceptional period of time and wishes to spend it in an effective and meaningful way must first turn their steps towards the Qur’an. They should remember once again that reciting the Holy Qur’an beautifully, and understanding and applying it in our lives in the best way are the main purposes of life. If we want to enlighten our lives and add barakah to it with the Qur’an, Lailat al-Qadr is the best opportunity.

In that case, let us take this opportunity to contemplate some of the verses from the Holy Qur’an which invite us to hidayah (guidance to the true path) and to the truth.

آللَّهُ الدِّينُ الْخَالِصُ ...

“Is it not to Allah that sincere devotion is due?”³ Muslims who comprehend that neither humans are created in vain nor they are left unattended after creation be the servants to only Allah (swt). They stay away from all kinds of arrogance and show-off, and live in ikhlas (pure intention) and sincerity. They reflect on their lives the promise that they gave by believing with their worship and the morality of the Qur’an.

فَاسْتَقِمْ كَمَا أُمِرْتَ ...

“Therefore stand firm (in the straight Path) as thou art commanded.”⁴ Muslims take our beloved Prophet Muhammad (saw) as an example in every phase of life and they become honest like him. They try not to get off the direction, the right and the truth. They know that lies, slander and betrayal can never exist together with iman. They do not compromise on righteousness.

“Allah doth command you to render back your trusts to those to whom they are due; and when ye judge between man and man, that ye judge with justice.”⁵ Our lives, our property and our family are entrusted to us. The nature, with its plants, animals, water, and soil, is entrusted to us. Reconstruction and management of the earth with justice, peace, and goodness are entrusted to us. A virtuous Muslim gives the trusts to those to whom they are due and sustains justice.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آتَوْنَا أُولَئِكُمْ بِالْقُوَّةِ ...

“O ye who believe! Fulfill (all) obligations.”⁶ Mu’mín (believer) means the one who is trustworthy. When they promise,

they keep their promises. Besides obeying the commands and prohibitions of Allah (swt), they also fulfill the requirements of the promises and agreements they make with people. Believers know that lying when one speaks, not keeping promises, and betraying what is entrusted are the signs of the hypocrites.

**يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آتَوْنَا لَا تَنكِحُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ يَتَّكِنُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَ يَتَّخَذَ عَنْ تَرَاضِيْنِ مِنْكُمْ
وَلَا تَنْفَعُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ ...**

“O ye who believe! Eat not up your property among yourselves in vanities; but let there be amongst you traffic and trade by mutual good will: nor kill (or destroy) yourselves.”⁷ Muslims obtain their rizq (sustenance) by halal means and do not get involved in forbidden means in trade. They do not resort to void practices such as theft, extortion, bribery, usury, pawnbroking, gambling, unreasonable prices, and deception.

وَإِذَا دَأَدْنَ رِبُّكُمْ لَعِنْ شَكَرَتُمْ لَا زِيَّدَنَكُمْ وَلَعِنْ كَفَرُتُمْ إِنَّ عَذَابِي لَشَدِيدٌ

“And remember your Lord caused to be declared (publicly): ‘If ye are grateful, I will add more (favors) unto you; but if ye show ingratitude, truly my punishment is terrible indeed.’”⁸ Believers, who sustain their lives by countless blessings of Allah (swt), use the opportunities in their hands in accordance with the consent of the Almighty Allah (swt). The gratitude of wealth is to spend it in the way of Allah (swt), that of scholarship is to use knowledge for the benefit of humanity, and that of health is to serve in the path of benevolence and goodness.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آتَوْنَا اللَّهَ وَلَنَنْظُرْ نَفْسُ مَا قَدَّمْتِ إِلَيْهِ ...

“O ye who believe! Fear Allah, and let every soul look to what (provision) it has sent forth for tomorrow.”⁹ Muslims know that you shall reap what you sow and that the Hereafter awaits us after this worldly life. When they have the opportunity, they ask themselves how prepared they are for the Hereafter. As they walk the path determined by the Qur’an to achieve eternal salvation, they set their target as the happiness in the Hereafter.

Honorable Muslims!

We can appreciate the value of Lailat al-Qadr only by truly appreciating the value of the Qur’an. Then let us connect our minds and our hearts to the Qur’an with the occasion of this night when the Holy Qur’an was revealed. Let us read the Qur’an more, exert effort to understand it, and try to live according to it and help others follow the same path. Let us consider the Night of Qadr as an opportunity for self-accounting, and asking forgiveness and mercy for our sins. Let us cherish every night and know the value of every blessing to add barakah to our whole life. Let us by this way benefit from the spiritual rewards of this night of grace and gifts, which is better than a thousand months.

Dear Believers!

I would like to make an important reminder as I conclude my khutbah. There are only a few days left for us to reach the eid. Many of us are going to set off as of today to spend the eid with the loved ones. The intensity of traffic flow on the roads requires us to be more careful than ever. Because the traffic accidents turn our joy of eid into sadness, and, as a nation, we all feel grief in our hearts. Many brothers and sisters are dying in accidents that occur due to speed violation, improper overtaking, close follow-up, fatigue, etc. Many families are destroyed due to these incidents. At this point, I invite all our brothers and sisters to obey the traffic rules, to be patient, sympathetic and careful, and to respect each other’s rights and law.

¹ Qadr, 97/1-5.

² Bukhari, Fadlu Lailat al-Qadr, 3.

³ Zumar, 39/3.

⁴ Hud, 11/112.

⁵ Nisa, 4/58.

⁶ Ma’idah 5/1.

⁷ Nisa, 4/29.

⁸ Ibrahim, 14/7.

⁹ Hashr, 59/18.

لِتَهْكِمُوا الْجُنُوبُ

وَاعْبُدُ رَبَّكَ حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَكَ الْبَقِيرُ
 وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
 يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ أَفْشُوا السَّلَامَ وَأَطْعِمُوا الطَّعَامَ وَصُلُوِّلُوا الْأَرْحَامَ
 وَصُلُوِّلُوا بِاللَّيْلِ وَالنَّاسُ نِيَامٌ تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ بِسَلَامٍ

EID AL-FITR

Honorable Muslims!

We are grateful to reach once again the month of Ramadan whose beginning is mercy, middle is forgiveness, and end is salvation from the hell. Although we are sad that this blessed month has ended, we are also happy to have this morning of eid, with the feelings of fidelity and brotherhood spread all over the nation in waves. May endless praise and thanks be to the Almighty Allah (swt) who has let us reach the eid. May salat and salam be upon our Prophet Muhammad Mustafa (saw) who describes the days of eids as the days of joy, happiness and remembrance of Allah (swt). Eid Mubarak! I wish you all a happy eid!

Dear Believers!

We endeavored to seek the consent of Allah (swt) day and night, with fasting, tarawih and so on throughout the month of Ramadan. We tried to worship more, increase our acts of benevolence, increase our patience and repentance, and nourish ourselves with the Qur'an, and be embellished with taqwa (piety). While practicing the Sunnah of our Prophet (saw) with muqabala, we shared our food with our loved ones and the people in need at iftar tables. We prayed that our zakat and sadaqah save us from the hunger for wealth and property, and from the greed of the world. While we felt the joy of being ummah in our mosques where takbirs and salawats were heard, we also refreshed our awareness of servitude to Allah (swt) with itikaf. We reviewed the past years, repented for our mistakes and sins, and sought refuge in the forgiveness of al-Rahman. Alhamdulillah, in the end of such a bountiful and blessed month, we have reached the morning of the eid.

Honorable Muslims!

Eid is a bestowal of Allah the Exalted (swt) to His servants who fasted in the month of Ramadan. Today is the time to come close to each other, to open the doors of our hearts and homes, and to share our happiness. Today is the time to bring the hope, gratitude, and joy of being a believer who rejoined with the eid to all the places we go.

Then, let us experience this joy with our parents, who deserve respect and kindness most, with our wives who are our faithful companions and the witnesses of our bad and good days, and with our children who are

the little sources of joy and hope in our houses. Let us visit family elders, relatives, neighbors, and friends.

Let us ask each patient around us of their condition, and make each old person around us happy. Let us add meaning to our eid with the smile of the orphans, and people in need and lonely.

In the morning of this eid, let us end the resentments and offenses between us as brothers and sisters with whom we turn to the same qiblah shoulder to shoulder. Let us strengthen the bonds of affection and trust between us by obeying the divine command of **إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ** “The believers are but brothers.”¹

Let us remember our relatives who passed away and our glorious martyrs who sacrificed their lives for our blessed homeland. Let us raise our hands and beg to Allah (swt) for our Muslim brothers and sisters in trouble, and pray that Allah (swt) let them experience the eids to which they will also reach in peace, tranquility, and security.

Dear Muslims!

We are bidding farewell to another month of Ramadan. We know that our duty of servitude to Allah (swt) is not limited to the month of Ramadan only. The mosques must be filled with people not only at tarawih but also five times a day; the tables of the people in need must be filled with food not only at iftar but also all the time; and the vitality of fasting and the generosity of sadaqah should be spread over the year. Indeed, the Almighty Allah (swt) invites us to spend every moment of our lives with the consciousness of servitude by stating in the Holy Qur'an, “**And serve thy Lord until there come unto thee the hour that is certain.**”²

In accordance with this command of Allah (swt) and by responding to this divine invitation, let us continue the good traits we have gained in the month of Ramadan throughout our lives. Although the month of Ramadan has come to an end, may the barakah and sincerity of the month of Ramadan always be in our lives.

With these thoughts and feelings, I would like to wish a happy eid to the entire Muslim world, primarily our nation. May Allah the Almighty (swt) let this eid bring goodness to humanity.

I would like to conclude my khutbah with this hadith of Prophet Muhammad (saw): “**O people! Spread salaam amongst you, share foods with each other, observe your kinship relations and establish prayer while people sleep so that you can enter heaven safely.**”³

¹ Hujurat, 49/10.

² Hijr, 15/99.

³ Tirmidhi, Sifat al-Qiyamah, 42.

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنَّ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا
وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ.
وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
خَيْرُكُمْ خَيْرٌ كُمْ لِأَهْلِهِ وَأَنَا خَيْرُكُمْ لِأَهْلِي

BEING A FAMILY AND REMAINING AS A FAMILY

Honorable Muslims!

Allah the Almighty (swt) states in the verse I have just recited: **“And among His Signs is this, that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that ye may dwell in tranquility with them, and He has put love and mercy between your (hearts): Verily in that are Signs for those who reflect.”¹**

The Prophet Muhammad (saw) said in the hadith I have read: **“The best of you is he who is best to his family, and I am the best among you to my family.”²**

Dear Believers!

Allah the Exalted (swt) sent human, the most precious being, to this world in two different genders as man and woman. He created a strong bond of love and compassion between them to be spouses and to start a peaceful family. He bestowed upon them a family atmosphere in which they can cooperate in benevolence and feel safe.

Honorable Muslims!

Getting married and establishing a family, first of all, inheres in human nature by creation. While Allah the Exalted (swt) encourages marriage for man and woman with the command **“Marry those among you who are single.”³**, He also advises the whole society, especially their relatives, to support those who are in the age of marriage.

Starting a family is also a Sunnah of our Prophet (saw). The Messenger of Allah (saw) said in a hadith: **“Marriage is part of my Sunnah, and whoever does not follow my Sunnah has nothing to do with me.”⁴** It is an honor and reason for gratitude for every human being to have a decent marriage by correct way and in a manner appropriate to his nature. Because our Prophet (saw) stated, **“O young men, whoever among you can afford to get married, let him do so.”⁵**, and expressed, **“Marriage is the best way to turn eyes away from haraam, and protect the honor.”⁶**

Dear Believers!

Living in a family is a blessing that gives trust and happiness to people of all ages. What other blessing can substitute for the taste of a warm home, its affectionate hand that solves one’s problems, and its support that adds meaning to life? Spouses who build their family

life on sound grounds will be happy not only in this world but also in the Hereafter, and they will take each other to heaven.

Being a family does not mean just living under the same roof. Family is also a togetherness in feeling, ideal, hope, and thought. It means spouses to be friends and compete in benevolence and taqwa. Being a family is to live a life that complies with the consent of Allah (swt). It is to share both joy and grief, and both richness and poverty. It is to overcome all kinds of difficulties together and to be a compassionate spouse, a loyal lover, a merciful parent, and a good child.

Honorable Muslims!

Remaining as a family is as much important as starting a family. To value and protect one’s family are the duties of every male and female Muslim. Remaining as a family means that the spouses cover each other like a garment, protect each other from all kinds of evil, and integrate each other with love and care. For this reason, the Almighty Allah (swt) states: **“They are your garments and ye are their garments.”⁷**

Remaining as a family requires leaving the mistakes and flaws that threaten home. A believer tries to be tolerant and forgiving, and act in a patient and persistent manner in his/her family. In this regard, our Beloved Prophet (saw) recommends: **“A Muslim man must not bear hatred against his Muslim wife as she has an unlikeable temper; because she must have many other tempers that he will like.”⁸**

Remaining as a family is possible only if each woman, man, elder person, and young person fulfill their responsibilities and observe the rights of others as well as their own rights. It requires thinking about the benefits of the family under any circumstance rather than one’s own interest. Our Prophet Muhammad (saw) says, **“It is enough sin for a man not to give food to the one whom he is supposed to feed.”⁹**

Dear Believers!

Let us exert efforts to have a family where love and joy get barakah and sadness and sorrow disappear. Let us introduce our youth to a family’s strong and sincere spirit. Let us present a family atmosphere that will give peace to our children and spouse. Let us appreciate the value of our family. Let us remember that our family is the trust of Allah (swt), and that people will firstly account for their behavior towards their parents, spouses, and children in the Hereafter.

¹ Rum, 30/21.

² Tirmidhi, Manaqib, 63.

³ Nur, 24/32.

⁴ Ibn Majah, Nikah, 1.

⁵ Bukhari, Nikah, 3; Muslim, Nikah, 1.

⁶ Bukhari, Nikah, 3; Muslim, Nikah, 1.

⁷ Baqarah, 2/187.

⁸ Muslim, Rada’, 61.

⁹ Abu Dawud, Zakat, 45.

كِتَابٌ أَنزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكُمْ مُبَارَكٌ لِيَدْبَرُوا أَيَّاتِهِ وَلِيَذَكَّرَ أُولُو
الْأَلْبَابُ.

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
مَا تَحَلَّ وَإِلَّا وَلَدًا مِنْ تَخْلِيلٍ أَفْضَلَ مِنْ أَدْبِ حَسَنٍ.

MOSQUES FULL OF CHILDREN, CHILDREN FULL OF QUR'ANIC MANNERS

Honorable Believers!

Allah the Almighty (swt) states in the verse I have just recited: **"This is a blessed Book which We have revealed to you so that they may contemplate its verses, and people of reason may be mindful."**¹

Prophet Muhammad (saw) reminded us in the hadith I have just read: **"No father can leave a better heritage to his children than good manners."**²

Dear Muslims!

Every child is born with the innate inclination to believe in, love, and be connected to Allah (swt). It is human nature to turn towards what is good, prefer what is pleasant, and search for the truth. The inner compass, since childhood, points to what is true and authentic. However, the paths children follow differ, their beliefs are formed, and their manners are changed as they grow up, under the influence of their parents and circle of friends.

Honorable Believers!

Our children are among the most precious blessings bestowed upon us by Allah (swt) that we need to hold in trust. Prophet Muhammad (saw) encourages us to appreciate the value of and look out for our children as rare treasures entrusted to us. There is a delicate balance of rights and responsibilities between parents and children. The greatest right our children have on us is for us to protect them from all kinds of evil by preserving their pure and uncorrupted nature.

Dear Believers!

Children are the apples of our eyes and hopes of our future, and therefore, we are responsible to meet their both non-material needs, as well as their material needs. Our fundamental duty is to ensure that our children are aware of the Almighty Allah (swt) and the Prophet Muhammad (saw), that they have acquired the habit of worship, and that they are instilled with good manners. We should embellish their innocent hearts and clear minds with knowledge, wisdom, and decency. We should keep them away from all kinds of perverted ideas, immoral

behaviors, superstitions, and newly-emerging false forms of religious knowledge. We should exert efforts to rear them as sincere believers who lead their lives with the Holy Qur'an in their hands and iman in their hearts. We should not forget that it is the essential responsibility of each one of us to leave behind a beautiful young generation who is aware of the Book of Allah (swt), has the Messenger of Allah (saw) as role model, and is loyal to the homeland and fellow citizens.

Honorable Believers!

It is among the signs of being a believer to recite the Holy Qur'an finely, understand it in the most correct, way and live by it in every phase of one's life. It will be easier for our children to lead a life as described above if we ensure that they, from their early years on, are able to read the Qur'an, and are familiar with the core values of Islam. Our children are more, than any of us are, inclined to the warm and sincere call of the Qur'an, and to its spiritual offerings. Childhood is the best and most appropriate time to learn our sublime religion, to get the habit of worshipping, and to adopt such virtues as honesty and compassion. If we want to instill the love for the Qur'an in our children, and to ensure that they take the first steps into a life that will continue in the light of the Qur'an, the summer vacation is a unique opportunity.

Dear Muslims!

We would not like our children, who are easily attracted by the technology, to waste their days in front of computer and phone screens. Therefore, it is our duty to save our children from addiction to technology, and to create opportunities to strengthen their mental and physical health. One of the greatest opportunities to help develop the hearts of our children and enrich their dreams and ideals is around the corner. The summer courses are going to start at all of our mosques and Qur'an course centers on Monday, June 17th. Our mosques are going to spring up flowers, and our courses are going to be filled with joy, with our children, with the slogan of "Mosques Full of Children, Children Full of Qur'anic Manners". In addition to the lessons on iman, worship, and morals, our children will have fun while learning through social and cultural activities. We are waiting for your applications to our mosques and Qur'an courses in order to ensure that our children have "the most valuable heritage" of good manners as expressed by Prophet Muhammad (saw). We welcome our children, and pray for a successful, auspicious, happy, and healthy future for all of them.

¹ Sad, 38/29.

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

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

**قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُوْلَدْ
 وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُواً أَحَدٌ.
 وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
 مَا مِنْ أَحَدٍ يَشَهِّدُ أَنَّ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّداً رَسُولُ
 اللَّهِ صِدِّيقًا مِنْ قَلْبِهِ إِلَّا حَرَمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَى النَّارِ...**

FAITH IN ALLAH

Dear Muslims!

The Almighty Allah (swt) states in the Surah al-Ikhlas that I have quoted at the beginning of the khutbah, “**Say: He is Allah Who is One and Only; the Sustainer needed by all; He neither begets nor is born; and there is none equivalent or comparable to Him.**”¹

In the hadith I have quoted, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) states, “**Whoever sincerely testifies that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah and Muhammad is His messenger, Allah will save him from the Hellfire.**”²

Honorable Believers!

