



Maintainers of the Mosques

The First Sermon

All praise is due to Allah, the One worthy of love and veneration. Glorified is He, to whom all creation submits obediently and in submission. I bear witness that there is nothing worthy of worship except Allah, alone, without any partner. And I bear witness that our master and prophet Muhammad is the servant of Allah and His chosen messenger. O Allah, send your peace, and bestow blessings upon him, his family, his companions, and those who follow them in the best of ways till the Last Day.

To Continue: I advise you and myself to observe the Taqwa of Allah and obedience to Him, and to honor His signs, in accordance with His saying:

وَمَنْ يُعْظَمِ شَعَائِرَ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّهَا مِنْ تَقْوَى الْقُلُوبِ

'And whoever honors the symbols of Allah - indeed, it is from the piety of hearts.' [٢٢:٣٢]

O Believers: There are places that Allah has purified, houses dedicated to His worship and filled with devotion and obedience, where the hearts of believers expand, the souls of worshippers rejoice, and where hearts unite in goodness. There the believers' ranks are aligned, their words are united. The believer enters these places with supplication, exits with supplication, enlivens it with prayers, remembrance, and supplication. In it, he finds peace of heart, happiness of soul, and tranquility of spirit.

Indeed, these are the mosques, O servants of Allah, which are: أَحَبُّ الْبِلَادِ إِلَى اللَّهِ

'The most beloved places to Allah,' [Sahih Muslim]
Allah loves these places so much, He attributes them to Himself: وَأَنَّ الْمَسَاجِدَ لِلَّهِ

'And [He revealed] that the mosques are for Allah.'

[٧٢:١٨]

In them, prayers are established, intimate discourse and supplications to Allah ascend, their minarets echo with the call to prayer, the remembrance is heard from their pulpits, Qur'anic verses are recited within their walls, hearts humble in their precincts, and their sincere visitors attain Paradise. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said:

مَنْ عَدَا إِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ أَوْ رَاحَ، أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَهُ نَزْلَهُ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ كُلَّمَا عَدَا
أَوْ رَاحَ

'Whoever goes to the mosque in the morning or in the evening, Allah prepares for him a place in Paradise every time he goes or comes.' [Bukhari and Muslim]

In them sins are forgiven even if they be many, whilst a multitude of good deeds are recorded, mercies descend, and tranquility envelops! The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said:

مَا اجْتَمَعَ قَوْمٌ فِي بَيْتٍ مِنْ بُيُوتِ اللَّهِ يَتْلُونَ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ
وَيَتَدَارَسُونَهُ بَيْنَهُمْ؛ إِلَّا نَزَلَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّكِينَةُ، وَغَشِيَتْهُمْ الرَّحْمَةُ،
وَحَفَّتْهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ، وَذَكَرَهُمُ اللَّهُ فِيمَنْ عِنْدَهُ

'No group gathers in a house of Allah, reciting the Book of Allah and studying it among themselves, except that tranquility descends upon them, mercy covers them, angels surround them, and Allah mentions them to those with Him.' [Sahih Muslim]

In the mosques, noble angels accompany you, raising your actions and words to your Lord, mentioning you for good in His presence. Saying:

يَقُولُونَ: أَتَيْنَاهُمْ وَهُمْ يُصَلُّونَ، وَتَرَكْنَاهُمْ وَهُمْ يُصَلُّونَ

They say, 'We came to them while they were praying, and we left them while they were praying.' [Ahmad]

O visitors of the houses of Allah, Allah has commanded their respect, reverence, and honor, and the fulfillment of their rights, elevating their status, as He says:

فِي بُيُوتِ أَذْنِ اللَّهِ أَنْ تَرْفَعَ

'In houses [of worship] which Allah has permitted to be elevated.' [٢٤:٣٦]

That is, their status is elevated and honored, hence they are to be protected and glorified. And indeed, part of respecting mosques is for a Muslim to purify himself at his home before going to them, then coming to them with calmness and dignity. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said:

مَنْ تَطَهَّرَ فِي بَيْتِهِ ثُمَّ مَشَى إِلَى بَيْتٍ مِنْ بُيُوتِ اللَّهِ، لِيَقْضِيَ فَرِيضَةً مِنْ فَرَائِضِ اللَّهِ؛ كَانَتْ خَطْوَتَاهُ إِحْدَاهُمَا تَحُطُّ خَطِيئَةً، وَالْأُخْرَى تَرْفَعُ دَرَجَةً

