

On the importance of family gatherings

First Sermon

All praise is due to Allah. He made the family gatherings a cause for imparting compassion, mercy, amity and kindness to its members. I bear witness that there is no deity save Allah, having no associates. I also bear witness that our Master Muhammad is the Servant of Allah and His Messenger. May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, his pure blessed family and companions, and all those who follow them in righteousness till the Day of Judgment.

As to what follows,

I urge you, **O servants of Allah**, and myself to be aware that you are asked to obey Him, the Most Exalted, and implore to him: “**and those who say, "Our Lord, grant us from among our wives and offspring comfort to our eyes and make us an example for the righteous.**” (Al-Furqan: ٧٤).

Dear Muslims,

Amongst the numerous bounties Allah, the Most Exalted, bestowed upon us is the family. About it, the Almighty says, “**and Allah has made for you from yourselves mates and has made for you from your mates sons and grandchildren.**” (An-Nahl: ٧٢). Thus, it is our duty to show gratitude to our Lord for granting us such favour by giving much care to our family members. This is because our family is a trust in our hands and we are accountable before Allah, the Almighty, for its well-being.

Indeed, every blessing that Allah has granted us is a trust that we should fulfil. Our family is one of the most precious trusts, hence, taking care of and protecting its members is a responsibility that we should shoulder. This is because our family members are a source of stability, comfort and happiness for us.

Truly, the Prophets and the righteous Salaf set a great example for us in taking good care of their family members and offering them good advices. A good example on this is that of Luqman the wise who unremittently offered righteous advices to his son.

For instance, in the following Aya, he reminds his son with the might and power of his Lord in order to strengthen his faith in Allah and encourage him to always be mindful of Him: “[**and Luqman said**],

‘O my son, indeed if wrong should be the weight of a mustard seed and should be within a rock or [anywhere] in the heavens or in the earth, Allah will bring it forth. Indeed, Allah is Subtle and Acquainted.’” (Luqman: ١٦).

Luqman also enjoined his son to establish prayer and engage in good actions so as to be successful in his efforts and benefit his society. In like manner, parents should sit with children, listen to them, offer them advice and correct their misconceptions. Mutual consultation is also necessary amongst spouses.

O Servants of Allah,

One of the most successful means for nurturing a happy, stable, cohesive and tranquil family life is to gather family members together very often. This can happen in many forms. For example, eating meals jointly with family at home has a great positive impact on the family members as it brings about Allah’s blessing. Thus, as often as possible all the family members are urged to eat together around the dining table.

It was narrated in this regard that some of the companions of the Prophet pbuh said to him, “O Messenger of Allah pbuh! We eat but we are not satisfied.” He pbuh said, “Perhaps you eat separately.” They replied, “Yes.” Thereupon, he pbuh said, “If you gather together at your food and mention Allah’s name, it will be blessed for you.”

Another form of getting together with the family members is when the father designate a regular time for setting with his wife and children. This gives him a precious opportunity to engage with them, follow up the children’s learning progress and discuss family affairs and responsibilities together.

Dear Parents,

Please know that getting together with family members is a good deed and have tremendous benefits especially when such gatherings are engulfed with a warm atmosphere of love, kindness and care.

Truly, the Prophet pbuh was the best model for us to emulate in this regard. He always sat with his family members and listened to them.

It was narrated that Ibn Abbas, may Allah be pleased with him, said, “I stayed overnight in the house of my aunt Maimoona. The

Messenger of Allah pbuh talked with his wife for a while and then went to bed.”

The Prophet pbuh also sat with his daughter Fatima, may Allah be pleased with her, frequently. It was narrated that when she came to visit him he got up to (welcome) her, took her by the hand, kissed her and made her sit where he was sitting; and when he went to visit her, she got up to (welcome) him, took him by the hand, kissed him, and made him sit where she was sitting.

On another level, family gatherings are conducive to increasing cohesion amongst family members as they help the wife and children to understand father’s interests, concerns and way of thinking. The father will, likewise, get to understand the reasoning methods and interests of his wife as well as children. With such mutual understanding, they will become more close to one another and cherish positive feelings and emotional stability.

Undoubtedly, a happy home is built on the foundations of love, gatherings and mutual consultation. Good word of mouth, decent manners, setting good example and overlooking one another’s flaws are further factors to building harmonious and sympathetic relationships amongst the family members. This way, they will all be united and bound with a strong relationship. On the contrary, too many problems within the one family will lead to severing the bonds amongst its members.

Furthermore, it is also good to know that family get-togethers allow the opportunity for young boys to engage in constructive discussions and nurture in them self-confidence. In return, they will acquire confidence to express their opinion to the public.

It is also important to give girls equal chances to express their aspirations, feelings and ideas. This is conducive to strengthen the youngsters’ loyalty to the family, foster their sense of responsibility and nurture in them the culture of group work and transparency. Such happy and serene atmosphere will, ultimately, reflect positively on the coherence and unity of the whole community.

Another great benefit of family members getting together is that such meetings allow ample opportunity for cross-generation exchange of experience. This should also play a significant role in correcting

misconceptions that the youngsters may learn from outsiders as well as fulfilling their urgent requirements.

Through family gatherings, parents will also have the chance to promote their children's awareness in light of the contemporary fast paced changes. This can be achieved through exchanging ideas on such topics as homeland, work, school and family, just to mention a few.

On another account, parents-children sittings are precious opportunities for parents to instil noble values in their children's mind, educate them about their authentic traditions and customs as well as teach them good conducts.