Allah the Almighty (swt) is the Lord of the worlds. All kinds of praise and thanks, power and magnificence, supremacy and superiority pertain to Him. Whatever exists in the heavens and on earth is owned by Him. Allah the Exalted (swt) has an absolute power and endless wisdom. He is the one who creates death and life, bestows property and authority, and glorifies or abases those whom He desires. He is the one Who creates and continues to create. He is the one Who lets people live, gives livelihood to them, and feeds and protects them. He is the only one Who dominates in, executes and manages every field and moment of life. Thus, it is stated in the Holy Qur'an, “**Of Him seeks (its need) every creature in the heavens and on earth: Every day in (new) splendor doth He (shine)!**”³

Dear Believers!

Faith in Allah is the first condition of being honored with Islam. Believing in Allah's (swt) existence, oneness, uniqueness, and having no equivalence and partner, that is to say, adopting tawhid is the basis of principles of faith. The greatest right Allah (swt), Who created us from nothing and lets us live with His endless blessings, has over us is us having faith in Him.

Honorable Muslims!

Faith in Allah (swt) requires following the Prophet assigned by Him, living by the Holy Qur'an

sent down by Him, and showing submission to His commands and rulings. Muslims do not consider faith in Allah (swt) as uttering some words only. On the contrary, faith in Allah (swt) makes it obligatory to know Allah (swt) by means of both the verses of the Holy Qur'an and the hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad (saw) and to live a life in line with this faith. Having faith in Allah (swt) adds meaning to the lives of Muslims, guides their ideas and decisions, and affects all their relations with all living and non-living beings. Therefore, faith which is uttered by Muslims and takes root in their hearts is, in fact, the assurance of benevolence on earth.

Dear Believers!

Those who believe in Allah (swt) observe the consent of the Almighty Allah (swt) in everything they do. They protect the rights of their family, relatives, neighbors, and employees. They fulfill every job undertaken with the consciousness of trust.

Those who believe in Allah (swt) know that even the smallest benevolence will be rewarded and even the smallest evil will be punished. They do not attach more importance to the world than the Hereafter, and they live a life for which they can account.

Those who believe in Allah (swt) cannot be rude and oppressive. On the contrary, they value consultation in all their endeavors. They adopt mercy and compassion as principle.

Muslims who believe in Allah (swt) are tightly bound to their homeland, fellow citizens, religion, and values. They may sacrifice their property and even their life, but they do not turn away from their sacred values.

Honorable Muslims!

Faith in Allah (swt) is a reliable guide to lead us to the true path in the world, and take us to heaven in the Hereafter. Our faith in Allah the Exalted (swt) is our most precious treasure as us being His servants. Spending a life with faith in Allah, accompanying our deeds with our faith, uttering the words of faith in our last breath, and leaving faithful generations are all our desire.

I would like to conclude with the following words of the Prophet Ibrahim (as) as stated in the Holy Qur'an, “**He is the One Who created me, and He alone guides me. He is the One Who provides me with food and drink. And He alone heals me when I am sick. And He is the One Who will cause me to die, and then bring me back to life. And He is the One Who, I hope, will forgive my flaws on the Day of Judgement.**”⁴

¹ Ikhlas, 112/1-4.

² Bukhari, 'Ilm, 49.

³ Rahman, 55/29.

⁴ Shu'ara, 26/78-82.

الْحَجَّ أَشْهُرٌ مَعْلُوماتٌ فَمِنْ فَرَصَ فِيهِنَّ الْحَجَّ فَلَا رَفَقَ وَلَا مُسُوقٌ
 وَلَا جِدَالٌ فِي الْحَجَّ وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يَعْلَمُهُ اللَّهُ وَتَرَوَدُوا فَإِنَّ
 خَيْرَ الرِّزَادِ التَّقْوَىٰ وَأَتْقَنُونَ يَا أُولَى الْأَلْبَابِ
 وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
 ...الْحَجُّ الْمَبْرُورُ لَيْسَ لَهُ جَرَاءٌ إِلَّا الجَنَّةُ.

A SACRED JOURNEY: HAJJ

Honorable Believers!

The Almighty Allah (swt) states in the Holy Qur'an, "Surely the first House of worship established for humanity is the one in Makkah - a blessed sanctuary and a guide for all people. In it are clear signs and the standing place of Ibrahim. Whoever enters it should be safe. Pilgrimage to this House is an obligation by Allah upon whoever is able among people. And whoever disbelieves, then surely Allah is not in need of any of His creation."¹

Dear Believers!

According to the Prophet Muhammad (saw), hajj is one of the five pillars on which Islam is established. Hajj means circumambulating the Ka'bah and standing (waqfah) at Arafat to gain Allah's (swt) consent. It means the gathering of Muslims, after a sacred journey, in the shade of the Ka'bah towards which they turn for prayer all around the world other times. The Almighty Allah (swt) addresses those Muslims who set out to visit His House as follows: "The Hajj is in appointed months. Whoever commits to performing hajj, let them stay away from intimate relations, foul language, and arguments during the hajj. Whatever good you do, Allah fully knows of it. Take necessary provisions for the journey. Surely the best provision is righteousness (taqwa). O people of reason, be mindful of Me!"²

Dear Muslims!

Muslims who commit to performing hajj and set off for it wears ihram, physically, and taqwa, spiritually. They promise to follow the commands of Allah (swt) and the Prophet Muhammad (saw), and stay away from any kind of sins, wrongdoings, and unpleasant acts. Together with their Muslim brothers and sisters of different skin colors, languages, and countries of origin, they pray reciting talbiyah,

لَبَّيْكَ اللَّهُمَّ لَبَّيْكَ لَا شَرِيكَ لَكَ لَبَّيْكَ إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ وَالْعِظَمَةُ لَكَ
 وَالْمُلْكُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَكَ

"Here I am, o Allah, here I am! I am obedient to Your commands! You have no partner. Here I am, o Allah! All praise is for you. All blessings and all sovereignty is yours. You have no partner."³

The Prophet Muhammad (saw) says, "The voice of a believer who recites talbiyah is accompanied by stones,

trees, and even earth."⁴ An amazing choir of universe prays along with prospective pilgrims.

Honorable Believers!

The glad tiding by the Prophet Muhammad (saw) is reciprocated in the hearts of Muslims in their every step during the hajj: "The reward of Hajj that is accepted by Allah is nothing but heaven."⁵ Prospective pilgrims who want to be on the receiving end of this glad tiding climb to Mount Arafat, rehearsing the Day of Judgement. Arafat means to know the truth, reach wisdom, and account for oneself before death.

Pilgrims flood to Muzdalifah after the Arafat waqfah, and then to Mina. While Muzdalifah is where they stand for waqfah in the sight of Allah in order to gain awareness, Mina is where the expression of forsaking all the worldly blessings and asking for the consent of Allah only is manifested.

Muslims who stone the Devil at Jamarat actually stone their own selves, greeds, and passions that keep inviting them to committing sins. Then, they head to the Ka'bah for the tawaf al-ziyarah. Their eyes turn to the Ka'bah, their hearts to Allah (swt).

The animals sacrificed during the hajj are of the signs of Allah (swt). But neither their meat nor their blood reach Him. What is going to reach Him is our taqwa only.

Dear Muslims!

Hajj is literally a cornerstone for Muslims. Pilgrims manifest on themselves the Prophet Ibrahim's loyalty, the Prophet Ismail's submission, and Hajar's reliance on Allah (swt). They express their willingness to sacrifice themselves for the sake of Allah (swt). Pilgrims who visits the places bearing the Prophet Muhammad's (saw) footprints experience patience, gratefulness, revitalization, and tranquility all at the same time. Muslims who bring with them taqwa for their sacred journey should stay away any kind of bad words and acts in order not to waste their taqwa. Utmost care should be paid not to cause any damage to any living being and the nature during the performance of hajj. Pilgrims leaving from those sacred places by leaving behind all their past mistakes and sins should never repeat the same mistakes and sins in the remainder of their lives.

I would like to take this opportunity to pray that the Almighty Allah (swt) may accept the worships of hajj that members from among our community will perform. I would like to conclude this khutbah with the Prophet Muhammad's (saw) following words: "Those who go on pilgrimage and umrah are the messengers of Allah (swt). If they pray to Allah, He accepts their prayers; and if they ask Allah to forgive their sins, He forgives their sins."⁶

¹ Ali 'Imran, 3/96-97.

² Baqarah, 2/197.

³ Muslim, Hajj, 19,21.

⁴ Tirmidhi, Hajj, 14.

⁵ Bukhari, Umrah, 1.

⁶ Ibn Majah, Manasiq, 5.



يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شَعُوبًاٰ وَقَبَائِلٰ
 لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَثْقَلُكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ
 وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
 إِنَّ دِمَاءَكُمْ وَأَمْوَالَكُمْ وَأَغْرَاضَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ حَرَامٌ كَحْرَمَةٍ يَوْمَكُمْ هَذَا
 فِي شَهْرٍ كُمْ هَذَا، فِي بَلْدَكُمْ هَذَا

PRESERVATION OF FAMILY ENVIRONMENT: A RIGHTEOUS AND PEACEFUL FUTURE

Honorable Muslims!

The Almighty Allah (swt) states in the verse I have quoted, "O people! Indeed, We have created you from a male and a female, and made you into tribes and nations so that you may get to know one another. Surely, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous among you. Allah is truly All-Knowing, All-Aware."¹

The Prophet Muhammad (saw) says in the hadith I have quoted, "O people! Your blood, property, and honor are sacred to one another like the sanctity of this day of Eid al-Adha in this month of Dhu al-Hijjah in this city of Makkah."²

Dear Muslims!

We are born, when the Almighty Allah (swt) appreciates, to the mother and father that are predestined by Him, and again with the gender designated by Him. The creation of human beings in two genders as male and female is one of the proofs of Allah's (swt) existence and power. In this sense, it is Allah (swt) Who has bestowed different abilities and superiorities upon to man and woman, made them spouses to each other, and had them have children since Adam (as) and Hawwa (ra).

The creation of human beings as male and female is the predestination of the Almighty Allah (swt) and a condition required by the laws of Allah, which bears many wisdoms. What falls upon us as His servants is to respect His disposition, display respect to both genders, and establish and sustain justice and compassion between them.

Honorable Muslims!

The Exalted Allah (swt) wants us to live a life in accordance with the wisdom underlying our creation, and the honor and dignity of being human. He wants us to get married, have a family, and bring up strong and faithful generations. Protecting our children and safeguarding our future are the duties of all of us as His believing servants. The security of our children is as much valuable and inviolable as the security of our lives and properties. Our chastity, dignity, and efforts to live by halal means are sacred.

Dear Believers!

The most valuable institution that help protect the chastity, respectability, and rights of both man and woman is family. Family life establishes the bonds of trust and peace between us. All kinds of opinions and behaviors that ignore family and destroy family structure, in fact, target social bonds.

In order for a society to look at its future with hope, the first thing to is to encourage the young people of marriage age to get married and set up legitimate relations. For family is the oldest, the most deep-rooted unit, and the strongest tower for humankind to continue living in a proper way, from past to present.

Dear Muslims!

Marriage is the most blessed contract concluded pursuant to the commandment of Allah (swt) with reference to the Prophet Muhammad (saw). Marriage means both happiness and responsibility for man and woman. Extramarital relationships and "unrestricted approaches" disguised under the name of "sexual freedom" are far from respecting the rights and integrity of men and women. Living together without a legal and recognized marriage is prohibited by Allah (swt). Nothing good results from a wrong path full of haram. For haram always causes misperceptions and is destructive; it harms people and damages society.

Honorable Muslims!

Allah the Exalted (swt) has predestined our gender just like our race, skin color, and lifetime. Trying to change the codes of human nature and the innate characteristics of genders are against the laws of Allah (swt). The attempts to interrupt genders and the efforts to promote genderlessness would destroy not only individuals but also the entire generation eventually. Disregarding the divine will by presenting the choice of gender as if it were an individual freedom and choice means to step out of line and deviate from servitude to Allah (swt). All beliefs have rejected and cursed such understandings throughout the history.

Honorable Believers!

Nations survive thanks to their religious and moral values. When these values are weakened, the society starts to be dissolve, and our future will be endangered. The Almighty Allah (swt) informs us of the destruction of many communities throughout the history because they ignored the revelation and went through moral corruption and perversion. According to the Holy Qur'an, the Prophet Lot addressed his people of corrupted human nature, "We had sent Lot as a prophet. He scolded the men of his people, 'Do you commit a shameful deed that no man has ever done before? You lust after men instead of women! You are certainly transgressors'!"³

Dear Muslims!

Let us draw a lesson from the tribes that were destroyed because of their depravity and stepping out of line. Let us strive to live a decent life in compliance with our nature. Let us protect the honor and dignity of humanity by considering them as our dearest and most precious values just as we protect our lives. Let us stay away from extremisms and improper practices that may harm the honor of man and woman. Let us value and show due care to our daughters and sons as they deserve. Let us remember that we are all responsible of bringing up proper generations, which is only possible through educating our children and young people against perverted understandings, raising their awareness, and protecting them.

¹ Hujurat, 49/13.

² Bukhari, Ilm, 9; Muslim, Qasamah, 30.

³ A'raf, 7/80, 81.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

قَمَنَ أَظَلْمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا أَوْ كَذَبَ بِأَيْمَانِهِ
 إِنَّهُ لَا يُفْلِحُ الْمُجْرِمُونَ.
 وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
 تَرَكْتُ فِيْكُمْ أَمْرَنِينِ لَنْ تَضِلُّوا مَا تَمَسَّكْتُمْ بِهِمَا
 كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَسُنْنَةَ نَبِيِّهِ.

COMMEMORATION OF THE JULY 15 AND COMPREHENSION OF THE BETRAYAL

Honorable Muslims!

The Almighty Allah (swt) states in the verse I have quoted, **“Who does more wrong than those who fabricate lies against Allah, or deny His revelations? Indeed, the wicked will never succeed.”¹**

In this respect, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) said, **“I leave behind me two things, and if you follow these you will never go astray. They are the Qur'an and the Sunnah.”²**

Dear Believers!

Our nation came safely through an existential challenge three years ago. The terrorist organization FETO, which has, under the guise of serving for Allah's (swt) cause, exploited the resources and values of our nation for years, finally attacked the independence and future existence of our nation. However, our nation, which has throughout the history overcome countless betrayals thanks to its resoluteness, courage, and self-sacrificing nature, did not let this invasion attempt succeed, too, with the help of Allah (swt). Today, once again and always, we as a nation express our endless gratefulness to the Almighty Allah (swt) for helping us.

Honorable Muslims!

Those people who tried to demolish our nation's parliament and drag our young people and future generations to captivity on the July 15 did all of it under the veil of being religious. While they appeared to teach about and call to the religion of Islam, and to be in the service of the ummah, all that they did actually was to pave the way for corruption. Such corruptors are referred to in the Holy Qur'an as follows, **“When they are told, “Do not spread corruption on the Earth,” they reply, “We are only peace-makers!” Indeed, it is they who are the corruptors, but they fail to perceive it.”³**

Honorable Believers!

Could there be a worse danger than spreading tumult, sedition and corruption disguised as peacemaking?

This is referred to in the words of the Prophet Muhammad (saw) as follows, **“Whoever deceives us is not one of us.”⁴** Then, could there be a more serious crime than deceit, invasion, and exploitation through the instrumentality of the religion?

Let us not forget that the terrorist organization FETO, which used the methods of disguising itself, sailing under

false colors, hypocrisy, lies, threats, and blackmailing to remain standing, has never been a religious organization.

The FETO is a terrorist organization that tried to create a so-called moderate Islam through dreams, mysteries, and insidious plots.

Honorable Believers!

No knowledge in contradiction of the Qur'an and the Sunnah is of religious value. All understandings and approaches are deviant other than the middle-of-the-road approach and the straight path (mustaqim) followed by the majority of Muslims since the time of the Prophet's Companions.

According to Islam, there is no authority “innocence and incontrovertible” other than the Prophet Muhammad. Muslims, therefore, cannot entrust their reasoning, will, and disposition to other people blindly.

Muslims are but brothers. Damaging the unity of the ummah with arrogance, hypocrisy, corruption, and slander, and giving way to discord cannot be accepted.

Dear Muslims!

While we remember the July 15, we should comprehend the betrayal, and bring to mind our responsibilities. We should lead a life guided by the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (saw). We should not give opportunity for those who abuse the religion for their personal interests. We should protect the Anatolian wisdom that has been accumulating on this land for centuries and is the power to keep our religious life standing.

We should be awake and alert against those who aim to exploit our religion, language, ethnicity, and innate richness, in order not to relive the bitter experience on the July 15. We should together stand against the acts of hypocrisy by those who want to drag our nation into sedition and corruption. We should regard the property of each other as our own property, the rights of each other as our own rights, and the honor and dignity of each other as our own honor and dignity. We should not behave in such a way as to cause our peace, trust, and brotherhood to be damaged. We should make no compromise on our unity and solidarity.

We should pay attention that our children learn the authentic religious knowledge through true methods and techniques from competent persons for the future existence of our state and nation, and for the well-being of the Prophet Muhammad's (saw) ummah. We should be careful about the people to whom we entrust our children, as well as with whom they are friends, where they spend their time, and what they learn about the religion.

On this occasion of the anniversary of the July 15, we remember, wishing Allah's mercy upon and deeply felt gratefulness for, our martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the cause of the homeland and our veterans who proudly carry their wounds like a liberty medal.

¹ Yunus, 10/17.

² Muvatta', Qadar, 3.

³ Baqarah, 2/11-12.

⁴ Muslim, Iman, 164.



يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا نُودِي لِلصَّلَاةِ مِنْ يَوْمِ الْجُمُعَةِ فَانسِعُوا إِلَى ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَذَرُوا الْبَيْتَ ذَلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ
وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
إِنَّ فِي الْجُمُعَةِ سَاعَةً لَا يَسْأَلُ اللَّهُ الْعَبْدُ فِيهَا شَيْئًا إِلَّا كَاهَ اللَّهُ إِيَاهُ.

FRIDAY PRAYER AND ITS CUSTOMS

Honorable Muslims!

Today is Friday. The most blessed and bountiful day of a week. Today is an eid of Believers and a time of meeting weekly. It is an occasion of grace and mercy and brotherhood and familiarity.

It is a unique spiritual climate that differs from the other days in terms of its value and merit. The Prophet Muhammad (saw) told us about Friday, **“The best day on which the sun rises is Friday. [On Friday] Adam was created, and on that day he entered Paradise, and on that day he was expelled from Paradise. And the Hour will come to pass on Friday.”**¹

Dear Believers!