'Whoever purifies himself at his home and then walks to one of the houses of Allah to fulfill a duty from the

duties prescribed by Allah, his steps will remove his sins, and his other step will elevate his rank.' [Muslim] The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) also said: إِذَا أَتَيْتُمُ الصَّلَاةَ فَعَلَيْكُمْ بِالسَّكِينَةِ، فَمَا أَدْرَكْتُمْ فَصَلُّوا،

وَمَا فَاتَكُمْ فَأَتِمُّوا

'When you come to the prayer, you should come with tranquility. Whatever you catch up with, pray, and whatever you miss, complete it.' [Bukhari]

When going to the mosque, a believer should wear his best and cleanest clothes, realizing that he is a 'visitor of Allah,' acting upon His saying ،

يَا بَنِي آدَمَ خُذُوا زِينَتَكُمْ عِنْدَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ

'O children of Adam, take your adornment at every masjid[٧:٣١]'

فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ أَحَقُّ مِنْ تَزِينٍ لَهُ

'Indeed, Allah is the most deserving of those who are adorned for Him.' [Sunnan al-Kubra li Bayhaqi]

So, what about people who come to the mosque in inappropriate clothing or carrying offensive odors that harm the worshippers and the recording angels? Haven't they heard the saying of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him):

إِنَّ الْمَلَائِكَةَ تَتَأَذَى مِمَّا يَتَأَذَى مِنْهُ بَنُو آدَمَ

'Indeed, the angels are offended by what offends the children of Adam?' [Muslim]

Among the honoring of mosques is that a person says upon entering them: بِسْمِ اللَّهِ، وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ، اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي ذُنُوبِي وَافْتَحْ لِي أَبْوَابَ رَحْمَتِكَ

'In the name of Allah, prayers and peace be upon the Messenger of Allah. O Allah, forgive my sins and open the doors of Your mercy for me.' [Tirmidhi]

And he should maintain his greeting upon entering it every time, as the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said:

إِذَا دَخَلَ أَحَدُكُمْ الْمَسْجِدَ، فَلْيَرْكَعْ رَكَعَتَيْنِ، قَبْلَ أَنْ يَجْلِسَ

'When any one of you enters the mosque, let him perform two Rak'ahs before sitting.' [Bukhari and Muslim]

The worshipper should also preserve the beauty and splendor of the mosques, their pleasant appearance, and strive for their continuous cleanliness. Let us not forget that there was a woman during the time of the Prophet who used to clean the mosque, and he appreciated her action, remembered her and prayed for her.

Likewise, lowering one's voice in the mosques is among the refined etiquettes and pleasing behaviors, as the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) heard his companions reciting aloud, and he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: أَلَا إِنَّ كُلَّكُمْ مُنَاجٍ رَبَّهُ، فَلَا يُؤْذِينَ

بَعْضُكُمْ بَعْضًا، وَلَا يَرْفَعُ بَعْضُكُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ فِي الْقِرَاءَةِ

'Verily, each of you is conversing with his Lord, so do not harm each other or raise your voices over one another in recitation.' [Abu Dawud]

So what about those who raise their voices with idle talk? Haven't they been informed of the saying of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that:

إِنَّمَا هِيَ لِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَالصَّلَاةِ وَقِرَاءَةِ الْقُرْآنِ

'The mosques are only for the remembrance of Allah, prayer, and the recitation of the Quran'? [Muslim]

Or haven't they heard about the statement of our master Umar to a man who raised his voice in the mosque:

أَتَدْرِي أَيْنَ أَنْتَ؟

'Do you not know where you are?' [Ibn Abi Shaybah]

So be keen, O you who honor the sanctity of mosques, to utilize your presence in the houses of your Lord by increasing your remembrance of your Creator and avoiding preoccupation with your desires. Do not rush to leave the mosque after completing your prayer. Wouldn't you like that the angels pray for you? For the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said:

الْمَلَائِكَةُ تُصَلِّي عَلَى أَحَدِكُمْ مَا دَامَ فِي مُصَلَّاهُ الَّذِي صَلَّى فِيهِ مَا لَمْ يُحَدِّثْ، تَقُولُ: اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لَهُ، اللَّهُمَّ ارْحَمْهُ

'The angels continue praying for one of you as long as he is in the place where he prayed, so long as he does not break his ablution, saying, "O Allah, forgive him, O Allah, have mercy on him."' [Bukhari]

So, O Allah, forgive us and have mercy upon us by Your grace, and grant us success in acting upon Your saying: 'O

you who have believed, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you.' I say this and I seek forgiveness for myself and for Allah, so seek His forgiveness for He is the most forgiving and the most-Merciful.

