

واجب المسلمين في إسداء الخير للعالمين

عمر الفاروق عبد الله

Our Obligation As Muslims to Do Good to All People

Dr. Umar F. Abd-Allah

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

وصلى الله على سيدنا محمد

وعلى آله وصحابه الطيبين الأكرمين

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

God extol our noble lord and master Muhammad, his family, and his Companions
and grant them perfect peace.

قال الله تعالى: ﴿كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ﴾ (آل عمران، الآية 110). وكلمة (الناس) في هذه الآية عامة، فهي تفيد جميع الناس على مختلف أشكالهم وأنواعهم وأحوالهم: المؤمن وغير المؤمن، المطيع وغير المطيع. وفسر الإمام البخاري مفهوم (الناس) في هذه الآية بهذا العموم، فقال: "خير الناس للناس". وجاء مثل ذلك عن كثير من علماء السلف والخلف: أي أن أمة الإسلام ينبغي أن تكون خير الناس وأنفعهم وأرحمهم لجميع الناس.

God, exalted be He, says in the Noble Qur'an: "You are the best community brought forth unto humankind..." (3:110). In this verse, the word "humankind" is broad, general, and all-embracing. It includes all human beings in their diverse forms, types, and conditions. It refers to both the believer and the non-believer. It refers to those who obey God as well as to those who do not obey Him. Imam al-Bukhari interprets the meaning of "humankind" in this verse in such terms of comprehensive generality. He says: "[You must be] the best of [all] people to [all] people." Many Islamic scholars in the first and later generations have held the same view. They understood that we as the world community of Islam must constitute the best, most beneficial, and most merciful of all people to humankind as a whole.

وليس خيرية هذه الأمة مَفْخَرَةٌ نباهي بها غَيْرَنَا ونتكبر بها عليهم، وإنما هذه الخيرية أمانة كبرى ومسئولية ثقيلة، فالدنيا دارُ الخدمة، والآخرة دارُ الأجر. وكانت هذه الخدمة العامة غيرُ المقيدةِ دأبَ رسول الله، صلى الله عليه وسلم، قبل النبوة، وعند النبوة، وبعدها. قالت له أمُّ المؤمنين خديجةُ رضي الله عنها في بداية الوحي: "والله، إنك لتَصِلُ الرَّحِمَ وتَصْدُقُ الْحَدِيثَ وَتَحْمِلُ الْكَلَّ (أي إنك تتحمل كل ثقل في خدمة الغير) وتَكْسِبُ الْمَعْدُومَ (أي إنك تعطي الناس الشيء المَعْدُومَ عندك وتُوصِلُهُ إِيَّاهُمْ وتعين الفقير على الكسب) وتَقْرِي الضَّيْفَ وتُعِين على نوائب الحق.

Our status as "the best community brought forth unto humankind" is not a triumphalist boast. It is not a badge of arrogance that declares us superior to others. On the contrary, the excellent status God has given the Muslim community is a major trust we must keep and a weighty responsibility that we must bear. This world is a place of service, while the next world is the place of reward. General service to humanity in this world without restriction was the constant custom of the Messenger of God, God extol him and grant him perfect peace, before Prophecy came to him, on the advent of its coming, and for all time after that. Such service is the description that the Mother of the Believers, Khadija, God be pleased with her, gave of the Prophet when the first revelation came: "In certainty, by God, you [are a person who] joins the tie of kinship; you speak the truth; you bear every great burden [in serving others]; you give freely to people what you lack for yourself; you enable the poor to earn a living; you host your guests generously; and you help others withstand the calamities of bad fortune."

ومن آخر ما نزل من الوحي وداعاً لرسول الله، صلى الله عليه وسلم وتعظيماً لشأنه، ما جاء في خواتيم سورة التوبة: ﴿لَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا عَنِتُّمْ حَرِيصٌ عَلَيْكُمْ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَؤُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ﴾ (التوبة، 128). والخطاب عام في قوله تعالى: (لقد جاءكم)، وقوله: (عنتم) وقوله: (حريص عليكم)، بدليل التخصيص والاستثناء المفهومين من قوله تعالى بعد ذلك: (بالمؤمنين رءوف رحيم).

فأفادت الآية أن رسول الله، صلى الله عليه وسلم، أراد الخير لجميع الذين بُعث إليهم، السعيد منهم والشقي، المطيع منهم والعاصي، المقبل عليه بالصدق والمعرض عنه بالكذب. فعزَّ عليه عَنَتُ الجميع وليس المفلح فقط، وكان حريصاً عليهم جميعاً مع خصوص الرأفة والرحمة بالمؤمنين منهم.