Today, our most important responsibility is to perform the Friday prayer. Because Friday prayer is an obligation for Muslims. The Almighty Allah (swt) states in the verse I recited in the beginning of my khutbah, **“O ye who believe! When the call is proclaimed to prayer on Friday (the day of assembly), hasten earnestly to the remembrance of Allah, and leave off business (and traffic): That is best for you if ye but knew!”**²

Neglecting Friday prayer unless there is a valid excuse is a great sin. The Messenger of Allah (saw) warned us about this issue, **“Whoever do not establish Friday prayer three times because he does not care about it, Allah sets a seal on his heart.”**³

Honorable Muslims!

Every believer who wants to benefit from the baraqah of Friday prepares himself for Friday prayer by complying with the sunnah of our Prophet Muhammad (saw). He performs ablution properly and cleans his body. He makes a point of wearing clothes that are clean and suitable to satr-i awrat. He knows that it would not be good to come mosque after eating stinky food. He wears nice scents. He behaves in accordance with the soul of the worship and the awe of the community. He makes effort to close and align the ranks. He respects Friday prayer and avoids from making noise and disturbing the people who stand near him in the presence of Allah (swt).

Dear Muslims!

On this blessed day, another point we need to be careful about is the Friday khutbah. Khutbah is a call on ummah from minbar. It is a recommendation, reminder, and warning for Muslims. It is an invitation to iman, wisdom, and morals and a call for the truth. Khutbah is also a must of Friday prayer. Khutbah is a worship, too, just like prayers.

It is a religious necessity to listen to the khatib in awe, silently and by hanging on his every word. Taking to your friends or playing with your phones during khutbah causes you to stray from the essence of khutbah and miss out the rewards of it. Sadly, I need to say that such behaviors that are contrary to the soul of worship are becoming widespread among our community day by day. However, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) did not even tolerate speaking of a member of community in order to warn a friend who speaks near him, and warned his ummah about this issue, **“You are wrong even to say “Hush!” to your friend while imam reads khutbah on Friday.”**⁴

Honorable Believers!

Let us try to benefit from the bounty and blessing of Friday that is the best day on which the sun rises. Let us conduct this day to meet, become friends, and strengthen our brotherhood bonds. To ask how we are doing, to share each other's happiness, and to give hand to each other when one of us suffers. Let us look for ways to help the needy people, those who are short of money, and the ones who are in bad health. On Fridays, let us go mosques with all members of our family as it was in the Asr al-Saadah. Let us familiarize our children with Friday prayer and invite our young people to the presence of Friday.

Let us remember that khutbah is a part of the prayer. Let us give our interest and attention only to khatib and khutbah during the khutbah. Let us stay away from behaviors that do not suit to the soul of the worship. In this time of acceptance when duas are accepted let us our bodies, minds, hearts, and feelings turn to al-Rahman.

I would like to conclude my khutbah with these glad tidings of the Prophet Muhammad (saw), **“There is such a moment on Friday that if servants ask something, Allah certainly bestows what they ask to them.”**⁵

¹ Muslim, Jumu'ah, 18.

² Jumu'ah, 62/9.

³ Ibn Majah, Ikamat, 93.

⁴ Muslim, Jumu'ah, 11.

⁵ Tirmidhi, Jumu'ah, 2.

يَا بَنِي آدَمْ قَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ لِبَاسًا يُوَارِي سَوَاتِكُمْ وَرِيشًا
وَلِبَاسُ النَّقْوَى ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ ذَلِكَ مِنْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَذَكَّرُونَ
وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ حَلِيمٌ حَيْثُ سِتَّرَ يُحِبُّ الْحَيَاةَ وَالسَّرَّ...

PHYSICAL PRIVACY AND ISLAMIC DRESSING

Honorable Muslims!

In the verse I have just recited, the Almighty Allah (swt) states, “O Children of Adam! We have provided for you clothing to cover your nakedness and as an adornment. However, the best clothing is righteousness. This is one of the signs of Allah, so perhaps you will be mindful.”¹

In the hadith I have just read, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) says, “Allah is modest and decent, and He covers up flaws. He loves decency and dressing (tasattur)...”²

Honorable Muslims!

Our bodies, just like our souls, are great blessings bestowed upon and entrusted to us by Allah (swt). Every believing man and every believing woman is obliged to protect it. In this respect, our bodies, just like all blessings bestowed upon us, have rights over us. All believers in the know of the value of the blessings should use their bodies in the way of doing good deeds and helping spread the good. For there will come a day when we all will be questioned about for what purposes we have used our physical strength, beauty and handsomeness, and skills in the world.

Honorable Believers!

On top of the responsibilities towards our bodies comes covering it and protecting it from unallowed eyes, and bad words. Before everything else, it is a religious obligation to cover up one's body. It is also an innate and natural need to do so.

Dressing up one's body is done primarily for one's own good other than for others. It is a demonstration of one's self-respect and protection of privacy. Covering up one's private parts reflects one's decency and attentiveness to the body. A specific feeling felt by humans only, decency stems from faith, as expressed by the Prophet Muhammad (saw). Covered up in a piece of cloth and entrusted to the mother after birth, humans are washed clean under another piece of cover and buried shrouded after death.

Honorable Muslims!

Just as to their bodies, Muslims need to show the same respect to other people. Not only do they need to

cover up their bodies against unallowed and unpermitted stares by other people, they also need to respect their privacy. Aware of their boundaries, they should not disturb other people with their stares. The line “It is a spiritual merit to look at beautiful women!” widely used colloquially has no place in Islam. For all persons have the right to privacy, regardless of their appearance. In this respect, the Almighty Allah (swt) warns Muslims as follows:

قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغْضُبُوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَخْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ

“Tell the believing men to lower their gaze and guard their chastity. That is purer for them. Surely Allah is All-Aware of what they do.”³

وَقُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَغْضُبْنَ مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِنَّ وَيَخْفَظْنَ فُرُوجَهُنَّ وَلَا يُبَدِّلْنَ

رِبَتْهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَلَا يَصْرِفْنَ بِحُمْرِهِنَّ عَلَى جُبُوبِهِنَّ

“Tell the believing women to lower their gaze and guard their chastity, and not to reveal their adornments except what normally appears. Let them draw their veils over their chests.”⁴

As clearly stated in the verses above, the Almighty Allah (swt) asks all believing people, man or woman, to pay attention to decency and privacy. He declares that turning our gazes from haram and paying attention to dressing (tasattur) are duties upon us. Men's clothes that fit so tightly, thereby also threatening the physical health, are in violation of Islamic dressing. The awareness of Islamic dressing is not only about covering up the body, but also covering up and protecting the heart and mind against all kinds of evil, extremism, and what is forbidden (haram).

Honorable Believers!

Decency is a highly valued virtue that beautifies all people. The inviolability of decency is a shared value for all people. Due diligence to it makes both women and men respectable in the same way. For all persons, whether woman or man, deserve respect.

Dear Believers!

Paying attention to privacy is a requirement of piety (taqwa), namely the sense of respectfulness and respectability towards Allah (swt). Then, let us not let weaken the connection between us and Him, who blessed us with our bodies. Let us struggle to live a life He would approve and appreciate. Let us be aware that our bodies are sacredly inviolable, and our souls graceful and respectable. Let us instill self-confidence through the sense of privacy in our family members and particularly our children from early ages on. Let us not forget that virtuous societies are formed by people who protect their moral, spiritual, and cultural values.

¹ A'raf, 7/26.

² Nasai'i, Ghusl, 7.

³ Nur, 24/30.

⁴ Nur, 24/31.



إِنَّا أَعْطَيْنَاكُوكَوْثُرَ فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّكَ وَانْهَرْ
وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
مَا عَمِلَ آدَمُ مِنْ عَمَلٍ يَنْهَى اللَّهُ مِنْ إِهْرَاقِ الدَّمِ...

MAKE SACRIFICE FOR YOUR LORD

Honorable Muslims!

In the verse I have recited, the Almighty Allah (swt) states: “Indeed, We have granted you, o Prophet, abundant goodness. So, pray and sacrifice to your Lord alone!”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 started to feel the excitement of the Eid al-Adha, an occasion for us to get closer to Allah (swt) and to reinforce our bonds of brotherhood with Muslims. May endless praise and thanks be to Allah (swt) for allowing us to reach these blessed days. Insha’allah, we all together will reach the eid on August 11, Sunday. We are going to refresh our submission and loyalty to Allah (swt) by means of qurban, and our affection with our brothers and sisters by means of our aids and offerings.

Dear Muslims!

Qurban means sacrificing an animal of certain qualifications in accordance with certain procedures for worship purposes. As in all worships, the primary purpose of qurban is to get closer to Allah (swt). That is to say, it is the effort to attain the approval of Allah (swt). It is the desire to attain piety (taqwa). Qurban is a demonstration of respect and sincerity by obedient servants for al-Rahman. This is referred to in the words of the Almighty Allah (swt) as follows, “Neither their meat nor blood reaches Allah. Rather, it is your piety that reaches Him.”³

Dear Believers!

Qurban for Allah (swt) has been a form of worship made obligatory for all nations since the Prophet Adam (as). This is referred to in the Holy Qur'an as follows, “For every community We appointed a rite of sacrifice so that they may pronounce the Name of Allah over the sacrificial animals He has provided for them...”⁴

Let qurban remind you of Abil and Kabil, the Prophet Adam's sons, who were put to a test of sincerity. Abil, with his contentedness and obedience to the commandment of Allah (swt) in the best manner, passed successfully the test, and Kabil failed it, with his insincerity and jealousy. For sincerity (ikhlas) and piety (taqwa) constitute the essence of worship.

Let qurban remind you also of the Prophet Ibrahim (as) and his son Ismail, both of whom were put to a test of submission. In this challenging test, a prophet as a father and his son showed all people that they could without hesitation sacrifice all they had in the cause of Allah (swt).

Let qurban remind you of the Prophet Muhammad (saw), who performed this worship every year until his death. He himself would do the slaughtering of the animal he would sacrifice; he and his family would eat from the meat of the sacrificed animal, and he would also offer some meat to his companions, and to those people in need. Qurban also bears the marks of the Prophet Muhammad's (saw) loyalty and prayers. On it are reflected also the marks of his morals of infaq and sharing.

Dear Muslims!

Qurban is a supreme responsibility in both material and spiritual terms. It means coming together, with our family, friends, neighbors, relatives, brothers and sisters, around the same blessing. It means doing good and spending in the cause of Allah (swt), and staying conscious of the need to share His blessings with other people. It means making happy the people primarily in our close circles, the people in need, the aggrieved, the miserable, and the lonely. It means delivering compassion and joy to the homes of people in need without any discrimination of color, language, or geography. It means stretching out a hand of benevolence to countries, of whose names we may not have heard before, and people whom we may have not met before. It means grasping the meaning of being brothers and sisters, being united, and being the ummah.

Honorable Believers!

The Presidency of Religious Affairs, in cooperation with the Türkiye Diyanet Foundation, continues to carry out its organization of qurban by proxy this year, too, just as it has been for the past years. Great was your participation for the last year's organization. Alhamdulillah, we distributed a total number of 430.000 shares of qurban, which you entrusted to us, to 17.650.000 brothers and sisters of ours who are in need, oppressed, aggrieved, and refugees.

This year, within the framework of the organization initiated under the title of “Share Your Qurban, Get Closer to Your Brothers and Sisters”, some of the shares of qurban you entrusted to us will be slaughtered in our country, and some of them by our officials on duty abroad. We will meticulously deliver your shares entrusted to us to those people truly in need. This way, we will function as a bridge of love between the hearts of Muslims, thereby strengthening the consciousness of being ummah. We will be serving for upholding and spreading the awareness of Islamic infaq, morality, assistance, and solidarity before all humanity.

The Türkiye Diyanet Foundation will keep its system of receiving donations of shares of qurban open until the evening of the Day of Arafah. We would like to invite you, our honorable community, to this charitable activity. Let us not forget that a single share of qurban will turn back to us as thousands of prayers uttered for us. You can get detailed information from the mosque officials and offices of muftis.

I would like to take this opportunity to pray to Allah (swt) that He may allow us to reach the Eid al-Adha as healthy, tranquility, and happy. May Allah the Almighty (swt) appreciate our worship of qurban and other worships.

1 Kawthar, 108/1-2

2 Tirmidhi, Adabi, 1.

3 Hajj, 22/37.

4 Hajj, 22/34.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوا كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الطَّنَّ إِنَّ بَغْضَ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ وَلَا
 تَجْسِسُوا وَلَا يَغْتَبْ بَعْضُكُمْ بَعْضًا.
 وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
 الْمُسْلِمُ مَنْ سَلَّمَ الْمُسْلِمُونَ مِنْ لِسَانِهِ وَبِدِيهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُ مَنْ أَمِنَ النَّاسُ عَلَى
 دِمَائِهِمْ وَأَمْوَالِهِمْ.

BELIEVERS: THE GUARANTEE OF A PEACEFUL SOCIETY

Dear Muslims!

The most basic principle which sustains a society and helps it live in peace is justice. The verse of “O ye who believe! Stand out firmly for Allah, as witnesses to fair dealing.”¹ points out the fact that being a believer requires to stand by the truth. Justice is also the most important balance element and the guarantee of social life.

Trust is another must-have principle that is needed in order to implement peace in a society. Believers assure all people by taking the example of their Prophet called as Muhammad al-Amin (the Trustworthy). Because the Messenger of Allah (saw) described them as, “True Muslims are the ones from whose tongues and hands Muslims are safe. And believers are persons trusted by other people for safety of their lives and properties.”²

Honorable Believers!

Another principle of establishment of a peaceful and safe society is righteousness. Being sincere and honest is a requirement of being a believer. Believers are frank and transparent. They tell exactly what they think. Their intentions and deeds are consistent

with each other. In accordance with the قَاتِقَمْ كَمَا أُمِرْتَ Therefore stand firm (in the straight Path) as thou art commanded.”³ Command of the Almighty Allah (swt), not leaving the right path is the slogan of believers. Believers do not lie, do not defame, and do not violate rights of others!

Dear Muslims!

One of the most harmful behaviors which damages the conscious of solidarity of a society and leaves the door open for duality is prejudice. Prejudice means to slander people without basing on any proof and ground and to build assumptions on evil thoughts. However, just like the lives and properties of believers, also their honor and chastity are entrusted to each other. The law of brotherhood and the ethics of brotherhood should dominate over the relationship between them. It is a requirement of iman to have good intentions towards your believer brothers and sisters. Allah the Exalted (swt) warns believers as follows in the verse I recited at the beginning of my khutbah,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوا كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الطَّنَّ إِنَّ بَغْضَ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ

“O ye who believe! Avoid suspicion as much (as possible): for suspicion in some cases is a sin...”⁴

Honorable Believers!

The religion of Islam also prohibits spying on secret conditions of people and disclosing them to others just as it prohibits prejudice. Criticizing each other maliciously, saying bad words behind each other's back, and disclosing mistakes and shames of your brother and sister are haram in Islam. Because all these ill tempers cause the unrest and corruption to become widespread and the people who do not trust each other to establish an unrestful and chaotic society. It is impossible for such society

to sustain and look future with hope. With His command of,

وَلَا تَجْسِسُوا وَلَا يَغْتَبْ بَعْضُكُمْ بَعْضًا

“And spy not on each other, nor speak ill of each other behind their backs ...”⁵ the Almighty Allah invites us to be sensitive on this subject. Otherwise, the destination will be disappointment in the world and regret in the Hereafter. However, Allah the Exalted informs us as follows about the fact that Devil will drive a wedge between believers who do not say the true and beautiful words, “Say to My servants that they should (only) say those things that are best: for Satan doth sow dissensions among them: For Satan is to man an avowed enemy.”⁶

Dear Believers!

The Beloved Prophet Muhammad (saw) stated, “It is enough sin for a man to speak of everything that he hears.”⁷ By sharing an information before checking its correctness you become an instrument to spread groundless words and feed lies and slanders. Allah the Exalted (swt) states in the Holy Qur'an as follows,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّ جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ يَنْبَأُ فَتَبَيَّنُوا

“O ye who believe! If a wicked person comes to you with any news, ascertain the truth....”⁸

Believers do not rely on groundless news and comments released irresponsibly and unconsciously. They stay away from saying a word about the honor and chastity of innocent people just like they run away from fire. They know that they will account for every word uttered, every comment written, and every deed committed by them. They apply this verse of Allah (swt) to their lives, “And pursue not that of which thou hast no knowledge; for every act of hearing, or of seeing, or of (feeling in) the heart will be enquired into (on the Day of Reckoning).”⁹

Honorable Muslims!

Let us be tied to our divine book the Holy Qur'an and the sunnah of our Prophet Muhammad Mustafa (saw) in order to establish a peaceful, safe, and powerful society. Starting from our family, let us spread, live, and make others live the conscious of tawhid, the conscious of brotherhood, and good morals. Let us stay away from all kinds of behaviors that will weaken the bonds between us and make us mistrustful against each other. Let us work altogether for a peaceful environment in which spouses, parents, children, chiefs, civil servants, workers, employers, neighbors, relatives, friends, fellows, and in short all the members of the society trust each other. Let us not forget the following warning of Prophet Muhammad (saw) not even for a moment, “Do not hate each other, do not envy each other, do not turn away from each other, but rather be servants of Allah as brothers.”¹⁰

Dear Believers!

I would like to remind you an important point as we approach to the Eid al-Adha. Most of us are going to set off to spend the eid with our beloved ones. We need to be extra careful because of the intense traffic on the ways we will use to go and come back. Because our several citizens lose their lives and many families disappear in accidents that occur due to improper passing, close follow-up, and tiredness. For this reason, I would like to invite all our brothers and sisters to abide by traffic rules and act patiently, thoughtfully, and carefully.

¹ Maidah, 5/8.

² Tirmidhi, Iman, 12.

³ Hud, 11/112.

⁴ Hujurat, 49/12.

⁵ Hujurat, 49/12.

⁶ Isra, 17/53.

⁷ Abu Dawud, Adab, 80.

⁸ Hujurat, 49/6.

⁹ Isra, 17/36.

¹⁰ Bukhari, Adab, 62.

لِقَاءُ الْعِزْمَةِ الْجَنْبِيِّ

قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَتُسُكُّنِي وَمَخْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
 لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَيَدْلِكَ أُمِرْثُ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ.
 وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
 إِنَّ أَوَّلَ مَا تَبَدَّأُ بِهِ فِي يَوْمَنَا هَذَا أَنْ تُصَلِّي، ثُمَّ تَرْجِعَ
 كُنْتَنَحَّرَ، فَمَنْ قَعَلَ فَقَدْ أَصَابَ سُنْتَنَا.

