

Our Responsibility Towards Our Neighbour

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
﴿وَأَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَبِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ
وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَالْجَارِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْجَارِ الْجُنُبِ وَالصَّاحِبِ
بِالْجُنُبِ﴾
عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ﷺ قَالَ:
« لَا يَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ مَنْ لَا يَأْمَنُ جَارَهُ بَوَائِقَهُ »

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

One of the most important goals of Islam is to morally elevate. In the past, Muslims who centred their lives around the principles and values of Islam established a way of life that aimed for the happiness of both this world and the hereafter. Regardless of their religion, language, or ethnicity, they attached great importance to the moral value of being good neighbours, which is essential for different social groups to live together. In our noble book, the Qur'an, which is the source of timeless and universal values, it is stated: "**Worship Allāh and associate nothing with Him, and to parents do good, and to relatives, orphans, the needy, the near neighbour, the neighbour farther away, the companion at your side, the traveller, and those whom your right hands possess. Indeed, Allāh does not like those who are self-deluding and boastful.**"¹

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

The noble saying of our Prophet (saw), "*Be good to your neighbours so that you may become a true believer.*"² holds great importance for us Muslims. Our beloved Prophet, who encouraged everyone to show kindness to their neighbours, once advised Abu Dharr, by saying, "*When you cook a pot of soup, add a little extra water, then look to your neighbours and offer them some soup in a suitable manner.*"³ This reminder highlights the importance of consistently caring for one's neighbours. We have not only material but also spiritual responsibilities towards our neighbours. It is among our duties to invite them to goodness, to invite them to the community and to advise them to do good and turn away from evil.

The following hadith is highly important regarding our responsibility towards our neighbours: "Jabreel kept advising me to be good to neighbours until I thought he would make them my heirs."⁴ This valuable statement of the Prophet (saw) demonstrates that our relationships with neighbours are as significant as our relationships with relatives.

Dear Jama'ah

Regardless of religion, language, race or colour, it is our duty to represent Islam to all our neighbours. We must be aware that our actions and words are not just personal but are directly associated with the Islamic faith. We should be aware that every good or bad behaviour we show in society will be attributed to Islam. Especially on important days and nights, we should extend hospitality to our neighbours, explain the significance of those days and invite them to goodness. We should remember that the most visible aspect of people's opinions about us is our relationship with our neighbours. Our neighbours have rights solely based on being neighbours and therefore, they deserve to be treated kindly. Rasulullah (saw) also had Jewish neighbours in Medina and he would uphold their rights and treat them with fairness. In fact, when he would slaughter an animal for sacrifice and distribute its meat, he would instruct Aisha (ra) to "Start with our Jewish neighbour."⁵

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

As commanded by our religion, establishing good relationships with our neighbours will not only bring us closer to Allah but also contribute to the peaceful coexistence of different social groups. We should especially invite our Muslim neighbours to our mosques and community gatherings and encourage them towards goodness.

May Allah (swt) make us among those servants who fulfill their duties and responsibilities towards their neighbours. Ameen!

¹ Surah An-Nisa, 4:36

² Ibn Mâce, Zühed, 24

³ Müslim, Birr, 143

⁴ Buhârî, Edeb, 28

⁵ Kurtubî, el-Câmiul-ahkâmi'l-Kur'ân, V, 188