Indeed, the Prophet pbuh set the best example in this regard. He invested such times in offering guidance, education and advocating good etiquettes. For instance, it was narrated that he pbuh said to a boy who was eating with him, "O boy! Mention the Name of Allah and eat with your right hand, and eat of the dish what is nearer to you."

The holy Quran emphasised the role of parents in nurturing good qualities in their children's mind and soul by presenting the praiseworthy advices of Luqman the wise to his son. Allah, the Most Exalted says, "**and do not walk through the earth exultantly. Indeed, Allah does not like everyone self-deluded and boastful. And be moderate in your pace and lower your voice.**" (Luqman: ١٨-١٩).

On another note, through family gatherings, a father will get the chance to address any disputes that may arise amongst his children and remove their root causes. By so doing, they will foster family cohesion and, ultimately, that of the community in general.

With this in mind, let us seek Allah's grace to make our family and offspring a source of happiness for us. May Allah also continue blessing our homes with compassion and mercy.

We pray to Allah the Almighty to guide us all to obey You and obey Your Messenger Muhammad pbuh and obey those You have commanded us to obey in line with Your orders: "**O you who have believed, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you.**" (An-Nisaa: ٥٩).

May Allah direct us all to the blessings of the Glorious Quran and the Sunna of His Messenger pbuh.

I say this and ask Allah for forgiveness for me and you, so invoke Him for forgiveness, for He is the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful.

Second Sermon

All praise is due to Allah, the Lords of the Worlds. I bear witness that there is no deity save Allah, having no associates. I also bear witness that our Master Muhammad is the servant of Allah and His Messenger. May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon our Master Muhammad, his pure family, companions, and all those who follow them in righteousness till the Day of Judgment.

As to what follows,

Please be aware, **O Worshipers that** the most important thing we should advise each other about is obeying Allah, the Most Compassionate, and encourage our family members to set together very often. Such gatherings play a significant role in creating strong bonds amongst one's own family members, in particular, as well as those with their kin and kith, in general.

One way to achieve this is by setting a routine to gather family members and relatives on Fridays. This way, we will set for our youngsters a model for cohesion and cooperation amongst the members of the community, following in this the Almighty's order: **"and cooperate in righteousness and piety."** (Al-Maida: ۴).

It is, therefore, your responsibility, dear parents, to develop a routine of sitting regularly with your wives and children, boys and girls.

In like manner, it is your duty, dear children, to help your parents in holding such family gatherings and make sure to take part in them.

That is said, please bear in mind that you are instructed to invoke peace and blessings on the Prophet pbuh. The Messenger of Allah pbuh said, "For everyone who invokes a blessing on me will receive ten blessings from Allah."

O Allah, please confer Your blessings and grant peace upon our Prophet Muhammad pbuh, his family and all of the companions.

O Allah, we seek Your grace to grant us success in protecting our family and supporting our children, O Lord of the Worlds.

May Allah have mercy on the honourable martyrs of our country and those of the coalition and gather them with the righteous. May Allah make their dwelling with the ones upon whom Allah has bestowed favour of the prophets and the steadfast affirmers of truth, O the Most Gracious the Most Forgiving.

O Allah, please grant the best reward for the families of the martyrs and offer them patience and solace. May Allah grant victory to the soldiers of the Arab Coalition who gathered to restore the rights to their owners. O Lord, please be by their side and guide the Yemeni people to everything that is good. O Allah, make them rally for the word of truth and legitimacy, and bless them with welfare and stability, O the Most Generous.

O Lord, we beseech You to bless all the Muslim countries with stability and peace.

May Allah be pleased with the Rightly Guided Caliphs: Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman and Ali, and all of the Companions.

O Allah, may we ask You for all that is good, in this world and in the Hereafter. O Allah, we seek Your grace to admit us, our parents, whoever has done a favour to us and all Muslims to Your Paradise.

May Allah grant success and continued health and care to the UAE President HH Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan. May Allah also ensure success to his Vice-President, trustworthy Crown Prince and his brothers, Their Highnesses the Rulers of the Emirates.

O Allah, please forgive all of the Muslims, men and women, living and dead. May Allah have mercy on Sheikh Zayed, Sheikh Maktoum and the Late UAE Sheikhs. O Lord, forgive and show mercy on our parents, relatives and whoever has done a favour to us.

May Allah accept from all those who pay Zakat, compensate for them and bless their provisions.

O Allah, we pray to You to grant Your forgiveness and reward to who built this mosque and to his or her parents as well as to anyone who gave to this mosque.

O Allah, we also supplicate to You to forgive whoever built a mosque where Your name is remembered or donated a Waqf that

goes for the best interest of Your servants or the benefit of their offspring.

O Allah, make this gathering one of compassion, and our dispersion after it one that is infallible. O Allah, do not let anyone amongst us be deprived or desperate.

We pray to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds, to protect the UAE against any of temptations, both apparent and hidden, and continue blessing the UAE with safety and security.

Our Lord, give us in this world that which is good and in the Hereafter that which is good, and save us from the torment of the Fire.

O Allah, we implore you to send upon us wealthy rain and make us not amongst those who are desperate. O Allah, relieve us! O Allah, relieve us! O Allah, relieve us! O Lord, provide us from the blessings of the sky a beneficial rain and make our crops grow.

O Servants of Allah “indeed, Allah orders justice and good conduct and giving to relatives and forbids immorality and bad conduct and oppression. He admonishes you that perhaps you will be reminded.” (An-Nahl: ٩٠).

Remember Allah and He will remember you. Be grateful of His benevolence and He will increase His blessings to you. Allah says, **“and establish prayer. Indeed, prayer prohibits immorality and wrongdoing, and the remembrance of Allah is greater. And Allah knows that which you do.”** (Al-Ankaboot: ٤٥).