EID AL-ADHA

Honorable Muslims!

Today is the Eid al-Adha. It is an exceptional time when we submit our servitude to Allah (swt) and express our gratitude to Him for all the blessings He bestowed upon us. It is an offering by Him for those people who bear the Prophet Ibrahim's faith, Hajar's loyalty, and the Prophet Ismail's submission. It is the day when the prospective pilgrims enjoy the peacefulness and joy of becoming pilgrims by going to Muzdalifah from Arafat, and to Mina thereafter, stoning the devil, and performing the tawaf al-ziyarah. Today is one of those rare times when we get closer to Allah (swt) by performing the worship of qurban, a distinctive sign of Islam.

Dear Believers!

It was an eid morning just like now, when the Prophet Muhammad (saw) left home to perform the eid prayer. Arriving the place to perform the prayer, he appealed to his companions, “**The first thing to do today is to perform the eid prayer, and then perform the worship of qurban. Those who follow this are in conformity with my sunnah.**”¹

In the khutbah he delivered to his companions after performing the eid prayer, he gave the following good news to his ummah, “**A human does no action from the actions on the day of nahr more beloved to Allah then spilling blood. On the Day of Judgement, it will appear with its horns, and hair, and hooves, and indeed the blood will be accepted by Allah from where it is received before it even falls upon earth, so let your heart delight in it.**”²

It was the time to sacrifice the animal after the prayer and the khutbah. The Prophet Muhammad (saw) warned the believers about treating nicely the animals to be sacrificed, and showing mercy and compassion to them as follows, “**Allah made it a fardh for people to act based on ikhsan, in other words to act nicely. Then, whoever will sacrifice an animal should do it nicely.**”³ He placed the animal to be sacrificed on the ground facing the qiblah, recited basmalah and takbir, and uttered the following verses:

“I have turned my face toward Allah, Who created the Heavens and the Earth. I am not of the idolaters. Verily, my salah, my sacrifice, my life, and my death are for Allah. He has no partner. And of this I have been commanded, and I am the first of the Muslims.”⁴

Dear Muslims!

Let us spend the days of the Eid al-Adha in conformity to the sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (saw) as he taught us. Let us bear in mind that we need to utter 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.

As members of the ummah of the Prophet Muhammad (saw) who says, “**Cleanliness makes up half of the faith.**”⁵ let us pay attention to the environmental cleanliness. We should bury deep in the ground any piece of diseased-looking meat from the sacrificed animal. For, in the event that stray cats and dogs eat such meat, they may transmit diseases to people. We should also ensure that the animals to be sacrificed be slaughtered and apportioned at a clean place.

Dear Believers!

The occasions of eid are the days of sharing, offering, and helping. We should bear in mind that our neighbors, relatives, poor people, orphans, and people in need have their rights over our qurban. Let us remember that we gain as much as we give out, and we get richer as much as we share out.

The silat al-rahim (paying visits to relatives) is the essence of the eid. We should be aware that the days of eid are not only an opportunity for off days. Let us visit the elderly members of our family and show our care in their well-being, particularly our parents. Let us make the younger family members happy with little treats. Let us ensure that the sick, the elderly, and the lone people have their share from the joy of the eid.

Dear Muslims!

The occasions of eid are the days of forgiving and embracing one another. Let us regard the days of the eid as an opportunity to put an end to conflicts and hard feelings between our brothers and sisters. Let us fully enjoy the peacefulness and brotherly climate of the eid.

As I conclude the khutbah, I would like to congratulate our noble nation and the whole Muslim world for the Eid al-Adha. May Allah's (swt) peace, mercy, and blessings be upon you. May this Eid al-Adha bring many beauties for all of us.

¹ Bukhari, 'Eidayn, 3.

² Tirmidhi, Adahi, 1.

³ Muslim, Sayd, 57; Abu Dawud, Dahaya, 10-11.

⁴ An'am, 6/79, 162-163; Ibn Majah, Adahi, 1.

⁵ Tirmidhi, Daawat, 86.



ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ
 لِيُذْيِقُهُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي عَمِلُوا لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ.
 وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
 مَا مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ تُصِيبُ الْمُسْلِمَ إِلَّا كَفَرَ اللَّهُ بِهَا عَنْهُ
 حَتَّىٰ الشَّوْكَةِ يُشَانِكُهَا.

PREPAREDNESS AGAINST DISASTERS FOR A SAFE AND SECURE LIFE

Honorable Muslims!

In the verse I have just recited the Almighty Allah (swt) states, “**Corruption has appeared throughout the land and sea by [reason of] what the hands of people have earned so He may let them taste part of [the consequence of] what they have done that perhaps they will return [to righteousness].**”¹

In the hadith I have just read the Prophet Muhammad (saw) says, “**Even if it were the prick he receives from a thorn, but that Allah expiates some of his sins for that.**”²

Dear Believers!

We have come from Allah (swt) and to Him we will return. We are conscious of the fact that Allah (swt) puts all of us to a variety of tests in this world. We wholeheartedly believe that the life in this world is temporary and that in the Hereafter is eternal. We display gratitude to Allah (swt) for the blessings, and patience and resoluteness for the troubles. In Him we trust and on Him we rely. However, we as human beings still keep trying to fulfil our responsibilities against natural disasters.

Honorable Muslims!

Allah (swt) has created the entire nature as a whole, from the largest galaxies to the tiniest little ants, and oversees everything at all times. On His ruling and laws depend the hilarious harmony and balance of the nature.

Sometimes it is not only the nature that is upset by some disasters, but also the lives of people, in a bitter way. Throughout the history disasters such as earthquakes, floods, landslides, and fires have resulted in many losses of life and property. The pain caused by the earthquakes and floods in the near past of our country is still fresh in our hearts.

Dear Believers!

Allah (swt) commands people, “**And cause not corruption upon the earth after its reformation.**”³ By people who irresponsibly waste the nature, cut the trees in forests for personal benefits, pollute the air and water, desertify the earth is disturbed the balance on Earth. The majority of the bitter results of disasters are due mostly to our own mistakes and neglects. In this regard states the Almighty Allah (swt), “**And whatever strikes you of disaster - it is for what your hands have earned; but He pardons much.**”⁴

Dear Muslims!

Muslims have absolute faith that what Allah (swt) has preordained will eventually take place. They are aware, however, that the natural phenomena take place in accordance with the divine order and laws on a cause and effect basis. They do not simply rely on the fact that “What Allah (swt) wills happens.” by ignoring the importance of exerting efforts and seeking opportunities for desired results. They watch their steps in terms of harmfulness to the nature and avoid acts that invite disasters. They show due diligence in their works, and take necessary measures. Only after deploying material and non-material means and fulfilling their responsibilities do they wait for Allah's (swt) decision. As the Prophet Muhammad (saw) expresses, “**They first tie their camels and then place their trust in Allah.**”⁵

Dear Believers!

Let us take necessary measures for a secure life. Let us be conscious of and prepared for disasters. Let us take into consideration the location for constructing residential places in terms of risk of earthquake, landslides, and floods. Let us inform our family members on disasters and emergencies. Let us apply to provincial directorates of the Disasters and Emergency Management Presidency of Turkey, for first aid training, information and support.

May Allah's (swt) mercy be upon our fellow citizens who have lost their lives in disasters occurring in our country, and particularly upon those who have lost their lives in the 1999 Marmara Earthquake, the 20th anniversary of which we will commemorate tomorrow. May the Almighty Allah (swt) protect us, our nation, and Muslim world against all kinds of disasters. May He also allow us to take necessary lessons from the past disasters, to fulfill our responsibilities, and lead a peaceful and secure life.

¹ Rum, 30/41.

² Bukhari, Marda, 1.

³ A'raf, 7/56.

⁴ Shuraa, 42/30.

⁵ Tirmidhi, Sifat al-Qiyamah, 60.

لِئَلَّا يَعْنَى الظُّنُونُ

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَأْكُلُوا أَضْعَافَةً مُضَاعَفَةً وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ.

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ
مَا أَحَدُ أَكْفَرَ مِنَ الرِّبَا إِلَّا كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ أُمْرِهِ إِلَىٰ فِلَةٍ.

SOCIAL HARMS OF INTEREST

Dear Muslims!

It was tenth year of hijrah and the last year of prophecy. Prophet Muhammad (saw) set off from Medina and arrived Arafat with his companions in order to perform hajj obligation. There, he recited his khutbah that will be known as "The Last Sermon" after years. He gave recommendations that will enlighten the road of humanity. He warned his ummah against some harams and deviations. One of the issues which was irreversibly prohibited by the Messenger of Allah (saw) in the Last Sermon by saying, "**All practices of the days of ignorance are now under my feet,**" was interest. By declaring that he trampled on all kind of interest, Prophet Muhammad (saw) addressed to the believers as follows, "**All dues of interest shall stand cancelled.**"¹

Honorable Believers!

Interest means taking the money lent to someone back at the end of certain period and by adding some money to the initial capital. It is illegal, unreturned, and unmerited extra money that is paid by debtor to creditor compulsorily. It means having an unearned gain without turning an honest penny and exerting efforts. It means turning the trouble of people who are in need into opportunity.

Dear Muslims!

Islam declares all kinds of interest as haram definitely. It considers the operations with interest as one of the greatest sins. However, the Almighty Allah (swt) warns believers in the verse I recited in the beginning of my khutbah as follows, "**O ye who believe! Devour not usury, doubled and multiplied; but fear Allah that ye may (really) prosper.**"²

Honorable Believers!

All commands and prohibitions of Allah is for the good of His servants. They are for their peace in the world and the happiness in the Hereafter. Prohibition of interest in Islam has many wisdoms in terms of both individual and society.

Interest decreases the baraqah of not only the property but also the life. Interest cause many bankruptcies suicides, dissolution of families, and wasted lives. Low-incomers and the poor are degraded in the societies in which interest is common. The gap between the rich and the poor goes deeper day by day. Virtuous behaviors such as lending for the consent of Allah (swt), solidarity, sympathy, mercy, compassion, benefaction, and infaq are eliminated. Religious and moral values are damaged. Sensitivity to halal and haram weakens. Consequently, trying to make profit without considering whether it is legal cause great unrests in society.

Dear Muslims!

Although a person who makes operations with interest thinks that he makes profit effortlessly and easily, in fact, he is deemed to lose. However, the Almighty Allah (swt) points out this fact in the Holy Qur'an as follows, "**Allah will deprive usury of all growth but will give increase for deeds of charity, for He loveth not creatures ungrateful and wicked.**"³ Because the property of those who give zakat and sadaqah gets baraqah and increases. They benefit from their wealth. Their hearts are filled with peace and their book of deeds is filled with rewards. Interest, on the contrary, eliminates the baraqah of a wealth. Its owner cannot make any profit out of it other than sins. It sets up the bankruptcy of its owner both spiritually and materially. The Messenger of Allah (saw) expressed that interest made its owner lose eventually as follows, "**Those who increase their property by way of interest cannot benefit from their property.**"⁴

Honorable Believers!

Our supreme religion commands us to earn halal money for sustenance. Prophet Muhammad (saw) said, "**No one can eat a food that is more favorable than their own gain.**"⁵

I am sorry to say that operations with interest are sometimes evaluated as a part of trade today as it was in the period of negligence and the ideas and practices indicating the indispensability of trade are tried to be extended. However, trade and interest are completely different things. So, the Holy Qur'an states, "**Allah hath permitted trade and forbidden usury.**"⁶ For this, our responsibility is to act extremely sensitive not to make use of interest while trading.

Dear Muslims!

The frustration to be faced by those who do not give up on interest despite all the warnings from our religion is informed in the Holy Qur'an as follows, "**Those who devour usury will not stand except as stands one whom the Evil One by his touch hath driven to madness, that is because they say: 'Trade is like usury'...**"⁷

Then, let us stay away from the disaster of interest which has been one the biggest means of exploitation and oppression in economic life throughout the history. Let us understand that we cannot benefit from the property gained by interest. In this temporary world life, let us try to earn halal money and spend it for halal ways rather than trying to earn more money. Let us always remember that we will not be able to leave the presence of Allah (swt) before accounting for how we earned and for what we spent our property, on the Day of Judgment. I would like to conclude my khutbah with this warning of Allah the Exalted (swt), **O ye who believe! Fear Allah, and give up what remains of your demand for usury, if ye are indeed believers. If ye do it not, take notice of war, from Allah and His Messenger: But if ye turn back, ye shall have your capital sums; deal not unjustly, and ye shall not be dealt with unjustly.**⁸

¹ Muslim, Hajj, 147.

² Al 'Imran, 3/130.

³ Baqarah, 2/276.

⁴ Ibn Majah, Trade, 58.

⁵ Bukhari, Spell, 15.

⁶ Baqarah, 2/275.

⁷ Baqarah, 2/275.

⁸ Baqarah, 2/278-279.

لِيَقْدِيرُ الْمُجْتَمِعُ

إِنْ يَنْصُرُكُمُ اللَّهُ قَدْ لَا غَالِبَ لَكُمْ وَإِنْ يَخْذُلُكُمْ فَمَنْ ذَا الَّذِي
 يَنْصُرُكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ قَلِيلُ الْوَكِيلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ
 وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
 إِيمَانُ بِاللَّهِ وَجِهَادُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ

HOMELAND IS ENTRUSTED TO US

Dear Muslims!

Allah the Exalted (swt) states in the verse I have just recited, “If Allah helps you, none can overcome you: If He forsakes you who is there after that, that can help you? In Allah, then let believers put their trust.”¹

In the hadith I recited, Messenger of Allah (saw) answers the question of, “What is the best deed?” as follows: “To believe in Allah and fight for His Cause.”²

Honorable Believers!

The homeland where we live means more to us than a piece of land. Homeland is the place where we live independently and we use our chest as a shield against all kinds of graceless invasions in order to do so. It is our heavenly land which we will never abandon even an inch of it even if the entire world is offered to us. Homeland is a sacred trust left to us as legacy by martyrs who sacrificed their lives, beloved ones, and all their belongings for the sake of homeland and by veterans who gave up on their own existence.

Dear Muslims!

We do not see defending homeland only as protecting a piece of land. We exert all kinds of efforts in order to protect all of our supreme values which make this piece of land a homeland. We protect life, religion, property, children, honor, and chastity of each person who lives in this homeland. We stand by the oppressed ones without making discrimination between religions, languages, and races and do not disappoint those who put their trust in us. We fight for ensuring that our honorable flag, which is the symbol of our independence and future, waves in the sky. We make all kind of self-sacrifices in order that our adhans, whose witnessing is the base of the religion, never end.

Honorable Believers!

Loving and protecting homeland is a sacred duty of every Muslim. Our religion commands that we need to be prepared to fight against enemies in any case, for example psychologically, technologically and economically. However, the Almighty Allah commands on this subject, “O ye who believe! Persevere in patience and constancy; vie in such perseverance; strengthen each other; and fear Allah; that ye may prosper.”³ Prophet Muhammad (saw) states as follows on the sacred fight for the true and the truth, “Fight with your hands, words, and properties.”⁴

Dear Muslims!

This month is a unique month when our ancestors showed unique heroisms for protecting homeland and sacred values. Our honorable ancestors won incomparable victories, which left their mark in the month of August, with their chests full of iman and their courage and determination. The victories won from Manzikert to Kosovo, from Mohacs to the Battle of Dumlupinar are the greatest examples of this fact.

These victories showed us that Allah is always near Muslims with His help. When believers begged as,

مَنْ شَاءَ تَعْصِيَ اللَّهَ
 آلَّا إِنَّ نَصْرَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ

“When (will come) the help of Allah?”, the Almighty Allah (swt) supported them by giving the glad tidings of, “Ah! Verily, the help of Allah is (always) near!”⁵

Honorable Believers!

Disallowed hands will never be able to touch our homeland until the last home on our land is eliminated. Our dear nation, which prioritizes unity and solidarity over all kinds of interest and works with courage and ambition, will never be under the sovereignty of any derogation. Those who want to damage our brotherhood, friendly conversation, and peace are deemed to lose today as they were yesterday. Because those who stand by Allah and work in justice and sincerity will have victory eventually. And the ones who support falsehood and fall into clutches of oppression and the dark will terminate one day definitely. Thus, the Holy Qur'an states, “Truth has (now) arrived and falsehood is (by its nature) bound to perish.”⁶

Dear Muslims!

The existence of our dear nation, which sustains its honorable journey from past to today, is a hope for the world. That we stand against the oppressors and protect the oppressed people is only possible with defending our homeland, nation, and sacred values altogether and being powerful materially and spiritually.

Then let us, either young or old, be embellished with the same iman, the same objective, the same ambition, the same loyalty, and the same submission by taking our ancestors as an example. Let us do not give chance to those who want to suppress our country, damage our unity and solidarity, and start turmoil in this dear homeland by means of corruption and unrest. Let us not abandon righteousness, benevolence, and the true and the truth.

While ending my khutbah, I would like to say that we commemorate our dear martyrs and heroic veterans, who carried the flag of Islam up in the air throughout the history and entrusted this heavenly homeland to us, once again with mercy, gratitude, and thankfulness.

¹ Al 'Imran, 3/160.

² Bukhari, Itk, 2.

³ Al 'Imran, 3/200.

⁴ Nasai, Jihad, 48.

⁵ Baqarah, 2/214.

⁶ Isra, 17/81.



وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ تَفَرَّقُوا وَأَخْتَلُفُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَاتُ
وَأُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ
وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
لَا تَبْاغِضُوا، وَلَا تَحَاسِدُوا، وَلَا تَدَابِرُوا، وَلَا تَكُونُوا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ إِخْوَانًا.

THE MONTH OF MUHARRAM AND THE DAY OF ASHURA

Honorable Muslims!

As the Almighty Allah (swt) states in the Holy Qur'an, "**The number of months in the sight of Allah is twelve.**"¹ One of these months that we are currently in is the month of Muharram. It is an exceptional period of time blessed by the mercy of Allah. The Prophet Muhammad (saw) referred to the abundance of spiritual blessings in this month by saying, "**The most excellent fast after Ramadan is the fast in Allah's month al-Muharram.**"²

Dear Believers!

The month of Muharram holds a special place in our history and our culture as well. The month of Muharram is the month of Ashura. Ashura is one of the symbols of our unity, togetherness, sharing, and solidarity. Just as the ashura as a food brings together a variety of ingredients and creates a balanced flavor, our nation, as required by the ethics of living together, has for centuries been sharing the joy and sorrow, the blessings and hardships, and the affection and hard feelings.