The second to the last verse of Surat at-Tawba stands among the very last of the revelations sent down to the Messenger of God, God extol him and grant him perfect peace. It came down both as a final farewell to his community and as a universal declaration of his greatness: "There has indeed come unto you a Messenger from among your own. Troubled is he by what you suffer. He is concerned for you [and your well-being]: Unto the believers, [he is] kind and merciful" (9:128). The people addressed in the statements "there has indeed come unto you," "what you suffer," and "concerned for you [and your well-being]" are all the people in general to whom he was sent. The proof for this generality lies in the exception that is drawn at the end of the verse by the words: "Unto the believers, [he is] kind and merciful." In its entirety, this farewell verse indicates that—at the end of his Prophetic career as at the beginning of it—the Messenger of God, God extol him and grant him perfect peace, desired good for all humanity. This generality applies both to the felicitous among them and the infelicitous. It applies to those who obeyed and those who did not obey. It applies to those who received him in truth as well as to those who opposed him in falsehood. Likewise, the suffering of all of these people troubled him immensely. He was not just troubled by the suffering of those who believed in him, followed him, and met with eternal success. Similarly, God's Messenger, peace be upon him, was personally concerned for all humanity and its well-being, while showing special kindness and mercy for those among them who believed.

وقال تعالى: ﴿إِنَّ الْغُفَّينِ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ سَيَجْعَلُ اللَّهُ
لِلرَّحْمَنِ وَحْدًا﴾ (مريم، 96)، ومن تفسير ذلك أن الله تعالى يضع محبة
خاصة في قلوب المؤمنين الصادقين الصالحين، وهذه المحبة تدل على
صدق إيمانهم وإخلاصهم في العمل. وهي المحبة التي أشار إليها رسول
الله، صلى الله عليه وسلم، حيث قال: "لا يؤمن أحدكم حتى يُحبَّ لأخيه
ما يحب لنفسه" (البخاري ومسلم)، وكلمة الأخ في "لأخيه" في الحديث

بمعنى الاخ في الإنسانية من بني ادم عموماً وليس الاخ في دين الإسلام فقط، وجاء ذلك في شروح كثيرة. وصرح رسول الله، صلى الله عليه وسلم، بذلك المفهوم العام في رواية أخرى بسند جيد: "لا يؤمن أحدكم حتى يحب للناس ما يحب لنفسه"، وليست هذه المحبة مجرد الشعور بالتلطف في القلب نحو المحبوب، وإنما هي إرادة جلب المنافع له ودفع المفسد عنه والسعي في سبيل ذلك. وعلى أساس ذلك عرّف سلطان الأولياء وشيخ الإسلام الشيخ عبد القادر الجيلاني مبدأ الإحسان في هذا الدين بأنه: "الصدق مع الحق وحسن الخلق مع الخلق".

God, exalted be He, says in the Noble Qur'an: "Surely those who believe and perform righteous deeds, for them shall the Compassionate [Lord] ordain [a special] love" (19:96). One of the meanings of this verse is that God, exalted be He, shall place a special type of love in the hearts of the truthful and upright believers. This love will be a testimony to the truthfulness of their faith and the sincerity of their deeds. This special love is the one indicated by the Messenger of God, God extol him and grant him perfect peace, when he said: "None of you believes until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself" (Bukhari and Muslim). The words "for his brother" in this Hadith refer to each believer's "brother in humanity among the children of Adam in general" and not just to his brother in the religion of Islam. This explanation has been given in many commentaries on the Hadith. God's Messenger, may God extol him and grant him perfect peace, also stated this general understanding explicitly in another transmission of the Hadith with an excellent chain of transmitters: "None of you believes until he loves for humankind what he loves for himself." This love is not just made up of feelings of affection toward the ones we love. Rather it requires that we have an active will to bring them benefits and divert from them harms and that we exert ourselves to accomplish that. On this basis, the Sultan of the Awliya', Shaykh al-Islam, al-Shaykh 'Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani, defined the principle of *Ihsan* (moral perfection) in this religion as: "Truthfulness toward [God] the Real and good character toward [all His] creation."

وقال بعض الصالحين: "من أحبَّ الله وأحبَّ الله فقد تمت له ولايته"، ومن علامة هذه المحبة الرحمانية أيضاً أنك تحب من أحسن إليك ومن لم يحسن إليك. وهذه المحبة من أجلِّ مقامات اليقين.

Some of the upright believers of this community have said: "Whoever loves God and loves [others] for the sake of God, his/[her] sainthood has attained perfection." One of the signs of this perfected love that God, the Compassionate, confers upon us is that we love those who do good to us just as we love those who do not do good to us. Such a love belongs to the most illustrious stations of certainty [of belief].

وقال الله تعالى في شأن نبيه الكريم، صلى الله عليه وسلم: ﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ﴾ (الأنبياء، الآية: 107)، وتنكير كلمة (رحمة) في الآية يفيد أن الرحمة التي بُعث بها النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم رحمةً غير معهودة، فهي فوق كل وصف.

God, the Exalted, says regarding the eminence of His noble Prophet, may peace be upon him: "And We sent thee not, save as a mercy unto the worlds" (The Prophets, 21:107). The use of the indefinite grammatical form in this verse in the words "a mercy" indicates [in Arabic usage] that the mercy that the Prophet, peace be upon him, was given and with which he was sent belonged to a unique type of mercy, not customarily known to us. It was a mercy so special that it exceeds our ability to describe it.

