

## BE GOOD TO NEIGHBORS

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ. وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا. مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ وَمَنْ يَضِلَّ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ.

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ. اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ وَبَارِكْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ.

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

وَلَتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٠٤﴾

أَمَّا بَعْدُ،

فَيَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ، وَأَوْصِيكُمْ وَنَفْسِي بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ وَطَاعَتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ.

Let us all increase our obedience towards Allah the Almighty by doing everything that He prescribes and avoiding everything that He prohibits. Only through obedience towards Him will we be blessed by Allah the Almighty in this world and in the Hereafter.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Islam is very concerned with good relations among people. In everyday life, a person will always be in touch with others, such as co-workers, housemates, neighbors, etc. and by nature, everyone needs help from others. The closest and the most capable person to assist us is our neighbor.

We need to respect our neighbors and treat them charitably as we would our own families. Islam teaches us to honor our neighbors as mentioned in one of the Prophet Muhammad's (peace be upon him) *Hadith* which was reported by Imam al-Bukhari and Muslim:

مَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَلْيُكْرِمْ جَارَهُ

Which means: *Whoever believes in Allah and the hereafter, let him honor his neighbor.*

Islam states that our neighbors have certain rights over us as confirmed by Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) in a *Hadith* which was reported by Imam al-Tabrani:

*Which means: There are three types of neighbors: Neighbors who have at least one right, neighbors who have two rights and neighbors who have three rights. The neighbors who have one right are non-Muslim neighbors and for them are the rights of being neighbors. The ones with two rights are the Muslim neighbors and for them are the rights of being fellow Muslims and the rights of being neighbors. While the neighbors who have three rights are Muslim neighbors who happen to be our blood relatives also. They have the rights of being neighbors, the rights of being fellow Muslims and the rights of being relatives.*

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Good neighbors have certain characteristics which include being friendly, helping each other, visiting each other, keeping an open relationship, tolerating others, and caring. Good neighbors keep away from being jealous and slandering others, etc.

In Malaysia, we live in a multiracial and multi-religious society. Our neighbors are likely to be non-Muslims and so this is a good opportunity to demonstrate the beauty of Islam by being kind and responsible towards them. Any form of behavior that is contradictory to good values must be avoided in order to protect the image of Islam.

Respecting neighbors includes not doing things that can hurt them or disrupt their peace. For example, not responding to their greeting, making noise (especially at night), revving the car engine, obstructing their pathway by parking our vehicle haphazardly, letting our livestock defecate in the neighborhood, littering, etc. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said in a *Hadith* which was narrated by Imam al-Bukhari:

وَاللَّهِ لَا يُؤْمِنُ وَاللَّهِ لَا يُؤْمِنُ وَاللَّهِ لَا يُؤْمِنُ قِيلَ وَمَنْ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ قَالَ الَّذِي لَا يَأْمَنُ جَارُهُ  
بَوَائِقَهُ

Which means: "By Allah, he is not a believer! By Allah, he is not a believer! By Allah, he is not a believer." He was asked, "Who is that, O Messenger of Allah?" He said, "One whose neighbor does not feel safe from his evil".

However, there is a distressing trend among the members of society today who think that neighbors only cause them problems. They feel more comfortable living in their own world without paying attention to others. Such people will only realize the importance of neighbors when they are in difficulties.

Dear Brothers and Sisters

We should visit our neighbors when they are ill or when there is a death. We must accept their invitation to a feast and help them prepare for it. Let us invite our neighbors to attend religious talks and to pray congregationally at the mosque in order to strengthen our neighborly relations and to create unity as eloquently expressed by a Malay idiom "United neighbors invite blessings". Allah the Almighty commands us to do good to our neighbors as He mentioned in the Quran in Chapter 4 (Surah al-Nisa '), verse (ayat) 36:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ  
وَأَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا<sup>ط</sup> وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَبِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ  
وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَالْجَارِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْجَارِ الْجُنُبِ وَالصَّاحِبِ بِالْجَنبِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ  
وَمَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ<sup>ظ</sup> إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَنْ كَانَ مُخْتَالًا فَخُورًا ﴿٣٦﴾

Which means: *Serve Allah, and join not any partners with Him; and do good- to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, those in need, neighbors who are near, neighbors 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*

بَارَكَ اللهُ لِيْ وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقُرْآنِ الْعَظِيْمِ، وَنَفَعَنِيْ وَإِيَّاكُمْ بِمَا فِيْهِ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيْمِ،  
وَتَقَبَّلَ مِنِّيْ وَمِنْكُمْ تِلَاوَتَهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيْعُ الْعَلِيْمُ. أَقُولُ قَوْلِيْ هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللهَ الْعَظِيْمَ لِيْ  
وَلَكُمْ، وَلِسَائِرِ الْمُسْلِمِيْنَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ، وَالْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ، فَاسْتَغْفِرُوْهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُوْرُ الرَّحِيْمُ.