Dear Muslims!

The month of Muharram is also the month in which the Battle of Karbala took place, which is our shared sorrow and the heart wound of our history. Over 70 Muslims, the majority of whom were from Ahl al-Bayt, including the Prophet Muhammad's (saw) grandson Hussein, were martyred in Karbala. Karbala is the name of a challenging test and a deep sorrow. Karbala is a heavy experience bequeathed by the Prophet Muhammad's (saw) family members for centuries to come. Muslims whose hearts burn and heave a painful sigh today at the mention of Karbala and Hussein should contemplate about Karbala, understand it correctly, and draw lessons from it.

Dear Believers!

In order to understand Karbala, one needs to be knowledgeable about Hussein. Hussein was an honorable believer following the path of his grandfather Muhammad Mustafa (saw), the Last of the Prophets (Khatam al-Nabiyyin). He was a graceful

Muslim who stood against injustice and oppression, and set his heart on upholding the truth, justice, loyalty, fidelity, and righteousness. To love him requires defending the values he sacrificed his life for. For he is a sublime example of an honorable life and a noble stance for all generations and centuries to come. It is a duty upon us to embrace his faith and morals, and, at the same time, to pass down his personality traits of bravery and self-sacrifice to our young people.

Dear Muslims!

The greatest message of the month of Muharram for us Muslims is to hold on to our unity and peace, and to never make any concessions on our brotherhood. The Almighty Allah (swt) warns us in the Holy Qur'an, "**Be not like those who are divided amongst themselves and fall into disputations after receiving Clear Signs. For them is a dreadful penalty.**"³ Similarly, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) says, "**Do not hate one another. Do not be jealous of one another, and do not desert each other. O the worshippers of Allah! Be brothers.**"⁴

Dear Muslims!

Let us unite our hearts of the same faith, the same pain, and the same longing, in order not to let new incidents of Karbala take place. Let us spare rooms in our hearts for each other, and embellish our lives with affection. Let us deal with our shared sorrows and problems in need of solution through discernment, prudence, sense of responsibility, and sensitivity. Let us lock together around the sacred values that make us "us". Let us make Hussein's nobility and good morals our distinctive marks.

I would like to take this opportunity to commemorate, wishing Allah's mercy upon and with heartfelt gratitude for, Hussein the leader of martyrs, in particular, and all our martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the truth, freedom and independence, dignity and sacred values, from Karbala to today.

As I conclude the khutbah, I would like to point out another point. As you know, the new school year is just around the corner. The next Monday, schools will open insha'allah. I would like to take this opportunity to pray Allah the Almighty (swt) that the new school year may lead to good developments for our children who are our hope for the future, for all students at any academic level, and for our dear teachers and parents of our students. May Allah (swt) allow our children to have a healthy, peaceful, and successful school year, and enable them to equip themselves with knowledge, skills, and experience that they can use for the benefit of our country, nation, and for all humanity.

¹ Tawbah, 9/36.

² Muslim, Siyam, 202.

³ Al-i Imran, 3/105.

⁴ Bukhari, Adab, 57

وَمَنْ يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُّتَعَمِّدًا فَجَرَأَهُ جَهَنَّمُ حَالِدًا فِيهَا
 وَغَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَلَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
 وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
 مَنْ ضَارَ أَصْرَرَ اللَّهَ بِهِ وَمَنْ شَاقَ شَاقَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ.

THE INVIOABLE RIGHT TO LIFE

Honorable Muslims!

In the verse I have just recited the Almighty Allah (swt) states, **If a man kills a believer intentionally, his recompense is Hell, wherein he will abide eternally. The wrath and the curse of Allah are upon him, and a dreadful penalty is prepared for him.**¹

In the hadith I have just recited the Prophet Muhammad (saw) says, **“Whoever harms others, Allah will harm him. Whoever causes hardship to others, Allah will cause hardship to him.”²**

Dear Believers!

The sublime religion Islam is known for its promotion of justice, harmlessness to others, mercy, and trust. The right to life comes on top of the values that Islam protects. All people, regardless of their religion, language, race, and gender, have the inviolable right to life. In this regard, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) declared in his Khutbah al-Wada (the Farewell Khutbah), **“Verily! Your blood, property, and honor are sacred to one another like the sanctity of this day of Arafah, this month of Dhu al-Hijjah, and this city of Makkah.”³**

It is a great oppression when a person takes another person's life unlawfully. It is a great honor, on the other hand, when a person saves another person's life who is victimized and in need of help. As the unchanging principle of the divine message revealed to all prophets, this issue is referred to in the Holy Qur'an as follows, **“...Whoever takes a life, unless as a punishment for murder or mischief in the land, it would be as if killing all people. And whoever saves a life, it would be as if saving all people...”⁴**

Dear Muslims!

Every human being deserves to be respected from the moment of falling into the mother's womb. According to the legal and ethical restrictions put in place by Islam, abortion without any medical reason can never be an option for personal benefits, such as if the unborn infant would risk the mother's life. Honor killing can never be an excuse to throw a woman into the brutal claw of violence. An explanation showing great ignorance, such as "Our traditions force us to do so" can never be a justification for the cause of blood feud or killing a person. Since, in fact, even our own life is entrusted to us and we do not have the right to commit suicide by claiming, "This life is mine."

Dear Believers!

It should never be forgotten that Islam, the religion in the sight of Allah the Most Gracious and the Most Merciful, is founded on mercy. Similarly, Muhammad Mustafa (saw) the Last Prophet was an ambassador of compassion. Never

do violence and oppression have a room in Islam. For violence is the wound of conscience, not faded away over time, nor forgotten in the heart. Violence is a blatant oppression, no matter whom it hurts, be it a woman or a man, or a young or an old person. Oppression is definitely haram.

Miserable are those people who yield to their anger, hatred, or ignorance, and subdue the oppressed ones. A pit of utter darkness is the destination of those people who are devoid of compassion and mercy and who are far from being fair and just.

Dear Muslims!

The Prophet Muhammad (saw) himself was very respectful, compassionate, and polite to his family particularly and to all people around him. He would not utter any rude or hurtful word to anybody, nor would he allow any Muslim to resort to violence in any way. In one occasion he warned Muslims as follows, **“Those who torment people most in this world will be punished most severely on the Day of Resurrection.”⁵**

Honorable Believers!

How sad it is that sometimes we as Muslims attempt against others' lives because of such unimaginable reasons as “throwing an oblique look at someone” or “horning someone's car in traffic” while we are expected to not hurt even an ant. We Muslims look as if we forgot that Allah (swt) commands that an arbiter be appointed if a dispute arises and friendly settlement of conflicts be sought, and that the Prophet Muhammad (saw) would forgive even those people who had tried to commit suicide when they regretted. Today, Muslims have turned into such people hurting one another because of losing temper in a moment of anger while they are expected to treat each other with patience and tolerance in family, at school, at work, or in the street. In this regard, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) criticized one's resorting not to the intellectual strength but to the physical strength, and said, **“The strong man is not the one who is good at wrestling. But the one who controls himself in a fit of rage.”⁶**

Dear Muslims!

Come! Let us try to see the might of our Lord (swt) through all living beings. Let us hold dear to ourselves whatever is created for the sake of the Creator. Let us ensure that we do not cause any harm to any creature, be it through our actions or our words. Let us follow the prophetic principle, **“Neither harm, nor get harmed!”⁷** Let us hold on to the virtue of being reliable, bequeathed to us by our Beloved Prophet. Let us never resort to violence regardless of the magnitude of our problems and troubles. Let us adopt a manner of speaking, listening, understanding, and getting along well with each other, as would be finely fit for human dignity. Yet the most important of all, let us not frustrate our life in this world and in the Hereafter by attempting against one's life that our Lord (swt) regards sacred and inviolable.

¹ Nisa, 4/93.

² Abu Dawud, al-Qada' (Aqdiyyah), 31.

³ Bukhari, 'Ilm, 9; Muslim, Qasamah, 30.

⁴ Ma'idah, 5/32.

⁵ Ibn Hanbal, IV, 90.

⁶ Bukhari, Adab, 76; Muslim, Birr, 107.

⁷ Ibn Majah, Ahkam, 17.

وَعِبَادُ الرَّحْمَنِ الَّذِينَ يَمْشُونَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ هُؤُلَاءِ ...

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

مَنْ تَوَاضَعَ لِلَّهِ تَخَشُّعًا رَقَعَةُ اللَّهِ يَوْمُ الْقِيَامَةِ وَمَنْ تَطَوَّلَ

تَعْظِيمًا وَضَعَةُ اللَّهِ يَوْمُ الْقِيَامَةِ.

HUMILITY EXALTS US

Honorable Muslims!

In the verse I have just recited the Almighty Allah (swt) states, “**The servants of Allah the Most Gracious are those who walk on the earth in humility...”¹**

In the hadith I have just read the Prophet Muhammad (saw) says, “**Allah shall exalt humble people on the Day of Judgment for showing humility for His sake. He shall degrade arrogant people on the Day of Judgment for showing disdainful pride.”²**

Dear Believers!

Doing righteous deeds and having good morals are the greatest manifestation of perfect faith in one's life. This is because good morals are the most valuable asset to illuminate the life in this world and turn the eternal life in the Hereafter into heaven. We as Muslims believe that a life cannot lead to heaven without good morals. On top of these good morals comes humility that will exalt us in the presence of Allah.

Humility is the quality or state of being unpretentious and modest. It means staying away from self-praise and boastfulness. It means adopting a life free of pride and arrogance. It means showing respect, compassion, and mercy to all living beings and treating them gently.

Dear Muslims!

The Prophet Muhammad (saw) is the example of humility for us as Muslims. He led a simple and modest life.³ He would value and respect people for the sake of being human. He would know that being humble was one of the characteristics of those people to enter to heaven.⁴ He would warn us that looking down upon our Muslim brothers and sisters would be enough as an evil act.⁵ Referring, in one occasion, to the fact that humility was a personal trait that would exalt people in the presence of Allah (swt), he said, “...Allah increases his dignity who is tolerant, and exalts him who is humble.”⁶

Dear Believers!

Humble Muslims whose role model is the Prophet Muhammad (saw) know that the true owner of all the

blessings is the Almighty Allah (swt). They also know that all blessings in their possession are tools for them to be tested. They spend all their capabilities in the cause of attaining Allah's (swt) consent and approval. They never place themselves in a superior position compared to other people, regardless of their level of authority or status. They believe that the superiority of people in the presence of Allah (swt) is measured only by their piety.

Dear Muslims!

Islam aims to equip Muslim souls with humility on the one hand, and on the other hand, it warns them to be far from being arrogant to the extent possible. This is because, as expressed in the Prophet Muhammad's (saw) words, “**Arrogance means rejecting the truth and despising people.”⁷**

Arrogant people think the world turns around them. They belittle other people and turn their back on them. Muslims, however, should never depreciate anybody for any reason whatsoever. In this regard, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) warns us as follows, “**Allah has revealed to me that you should be humble and that you should not wrong one another.”⁸**

Dear Believers!

Muslims, just like in all their affairs, should not go to extremes in humility. This is because while they are obliged to lead a humble life, they are also responsible to protect their own honor and dignity, as well as those of their Muslim brothers and sisters. They maintain their dignified and temperate stance against people who depreciate Muslims. They do everything in their power to protect Muslims' honor and dignity. They take to their hearts the following commandment of the Almighty Allah (swt), “**Muhammed is the Messenger of Allah. Those who are with him are strong against unbelievers, but compassionate amongst each other...”⁹**

Honorable Believers!

Let us adopt humility in all domains of our lives. Let us not hurt anybody. Let us not sadden each other by falling for the temporary desires of this mortal world. Let us avoid arrogance, haughtiness, and hypocrisy that will turn our world into a prison and our eternal life into hell. Let us not belittle people or make a face at them. Let us not walk on earth arrogantly. Let us not forget that the Almighty Allah (swt) does not like those people who are arrogant and self-praise themselves.

¹ Furqan, 25/63.

² (Ibn Hanbal, II, 76)

³ Muslim, Zuhd, 33.

⁴ (Bukhari, Adab, 61)

⁵ (Muslim, Birr, 32)

⁶ Muslim, Birr, 69.

⁷ Muslim, Iman, 147.

⁸ Muslim, Jannah, 64.

⁹ Fath, 48/29.



إِنَّمَا يَعْمُرُ مَسَاجِدَ اللَّهِ مَنْ أَمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَاتَّقَى
 الزَّكُوةَ وَلَمْ يَخْشَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ فَعَسَى أُولَئِكَ أَنْ يَكُونُوا مِنَ الْمُهَتَّدِينَ.
 وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
 أَحَبُّ الْبِلَادِ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَسَاجِدُهَا.

MOSQUES AND LIFE

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 recited, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) says, “...**The most beloved places on Earth to Allah are its mosques.**”²

Dear Believers!

The Islamic civilization is the one centered around the mosque. Mosques are holy places that have from the past to the present borne witness the social life itself and where the Islamic places develop and Muslims unite. The mosque is the heart of our residential areas, the spirit of our cities, and the safe haven for our noble nation and the Muslim ummah. They are not only places for worship, but also hubs where our history, literature, customs and traditions, and culture are intertwined.

Dear Muslims!

The Prophet Muhammad (saw) placed a special emphasis on building mosques and masjids. Upon the hijrah from Makkah to Madinah, he first of all, built the Masjid al-Nabawi. He turned Yathrib into Madinah, and the Masjid al-Nabawi into the cradle of science and knowledge. That way, the Prophet of Mercy actually designed a city model centered around the mosque and established strong ties between the mosque and the life. It was the Masjid al-Nabawi where he laid the foundation of the Islamic civilization that has, since the Asr al-Saadah, spread justice, wisdom, compassion, peace, safety and security, and knowledge throughout its reach. In the Suffa, a special section in the Masjid al-Nabawi, a group of young and self-sacrificing companions who devoted themselves to knowledge and worship turned out to be the forerunners of a benevolent generation. On one occasion, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) gave the good news that Allah would let those people whose hearts were connected to masjids enjoy the shade of the sky on the Last Day.³ In this regard, he encouraged Muslims to enhance and improve mosques that are the apple of the eyes of cities by saying, “**Whoever builds a masjid for Allah, Allah will build for him a house like it in heaven.**”⁴

Dear Believers!

Just as we need to eat, drink, and work, and just as they are significant, it is also necessary and valuable to center our lives around mosques. This is because mosques are exceptional places where we can listen to our own self in the rush of the daily life, and under the domes of which we can submit our servitude to Allah (swt). They help us as Muslims

strengthen our brotherhood and consolidate our unity and togetherness. They are blessed places that unite our bodies, as well as our hearts, as clear of all kinds of self-centeredness. Mosques, for all of us, are sometimes places of peace and tranquility, and sometimes sources of hope and consolation.

Dear Muslims!

The sound of adhan rising from the minarets does not only call us to performing prayer five times a day. Mosques, together with their adhan, minaret, dome, mihrab, and minbar, invite people to servitude, worship, piety, knowledge, and good morals as well. Then, Muslims, who submit their servitude to Allah (swt) by standing in prayer, should be aware that He oversees them outside mosques as well. Standing side by side in the same row with iman and ikhlas, they are responsible to protect and take care of their brotherly relations. Muslims, who enhance and improve mosques, also protect and beautify the environment they live. They do not damage a growing plant by itself, nor do they harm an ant in pursuit of its own sustenance. Muslims, who keep their mosques clean, also keep clean the world, the entirety of which is made a masjid by Allah (swt).

Dear Muslims!

How sad it is that today, when we are taken down by getting isolated and alienated, our mosques are gradually losing their position of being the heart of cities. However, the only places that will welcome us, like a compassionate mother's embracing her child, are our mosques. Our exhausted souls will rest in mosques, our spirituality will get stronger in mosques, and the answer to our search for the meaning of anything will be found in mosques.

Then, come! Let us center our lives around the mosques again. Let us take a break from our busyness during the prayer times, whether we are a superior or a subordinate, an employer or an employee, a business owner or a student of any walk of life. Let us all, women or men and children and old people, go to mosques and flourish in mosques. Let us not leave our mosques unattended and abandoned. Let us attain true peace by standing for prayer in mosques for Allah (swt). Let us not forget that mosques are in the center of life and full of life.

Dear Believers!

As in each year, this year, too, the week of 1-7 October will be celebrated as “the Mosques and Religious Officials Week”. We will share with our society the meaning and values added to our life by the mosques and religious officials through this year's theme “Mosques and Life”. We will remember with gratitude our charity-loving nation's sacrifices to enhance and improve our mosques.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish Allah's mercy upon the deceased religious officials, who guide our life starting with adhan and ending with salah, and the deceased members of our congregation, which is the most valuable asset of our mosques, and to wish health and a long life for those alive yet. May Allah never leave our homeland without mosques, our mosques without congregation, and our minarets without adhan.

¹ Tawbah, 9/18.

² Muslim, Masajid, 288.

³ Muslim, Zakat, 91.

⁴ Muslim, Zuhd, 44.

وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمْ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعاً مِنْهُ إِنَّ
فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ.
وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ
إِنْ قَامَتْ عَلَى أَحَدِكُمُ الْقِيَامَةُ وَفِي يَدِهِ قَسِيلَةٌ فَلْيَغْرِسْهَا.

LET US PROTECT OUR HOME: PLANET EARTH

Honorable Muslims!

Pondering over carefully, we can see that all creatures around us, from tiny little ants to inconceivably large planets sailing in their orbits, are all Allah the Almighty's (swt) works. With His unexampled power and inimitable artistic style, our Lord has created a thousand and one kinds of living beings. Each and every single one of them is a blessing for us, and we will account for each and every blessing bestowed upon us. In the verse I have recited at the beginning of the khutbah, this truth is referred to as follows, "**Allah has subjected to you, as from Him, all that is in the heavens and on earth. Behold, in that are Signs indeed for those who reflect.**"¹

Dear Believers!

The sole authority to determine the value of any and all things is Allah (swt) alone. Having created any creature for a specific reason to serve a specific purpose, Allah the Almighty (swt) states, "**Not for (idle) sport did We create the heavens and the earth and all that is between!**"² The universe, with all its unseeably atoms of certain meaning, is a balanced and sublime whole. All created beings on this planet on which we came to life have a distinctive function and value.

Dear Muslims!

It is important to note that Allah (swt) has not created a universe independent of His watch and left it unobservable. All creatures speak of and belong to Him. By Him is overseen all existence. This is referred to in the Holy Qur'an as follows, "**Of Him seeks (its need) every creature in the heavens and on earth: every day in (new) Splendor doth He (shine)! Then which of the favors of your Lord will ye deny?**"³

In this regard, we are responsible towards the nature and the environment, as our respect for the Lord's work and sovereignty would require. Causing harm and damage to the nature by going against Allah's (swt) rules and laws means the negligence of our responsibilities towards Him.