فُبُعث صلى الله عليه وسلم، برحمةٍ عظيمةٍ جداً شتملةٍ على جميع وجوه الرحمة الإلهية كي يكون الرسول رحمةً لجميع الناس والخلق في كل مكان وزمان. وكلمة (العالمين) عامة تعم كل ما يصدق عليه اسم (العالم). فهي تفيد جميع الناس وجميع الخلق. فالآية لم تخص عالماً من دون عالم، فلم يقل سبحانه وتعالى: (وما أرسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ خَاصَّةً)، فشملت هذه الرحمة النبوية العظيمة غير المعهودة المؤمن وغير المؤمن، والموحد وغير الموحد، والمطيع وغير المطيع، بل

شملت كلمة (العالمين) الجمادات والنباتات والحيوانات وجميع الكون. ومن مفهوم هذه الآية أن واجب الأمة أن تتخلق بخلق نبيها صلى الله عليه وسلم، وتتبعه فتكون هي الأخرى رحمة للعالمين، تجلب المصالح لجميع الناس ولجميع الخلق وتدرأ المفاسد عنهم.

The Prophet, peace be upon him, was sent with such an exceedingly great mercy that it included all the infinite aspects of divine mercy. Thus, the Messenger came as a mercy to all humankind and to all creation and all created things in all times and places. The words "unto the worlds" are general and not restricted to any particular type of world. The verse includes everything to which the word "world" [in Arabic, which is broader in this sense than English,] can be validly applied. It refers, therefore, to all human beings and to all creation and all created things. The meaning of the verse does not restrict itself to one particular world as opposed to another. God, glorious and exalted be He, did not say, for example: "We sent thee not, save as a mercy to the believers or to your community in particular." Thus, this universal and uncustomary Prophetic mercy, which is beyond anything we know or have experienced, includes the believer as well as the disbeliever. It includes the person who believes in God's oneness and the one who does not believe in it. It includes the person who obeys God but also the person who does not obey Him. Indeed, the [Arabic] word "the worlds" includes the mineral, plant, and animal kingdoms and everything in the universe. Therefore, part of what we must understand from this verse—as believers—is that it is our obligation as the world Muslim community to take on, to follow, and to live by the traits of the Prophet's character, God extol him and grant him perfect peace. Thus, we too must strive to be "a mercy unto the worlds." We must seek to bring benefits to all people and to all creation and we must actively ward off harm from them.

وقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: "إنما أنا رحمةٌ مُهداة".
فزين الله نبيه الكريم صلى الله عليه وسلم بالرحمة في جميع أقواله وأفعاله وشماله. ومن ذلك أنه لم يكن سبباً ولا لعناً. جاء في صحيح مسلم أنه (قيل: يا رسول الله، ادع على المشركين. قال: إني لم أبعث لعناً وإنما بُعثت رحمةً). وينبغي أن تكون أمته رحمة لجميع الناس أيضاً فلا ينبغي أن نتعهد السب واللعن والدعاء على الناس. بل من الرحمة الإلهية أن ندعوا حتى لأعدائنا بالتوبة والهداية والصلاح. بل هو من الحكمة أيضاً، فإننا كما قال بعض العلماء عندما ندعوا على من

عادانا وأساء إلينا فكاننا بذلك نطلبُ من الله تعالى أن يزيدَهم شراً وعدواناً وطغياناً وإساءة إلينا. ولعل بعض الكوارث التي نزلت بنا اليوم هي بسبب ما تعاوده بعض المسلمين من الدعاء على كل من عادانا ولا سيما بالمكبرات في المناسبات الدينية. وقال رسول الله، صلى الله عليه وسلم لأُم المؤمنين عائشة رضي الله عنها: "يا عائشة، إن الله رفيق يحب الرفق ويعطي على الرفق ما لا يعطي على العنف وما لا يعطي على سواه".

The Prophet said, God extol him and grant him perfect peace: "I am naught but a [special] mercy freely bestowed [as a gift by God]."

God adorned His noble Prophet, peace be upon him, with mercy in all of the things he said, everything he did, and in each and every one of his perfect attributes. One aspect of this perfection of mercy is that the Prophet, peace be upon him, never had the habit of insulting or cursing others. It has been authentically transmitted in *Muslim* that it was once said [to the Prophet]: "O Messenger of God, supplicate [God] against the idolaters." The Prophet replied: "I was not sent as one who is given to cursing. Rather, I was sent as a mercy." It is to be expected that this world community of Islam of ours also be a great mercy to humankind. We should never make it our habit to speak abusively of others or to curse them, even our enemies. Nor should we make supplications [to God] against them. On the contrary, it is part of the divine mercy which we are meant to embody that we make supplications [to God] for our enemies and ask Him to open their hearts to repentance, to give them guidance, and to make them good and upright. This is also a token of wisdom as well. For, as some great scholars have said, when we make supplications against those who are our enemies and have done us wrong, it is as if we were [actually] asking God, exalted be He, to increase the evil of our enemies, the enmity they have for us, and the transgression and great harm they do. Without doubt, many of the catastrophes that afflict our community at this moment are because of the habit that some Muslims have adopted of making [furious and fiery] supplications against our enemies, especially over microphones on religious occasions. God's Messenger, peace be upon him, said to 'A'isha, the Mother of the Believers, God be pleased with her: "A'isha, God is truly gentle. He gives in return for gentleness what He does not give in return for harshness and what He does not give in return for anything else."

