

SPREAD GREETINGS OF PEACE

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ 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 عَبْدَهُ
وَرَسُولَهُ. اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ.
أَمَّا بَعْدُ،

فِيَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَ أَوْصِيكُمْ وَآيَايَ بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ، فَقَدْ فَازَ الْمُتَّقُونَ.

Let us all increase our obedience towards Allah the Almighty by doing everything that He prescribes and avoiding all that He prohibits. Hopefully, we will be blessed in this world and in the hereafter.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

It has become a common practice among us to spread *salam* (Islamic greeting) when we meet each other. Giving *salam* is highly commendable but replying to it is compulsory. Allah the Almighty mentioned in the Quran in Chapter 4 (Surah Al-Nisa), verse (*ayat*) 86:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

وَإِذَا حُيِّئْتُمْ بِهِ بِحَيْثُ فَحْيُوا بِأَحْسَنَ مِنْهَا أَوْ رُدُّوهَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَسِيبًا ﴿٨٦﴾

Which means: *When a (courteous) greeting is offered to you, meet it with a greeting still more courteous, or (at least) of equal courtesy. Allah takes careful account of all things.*

The term "*al-salam*" is one of the attributes of Allah the Almighty. When we give *salam*, we pray for the person to be saved by Allah the Almighty from any harm such as illness, evil deeds of other humans, or the hellfire.

The Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said in a *Hadith* which was narrated by *Imam Muslim*:

Which means: "*You will not enter Paradise until you believe, and you will not believe until you love one another. Shall I inform you about a matter which if you do, then you will foster love among one another? That is spreading salam among each other.*"

This shows that the act of greeting is important that it is a factor necessary to enter paradise. The Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) even taught us to give *salam* to ourselves and to all righteous servants of Allah each time we perform our prayers.

Similarly, it is a great practice when we greet our spouse, children, family, friends, neighbors, members of the mosques and every Muslim whether we know them personally or otherwise.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Greeting fellow Muslims can be done any where. There is about one of the Prophet's companions named Tufail bin Ubai bin Ka'ab. One day Tufail followed his friend named Abdullah bin Umar to the market. He noticed that Abdullah saluted everyone he met at the market and then returned home without buying or doing anything. Then Tufail asked Abdullah the reason why the latter did that and Abdullah simply replied: "I went to the market to greet the Muslims I met there."

This anecdote shows the sincerity of the early companions of the Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in implementing the righteous deeds. Abdullah Bin Umar really understood that giving and responding to *salam* was part of worship. This incident is proof that we are strongly recommended to give *salam* to and answer *salam* from every person we meet, whether we know them or not, as long as it does not cause any defamation.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Prophet Muhammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was always the first to greet his companions. He was also the first to greet children who were playing while passing them. He also said that the most worthy person in the sight of Allah the Almighty was the one who initiated the greeting.

Therefore let us practice this teaching of our Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). Let us spread our love through greeting each other especially the ones who are closest to us because when we greet each other, we are praying for each other's well-being.

Do not wait for people to greet us but we should be the ones to greet them because that was the practice of our beloved Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). If we really love him we must strive to do what he liked. And as Allah commands us in the Quran, Chapter 24 (Surah An-Nur), Verse (Ayat) 61:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

فَإِذَا دَخَلْتُمْ بُيُوتًا فَسَلِّمُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِكُمْ تَحِيَّةً مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ مُبْرَكَةً طَيِّبَةً

كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

Which means: ...*But if ye enter houses, salute each other - a greeting of blessing and purity as from Allah. Thus does Allah make clear the signs to you: that ye may understand.*

بَارَكَ اللَّهُ لِيْ وَلِكُمْ فِي الْقُرْآنِ الْعَظِيمِ، وَنَفَعَنِي وَإِيَّاكُمْ بِمَا فِيهِ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ، وَتَقَبَّلَ مِنِّي وَمِنْكُمْ تِلَاوَتَهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ، أَقُولُ قَوْلِي هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ الْعَظِيمَ لِيْ وَلِكُمْ، وَلِسَائِرِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ، وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ، فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ فَيَا فَوْزَ الْمُسْتَغْفِرِينَ وَيَا نَجَاةَ التَّائِبِينَ