Dear Believers!

We are the members of the Prophet Muhammad's (saw) ummah, who would spectate with affection even a mountain and say, "**We love Uhud, and Uhud loves us.**"⁴ We follow his path, who says, "**If the Resurrection were established upon one of you while he has in his hand a sapling, then let him plant it.**"⁵

We take him as our guide and example who would always warn his companions about protecting the rights of animals.

Dear Muslims!

We are going through bitter times when on the one hand tons of bread are wasted and thrown in the garbage, and on the other hand many people lose their lives due to hunger and poverty. How sad it is that today people who are the captives of their worldly desires and ambitions fail to establish a friendly, fair and humane relationship with the nature. They set on fire forests that are the source of breath for all living beings, desertify the earth with the products grown on which we feed ourselves, and pollute the rivers that satisfy our thirst.

For how long yet will we have to put up with the fact that tons of food are being wasted in the garbage while our civilization considers unwelcome even a tiny little bit of breadcrumb thrown away on the ground? For how long yet will we carelessly keep recyclable waste in containers on the streets?

We should know, however, that we can be peaceful and healthy to the extent we treat the nature with love and compassion. Otherwise, the damage will not hit the nature only, but us, as well. People are warned in the Holy Qur'an as follows, "**Corruption has appeared throughout the land and sea by [reason of] what the hands of people have earned so He may let them taste part of [the consequence of] what they have done that perhaps they will return [to righteousness].**"⁶

Honorable Believers!

We humans are the Most Merciful Allah's (swt) caliphs on earth. Being a caliph means being held responsible; that is, being the protector of the earth, not its landlord. It means making use of the earth in accordance with Allah's (swt) approval. It means not spoiling and damaging the earth.

Then, let us be more sensitive towards the nature that is entrusted to us by our Lord who keeps creating and managing. Let us not forget that one day we will give an account for everything to the Owner of all things entrusted to us. Let us continue our lives as conscious of the fact that the earth belongs to all living beings, not to humans only.

Before I conclude today's khutbah, I would like to remind an important point. The next Sunday following the fajr prayer from all mosques, we will go planting saplings on the occasion of the Mosques and Religious Officials Week, with your participation, our honorable congregation. You and your family members are all invited for this meaningful activity.

¹ Jathiyah, 45/13.

² Anbya 21/16.

³ Rahman, 55/29.

⁴ Bukhari, Maghazi, 82.

⁵ (Ibn Hanbal, III, 184)

⁶ Rum, 30/41.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَهَاجَرُوا وَجَاهُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِمَا مَوَالِيهِمْ
وَأَنفُسِهِمْ أَعَظُمُ دَرَجَةً إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَأَوْلَئِكَ هُمُ الْفَائِزُونَ.
وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ لَا تَتَمَنَّوْا لِقَاءَ الْعَدُوِّ وَاسْأَلُوا اللَّهَ الْغَافِيَةَ قَاتِلًا
لَقِيَتُهُمُ فَاصْبِرُوا وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ الْجَنَّةَ تَحْتَ ظِلَالِ السُّبُّوْفِ.

TODAY IS THE DAY OF UNITY AND SOLIDARITY

Honorable Muslims!

In the verse I have just recited, Allah the Almighty (swt) states, “**The ones who have believed, emigrated and striven in the cause of Allah with their wealth and their lives are greater in rank in the sight of Allah. It is those who are the attainers of success.**”¹

In the hadith I have just recited, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) says, “**O people! Do not desire an encounter with the enemy. Pray to Allah to grant you security. But when you encounter the enemy, be patient and firm. Know this well that the Heaven is under the shades of swords.**”²

Dear Believers!

We as the Turkish nation have overcome numerous challenges. Those who want to remove us from the stage of the history have never given up on their cause. However, those who set their eyes on our homeland, every inch of which is watered by the blood of our noble martyrs, and who aim to scatter our nation are doomed to lose today, too, just as in the past. For we have that irrepressible power to make us victorious against our enemies. The source of our irrepressible power is our unshakable faith in Allah, our strong attachment to the sublime religion of Islam, and our deep love for our homeland, national flag, and independence.

Dear Muslims!

Muslims cannot approve and tolerate when the sacred and inviolable values of Islam are aimed to be trodden. They rather honorably strive to vanish all kinds of evil and ensure that peace prevails. This is how our heroic nation have throughout its history fought in this cause. All our efforts have been to ensure a peaceful, safe, and secure environment. We have not set an eye on anybody's homeland; however, we have put forth our chests full of and firm on faith as a shield against whosoever has set an eye on our homeland. We have never let our enemies set foot on our homeland, never let them bring down our national flag, and never let them stop our adhans from being echoed in our skies.

Dear Believers!

Unfortunately, the world today was turned into a place full of dark and evil traps. Those who claimed to bring so-called independence to some places have rather invaded those places. Innocent people have been forced to leave their homes. The very young and tender corpses of children hit the shores. Those who plan to dig pits of fire in all around the Islamic world have used weapons of sedition, terrorism, and betrayal to cause brothers to hit one another. Using various plots, plans, tricks and traps, they have targeted our existence and future survival, as well as our freedom and future. They have attempted to bring us, our noble nation to have been the flagbearer of the Muslim ummah for hundreds of years, to our knees.

Honorable Believers!

Notwithstanding all these challenges, we, together as our men and women, young and old people, in short with every fellow national, will fight for diminishing the evil and for establishing the good on earth. Our noble nation will overturn all the dark plots through their insight and foresight. Just as in the past, today, too, our nation will continue to be the remedy for the remediless people, be there for those people who has nobody by their side, and be the hope and safe haven for the victimized and the refugees.

If need be, we put up with hunger and thirst; however, never do we make any concessions on our freedom, independence, honor, and grace. We make any sacrifice and stand straight against any attack against our homeland, our sacred values, our unity and solidarity. Never do we forsake an inch of this heavenly homeland and let the enemy have it.

Then, let us not give any opportunity to those who aim to set us as nation against each other. Let us continue to interlock our hearts with being brothers and sisters in faith. Let us be awake and alert against those who fuel terrorism, sedition, and discord. Let us avoid any word or action that might damage our resolution, affection for each other, unity, and harmony.

Come, let us open our hands and pray to Allah the Almighty (swt) in this hour of this blessed Friday when prayers are accepted:

O Lord! Do not let them succeed who target our grace and honor, independence and future survival and who set their eyes on our existence and homeland!

Help our heroic army mobilized for our nation's security and peace, and for the region's peace and prosperity!

Protect each and every soldier of our army against all dangers and traps! With Your Might and Help, let us come through as victorious in our cause to vanish sedition and terrorism!

¹ Tawbah, 9/20.

² Bukhari, Jihad, 112; Muslim, Jihad wa Siyar, 20.

وَمَا كَانَ لِنَبِيٍّ أَنْ يَغُلُّ وَمَنْ يَغْلُلْ يَأْتِ بِمَا عَلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ
 ثُمَّ تُوقَى كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ.
 وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
 لَا يَأْخُذُ أَحَدٌ شِبْرًا مِنَ الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ حَقِّهِ إِلَّا طَوْقَةُ اللَّهِ إِلَى سَبْعِ
 أَرْضِينَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ.

INDIVIDUAL AND PUBLIC RIGHTS

Honorable Muslims!

One day the Prophet Muhammad (saw) asked his companions, “**Do you know who is a muflis (bankrupt)?**” His companions there replied, “O Rasulullah, a muflis is one who has neither money nor any property.”

Thereupon, he said, “**The real bankrupt would be those who would come on the Day of Resurrection with salat, sawm, and sadaqah, but they will find themselves bankrupt on that day as they will have exhausted the good deed because they reviled others, brought calumny against others, unlawfully devoured the wealth of others, shed the blood of others, and beat others; therefore, their good deeds would be credited to the account of those who suffered at their hands. If their good deeds fall short to clear the account, their sins would be entered in their accounts and they would be thrown in the Hellfire.**”¹

Dear Muslims!

Islam is the religion of rightfulness, truth, law, and justice. The concept of "right" denotes both our responsibilities and the values that we need to protect. Our source of life and peace, the revelations by Allah (swt) invite us to protecting the right. One of the Asma al-Husna (the Beautiful Names of Allah) is "al- Haqq". For this reason, when people are in pursuit of the right, they actually take the side of the righteousness and the truth, that is the conformity to Allah's (swt) commandments and consent.

Dear Believers!

Humans, from the moment they fall into the mother's womb, have the right to life and the security of life. This principle is referred to in the words of Allah the Almighty (swt) as follows, “**Whoever kills a soul unless for a soul or for corruption done in the land, it is as if he had slain mankind entirely. And whoever saves one, it is as if he had saved mankind entirely.**”²

Every person has the right to protecting their property and legitimate income. Engaged in haram are those people who gain property illicitly, deceive their customers by resorting to fraud in business, and do not pay, thereby stealing from, their employee's rightful share.

Inviolable are people's individual values, honor, chastity, and beliefs. Among the worst violations of rights are considered to insult people's values, defame them, and damage their reputation by uttering lies and slanders about

them. The violation of rights is a crime according to our laws in force, and a grave sin according to Islam.

Honorable Muslims!

Being a Muslim requires all of us to adopt a middle-of-the-path approach, be conscientious, and righteous in all domains of life. A distinctive sign of being a Muslim is to protect their own rights and the rights of other people around them. People who encroach upon the rights of other people, as well as of animals and the nature, for personal interests and benefits are doomed to lose and go bankrupt in the end although they may seem to gain profit in the first place.

Being a responsible person conscious of the rights requires giving the rightful due to whoever has the right, particularly the family members in the closest circle. Respecting the rights of our parents, observing the rights of our spouses duly and lovingly, and protecting the rights of our children compassionately are all responsibilities upon us. It is a duty upon all of us to strive to ensure that the rightful due is paid for those involved in kinship relations, particularly those who are party to any business partnership, wedding, or inheritance.

Dear Believers!

The sphere completely influenced by the rights of individuals is that of the rights of the public. The rights of the public require us to be even more responsible compared to the rights of individuals. Failure to observe the rights of the public drag people to frustration both in this world and in the Hereafter. In this regard states the Almighty Allah (swt), “**No prophet could (ever) be false to his trust. If any person is so false, they shall, on the Day of Judgment, restore what they misappropriated, and then shall every soul receive its due, whatever it earned, and none shall be dealt with unjustly.**”³ Similarly, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) warned his ummah, “**Whoever takes a piece of the land of others unjustly, he will sink down the seven earths on the Day of Resurrection.**” On another occasion, he said, ⁴ **Whoever is charged with a work and earns wage in turn, everything that he gets except for this earning is the breach of trust.**⁵

Dear Muslims!

Let us not forget that the relations based on righteousness lead to peace in this world and salvation in the Hereafter. Let us be careful not to infringe the rights of other people in our private life. Let us perform our public duties and services as conscious of them being entrusted to us for a given period of time, Keeping in mind that we are responsible even for the rights of orphans. This is so because any right of the public infringed and any public property damaged mean thousands of rights of individuals violated. Let us live in the know of the fact that just as every good deed has its rewards, every negligence and mistake will cause the violation of the rights of individuals and of the public.

¹ Muslim, Birr, 59.

² Ma'idah, 5/32.

³ Al-i Imran, 3/161.

⁴ Muslim, Musakat, 141.

⁵ Abu Dawud, Haraj, Fay' wa Imara, 9-10.

لِشَّاهِدِ الْجُنُوبِ

وَلَا تَهْنُوا وَلَا تَخْرُبُوا وَأَنْتُمُ الْأَغْلُونَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ .
 وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ :
 تَكَفَّلَ اللَّهُ لِمَنْ جَاهَدَ فِي سَبِيلِهِ ، لَا يُخْرِجُهُ إِلَّا الْجِهَادُ فِي
 سَبِيلِهِ ، وَتَصْدِيقُ كَلِمَاتِهِ ، بِأَنْ يُذْخِلَهُ الْجَنَّةَ ..

FOR OUR SOLDIERS (MEHMETCIK) ARE ALL OUR PRAYERS

Dear Muslims!

In this blessed hour when the prayers are accepted, I would like to mention about someone I know. A young man who is ready to give up on everything when it comes down to the defense of homeland...

You know him as well, he is the hero whom we named after the Prophet Muhammad (saw), the Honor of the Universe, thus "Mehmetçik"... Some of you may recognize him from the history. A strong, bold, intelligent, skillful, and fearless young man... Always up for fighting on the forefront... Restlessly, tirelessly... While rushing from one battlefield to another, he would sometimes leave behind his leg, sometimes his arm, and sometimes his eyes; yet, he would always hold the love for the homeland on the forefront, and say, "All for the homeland to live long!"

Dear Muslims!

The Prophet Muhammad (saw) said, "**Allah guarantees to the person who carries out Jihad for His Cause and nothing compelled him to go out but the Jihad in His Cause, and belief in His Words, that He will either admit him into Paradise or return him with his reward or the booty he has earned to his residence from where he went out.**"¹ With this glad tiding in mind, our Mehmetçik has hit the road once again. Out of seasons he loves spring the most; out of months August; but, he walked on these days of October as well. To bring peace to those victimized by terrorism, to bring tranquility to those at unease, to lighten those whose hearts are in flames...

Calling his walk "Peace Spring". Together with his friends, relatives, brothers... They are the sons of some of us, the brothers of some others... They are the sons of all of us, and the apples of our eyes...

Dear Believers!

Mehmetçik keeps walking day and night, regardless of time and place... Mehmetçik rewrites the history with his sweat and blood. Along the borders he protects, not only is our homeland safe, but also the fate of humanity is saved from chaos.

The verse "**So do not weaken and do not grieve, and you will be superior if you are true believers.**"² in the Holy Qur'an gives hope to our heroic army in this walk of peace in such a struggle for the better of humanity. This is such a great faith and love for homeland that the Holy Qur'an describes those who were martyred for this love as, "**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 Brothers and Sisters!

There is no doubt that with the help of Allah (swt), the plans of treachery will be disrupted, the traps and cheats of the oppressors will become thorn in their own sides. As Mehmetçik guards the entrenchments, the dreams and plans of all our enemies and their servants who infiltrated among us will confront with our reality, their traps with our faith, and they will be drowned in their own flood of terrorism that they pump. As our army moves forward and progresses for the cause of peace, all the innocent, the women and the children will gain safety and peace under the shade of our flag.

Dear Believers!

Mehmetçik is the star shining above us, our gem and treasure on earth under the shadow of our flag... Our heroic saga as one heart and one soul for the homeland, flag, nation, and state... On the front for the good to prevail the world and for the sake of humanity. And all our prayers are for them while they are rushing and struggling, shoulder to shoulder, on the land or in the air whether near or far, for the oppressed and the victimized who are deprived of their rights and freedoms May their sweat become mercy; may their blood become grace... For them are all our recitations of the Surah al-Ya-Sin, al-Fath, and al-Fatiyah... And for them are all our utterances of amin.

Amin! O Allah, al-Aziz and al-Karim! O Allah, al-Rahman and al-Rahim! Here we are at Your door, humbly asking Your Highness for help, asking Your Majesty for mercy. By uttering Your name and with our helplessness before Your presence. We ask for Your help for our soldiers and victory for our army. Save their lives from grueling and hazard, and protect their bodies from exhaustion and from being caught off guard.

O Lord, You are Who lets armies exist in the world as per Your name al-Jalal, and You are the Most Beloved, Who lets the martyrs be honored to see Your face in the Hereafter as per Your name al-Jamal. In Your Existence and Oneness we believe, and in You we trust and seek refuge. Do not let the Muslim ummah be challenged among themselves, and let not the innocent get burnt in the flames of sedition. Save the oppressed from the darkness, wake those deeply asleep in negligence up from the morningless nights... Do not make our friends sadden, do not make our enemies happy in this road. Do not cease Your mercy on our heroic army, do not take away Your divine abundance of blessings from our heavenly homeland. Make us sure about what we worry, and make us the representatives of Islam illuminating the darkness in tough times. Frustrate and destroy the masters and the servants of terrorism, set those oppressors against each other.

O Allah, Who is above all defects! Bestow Your blessings upon our martyrs, and bestow speedy recovery upon our wounded soldiers. Ease the pain and griefs of those who in pain, and bless our hopes with victory! Treat our prayers as those made in the Ka'bah. We are begging You not to take away Your compassion from us, not to withhold Your mercy from us... O Allah, do not silence our adhans. Do not let anybody and anything divide our homeland, o Allah! Do not let anybody pull our flag down the pole, o Allah! Do not let us bow down to anybody but You, o Allah, protect our soldiers from any kind of evil and harm! Let them gain victory and turn back safe and sound with glory and peace as soon as possible. I wish our mercy to our martyrs and veterans who founded our state and made this land our homeland. Amin, all praise and thanks be to Allah...

¹ Bukhari, Tawhid, 28.

² Al-i 'Imran, 3/139.

³ Al-i 'Imran, 3/169-170.

بِلْ تُؤثِّرُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا، وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَى.
وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

يَقُولُ ابْنُ آدَمَ مَا لِي قَالَ وَهُنَّ لَكَ يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ مِنْ مَالِكَ
إِلَّا مَا أَكَلْتَ فَأَفْتَنَتَ، أَوْ لَيْسَتَ فَائِلَنَتَ، أَوْ تَصَدَّقَتَ فَأَمْضَيْتَ،

SECULARIZATION: DELIGHT IN THE TEMPORARY LIFE

Honorable Muslims!

The Prophet Muhammad (saw) had made a peace agreement with the people of Bahrain and appointed an ambassador there. After some time, the ambassador returned to Madinah, with a significant amount of goods. Curious, the Ashab al-Kiram gathered around the ambassador and the goods he brought. As the Prophet Muhammad (saw) came out of the masjid, he saw the situation, smiled, and said, **"Rejoice and hope for what will please you! By Allah, I am not afraid of your poverty. But I am afraid that you will lead a life of luxury as past nations did, whereupon you will compete with each other for it, as they competed for it, and it will destroy you as it destroyed them."**¹

Dear Believers!

Islam, the sublime religion, encompasses all aspects of life. Allah's (swt) commandments and prohibitions lead us to the right path in this world, and to the heaven in the Hereafter. Yet despite all this, we get lost in the busyness of worldly affairs, whereby neglecting the life-enhancing principles of Islam. Away we drift from the guidance of the Prophet Muhammad (saw) as our role model, and slowly we lose the influence of Islam in our life that gives meaning to it. We cherish what is transient, lose the balance between the worldly affairs and the affairs relating to the Hereafter, and finally become secularized.