وقال الله تعالى في كتابه العزيز: ﴿وَكذلك جعلناكم أمة وسطا﴾

لتكونوا شهداء على الناس ويكون الرسول عليكم شهيدا﴾

(البقرة، 2، الآية: 143). ومعنى ذلك أن أفراد هذه الأمة ينبغي أن يكونوا خياراً وعدولاً كما كان الصحابة الكرام، رضي الله عنهم، والسلف الصالح خيار الناس وغاية في العدالة، و(الوسط) من الناس في كلام العرب هو الفاضل صاحب الخصال المحمود لوقوعها بين طرفي الإفراط والتفريط. ولذلك قيل: (خير الأمور أوسطها). ووصف رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، بأنه كان وسطاً في قومه، أي أنه كان خيارهم خلقاً وخلُقاً، نسباً وحسباً، ومن كل وجه، فهذه الآية تفيد مثل ما أفاده

قوله تعالى: ﴿كُنتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ﴾

God, exalted be He, says in the glorious Qur'an: "Thus did We make you a middle community, that you may be witnesses for humankind and that the Messenger may be a witness for you..." (The Cow, 2:143). This means that each individual member of our community should strive to be among the very best and the most just of all people. We should be like the righteous Companions, God be pleased with them, and the upright members of the first generations [of Muslims], who ranked among the very best of humankind in all times and were epitomes of goodness and justice. The word "middle" when applied in Arabic usage to people refers to those human beings who are the most excellent and have the most praiseworthy attributes. It implies that their excellence rests in the fact that they always fall in the middle between the two extremes of either going too far in excessiveness or of not doing enough out of lack of concern and negligence. For this reason, it is also said [in Arabic]: "The best of matters are those that belong to the middle." The Messenger of God, God extol him and grant him perfect peace, was also described as being of "the middle" with regard to his people. This meant [in Arabic] that he was the very best of them in outward form and inward character. It implied that he had the best lineage among them and that he had earned and was worthy of the highest honor. It meant that he was the most excellent from every standpoint. Thus, this verse conveys a meaning similar to that of the verse discussed at the beginning: "You are the best community brought forth unto humankind..." (The House of 'Imran, 3:110).

ومن معاني قوله تعالى في الآية: (لتكونوا شهداء على الناس)، أي لتكونوا قوامين للناس بالقسطِ بتنبيه الغافلين منهم إلى صدق التوجه إلى الله وإلى الحق وإلى الخير. (ويكون الرسول عليكم شهيداً) أي حفيظاً لكم بإرشاده وحسن سيرته، صلى الله عليه وسلم، عن طرق الإفراط والتفريط.

One of the meanings of this verse when it says: "[so] that you may be witnesses for humankind" is that, as Muslims, we should be upholders of fairness and justice among ourselves and among all people. We must take the hand of the ignorant and the negligent and draw their attention to what will enable them to turn to God in truthfulness. We must guide them to the truth and to what is good. As for the remainder of the verse: "and [so] that the Messenger may be a witness for you...", it is said that it means: "so that the Prophet, peace be upon him, be a protector for you through [your acceptance of] his right guidance and his life example so that you remain always in the middle and avoid the extremes of excess and negligence.

وقيل إن معنى قوله تعالى: (لتكونوا شهداء على الناس)، ليحفظ الله بكم جميع الأمم. فواجب المسلمين في الحفاظ على جميع الناس وإسداء الخير للعالمين بمَثَابَةِ مَقَامِ القرآن الكريم في الهيمنة على الكتب السماوية السابقة والرسائل النبوية السالفة: ﴿وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَمُهَيْمِنًا عَلَيْهِ...﴾ (المائدة، 5، الآية: 48). فينبغي أن يكون المسلم هو الحل وليس المشكلة. وبانحطاط المسلمين تخسر الدنيا بأسرها خسارة عظيمة.

It is also said that part of the meaning of "[so] that you may be witnesses for humankind" is so that God make you a protection for all other human communities. Thus, it is an obligation for Muslims to seek to bring about the protection and well-being of all people and to do good to them just as it is of the nature of the Qur'anic revelation to be "a protector over" all the heavenly books that preceded it and the Prophetic dispensations that came before it. God says: "And We have sent down unto thee the Book in truth, confirming the Revelation that came before it, and as a protector of it..." (The Table Spread, 5:48). Thus, a Muslim is always meant to be the solution and not the problem. By virtue of our decline as a middle community, we and all the world around us have indeed taken a great loss.

ومن معاني هذه الآيات وغيرها من الأدلة أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، أهل أُمَّتِهِ لتكونَ رحمةً للعالمين وأمةً وسطاً وخير أمة أخرجت للناس. فقد هدانا لكل ما نحتاج إليه لنقوم بهذه الأمانة. فبِاتِّبَاعِ هُدْيِهِ وَالتَّخَلُّقِ بِخُلُقِهِ أصبحنا خير الناس لجميع الناس، وقال البوصيري:

Among the meanings of these and similar verses in the Qur'an and statements of the Prophet, peace be upon him, is that they indicate that God's Prophet, may God extol him and grant him perfect peace, fully taught us and prepared us as his community to be a special mercy to the worlds like himself and to constitute a middle community. It is by the blessing of following in the Prophet's footsteps that we become the best of all communities brought forth for humankind. The Prophet guided us to everything that we need for that purpose so that we may keep the trust that was given us. For this reason, we can only hope to become the best of all human communities to the degree that we take on the Prophet's good character and follow his eternal example. Imam al-Busiri says:

And when God called [the Prophet], who [in turn] called us to [God's] obedience/
As the best of [all] Messengers, we became the best of all communities.