The Second Sermon

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of all worlds, and may peace and blessings be upon our Master and Prophet Muhammad, the Seal of the Prophets, and upon his family, companions, and followers.

O worshippers, adorning ourselves with the etiquettes of the people of the mosques and honoring them, and adhering to the manners of its people, is emphasized on such a blessed day as Friday. Let us give 'the path its due' upon our arrival, by parking our vehicles in designated spots and not obstructing the path of others. Blocking the way of others is forbidden and impermissible in our religion. Let us also take care to arrange our shoes in their designated places. When we enter the mosques, let us straighten our rows and sit where the assembly ends, and beware of crossing over others' necks, as the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said to a man who did so: **اجلسن فقد آذيت**

'Sit down, for indeed you have caused harm.' [Ahmad]

Let us face the Khatib with our faces and accept his words with our hearts, following the example of the companions of our Prophet, as they used to face him when he stood on the pulpit. Let us listen attentively to the Imam's sermon and avoid idle talk and speech during it, refraining from

raising our voices and arguing, for the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: **مَنْ لَغَا فَلَا جُمُعَةَ لَهُ**

'whoever speaks during the sermon, there is no Friday for him.' [Ahmad]

Similarly, when parents bring their children to the mosques, they should teach them its values and etiquettes, and guide them to good behavior therein, for that is more conducive to building their character and refinement. They should not neglect them, lest they become a source of annoyance and disturbance to other worshippers.

It is upon us, O visitors to the houses of the Most Merciful, to care for the mosques and their facilities, just as we care for our own homes, and to abide by their rules and regulations. Let us honor their imams and recognize their worth, and respect those who work in them, for this is the responsibility of each one of us. The United Arab Emirates, has given special attention and care to the mosques, making them beacons of faith and symbols of civilization. Let us strive to revive the mosques with acts of worship and contributions, and support them with ongoing charity, so that we may be among those who build the houses of the Most Merciful and enjoy the proximity of the Most Generous. For indeed, on the Day of Resurrection, Allah will call out saying:

**أَيْنَ جِيرَانِي؟ أَيْنَ جِيرَانِي؟ فَتَقُولُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ: رَبَّنَا وَمَنْ يَنْبَغِي أَنْ
يُجَاوِرَكَ؟ فَيَقُولُ: أَيْنَ عِمَارُ الْمَسَاجِدِ**

'Where are my neighbors? Where are my neighbors?'
And the angels will say, 'Our Lord, who is worthy to be

your neighbor?' So He will say, 'Where are those who maintained the mosques?' [Musnad Harith]

O Allah, make us among them, O Lord of the worlds. O Allah, ensure safety, stability, prosperity, and growth for the United Arab Emirates, and reward it abundantly for its care for the mosques, from Your vast bounty and immense grace. And encompass with Your favor all those who contribute to building a mosque for You or worship in it. O Allah, these are the days of Sha'ban that have come upon us, and the breeze of Ramadan has approached. The mosques are adorned with the people of faith, filled with standing in prayer and recitation of the Quran. Grant us the ability to reach them, O Merciful One, and inscribe for us therein mercy and contentment.

And with this we ask You to send Your blessings upon our Master and Prophet Muhammad, his family, and all his companions. And be pleased with righteous and rightly guided Khulafa: Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, Sayyiduna Umar, Sayyiduna Uthman and Sayyiduna Ali, and upon all of the companions and those of the righteous who come after them, may Allah be pleased with them all.

O Allah, grant success to the UAE President HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, to the Vice-President and his Brothers, their Highnesses, the Rulers of the Emirates and guide them to all that which is good and what pleases You.

O Allah, bestow your mercy on the late Sheikh Zayed, Sheikh Maktoum, Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed and the other late UAE Sheikhs who have passed on to Your mercy. We ask you to admit them into Paradise by Your grace.

O Allah have mercy on those martyred for Your sake, and grant them intercession for their people, and grant their families patience and a great reward. And have mercy, our Lord, upon all of the believers, the living and the dead. Believers, remember Allah and He will remember you, forget Him not, lest you be forgotten. Be grateful for your blessings and you will be increased therein.

وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ

And the remembrance of Allah is greater, and Allah knows what you do. (Quran ٢٩:٤٥).

So, stand up for prayer.