Dear Muslims!

Secularization is when people strive ambitiously for worldly affairs, becoming unaware of Allah (swt) and the Hereafter. It is when they ignore their responsibilities towards Allah (swt), and care about the worldly affairs only. It is when they place religious beliefs, values, and attitudes away from the center of their lives. It is when all they crave, as if they will never die, for are the worldly possessions. Regarding this wrong attitude of people states Allah the Almighty (swt), **"Behold, you prefer the life of this world. But the Hereafter is better and more enduring."**²

Dear Believers!

The Almighty Allah (swt) has sent us to this temporary life for test and trial. This is not to say that

Muslims should completely quit working for their livelihood. It is just that they should not neglect their affairs relating to the life in the Hereafter. It is essential to make legitimate use of the worldly blessings although the main purpose is to work to deserve going to the heaven in the Hereafter. What is important is that Muslims should not be captivated by the means they earn, and that they should use them in accordance with the consent of Allah (swt). In this regard states the Almighty Allah (swt) in the Holy Qur'an, **"But seek, with the wealth which Allah has bestowed on you, the Home of the Hereafter, nor forget your portion in this world. But do you good, as Allah has been good to you, and seek not occasions for mischief in the land, for Allah loves not those who do mischief."**³

Dear Muslims!

On top of the damages caused by secularization comes the unmindful consumption. While some people are in need of and crave for a piece of food in one corner of the world, other people in another corner push the limits of wasting resources extravagantly. It is unfortunate that today people think happiness rests in consumption. They are under the delusion that they will be happy when they spend more and consume expensive things. However, excessive and immoderate consumption erode our humane and moral values. Many people are lost in the swamp of debt and interest accrued due to unmindful consumption and irresponsible spending. Many families suffer from uneasiness and helplessness. The Prophet Muhammad (saw), however, had warned people from ages ago, **"Son of Adam says: 'My wealth, my wealth'. Do you own of your wealth other than what you eat and consume, and what you wear and wear out, or what you give in sadaqah to those who deserve it, and that what you will have in stock for yourself."**⁴

Honorable Believers!

If a delicate balance is struck between the world and the Hereafter, then wastefulness turns into mindful spending, greed and ambition into contentedness, uneasiness into reliance on Allah (swt), abundance into adequateness. Then, more mindful investments should be made in this life and the life in the Hereafter as per their worthiness. So, let us not forget that the life in this world is only as short as a blink of an eye. Let us get prepared for the eternal life in the Hereafter. Let us be unpretentious, humble, and moderate in all our affairs and actions.

I would like to conclude this khutbah with the following words of the Almighty Allah (swt), **"O People! Certainly the promise of Allah is true. Let not then this present life deceive you, nor let the Chief Deceiver deceive you about Allah."**⁵

¹ Bukhari, Maghazi, 12; Muslim, Zuhd, 6.

² A'la, 87/16,17.

³ Qasas, 28/77.

⁴ Muslim, Zuhd, 3.

⁵ Fatir 35/5.

لِيَوْمِ الْجَمعَةِ

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ
 وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا.
 وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
 إِنَّمَا بُعْثُ لِأَتْمِمَ صَالِحَ الْأَخْلَاقِ.

THE MAWLID AL-NABI Honorable Muslims!

As you know, today is Friday; that is, a celebration day for Muslims. Tonight is the Night of Mawlid (Laylat al-Mawlid), the anniversary of the Prophet Muhammad (saw) honoring the world with his birth, who communicated the message of Islam to us, taught us the right and truth, and guided us as the best role model on the road to the Heaven. Endless thanks and praise be to the Almighty Allah (swt) for honoring us to be the members of the ummah of the Last Prophet Muhammad's (saw) of sublime character and sweet tongue. Salat and salam be to the Prophet Muhammad (saw), whom Allah (swt) sent as an ambassador of peace, mercy, and trust to the worlds, and to his family and his companions.

Dear Believers!

The Prophet Muhammad (saw) was an inviter who invited all people to peace and salvation, and a warner who warned all people against and saved them from wrongdoing and being rebellious. He was the perfect living answer to the questions of "What do Muslims believe?" and "What kind of a life should Muslims lead?" In him were embodied such virtues as affection, compassion, loyalty, courage, and foresightedness. By him earned the weak, the poor, and the victimized people the deserved respect for being human. Around him became guided even the people, who wanted to kill him, to the right path thanks to his compassion. So much so that a dark age dominated by ignorance and oppression and lack of compassion, virtues, and wisdom turned into the Age of Bliss (the Asr al-Saadah) under the light of knowledge, justice, and compassion with his arrival and divine struggle. People who had lost their way and values in the whirl of the Jahiliyyah (Ignorance) period set the best examples of brotherhood, virtues, commitment to promises, and all good behaviors by following his path.

Dear Muslims!

In this regard, he said, "**I was sent to perfect the good moral character.**"¹ His life was filled with countless beautiful words and actions. It was him who declared that all people were equal before Allah and the criterion of superiority was piety (taqwa) by saying, "**Humans are children of Adam, and Adam was created from earth.**"² It was him who taught his

ummah to be humble by saying "**Fear not; I am just a man whose mother used to eat dried meat.**"³ to someone speaking with him in a state of excitement and shaking voice. **It was again him who advised us to pursue not the temporary blessings of this world but the approval of Allah (swt) by praying to Him,** "O Allah, I beseech You for guidance, piety, chastity, and contentment."⁴

Dear Believers!

The Almighty Allah (swt) states in the Holy Qur'an, "**There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and [who] remembers Allah often.**"⁵

Then let us get to know the Prophet Muhammad (saw) better, understand him better, and make sure that his great Sunnah has a determining role in our lives. Let us shape our world of thought according to his mentality, and let us clean our hearts with his morals. Let us protect all the principles, on which he never made any concessions, in all domains of our lives. Let us not forget that our faith, our humanity, and our society will reach the long-awaited good days to the extent that we take him as our role model. Only then will his birth (mawlid) mean literally a rebirth in our lives.

Honorable Muslims!

As in every year, the week following the Night of Mawlid will be celebrated as the Mawlid al-Nabi Week this year as well. The theme of the Mawlid al-Nabi Week 2019 is set to be "**the Prophet Muhammad and the Family**" by the Presidency of Religious Affairs. This is because it is our family values that are damaged worst in this world where peace is lost in the whirl of selfishness and self-interests and love is gone due to material concerns. It is therefore a duty upon all of us to ensure that families are established, protected, and maintained properly.

As in all matters, our best role model in the matter of family is also the Prophet Muhammad (saw). During the Mawlid al-Nabi Week, various events will be organized to introduce to our society the environment of love, compassion, trust, peace, and consultation within the family of the Prophet Muhammad (saw), and solutions will be sought, in line with the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah, for today's problems faced by the institution of family.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you all for the Night of Mawlid, and pray to Allah the Almighty (swt) that the Week may bring good things to our noble nation and the Muslim world.

¹ (Ibn Hanbal, II, 381)

² (Tirmidhi, Manaqib, 74)

³ (Ibn Majah, At'imah, 30)

⁴ (Muslim, Dhikr, 72)

⁵ Ahzab, 33/21.

وَالَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا هُبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا وَدُرْيَاتِنَا فُرْةَ أَعْيُنٍ
 وَاجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا.
 وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
 خَيْرُكُمْ خَيْرُكُمْ لِأَهْلِهِ وَأَنَا خَيْرُكُمْ لِأَهْلِي.

THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD (SAW) AND THE FAMILY

Honorable Muslims!

The time had come and the Prophet Muhammad (saw) received the first revelation in the Cave of Hira, which marked the beginning of the descent of the Holy Qur'an. With his heart trembling under the heaviness of the divine command, he went home and said to his beloved wife Khadijah, “**Cover me!**” He sought comfort in his wife, who was his confidant, and took support from her. That day she, with her assuring and calming manner, said to him, “You do not need to be afraid! For you always speak the truth and take care of your kin. You help the poor and the destitute, and serve your guests generously. Allah (swt) will never sadden you by disgracing you.”¹

Dear Believers!

Family means trust, shelter, and refuge. It refers to joining hands all together to foster the good and prevent the evil. The Prophet Muhammad (saw) never forgot the love and support of Khadijah throughout his life, and reminisced her with longing even many years after her death. For family is about loyalty and commitment. It is the strongest tie connecting the spouses to each other with trust and loyalty. Family members are there by each other's side to overcome the hardships of and share the beauties of life. They safeguard each other's honor, dignity, and privacy. This loyalty in family leads to graciousness in this world and salvation in the Hereafter.

Dear Muslims!

Consultation was very important in the Prophet Muhammad's (saw) family. He would respect the opinions of his family members and ensure that problems within family were solved in a patient and foresighted manner. For consultation enables people to overcome problems using common sense without resorting to violence. Mistakes can be prevented by taking into consideration the opinions of spouses and children. That way it can be ensured that rights and responsibilities within family are shared on a balance. This is because the Prophet Muhammad (saw), who advised men to be fair among family members, said, “**Your wives have rights over you as you have rights over your wives.**”²

Dear Believers!

If there is affection and compassion in a family, it is the manifestation of Allah with His name al-Rahman.

Compassion is not only about feeling pity for someone, but it is also about making the effort to understand them by esteeming them. Compassion is about treating one's family members with benevolence, fairness, kindness, tenderness, and affection.

Affection was just another indispensable value in the Prophet Muhammad's (saw) family. He (saw), as the Ambassador of Mercy, would treat his family highly affectionately. In his family, he would neither break anyone's heart, nor speak rudely or offensively to anyone, scold anyone, or use bad and vulgar words. He would never resort to violence, nor would he ever let any woman or child get harmed in any way. In this regard, he (saw) says, “**The most benevolent among you is the one who is most benevolent to his family. I am the most benevolent to my family among you.**”³

Dear Muslims!

His family was full of love. Each member of his family would feel a deep affection and amity in their hearts. He would not refrain from showing his love for his wives, children, and grandchildren. He would let them know when he liked something about them; for example, he would stand up when his beloved daughter Fatimah came in and let her sit down in his place. He would gather everyone in his family together and enjoy a chat with them every evening.

Those in our closest circles who share the burden of life with us are the ones who deserve the most to feel our love for them. A smile on our face and a couple of heartfelt sweet words would increase love in family. For this reason, in one occasion the Prophet Muhammad (saw) said, “**Those who do not show mercy to our young ones and do not respect our elders are not from us.**”⁴

Honorable Believers!

The Almighty Allah (swt) addresses the Prophet Muhammad (saw) in the Holy Qur'an as follows: “**Say, ‘If you love Allah, then follow me, so Allah will love you and forgive you your sins. For Allah is Oft-Forgiving and Most Merciful.’**”⁵ To love the Prophet Muhammad (saw) means for a Muslim to follow his path; that is, to adopt his lifestyle. For a happy family environment, we need him as a role model and the moral values he promoted more than ever.

As we learn from him, a family is established by love and trust, it is protected and maintained by fairness and compassion. We as Muslims who want peace in our families pray, “**O Allah! Grant us wives and offspring who will be the comfort of our eyes and make us an example for the righteous.**”⁶

¹ Bukhari, Ba'd al-Wahy, 3; Muslim, Iman, 252.

² Tirmidhi, Rada', 11.

³ Tirmidhi, Manaqib, 63.

⁴ Tirmidhi, Birr, 15.

⁵ Al-i 'Imran, 3/31.

⁶ Furqan, 25/74.

وَلَنْبُلُوكُمْ بِشَئٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ
 وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالْقَمَرَاتِ وَبَشِّرُ الصَّابِرِينَ.
 وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
 عَجَباً لِأَمْرِ الْمُؤْمِنِ، إِنَّ أَمْرَةَ كُلَّهُ خَيْرٌ

THE ISLAMIC ATTITUDE TOWARDS CALAMITIES

Honorable Muslims!

One day the Prophet Muhammad (saw) saw a woman crying out loud by the grave of her deceased child. “**Fear Allah and be patient!**”, he advised to the sorrowful mother. “Mind your own business! What has troubled me has not troubled you!”, said the woman, failing to recognize him because of her pain. A while later when she realized that it was the Prophet Muhammad (saw) who advised her to do so, she went near him and expressed her apologies. Then came the following striking advice from

إِنَّمَا الصَّابَرُ عِنْدَ الصَّدْمَةِ الْأُولَى “True patience is that which comes at the first blow.”¹

Dear Believers!

It is inevitable that all of us have troubles, pains, sorrows, and material and spiritual problems in life. This is the reason why this world is called "the world of trials". In this respect, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) endured the worst of such trials that we strive to come through in our own lives. He lost his father before he was even born, and his mother when he was only six years old, and had to grow up without a father and mother. Moreover, he suffered the loss of his beloved wife and his six children. He, together with a handful of believers, had to endure the polytheists' merciless pressures, tortures, restrictions, and exclusionary behaviors. Despite all these troubles and problems, he never lost his faith and hopes, always sought refuge in Allah, and asked only Him for help. He embraced mercy other than violence, and never resorted to solutions that Allah would disapprove.

Dear Muslims!

In the verse I have recited at the beginning of the khutbah, the Almighty Allah (swt) states, “**We will surely test you with something of fear and hunger and a loss of wealth and lives and fruits, but give good tidings to the patient!**”²

None of us naturally would like to encounter hardships. But as Muslims we all know that while there are good times in life, we also have bad times as a part of our trial in this world. Allah the Almighty (swt) tests us through depriving us of our possessions at times, and through giving us plenty of blessings at other times. It is therefore important for us not to lose control and go rebellious in the face of problems, but rather be patient and remain composed. We act in line with the common sense and reason.

We fulfill our responsibilities to overcome the problems. We seek wisdom in and draw lessons from all troubles for our life in this world and for the one in the Hereafter. We self-question ourselves regarding our mistakes and failures in order not to experience similar problems again. We consult the knowledgeable and experienced people, and then rely on Allah (swt) for the consequences.

Dear Believers!

In one occasion the Prophet Muhammad (saw) said, “**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.**”³

Holding on to life both in good times and in bad times and taking strength from our connection to Allah, then, is a sign of the beauty of the faith we have. It is cruel for people to turn their despair into violence and vent their anger on women and children in overwhelming situations. Any problem, disagreement, or overwhelming situation cannot be an excuse for violence against women. For that matter, violence means to infringe upon the rights of people and to poison family members by sowing seeds of pain and hatred. Muslims, however, should remain to be such people from whose hand and tongue can come mercy only and who instill peace and trust in their environment. It is never a solution to harm oneself and family members in the face of problems. Islam does not approve hurting the lives of people or taking one's own life that is entrusted by Allah, even to cease the pain. This is because if there is a problem, so is Allah as the Solver of problems. “**Allah is the best Protector and Helper!**”⁴ If there are troubles, there are also friends, neighbors, and relatives to find solutions to them. “**The believers are but brothers!**”⁵

Dear Muslims!

Let us not turn our pains into rebellion and oppression. Let us not forget that our patient and strong stance against our problems indicates that there will be much easiness for us before Allah (swt). We are here in this world to have faith and do good deeds. Let us remember the Prophet Muhammad's (saw) hope-increasing and comforting words, “**All troubles, even if it is the pricking of a thorn, that befall a Muslim serve for his/her sins to be forgiven.**”⁶ Let us not give up our hopes that Allah shall help us and be merciful to us. Let us pray to Allah (swt) in the words of the Prophet Muhammad (saw), “**We belong to Allah and to Him we shall return. O Allah! Compensate me in my affliction, recompense my loss and give me something better in exchange for it.**”⁷

¹ Bukhari, Jana'iz, 31.

² Baqarah, 2/155.

³ Muslim, Zuhd, 64.

⁴ Anfal, 8/40.

⁵ Hujurat, 49/10.

⁶ Bukhari, Marda, 1.

⁷ Muslim, Jana'iz, 4.



إِنَّا أَنزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ فَاعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصًا لَهُ الدِّينُ.

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَقْبِلُ مِنَ الْعَمَلِ إِلَّا مَا كَانَ لَهُ خَالِصًا وَابْتُغُى بِهِ
وَجْهَهُ.

SINCERITY: THE ESSENCE OF FAITH

Honorable Muslims!

In the verse I have just recited the Almighty Allah (swt) states, “Indeed, We have sent down to you the Book in truth. So worship Allah, offering Him sincere devotion.”¹

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.”²

Dear Believers!

The essence of the sublime religion Islam is sincerity. Whether or not our words and actions have any value before Allah (swt) depends on our sincerity. Sincerity is to have heartfelt faith in Allah (swt) and to live a life seeking His approval only, without expecting any worldly benefit in return, as required by such faith. It is to treat in good way and intention all living and non-living beings. It is to either seem as you are or be as you seem.

Dear Muslims!

In one occasion the Prophet Muhammad (saw) said, **آلَّذِينَ التَّصْيِحُونَ** “Religion is sincerity.” When his companions asked “To whom, o Rasulullah?”, he replied, “To Allah, to His Book, to His Messenger, to the leaders (imams) of the Muslims, and to all Muslims.”³

Religion should remind us of sincerity, as we understand from his words. It is not possible to view Islam as apart from ikhlas (purity), sincerity, good faith, and clean hearts.

Muslims worship Allah (swt) sincerely. They worship Him alone, they pray Him alone, and they ask for His help alone. They adhere to the Holy Qur'an, the best of words, sincerely. They strive to engrave the letter of the Qur'an in their memory, and implement its rules in their lives. They devote themselves to the Prophet Muhammad (saw) steadfastly. They, with deep love and sincerity, take him as a role model and try to live the way he did. They observe the rights of people in order for the

establishment and prevalence of peace and security in the society in which they live. They uphold the truth, rule of law, and justice in all areas, from education to commerce and from family to broader circles of the society, under any circumstances. They sincerely fulfill their responsibilities towards all people in their environment, regardless of their title, gender, or age.

They are aware of the fact that each Muslim is an honorable member of the Prophet Muhammad's ummah. They treat generously all Muslims without discrimination on any ground such as gender, race, skin-color, or language. For them no profit is more valuable than arms wide open with brotherly feelings of affection and compassion, and sincere prayers uttered with brotherly sympathy.

Dear Believers!

Ostentation and show-off are the greatest reasons to cause people to be captives of their ambitions and to cast a shadow over their sincerity. Islam orders that our words and actions be free from any kind of deceit and far from any play of interests. It advises us to “do good in expectancy of its outcomes from Allah only”. It makes clear that people who make concessions on honesty and sincerity and who think they derive benefits from people by deceiving them are actually doomed to lose. This is because all that those pretentious people will derive as benefit, who only seek to show off to others what they do, is loss in this world and in the Hereafter.

