



The General Presidency for the Affairs of  
the Grand Holy Mosque and the Prophet's Holy Mosque

Translation of the Two Holy Mosques Khutbahs  
A Joint Project



Al-Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University  
College of Languages and Translation

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## **Ethics of Commiseration**

### **Khutbah Topic**

His Eminence Sheikh Saud Al-Shuraim –may Allah protect him– delivered this Friday khutbah entitled “**Ethics of Commiseration**” in which he talked about commiseration and pointed out that such an attribute would bring about unity within the community. He presented evidence showing that Muslims feel strongly for each other and argued against the allegation that commiseration is made possible solely through money.

### **Part One**

Praise be to Almighty Allah! He is the First and the Last; the Manifest and the Hidden. There is no deity except Him; He is the Creator of everything and the Guardian of every single creature. No vision can grasp Him, but His Grasp is over all vision. He is the All-Gentle, the All-Knowing. I bear witness that there is no deity except Allah alone with no associate, and that Muhammad is Allah’s Servant, Messenger, Chosen Friend and the Best of His creatures. He has conveyed the Message, delivered the trust, and exhorted the *Ummah*. He left us on the white and well-defined path where night and day are equally bright. None but the doomed may go astray. May Allah’s abundant peace and blessings be upon him, his righteous and virtuous family, his righteous and benevolent Companions and the *tabi’in* (the contemporaries of the Companions of the Prophet [May Allah’s *Salat* and Peace be upon him] after his death) who followed in their footsteps until Doomsday.

Now then,

The exhortation set forth for you and me is *taqwa* vis-à-vis Allah in private and in public, in dismay and in satisfaction. It is a torch to light the way and water to quench thirst. It is good company in loneliness and comforting chanter for the traveller. It is one’s safe haven from fear and sadness.

﴿The Day whereon neither wealth nor sons will avail, Except him who brings to Allâh a clean heart [clean from *Shirk* (polytheism) and *Nifâq* (hypocrisy)].﴾ [Ash-Shu’ara: 88, 89] ﴿No doubt! Verily, the *Auliyâ’* of Allâh [i.e. those who believe in the Oneness of Allâh and fear Allâh much (abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds which he has forbidden), and love Allâh much (perform all kinds of good



deeds which He has ordained)], no fear shall come upon them nor shall they grieve, Those who believed (in the Oneness of Allâh - Islâmîc Monotheism), and used to fear Allâh much (by abstaining from evil deeds and sins and by doing righteous deeds). ﴿ [Yûnus: 62-63]

Now then, O people!

In the hustle and bustle of life, when people are engaged in feverish race to collect the scattered pieces and fragments therein, they are in dire need for solidarity rather than separation, cooperation rather than letting one another down, and support for one another rather than languor and submission to the other.

In this day and age, there is a pressing need for morals that bring people closer together, not for interests that pull them apart. People need deeds more than they do money and words. What they need is heart-felt sympathy and friendship regardless of linguistic, territorial, gender or racial considerations.

In other words, should a Muslim sneeze in the east, his fellow Muslim in the west should hasten to pray Allah to bless him<sup>1</sup>. If a poor Muslim falls sick, the rich Muslim should pay him a visit, and if a weak Muslim is wronged, his strong fellow should support him.

Such is –O servants of Allah– the “commiseration” sought by every *Ummah* that is cognizant of its value, that clings firmly to it as a token of solidarity, and that is bent on making an unshakable bond out of it.

Commiseration –O slaves of Allah– is a noble feeling that bespeaks the purity of the one who practices it. A society that practices commiseration deserves to be united where sympathy, friendship, and pity take turns in caring for it so that it can resist catastrophes such as egotism which tears the social body into pieces.

This is exactly what the Prophet [May Allah’s *Salat* and Peace be upon him] meant by his hadith “***The parable of the faithful in their compassion, pity and sympathy is the human body: should part of it be afflicted with pain, the rest of the body would respond with sleeplessness and fever.***” [Narrated by Bukhari and Muslim]

Without commiseration, the parable of the single body cannot be achieved in the *Ummah*. Moreover, it cannot attain the sublime degree of success and sovereignty if some are

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<sup>1</sup> This refers to one of the obligations of a Muslim towards a fellow Muslim. When a Muslim sneezes and says “Al hamdulillah” (Praise be to Allah), it is the duty of the other Muslim/s in his company to respond to his sneezing by saying “May Allah bless you”.



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rejoicing and others are crying over what they have lost, if some are eating their fill and their neighbours are hungry, if some drink their fill and their neighbours are thirsty, if some enjoy fanciful attire and their neighbours are poorly dressed.

The Truthful and Credible Prophet [May Allah's *Salat* and Peace be upon him] said, **“He is not a believer, the one who eats his fill and his neighbour next door is hungry.”** [Narrated by Al-Ḥākim et al]

An insensitive and unsympathetic heart is a detrimental plight whose fire burns all virtues, and whose dirt buries compassion and sensibility. The loser, no doubt, is the whole *Ummah*, individuals and communities alike.

