

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَى وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ
شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا...﴾ (١٣)
سورة الحجرات، ١٣/٤٩

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ
قَالَ:

"إِيَّاكُمْ وَالظَّنَّ؛ فَإِنَّ الظَّنَّ أَكْذَبُ الْحَدِيثِ، وَلَا
تَحَسَّسُوا، وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا، وَلَا تَحَاسَدُوا، وَلَا تَدَابَرُوا،
وَلَا تَبَاغَضُوا، وَكُونُوا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ إِخْوَانًا."
البخاري، كتاب الأدب، ٥٨

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

Islam, brings people together rather than dividing them. It is founded on brotherhood rather than hostility and mercy rather than hatred. Social peace is more than the absence of war or conflict. True peace exists when people trust one another, justice prevails, differences are respected and everyone feels safe. Building such a society begins with laws, but sustaining it requires good character. One of the greatest enemies of this character is prejudice.

My Brothers and Sisters!

Prejudice means judging someone before getting to know them. It means forming an opinion without seeking the truth and assessing a person by their name, background, language, school of thought, appearance or surroundings. Islam, however, judges people by their character, piety and deeds, rather than by labels. Prejudice is a veil drawn over the truth. Until this veil is lifted, justice cannot prevail, brotherhood cannot grow stronger and lasting harmony in society cannot be achieved.

Dear Jama'ah!

Allah (swt) warns us against suspicion. He says, "**O people! We created you from a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another.**" In doing so, He presents our differences as a means of mercy and mutual understanding.¹ Our differences are the work of Allah's power. The diversity of our languages and colours is among the signs of His power.²

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

Today, in an age when information is easier to access than ever, humanity is experiencing one of the hardest times for understanding one another. Baseless claims, quick judgements and divisive rhetoric spread through all types of media undermine trust between people. Judging someone without listening to them, blaming an entire community for the mistakes of a few or excluding those who think differently shakes the foundations of social peace. Bigotry, fanaticism and language that separates others build walls between hearts. Yet a believer builds bridges, not walls.

The Messenger of Allah (saw) said, "**Beware of suspicion, for suspicion (unfounded accusation) is the most false of speech. Do not pry into people's private lives or seek out their faults. Do not envy one another, harbour hatred towards one another or turn your backs on one another. O servants of Allah! Be brothers.**"³ True faith reaches its fullness through consistent worship, respecting the rights of others and protecting their dignity.

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

Social peace grows stronger through the small but sincere efforts we make in daily life, rather than through grand speeches. Offering a greeting, healing hurt feelings, patiently listening to those who think differently, upholding justice and approaching people with goodwill rather than prejudice are the foundations of a peaceful society. Let us teach our children justice and mercy, rather than hatred and division. Let us build relationships based on trust with our neighbours, colleagues and people from different cultures. For the society Islam seeks is one in which people trust one another, rather than fear one another.

May Allah (swt) make us among His servants who uphold truth in place of suspicion, wisdom in place of bigotry, mercy in place of anger and brotherhood in place of division. Ameen.



¹ Surah Al-Hujurat, 49:13

² Surah Ar-Rum, 30:22

³ Al-Bukhari, Book of Manners, 58