Dear Muslims!

In one occasion, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) warned us, “Allah does not look at your outward appearance and your wealth but He looks only at your hearts and your deeds.”⁴ Then, let us ensure that our hearts are clean and our deeds are sincere if we want to be decent Muslims and good servants of Allah (swt). Let us set getting the approval of Allah (swt) as the purpose of our lives. Let us never forget that He is All-Seeing and All-Knowing of what we do openly and secretly, and that He does and will reward our deeds if done sincerely only. Let us turn away from pomposity and hypocrisy. Let us all pray to Allah in the Prophet Muhammad's (saw) words, “O Allah, our Lord, and Lord of everything! Make me and my family sincere to You at every moment in this world and in the Hereafter. O Possessor of glory and honor!”⁵

¹ Zumar, 39/2.

² Nasa'i, Jihad, 24.

³ Muslim, Iman, 95.

⁴ Muslim, Birr, 34.

⁵ Abu Dawud, Witr, 25.



قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ وَمِنْ شَرِّ عَسِيقٍ إِذَا وَقَبَ
وَمِنْ شَرِّ النَّفَّاثَاتِ فِي الْعُقَدِ وَمِنْ شَرِّ حَاسِدٍ إِذَا حَسَدَ.
وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
إِذَا سَأَلْتَ فَاسْأَلِ اللَّهَ وَإِذَا اسْتَعْنَتَ فَاسْتَعْنْ بِاللَّهِ.

FALSE BELIEFS AND SUPERSTITIONS

Honorable Muslims!

One day the Prophet Muhammad (saw) was on a road trip with his paternal uncle's son Abdullah ibn Abbas and he gave him the following advices: “O young man, I shall teach you some words of advice. Be mindful of Allah and Allah will protect you. Be mindful of Allah and you will find Him in front of you. If you ask, then ask Allah alone; and if you seek help, then seek help from Allah alone. And know that if the nation were to gather together to benefit you with anything, they would not benefit you except with what Allah had already prescribed for you. And if they were to gather together to harm you with anything, they would not harm you except with what Allah had already prescribed against you...”¹

Dear Believers!

The sublime religion, Islam, points out for all people the truths of faith and the paths to peace in this world and in the Hereafter. Islam wants people to worship, rely on, seek refuge in the mercy of, and ask help from Allah (swt) only. Accordingly, it rejects all false beliefs and superstitions. Islam regards it as a great sin to exploit people's feelings and values by taking advantage of their lack of knowledge and desperation. People, however, have from time to time failed to pay attention to such principles of the religion and found themselves hoping for help from fortunetellers, sorcerers, soothsayers, magicians, and mediums.

Dear Muslims!

It is against the essence of Islam to assert claims about, and hope for help from practices such as, predicting the future, changing people's fate, bringing luck, and offering cures. For the future and unknown is known to Allah (swt) only. For He alone is the Most Powerful over all things. For He is the One, Who provided us every piece of food we eat and every drop of water we drink. For in Him alone rests the remedy to sorrows, the cure to diseases, and the solution to problems. For He is the One Who at all times oversees us and respond to our heartfelt entreaties and sincere prayers.

Dear Believers!

It is never approvable to make plans about the future by placing one's hopes on fortunetelling, sorcery, and soothsaying while we have faith in Allah (swt) and on Him we rely. It would be against the Islamic standpoint to suggest that one has obtained knowledge of people's fates through observing the movements of stars. It would also be against the Islamic faith to attribute mystery and bad omen to numbers, days, months, and objects that have no ability and power to do or change anything. Among such practices prohibited by Islam are to view a piece of bead as holy for thinking it protects against evil, tying a piece of cloth to a tree, and throwing away coins into a pool of water in the hope that they bring good luck.

Dear Muslims!

Let us think for a moment. Why are those people, who claim to find solutions to other people's problems through such illegitimate means as sorcery and magic, not able to find solutions to their own problems? Why are those people, who exploit other people's hopes through lies that they know what will happen in the future, not able to find the right path with the knowledge they claim to have? Why are those people, who deceive other people by telling them that they have cure for their illnesses, not able to use the same cure for their own illnesses?

Dear Believers!

The Almighty Allah (swt) states in the Surah al-Falaq I have recited at the beginning of the khutbah, “Say, “I seek refuge in the Lord of daybreak, from the evil of that which He created, and from the evil of darkness when it settles, and from the evil of the blowers in knots, and from the evil of an envier when he envies.”²

Let us then not spoil our clean human nature, created by Allah (swt) as fit for faith and inclined to do good, with false beliefs and superstitions. Let us strengthen our faith, which is our most precious treasure, with sincere feelings and our intentions with authentic religious knowledge. Let us make it a principle for a peaceful life to work and earn our livelihood through legitimate means, get treatment when ill, and seek for reasons to rely our efforts on. Let us not fall for hope-mongers who promote shortcircuiting the efforts through illegitimate means to earn a living. Let us ask Allah (swt) only for success, salvation, cure, and providence in this world and in the Hereafter. Let us always believe that He does not leave our prayers unresponded when uttered in a heartfelt manner.

¹ Tirmidhi, Sifat al-Qiyamah, 59; Ibn Hanbal, I, 293.

² Falaq, 113/1-5.



أَنْلِ مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَىٰ عَنِ
 الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ.
 وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
 مَنْ حَانَطَ عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ الْخَمْسِ رُكُوعُهُنَّ وَسُجُودُهُنَّ وَوُضُوئُهُنَّ
 وَمَوَاقِعُهُنَّ وَعَلِمَ أَنَّهُنَّ حَقٌّ مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ.

SALAH: OUR STRUGGLE TO GETTING CLOSER TO ALLAH

Honorable Muslims!

One day the Prophet Muhammad (saw) was having a conversation with his companions and asked them, "If there was a river at the door of any of you and he took a bath in it five times a day, would you notice any dirt on him?" His companions replied, "Not a trace of dirt would be left." Thereupon said the Prophet Muhammad (saw), "That is the example of the five prayers with which Allah annuls sins."¹

Dear Believers!

The most deeply-rooted form of worship in the history of prophets, salah is one of the five pillars of our exalted religion Islam. It is the symbol of turning towards Allah (swt) with the soul, body, mind, heart, love, respect, and the entire being in short. We as humans can attain true peace if we, acceptantly and in a heartfelt manner, respond to Allah's (swt) invitation to servitude and perform the worship of salah. But when we neglect our salah, thereby causing the connection between Him and us to weaken, then we fall captive to our worldly desires, thereby becoming frustrated.

Dear Muslims!

Standing in awe of Allah (swt) for salah upon the lofty call of the adhan, Muslims submit their love, devotion, obedience, and submission to Him. Salah, in this sense, is the moment for Muslims looking forward to meet Him in the closest manner. It is a holy journey Muslims set out on, leaving behind all the worldly rush, problems, and troubles. It is the desire, of people who have fallen far away from the true homeland of heaven, to return to Him after living a sincere life without going astray from the true path. In this respect says the Prophet Muhammad (saw), "The key to Paradise is salah."²

Salah is the time to give thanks and express gratitude to Allah (swt). It is the duty of loyalty for Muslims towards Him, Who creates, allows to live, feeds with blessings, protects, and forgives.

Dear Believers!

In the verse I have recited at the beginning of the khutbah, the Almighty Allah (swt) states, "Recite, o

Muhammad, what has been revealed to you of the Book and establish prayer. Indeed, prayer prohibits immorality and wrongdoing, and the remembrance of Allah is greater. And Allah knows that which you do."³ Salah, then, is the struggle to get purified and protected. A Muslim conscious and aware of worship is one who values and pays great attention to salah, fulfilling all its requirements duly and in awe, from takbir recited at the beginning to the salam at the end. The awareness of worship is about the awareness of being a servant to Allah (swt). It is to live piously, mercifully, and kindly with the awareness that Allah (swt) always oversees and hears.

This is why salah does not only represent the debt of worship for Muslims, but also their superior morals. People who perform salah are protected against any kind of extravagancy, rudeness, and violence. Because of the strengthened spirituality due to salah, they stay away from behaviors that are against the sense of shamefulness and rules of etiquette.

Dear Muslims!

In the Qur'an, all people are addressed in the person of the Prophet Muhammad (saw) as follows, "And enjoin prayer upon your family and people and be steadfast therein. We ask you not for provision; We provide for you, and the best outcome is for those of righteousness."⁴ As required of this commandment, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) would go to the door of his daughter Fatimah every morning and invite everybody in the house to performing salah, "O Ahl al-Bayt (the members of the Prophet's family)! Come on, to salah!"⁵ We are similarly responsible to get ourselves and our families accustomed to performing salah.

Then, let us, with our families, not remain deprived of the chance to meet Allah (swt) in the healing, comforting, and calming climate of salah. Let us not neglect performing salah which is both "the pillar of the religion" in this world and "the question to be asked of us to give account for" in the Hereafter. Let us not forget that salah is not a burden on us but, on the contrary, it is a unique opportunity to get to know and refresh our own self, as well as to get mature through remembering, thanking, and contemplating. I would like to conclude the khutbah with the following good news from the Prophet Muhammad (saw), "Whoever continues to perform five-times daily salah, knowing that to do so is the commandment of Allah, and showing due diligence to the salah's ruku', sajdah, wudu', and hour, goes to heaven."⁶

¹ Bukhari, Mawaqit al-Salat, 6.

² Tirmidhi, Taharah, 1.

³ Ankabut, 29/45.

⁴ Ta-Ha, 20/132.

⁵ Tirmidhi, Tafsir al-Qur'an, 33.

⁶ Ibn Hanbal, IV, 266.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقًّا لِّعْنَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوْنَ
 إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ.
 وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
 إِنَّ اللَّهَ حِينَمَا كُنْتَ، وَأَتَبِعِ السَّيِّئَةَ الْحَسَنَةَ تَمْحُهَا،
 وَخَالِقُ النَّاسَ يُخْلِقُ حَسَنَ

TAQWA: THE BEST PROVISION

Honorable Muslims!

The Prophet Muhammad (saw) had appointed one of his young companions Muadh ibn Jabal as ambassador to Yemen. He set out with him as he was going to bid farewell, and offered him some recommendations. Muadh was riding and the Prophet Muhammad (saw) was walking next to him. Before concluding his recommendations, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) said, “**O Muadh! Perhaps you may not see me again next year, except visit this masjid or my grave.**” Saddened because of having to be separated from the Prophet Muhammad (saw), Muadh started to cry upon those words. The Messenger of Allah (saw) turned facing Madinah and said, “**The most superior people in my eyes, regardless of who they are and what status and authority they may have, are the ones who have taqwa.**”¹

Dear Believers!

Taqwa is to live in the know of one's material and spiritual responsibilities as a servant of Allah (swt). It is to obey His commandments and earn His approval. It is to turn away from those acts to earn His disapproval, and seek refuge in the shade of His mercy. It is to follow in the Prophet Muhammad's (saw) footsteps, whom the Almighty Allah (swt) sent to us as the perfect role model and the unique guide.

Dear Muslims!

Only through taqwa is it possible for people to be honored with the divine mercy and protection. In the verse I have recited at the beginning of the khutbah, the Almighty Allah (swt) states, “**O believers! Fear Allah as He should be feared and do not die except as Muslims in submission to Him.**”²

Proper taqwa takes people to always feel as if they are in the presence of Allah (swt), to not show a lack of respect for Him, and to obey Him with deep love. Taqwa, in this sense, is to be concerned about doing acts to earn Allah's (swt) wrath and appearing with a face down before Him. It is to make preparations in this world for the life in the Hereafter, as commanded by the verse, “**O believers! Fear Allah. Let every soul look to what it has put forth for tomorrow.**”³

Dear Believers!

One day the Prophet Muhammad (saw) pointed his chest and repeated three times, “**Taqwa is right here.**”⁴ Taqwa is in the heart, right, but it is reflected on the body, in the words and behaviors. The comforting effect of taqwa manifests itself in our worships, good deeds, and good morals. Our awareness of taqwa is increased when we avoid what is evil and forbidden, and matures and reaches perfection through honesty and sincerity.

Taqwa is like the shield of Muslims. It is the shiver felt in the heart, the voice heard in the conscience. The barrier set up against the sins, and the bridge towards the merits... Then, Muslims who have taqwa thereby protect their hearts from sedition and corruption, their tongue from lies and slanders, and their eyes from what is forbidden. Their hands from unfairness, and their feet from racing for the evil... Let alone knowingly committing a sin, they do not even fall in two minds about going for things that may potentially lead to committing a sin. This is because a truly pious Muslim knows that observing the commandments and prohibitions of Allah (swt) will bring happiness in this world and salvation in the Hereafter.

Dear Muslims!

Taqwa is the only measure to determine our value in the sight of Allah (swt). This is because the superiority according to Islam does not depend on one's property, status and authority, profession, race, or gender. This is pointed out clearly in the verse, “**The most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you.**”⁵ The most virtuous of people are the ones who are honored with faith, have the clothing of taqwa on, a perfectly clean heart and a record of good deeds. These are the people with whom Allah (swt) is together. Their friend He is. For them are prepared the Paradise and all the unique blessings in it.⁶

Dear Believers!

The Almighty Allah (swt) states, “**Take provisions, but indeed, the best provision is taqwa. Fear Me, o you who understand.**”⁷

Then let us enrich our temporary life in this mortal world with taqwa. Let us continue to avoid evil and always be good and do good. Let us not frustrate our life in this world and in the Hereafter by trying to satisfy the insatiable desires of our nafs and by falling for the Satan's deceit. Let us not forget that one day we will give account for every word out of our mouth and for every deed we do. I would like to conclude the khutbah with the following hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (saw), “**Have taqwa of Allah wherever you are, and if you do evil knowingly or unknowingly, follow it with a good one to wipe the former out, and treat the people with good behavior.**”⁸

¹ Ibn Hanbal, V, 236.

² Al-i 'Imran, 3/102.

³ Hashr, 59/18.

⁴ Ibn Hanbal, III, 134.

⁵ Hujurat, 49/13.

⁶ Nahl, 16:128; Jathiyah, 45/19; Ra'd, 13:35.

⁷ Baqarah, 2/197.

⁸ Tirmidhi, Birr, 55.

وَمَا هِذِهِ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا لَهُوَ وَلَعِبٌ وَإِنَّ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ
 لَهُيَ الْحَيَاةُ إِلَّا كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ.
 وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
 كُنْ فِي الدُّنْيَا كَائِنًا غَرِيبًا أَوْ عَابِرًا سَبِيلًا.

A LIFE FULL OF CONTEMPLATION

Honorable Muslims!

In the verse I have recited the Almighty Allah (swt) states, **"And this worldly life is not but diversion and amusement. And indeed, the home of the Hereafter - that is the eternal life, if only they knew!"¹**

In the hadith I have recited the Prophet Muhammad (saw) says, **"Be in this world as if you were a stranger or a traveler."²**

Dear Believers!

We all have a limited number of days called life regardless of our current ages. One day that Allah knows only and not a moment earlier or a moment later than the predestined hour we all will leave this world after He takes our life entrusted to us. No other provision will we have than faith and a record of good deeds with us on our way to the place of resurrection where we will give an account for all we did in the world.

How lucky we are if we were able to know the value of time, the meaning of life, the importance of youth, and the gratitude for the blessings and health we have! Shame on us if we wasted our days, spent our wealth extravagantly, poisoned our mind or body, hurt our loved ones, and failed to properly perform our worship!

On these days with the beginning of a new year around the corner, by goes another year in our life, a step closer we are getting to our end. Then it is time for contemplation! Come, let us contemplate about what we have done in the previous year and about what spiritual abundances we have had and divine trials we have come through.

Dear Muslims!

At the beginning of the year about to be gone by we welcome the Three Holy Months. We celebrated Ragh'aib as the first blooming flower of mercy in the Three Holy Months, then Mi'raj as the clarity of our mind and the ease of our heart, and finally Night of Bara'ah as the peak of forgiveness. Did we truly regard these sacred days and nights as opportunities to refer our wishes to Allah (swt)? Did we truly hold fast on to performing the prayers that the Prophet Muhammad (saw) called as "**the light of my eyes**"³? Did we show true regret for our faults and sins and repent for them?

Dear Believers!

As in every year, we were honored with Ramadan

in this passing year. We reached the Laylat al-Qadr, more virtuous than a thousand months, and made it to the Eid al-Fitr. No matter how much gratitude we show, it is never enough! Because the holy month of Ramadan provided us with many opportunities to help and share with others while allowing us to enjoy the taste of spending in the way of Allah and treating well all creatures for the sake of Allah (swt). We attained abundance with suhur time, health with fasting, enlightenment with Qur'an, and peace with tarawih. Let us ask ourselves: Did we truly offer help and solution to the problems of our oppressed and needy brothers and sisters through the year after getting blessed with the abundance of Ramadan? Did we truly continue to live by Qur'an after the month of Qur'an came to an end? Did we truly, with our tongue uttering the name of Allah, heart feeling thankfulness, mind contemplating, body enduring, get accustomed to these fine virtues?

Honorable Muslims!

Also in this passing year, we celebrated the Eid al-Adha with our sacrifices for Allah that express our loyalty, thankfulness and submission. We observed the rights of our neighbors, relatives, the poor, and the orphan. We felt the Eid's atmosphere of peace, tranquility, and brotherhood. Did the past Eid al-Adha truly strengthen our devoutness, love and obedience for Allah (swt)? Did we truly maintain the spirit of giving charity and spending in the way of Allah through the year after the Eid? Did we truly get happy when we shared out?

Dear Believers!

Towards the end of this passing year, we celebrated the Mawlid al-Nabi Week for the memory of the Prophet Muhammad (saw) honoring the world. On the occasion of the Week, we paid more careful attention to his recommendations about family. We came to think again that compassion, fairness, trust and consultation were prevailing virtues in his family. Let us ask ourselves: Did we truly embrace our family values in his example? Did we truly protect our families we put our love to build through fairness and mercy? Did we truly solve our problems through common sense, never resorting to violence?

Dear Muslims!

The life in this world is a road to the Hereafter; the humans are travelers loaded with responsibilities; and the set number of days in this world is a challenging yet precious journey. Let us then not forget that we are merely travelers in this world. Let us live in a such a way as to value the worldly belongings as little as a traveler would need to, keeping in mind that our ultimate purpose is to enter heaven. Let us be aware of our life and the blessings in our possession. Let us spend every single day in such a way as would be approved by Allah (swt), doing useful deeds, with a good cause and without wasting the treasure of contemplation.

¹ Ankabut, 29/64.

² Bukhari, Riqqaq, 3.

³ Nasai, Ishrat al-Nisa, 1.