A society marked with the spirit of commiseration is definitely a positive society; otherwise it is purely negative. Why not try to train our souls to heed virtues and feel sympathy for others? Why not seek to set matters right, tolerate flaws, admit defects, and reach out to those who are set to do good? Why not give to the poor and help those who are in need but simply feel too modest and chaste to beg?

Now then –O servants of Allah– some of us may wonder how it is possible for a Muslim to commiserate with others albeit he has no money to do so! To answer this question, we say that it would be totally erroneous to believe that commiseration is pinned exclusively on financial ability. It is a feeling that emanates from the heart before the pocket. It is more an emotion than a physical action.

Some actions of commiseration require no money at all. For instance, it needs no money to pat an orphan on the head, walk in funerals, visit a sick person, smile to your Muslim brother, or console an afflicted person. There are so many forms of commiseration which require a living heart that is beating with love for others, that is cognizant of the reward of commiseration and certain that it leads to the midst of Gardens and Rivers (Paradise) in a seat of truth (i.e. Paradise), near the Omnipotent King (Allah, the All-Blessed, the Most High, the Owner of Majesty and Honour).<sup>2</sup>

In a *hadith*, the Prophet [May Allah's *Salat* and Peace be upon him] is reported to have said: **“Charity is due on the souls of all human beings at every sunrise.”** **“But whence can we get charity to give?”** they asked. **“Benevolence takes plenty of forms,”** he answered, **“glorifying and praising Allah, takbeer (saying ‘Allahu akbar’), tahleel (saying ‘lā ilaha illa Allah’), enjoining good and forbidding evil, removing harm off the road, helping the deaf, guiding the blind, giving directions, helping people in distress and the weak carry their load, etc. All these are given by way of charity payable on your soul.”** he concluded. [Narrated by Ahmad, Al-Nasā’i and Ibn Habbān]

<sup>2</sup> This is a reference to Surat Al-Qamar (54-55).



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It is, however, awfully strange –O servants of Allah– to have among the *Ummah* of mercy people so hard-hearted that they have wiped out the concept of commiseration from their lexical repertoire and their hearts have turned callous. Consequently, they would feel no grief for others' pain or sympathy with those crying for help. They would feel no pity for the needy; their hearts hardened and became senseless.

It is rather an obligation on the part of the Muslim *Ummah* not to glorify this worldly life with its Dinars and Dirhams and being oblivious of its orphans or *Miskins* (the needy)<sup>3</sup>. Thus, the *Ummah* will not be enslaved by aberrant thought when dealing with the other in terms of money, life, and feelings; for such a conduct will guarantee that the rich will treasure money and the poor hostility. In this case the strong will not give a hand to the weak, nor will the capable support the helpless. As a result, the needy and the weak will be lost in the midst of the hustle and bustle and subsequently crushed under the impact of cruelty and evil neglect.

A nation such as this will never be able to defeat its enemy, for it must first overcome its own desires: ﴿Nay, you prefer the life of this world (16); Although the Hereafter is better and more lasting.﴾ [Al-A'lā: 16-17]

The Prophet [May Allah's *Salat* and Peace be upon him] said one day to his Companions: "**Who amongst you is fasting today?**" Abu Bakr replied: '*I am*'; then the Prophet [May Allah's *Salat* and Peace be upon him] said: "**Who amongst you followed a funeral today?**" Abu Bakr said: '*I did*'; then the Prophet [May Allah's *Salat* and Peace be upon him] said: "**Who amongst you fed a poor person today?**" Abu Bakr said: '*I did*'; then the Prophet [May Allah's *Salat* and Peace be upon him] said: "**Who amongst you visited a sick person today?**" Again, Abu Bakr said: '*I did*'; then the Prophet [May Allah's *Salat* and Peace be upon him] said: "**He who does all this, he will be admitted into Paradise.**" [Narrated by Muslim]

Fear Allah, O servants of Allah, and hasten to revive the concept of commiseration by means of advice, encouragement, and by setting exemplary conduct through volunteer and charity work both as individuals and groups; you can do this by *Waqf* (religious endowments), *Wasāyā* (wills or testaments of donation), and cooperative organizations. Let us keep hold of this worldly life in our hands not in our hearts, and let us constantly remember that He who has granted us a smile is capable of taking it away and that He who has given us wealth can choose not to bless it for us: ﴿The life of this world is only the enjoyment of deception (a deceiving thing).﴾ [Āl Imrān: 185]

May Allah bless you and me by the Glorious *Qur'ān* and make its verses and wise sayings beneficial to you and me! This is what I have said. If it is correct, it is so thanks to

<sup>3</sup> This is a reference to 'Surat Al-Balad', verses 15-16.



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Allah, but if it is wrong, it is my own fault and Satan's. I ask Allah to forgive my sins, yours, and those of all Muslims, so ask Him for forgiveness, for He is Most Forgiving!



