

Enjoin Good, Forbid Evil

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
 ﴿وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ
 عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ﴾
 عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ: «لَيْسَ مِنْ أُمَّةٍ لَمْ يَرْحَمْ
 صَغِيرَهَا وَيُوقِرْ كَبِيرَهَا وَيَأْمُرْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ»

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

The Ummah of Prophet Muhammad (saw) has been addressed by Allah (swt) with the command: **“Let there arise from you a community inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong. And these are the successful.”**¹ The Ummah has been honoured with a continuous mission until the Day of Judgment, as mentioned in another noble verse: **“You are the best community that has been raised for mankind. You enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and believe in Allah.”** Every Muslim is obliged to make it their duty to establish goodness, beauty and righteousness in society while striving to prevent evil.

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

What Allah (swt) mentions in the verses is referred to as goodness, which encompasses all that is morally and intellectually good, brings peace to individuals and society when practiced. Evil, on the other hand, is the exact opposite of goodness. In other words, evil refers to the things prohibited by the Quran and the Sunnah. Enjoining goodness is the effort to guide people towards beneficial things, happiness and well-being. Forbidding evil, on the other hand, is the effort to distance people from things that are not in accordance with Islam. Therefore, enjoining goodness is about leading people toward good, while forbidding evil is about guiding them away from evil. The Prophet (saw), who is the guide for humanity, reminded believers of their social responsibilities by saying, **“The one who does not show mercy to our young, respect our elders, and promote goodness while preventing evil is not one of us.”**²

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

Our Muslim identity should not make us indifferent to the events happening in our surroundings. We must avoid the misguided attitude of "as long as it doesn't affect me, let it be." One of the most evident characteristics of a human being is being a social creature. It is impossible for us not to be influenced by the social atmosphere in which we live. Just as a rotten apple in a fruit basket will start to spoil the other apples, we should be aware that the goodness and evil in society will have an impact on us and our children. The result of unconcern can lead not only to individual but also to societal disasters. Goodness, like evil, is contagious. A society where goodness is widespread can heal from the effects of diseases and moral decline. We must not forget that roses rarely grow in mud and swamps. Roses thrive in a rose garden. The result of the goodness we promote and the evil we prevent will grant us rose gardens both in this world and in the hereafter. The Prophet (saw) said, **“The one who leads to a good deed will receive a reward like that of the one who performs it.”**³

Dear Jama'ah!

As Muslim individuals, the practice of "enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong" is not an act of worship to be performed using force or resorting to violence. Allah (swt) says, **“Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in a way that is best. Indeed, your Lord is most knowing of who has strayed from His way, and He is most knowing of who is [rightly] guided”**⁴. It is our responsibility to approach people with a kind manner, to act with politeness and courtesy, and not to be judgmental. A Muslim does not personalise any issues. They refrain from exposing and humiliating those whose wrongdoings they witness. When they say they will promote goodness and prevent evil, they do so without breaking hearts and causing ill will. The true target of their efforts is not individuals but rather wrongful and evil actions.

¹ Surah Âli-Imrân, 3:104

² Tirmizî, Birr, 15

³ Müslim, Imâre, 133

⁴ Surah An-Nahl, 16:125

As of last week, the unfortunate events in the Palestine region have deeply saddened us, as Muslims who are always in favour of peace. Targeting the lives of innocent civilians and subjecting them to collective punishment is unacceptable, regardless of the underlying reasons. We call upon the parties involved, international institutions and everyone with a conscience to take action to stop the bloodshed as soon as possible. May Allah (swt) be the helper and supporter of the oppressed.

May Allah (swt) make us among His servants who spread goodness and prevent evil. Ameen!