وكان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، بسيرته الحكيمة وسنته الكريمة
الحل لكل مشكلة، وأمثلة ذلك كثيرة جداً. منها أن المؤمنين من بني أوس
والخزرج، رضي الله عنهم، دعوا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إلى
الهجرة وهم يطلبون حلاً للحرب الأهلية التي قامت أجيالاً بينهم وبين
حلفائهم من اليهود حتى بلغت أقصى شدتها بحرب البعث. وحقَّق
رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم هذه المعجزة السياسية بعد قدومه إلى
المدينة بوضع الدستور المشهور بينهم المعروف بالصحيفة والميثاق،
وتتابعت معجزات سيرته الحكيمة، صلى الله عليه وسلم، حتى تمَّ ذلك
في آخر أيامه بتوحيد القبائل العربية لأول مرة في التاريخ ووضع أسس
الخلافة الراشدة.

By virtue of his wise conduct in life and his noble pattern of behavior, the Messenger of God, God extol him and grant him perfect peace, was in fact the solution to every problem. Examples of this reality are many. Among them is the fact that the believers from the Medinese tribes of al-Khazraj and Aws (the Helpers), may God be pleased with them, invited God's Messenger, peace be upon him, to make the *hijra* (migration to Medina) because they were urgently in need of a solution for the endemic civil war that had plagued their large oasis settlement for generations. The civil war had engulfed not only their two tribes but also their allies among the various Jewish tribes of Medina. The civil war culminated in the bloody Battle of al-Bu'ath only a few years before the Prophet's coming to Medina. The Messenger of

God, God extol him and grant him perfect peace, brought this political miracle to realization immediately after his arrival in Medina by laying down the well-known constitution between the tribes and clans of the city, which is known to scholars as the Constitution of Medina or, in Arabic, *Al-Sahifa* (the Scroll) and *al-Mithaq* (the Covenant). The Prophet's miraculous solutions to problems, peace be upon him, continued and followed one upon another until, at the end of his days on earth, he had brought about the unification of all the Arab tribes for the first time in history and he laid the foundation for the rightly-guided caliphate that would succeed him.

وَأَدَّتِ الحضارةُ الإسلاميةُ دورَ الإصلاحِ وتقديمِ الخيرِ لجميعِ الناسِ في
أجلٍ عصورها وربما جاءت بحلولٍ عجيبةٍ لمعضلاتِ المجتمعاتِ التي لم
يقدر على حلِّها غيرُ المسلمين. وكانت هذه الحلول من أهمِّ أسبابِ انتشارِ
الدعوة وقبولِ الناسِ للمسلمين في مشارقِ الأرض ومغاربها. نذكر من
أمثالِ ذلك إلغاءَ نظامِ الإقطاعيةِ في الأندلس وصقلية وجُزرِ البحر
الأبيض المتوسطِ بتطبيقِ الحكم الشرعي الحكيم (من أحيأ أرضاً مواتاً
فهي له)، الذي حرر الفلاحين النصراني وغيرهم وكان من أكبرِ أسبابِ
ازدهار المسلمين الاقتصادي في صدرِ الإسلام وثورتهم الزراعية المشهورة.

During its illustrious ages, global Islamic civilization played the role of a middle community among the world's nations. It often produced solutions and set things right among different peoples, bringing lasting good to humanity. Muslims often provided remarkable solutions for social, economic, and cultural problems that other peoples had been unable to bring about on their own. The solutions Muslims produced came to be among the most important reasons for the worldwide spread of Islam and the wide acceptance of Muslims as neighbors in the East, the West, and other regions of the world. An example of this is the abolition of the feudal system in Muslim Spain and Portugal (*al-Andalus*), Muslim Sicily, and other islands of the Mediterranean. One of the policies that facilitated the abolition of feudalism in Muslim Europe was application of the Prophetic injunction: "Whoever brings unused land to life, owns it." This ruling applied to vast stretches of fallow feudal land. It served not only Muslims but liberated the Christian peasantry and other populations as well. This uncomplicated distribution of empty land was one of the greatest reasons behind the great agricultural revolution and global economic prosperity that were hallmarks of Islamic civilization.