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## Part Two

Praise be to Allah for His blessings, and thanks are due to Him for His guidance and bounty!

Now then,

Observe *taqwa*, O servants of Allah, and keep in mind that Allah has created man “**into hardship**”<sup>4</sup>, that man is labouring towards his Lord with his deeds and actions (good or bad) and will meet Him<sup>5</sup>. Let it also be known to you that all humans will not be spared calamities nor will they escape life intrigues.

Therefore, the ethics of commiseration will form the best solace against these disasters; commiseration can help stop tears, and soothe heartbreaks. It is thanks to it that the Muslim community can be stronger and its weaknesses can be remedied. This will result in an increase in its cohesion, unity, and integration.

Throughout his life, man may not be free of complaint since it is a feature of life. However, such a complaint must be met with commiseration with the complainant in order to comfort him and share his grief.

Despite all of this, O you who is undergoing an affliction, you are ordered in the absence of a condoler to trust Allah, the Lord of the Worlds, for He –may He be exalted– is the Lord of the condoler himself and is the Most Merciful. Indeed, He may, perhaps, have taken something from you in order to give you more later, and has not given you something in order to protect you against its harm.

If it is neither this nor that, then it is an increase in reward (in the Hereafter) and forgiveness of sins. He who was unable to help you financially would not abstain from condoling you with his words or feeling your pain in his heart. In that case, you will feel that you are not suffering alone and that there are fellow Muslims who cry when you cry and feel sad when you are sad.

When reality goes dreary because there is no helper, then you should know that patience has consequences sweeter than purified honey: ﴿Only those who are patient shall receive their rewards in full, without reckoning.﴾ [Al-Zumar: 10]

Some people of the *Ansār* (patronisers/supporters of the Prophet in Medinah) once asked the Prophet [May Allah’s *Salat* and Peace be upon him] to give them (goods and financial support); so he did, then they asked him again for more, and he did give them till he used up what he had; then he said: “**What wealth I have I will not hoard from you. Whoever shows forbearance, Allah will help him. Whoever tries to be independent, Allah will enrich**

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<sup>4</sup> This is a reference to *Surat Al-Balad*, verse 4.

<sup>5</sup> This is a reference to *Surat Al-Inshiqāq*, verse 6.



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***him. Whoever tries to be patient, Allah will give him patience, and no one is given a better or vaster gift than patience.*** [Narrated by Ahmad]

This being said, do send (O you Muslims) your *salat* and peace upon the best and most honest of all mankind, Muhammad Ibn Abdullah [May Allah's *Salat* and Peace be upon him] the sole possessor of the Blessed Basin and the only interceder in the Hereafter. For Allah ordered you –O believers– after beginning by Himself and then His angels, who are praising His Sanctity, saying:

﴿O you who believe! Send your *Salât* on (ask Allâh to bless) him (Muhammad), and (you should) greet (salute) him with the Islâmic way of greeting (salutation i.e. *As-Salâmu 'Alaikum.*)﴾ [Al-Aḥzâb: 56]

O Allah! Send Your *Salat* (Graces, Honours and Mercy), Peace and Blessing upon Your Servant and Messenger, Muhammad, who has the brightest face and the most radiant forehead, upon the four Caliphs, Abu Bakr, Omar, Othman and Ali, upon all of his Companions, the *tabi'în* (the contemporaries of the Companions of the Prophet [May Allah's *Salat* and Peace be upon him] after his death) and those who righteously follow them till the Day of Judgement. O Allah! Be also pleased with us all, along with them, by Your Pardon and Generosity, O You, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate!

O Allah! Grant glory to Islam and Muslims! O Allah! Grant glory to Islam and Muslims! O Allah! Grant glory to Islam and Muslims and fail polytheism and polytheists (who associate partners with You), O Allah! Grant glory to Your religion, Your Book and the *Sunnah* of Your Prophet, and Your believing servants!

O Allah! Bring an end to the suffering of Muslims! Rescue those in distress, and help those indebted pay back their debts! Cure those of us and those of the Muslims who are ill! O You, Most Merciful, Most Compassionate!

O Allah! Grant us security in our homelands, and set right our *Imams* and leaders! O Allah! Entrust our government to those who fear You and seek Your satisfaction, O Lord of the Worlds!

O Allah! Guide our leader to say and do whatever You love and please, O You, the Living, the Everlasting! O Allah! Set right his retinue, O You, the Lord of Majesty and Honour!

O Allah! Set right the conditions of our Muslim brothers and sisters everywhere; O Allah! Set right the conditions of our Muslim brothers and sisters everywhere; O Allah! Grant them victory over their oppressors and enemies!



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O Allah! Guide us to what You love of words and deeds, O You, the Living, the Everlasting! O Allah! Grant our souls righteousness and purify them, for You are the best purifier; You (alone) are their Lord!

Glorified be our Lord, the Lord of Honour and Power! You are free from all that is wrongly attributed unto You! And may peace be upon the Messengers, and the last of our supplication is: praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds!