

Praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds. Praise be to Allah, who perfected our religion for us, completed His favor upon us, and made Islam a comprehensive way of life that regulates human relationships with their Lord, themselves, their families, and society as a whole.

O believers,

One of the greatest challenges facing Muslims in this era—especially as we live as Muslim minorities in non-Muslim societies—is a dangerous phenomenon that creeps into some people's lives without them realizing it. It is the phenomenon of separating religion from life, or the disconnect between how a Muslim lives inside the mosque and how they live outside of it.

You see some people who, when they enter the mosque, become humble, pray, remember Allah, and listen to the Qur'an and sermons. Yet, as soon as they step out into their work, business, or daily dealings, they become completely different people. It is as if Islam has a specific place and a specific time, and as if religion ends at the door of the mosque.

This understanding of faith, my dear brothers and sisters, is foreign to Islam. It is foreign to the Qur'an, and foreign to the life of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and his noble companions. Almighty Allah did not send His Prophet ﷺ merely to teach people how to pray, but to teach them how to live.

Therefore, Almighty Allah says in the Qur'an:

"Say, 'Indeed, my prayer, my rites of sacrifice, my living and my dying are for Allah, Lord of the worlds.'" 6:162]

Ponder this magnificent verse. Allah did not just say, "My prayer and my rites are for Allah," but He said: "my living and my dying". This means that the entirety of life belongs to Allah—work belongs to Allah, trade belongs to Allah, family belongs to Allah, relationships, money, morals, and choices all belong to Allah.

A Muslim does not worship Allah for an hour and then forget Him for hours. They do not obey Him in the mosque only to disobey Him in the marketplace. They do not fear Him in front of people, only to forget His watchfulness as soon as human eyes disappear.

That is why when the Mother of the Believers, Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her), was asked about the character of the Prophet ﷺ, she replied: "His character was the Qur'an." This means that the Qur'an was not just words to be recited to him, but a lived reality, a visible behavior, and a moving morality among the people. He was truthful, trustworthy, just, and merciful, exactly as the Qur'an commands.

O Muslims,

The problem we face today is not a lack of religious information. Lectures are plenty, sermons are many, and books are widely available. The real issue is transforming religion from information into reality, from rituals into morals, and from the mosque into daily life. Prayer is not just physical movements to be performed. Allah intended for prayer to change human beings. Almighty Allah says:

"Indeed, prayer prohibits immorality and wrongdoing." [29:45]

If a person has been praying for long years, yet their prayer does not stop them from lying, cheating, injustice, or violating the rights of others, then they must pause and question themselves: Where is the impact of prayer in my heart?

The same applies to fasting. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: Whoever does not give up false speech and acting upon it, Allah has no need of his giving up his food and drink."

Because the true purpose of worship is the reformation of the heart and behavior, not merely performing rituals and customs.

O believers,

One of the most dangerous forms of this disconnect is when some people care more about external appearances than they do about the inner truth and essence.

You find someone who is extremely meticulous about certain outward religious practices, and perhaps debates people about them at length. Yet, they do not hold themselves to the same standard when it comes to the source of their money, their truthfulness in business, their integrity at work, or the rights of others in their hands.

Some individuals resort to bypassing rules in trade, in contracts, in taxes, or in the systems and laws that govern public life in this country. It happens that someone works and earns an income, but presents themselves to official institutions as unemployed or having no income, in order to receive financial aid, social benefits, or subsidies they are not entitled to. Others might hide a portion of their income, provide incorrect information, or resort to lies and deception to obtain money that is not rightfully theirs.

Here, a believer must stand sincerely before themselves and ask a clear question:

Is this money that I am bringing home to my family *halál* (permissible) and pure, or is it money taken unjustly? Am I content to stand before Allah on the Day of Resurrection and be asked about this wealth—how did I acquire it?

Changing names and terms does not change realities. Deception remains deception, lying remains lying, and taking money unlawfully remains consuming people's wealth unjustly, no matter what justifications or interpretations a person creates for themselves.

Almighty Allah says: And do not consume one another's wealth unjustly." [2:188]

And He also says:

"O you who have believed, fear Allah and be with those who are true." [9:119]

The Messenger of Allah صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم said: "Whoever cheats is not of me." [Muslim]

and he صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم also said: "Indeed, truthfulness leads to righteousness, and righteousness leads to Paradise." [Al-Bukhari]

My dear brothers and sisters, a true Muslim does not display their Islam only in the mosque. Their Islam shines when human supervision is absent and only the watchfulness of Allah remains. Their Islam shows in a contract they sign, in a tax invoice they declare, in money they refuse to take because it isn't theirs, and in a transaction where they speak the truth, even if it costs them some worldly gain.

The real challenge is not just to be righteous among Muslims, but to be upright before Allah in every place. At home just as in the mosque. At work just as in the mosque. In the market just as in the mosque. With Muslims just as with non-Muslims.

O believers,

We live in a society where people watch our actions much more than they listen to our words. Many people do not learn about Islam from the Qur'an or from books; they learn about it through the behavior of Muslims.

When they see that a Muslim is truthful, trustworthy, fair, and respectful of laws and rights, they love Islam and its people. But if they see from some Muslims cheating, lying, bypassing regulations, or taking money unlawfully, the damage does not fall upon that individual alone. It extends to the image of all Muslims and to the image of Islam itself. In that moment, a person becomes a reason for driving people away from the religion, while thinking they are doing good.

Let us ask ourselves truthfully:

Are we the exact same person inside the mosque and outside of it?

- * Do our children see in our homes what we listen to in the mosques?
- * Has prayer impacted our manners?
- * Has the Qur'an left an imprint on our business dealings?

* Has faith influenced our money, our contracts, and our trustworthiness?

If we find good within ourselves, let us praise Allah and ask Him for steadfastness. And if we find shortcomings, let us return to Allah with sincere repentance and honest self-accountability.

O Allah, rectify our hearts and our deeds, purify our souls, and guide us to the best of manners. Make our inner selves better than what we show openly. Grant us truthfulness, trustworthiness, and uprightness in private and in public. Bless us in our sustenance and our wealth, keep us away from the forbidden and the doubtful, and make us keys to good and locks against evil.