ومن أمثلة ذلك الخير العام الذي قدَّمه المسلمون (القرى التجارية
المشتركة) التي أقامها المسلمون في غرب إفريقيا في وقتٍ مبكرٍ كما بين

ذلك المؤرخ John Ralph Willis فهذه القرى التجارية المتميزة أمكنت المسلمين من تحمّل الخسائر الاقتصادية والاستمرار بالتجارة العالمية رغم الظروف الصعبة التي واجهتهم في غرب إفريقيا حتى حولوا المنطقة كلها إلى سوق دولية خصبة وأحدثوا وسائل الاتصال بين جميع نواحي المنطقة والعالم الخارجي فوضعوا الأسس الاقتصادية والثقافية التي قامت عليها كل من مملكة غانا في آخر قرونها ثم مملكة مالي التي كانت من أغنى وأقوى دول العالم في أيام الملك المشهور مانسا كانكان موسى Mansa Kankan Musa في القرن الرابع عشر الميلادي ثم بعد ذلك مملكة سونغهاي Songhay.

Another example of the great, general good that Islam, as a middle community, produced for the world were the "trading village cooperatives" that Muslims established in West Africa from an early time as has been shown by the historian John Ralph Willis. These unique trading village cooperatives enabled Muslim artisans, farmers, traders, merchants, and others to withstand the economic difficulties, dangers, and burdens that the ancient tribal order of West Africa imposed upon them prior to the region's unification as a single organic economic system under Muslim leadership. The village cooperatives ultimately served to connect West Africans to the markets of the greater Islamic world beyond and enabled them to become active partners in world trade. After several generations, these Muslim trading village cooperatives developed a new economic infrastructure in West Africa and converted the region into a rich international market. These developments also led to the creation of new means of communication and travel in West Africa that were connected to the global trade routes beyond. Ultimately, this remarkable achievement laid the economic and cultural foundations that ushered in the most glorious days of the Empire of Ghana. It laid down the foundations of the great Empire of Mali, which succeeded Ghana and became one of the richest and most powerful of nations on earth, especially under its celebrated king Mansa Kankan Musa in the fourteenth century of the Common Era. It was on this same economic and cultural foundation that the Empire of Songhay was based, which appeared in the wake of the Empire of Mali.

وفي القرنين الثالث والرابع عشر الميلاديين اشترك المسلمون في وضع نظام اقتصادي عالمي فعال بالتعاون مع الصين كما بينت

ذلك المؤرخة Janet Lippman Abu-Lughod فوضّعوا ونظّموا الأسواق العالمية من أقصى الشرق في الصين إلى أقصى الغرب في الأندلس وأوروبا الشرقية والغربية وغرب إفريقيا. وجاء هذا النظام بأقدم نماذج للبنوك الدولية ونقل الأموال الضخمة عبر القارات عن طريق "الحوالة" وما يشبه الشيكات من غير حمل الذهب والفضة. ولكن من نوائب الحق في القدر أن هذا النظام الاقتصادي العالمي النافع انهار في القرن الرابع عشر الميلادي بغتة انهياراً تاماً بسبب انتشار الطاعون العالمي المعروف في التاريخ بالموت الأسود. لكن هذا النظام وضع الأسس التي قام عليها نظام البنوك والرأسمالية الغربية بتعديلاتها الضارة في القرن الخامس عشر وما بعد ذلك.

During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries of the Common Era, Muslims made a partnership with Imperial China that laid down the foundations of a dynamic global economic system such as the world had never seen before as has been illustrated by the historian Janet Lippman Abu-Lughod. This system connected and rationally organized a vast series of international markets, stretching from China in the Far East to the furthest reaches of Europe and Africa in the West. In collaboration with the Chinese, Muslims produced the oldest known models for what would become the bank and the international banking system of the modern era. The new economic order facilitated the movement of large amounts of capital across vast continents and seas by way of promissory money order (*hawala*) transactions that were similar to modern checks. These promissory notes relieved merchants from the onus and grave danger of carrying large and heavy amounts of gold and silver with them on their international travels. But, as a fearsome vicissitude of God's will in history, this remarkable global economic order completely collapsed and came to a sudden and unexpected end during the fourteenth century of the Common Era because of the rapid spread of the global plague of that century known in history as the Black Death (Bubonic Plague). Nevertheless, this relatively short-lived economic system of two centuries laid the foundations for the Western capitalist banking system, although it is not responsible for some of the harmful and usurious alterations that Europe would introduce during the fifteenth and subsequent centuries as it revived and modified this system, of which it too had been a beneficiary.

والخير الذي قدّمه المسلمون للعالم بمختلف العلوم والصناعات معروف ومُعترف به، ومن أهم عناصر ذلك الخير العام صناعة الورق بطريقة رخيصة نسبياً التي امتدّت من مدينة بخارى إلى الغرب وغيره

والتي أدت إلى ظهور حضارة الكتاب ومحو الأمية في بعض الأحيان والمناطق. وتبلور علم الرياضيات بين المسلمين عدة قرون آخذين من مصادر كثيرة مختلفة يونانية وهندوسية وفارسية وغيرها حتى قدموا الأرقام العربية إلى العالم ومفهوم الصفر وغير ذلك. ولولا هذه الهدايا العالمية القيمة لظل أكثر وجوه التقدم التكنولوجي التي نعرفها ونستفيد منها اليوم كالحاسب الآلي (وغيرها من مخض المستحيل).

The immense benefits that Muslims introduced to the world in the arts and crafts, various technologies, and the empirical sciences are well known and studied and universally recognized by historians. Among the most basic yet important of these gifts to humanity was the development of relatively inexpensive techniques for the manufacture of paper, which occurred in the Muslim city of Bukhara in Central Asia, borrowing but modifying Chinese techniques, which then spread to other regions of the world. The manufacture of inexpensive paper helped erase illiteracy, fostered the rise of a literate civilization, and ushered in much greater access to books than had ever been the case in the ancient past. Muslims had a special love for the mathematical sciences, which they synthesized from diverse ancient sources: Greek, Indian, Persian, and others. Among their many other mathematical achievements, Muslims offered Arabic numerals to the world, which included the revolutionary concept of zero. Had it not been for the gift of Arabic numerals and the concept of zero that underlies them, most, if not all, of the technological progress—including the computer and cell phone—which we rely on today would have been virtually impossible.

ومن المعلوم أن من أبرز سمات الحضارة الإسلامية حيث ما وجدت أنها فتحت أبواب التعايش بين الناس رغم اختلاف الأديان والأجناس واللغات وأنها شجعت التبادلات الثقافية والعلمية الفعالة. وعرف المسلمون بالدفاع عن الأقليات الدينية التي عاشت بين أيديهم. ومن أحسن الدراسات العلمية الحديثة لهذه الظاهرة المتميزة كتاب The Arts of Intimacy (فنون التأنس) التي ألفته العالمات Abigail Balbale و María Menocal و Jerrilyn Dodd. إن الكتاب دراسة جميلة بصور كثيرة لظاهرة التبادل الثقافي الفني الفعال الذي

قام في مدينة طَلَيْطَلَة الأندلسية بين المسلمين واليهود والنصارى المستعربين. ظهر الكتاب في سنة 2009م وحاز شرف أحسن كتاب ظهر في تلك السنة من قبيل جريدة The Times في لندن.

One of the essential characteristics of Classical Islamic Civilization wherever it flourished—as is well established in history—was that it opened the door for all people in its realms to live together and cooperate harmoniously despite their religious, cultural, ethnic, and linguistic differences. Islamic Civilization encouraged dynamic cultural and scientific exchanges. Muslims did not just tolerate different religious communities and minorities that lived among them. Muslims also protected those communities from their enemies and allowed them to flourish in their midst. Among the best recent academic studies of this unique Islamic cultural phenomenon is the book *The Arts of Intimacy* written by Jerrilyn Dodd, María Menocal, and Abigail Balbale. It is a beautiful study filled with many photographs. The book brings to light the remarkable phenomenon of the creative cultural and artistic exchanges that took place between Muslims, Jews, and Christians in the Andalusian city of Toledo (Tulaytila) in Muslim Spain. The book appeared in 2009 and won the honor of being designated by the *London Times Review of Books* as the best book to be published that year.

وأما في مجال التعليم، فقد أثبت الباحث المشهور George Makdisi قبل أكثر من ثلاثين سنة بكتابه الأكاديمي المتقن *The Rise of Colleges* "ظهور المدارس العليا في الإسلام والغرب" أن الجامعات الغربية المشهورة التي ظهرت في أوروبا في آخر العصور الوسطى لم تكن ظاهرة ثقافية مستقلة، بل تأثرت إلى حد بعيد بالمدارس العليا في الإسلام التي سبقتها ولا سيما المدارس الخاصة بإخراج الفقهاء والمفتين والمجتهدين. ومن آثار هذه المدارس على الجامعات الأوروبية الناشئة كما أثبت المقدسي مبادئ أساسية كحرية البحث وكتابة الأطروحة في مجال علمي مبتكر جديد ثم الدفاع عنها أمام العلماء وشهادة الدكتوراة التي تنال بذلك، والنظام المعروف بالكرسي الجامعي المنتشر في الغرب مأخوذ من كراسي التعليم في العالم الإسلامي.

As for education, the famous academic researcher George Makdisi showed more than thirty years ago in this carefully documented academic work *The Rise of Colleges* which is about the appearance of schools of higher education in the Islamic world and the medieval West, that the famous Western universities that appeared in Europe at the end of the Middle Ages were not an independent cultural phenomenon. Rather, these Western universities were influenced deeply and in great detail by the schools of higher learning that preceded them in the Islamic world, especially the legal colleges (*madaris*) that were designed to produce authorized scholars of Islamic law (*fuqaha*), jurisconsults (*muftis*), and independent scholars who sought solutions in Islamic law to new and unprecedented problems (*muftahiks*). Among the vestiges of these legal colleges in the developing universities of Europe—as Makdisi has shown—were the affirmation of fundamental principles such as academic freedom, the institution of writing the doctoral dissertation in an original area of study, the subsequent defense of the dissertation before a committee of qualified scholarly peers, and even the Ph.D. degree itself, which the graduate student attained through such labors. The tradition known as "the university chain," which spread throughout the West, was also taken from the "lecture chairs" that were established earlier in Islamic colleges and remain in some Muslim countries until today.

ثم أثبت الأستاذ المقدسي في كتابه *The Rise of Humanism* "ظهور الإنسانية" أن الفلسفة المعروفة بالغرب بالإنسانية والتي كانت من أهم عناصر النهضة الأوروبية والتي ربما يفتخر بها الغرب اليوم أكثر من أي مبدأ آخر ويرى أنها من مزاياه الخاصة فلها أيضا جذور عميقة تعود إلى الحضارة الإسلامية ولا سيما إلى حلقات الأدباء والأطباء العلمية. ومن أدلة هذا التأثير ما كتبه Pico della Mirandola في أول كتابه المشهور "شرف الإنسان" الذي ألف في القرن الخامس عشر الميلادي. وكان Pico من أهم قادة النهضة المفكرين المبكرين. وكان على علم باللغات اللاتينية واليونانية والعبرية والآرامية والعربية. وكان أستاذه من المتمكنين من فلسفة ابن رشد. وقال Pico في افتتاح كتابه المذكور الذي يعرف في الغرب ببيان النهضة، وهو يخاطب أباء الكنيسة: (لقد قرأت، أيها الآباء المحترمون، في كتب العرب أن عبد الله العربي (يريد بذلك عبد الله بن قتيبة) سئل ما هو أجدر شيء بالعجب على مسرحية

العالم، كما يقال، فأجاب أنه ليس ثمة شيء يُرى هو أعجب من الإنسان).

In a subsequent work, *The Rise of Humanism*, George Makdisi documented in detail that even the philosophy of man known in the West as Humanism has deep roots that go back to Islamic Civilization, especially to the academic circles of the chancellery scribes and literary figures (*al-udaba'*). Humanism came to constitute the presiding value system of the European Renaissance. It remains to this day the hallmark of Western ethics. Many Westerners take more pride in Humanism than they do in anything else Western, and they generally regard it to be a unique Western accomplishment. Among the many proofs in his book, Makdisi reminds us of the famous words of Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, who opens his early Renaissance essay *The Dignity of Man*, which is called the "Manifesto of the Renaissance," by addressing a body of the Catholic clergy and saying: "I have read, reverend Fathers, in the works of the Arabs, that when Abdalla the Saracen was asked what he regarded as most to be wondered at on the world's stage, so to speak, he answered that there was nothing to be seen more wonderful than man." Pico was among the most important figures of the early Renaissance. He learned Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Aramaic, and Arabic. His primary teacher was steeped in the Aristotelian philosophy of Ibn Rushd (Averroes). Abdalla the Saracen is probably a reference to 'Abd-Allah ibn Qutayba, the famous Islamic humanist who wrote a book on the dignity of man centuries before Pico's time.

وختاماً لهذا البحث، فقد قال ابن عطاء الله: (البدايات مجالات النهايات)، وقال: (من أشرقت بدايته، أشرقت نهايته). وكانت بدايات هذه الأمة الفاضلة عظيمة ومشرقة جداً ودامت هكذا أكثر من ألف سنة. فبشّرت بنهايات طيبة متماثلة. وقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: (أمتي أمة مرحومة)، وقال: (أمتي كالمنطر، لا يُدرى أوله خيرٌ أو آخره). فلا بد من أن ينتظر الخير والخيرية هذه الأمة المرحومة في آخرها كما ثبت ذلك لها في أوائلها.

In conclusion, Ibn 'Ata'-Allah says: "The beginnings are the manifestations of the ends." He also says: "Whoever has a luminous beginning will have a luminous end." The beginnings of this excellent middle community of Islam were truly great and luminous. They remained that way for more than a thousand years. These great and luminous beginnings give us the good news that great and luminous end-times are in store for us despite the darkness we find around us today. The Messenger of God, God extol him and grant him perfect peace, said: "My community is a community [that will be shown] mercy." He also said: "My community is like the [life-giving] rain. It will not be known which of it was better: the first of it or the last of it."

Thus, it must be that great good awaits our global community, which God will ultimately show special mercy, in its end-times just as that was the case in its first times.

وإنما كان البلاء الشديد لهذه الأمة في القرنين الماضيين بخاصة عصر الاستعمار وما بعد الاستعمار. وابتليت الأمة بكل أنواع البلايا والرزايا مما كاد أن ينسبها نفسها وتراثها وفضلها وكل الخير الذي كان متداولاً بينها. وكان هذا البلاء من موجبات حكمة الله تعالى وعذله في القضاء والقدر، فإنه كان من لوازم الحق أن تبتلى هذه الأمة بمثل ما ابتليت به الأمم من قبلها. بل كان لابد أن يكون هذا البلاء أشدّ لخيرية هذه الأمة بين الأمم وحتى يكون انبعاثها وعودتها إلى الحق والخير بعد الفساد العام من أكبر معجزات رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم في آخر الزمان. وقال الشيخ عبد القادر الجيلاني: (لا تهربوا من البلاء، فإن البلاء مع الصبر أساس كل خير: أساس النبوة والرسالة والمعرفة والمحبة).

Many of the greatest calamities that have overtaken this community have occurred during the last two centuries, the age of colonialism and post-colonialism. During this time, the global community of Islam was afflicted with every type of catastrophe and disaster to the extent that our community forgot itself, its tradition, its past, its excellence, and all the good that had once been a common part of it. This affliction was part of the dictates of God's eternal wisdom, exalted be He, and also reflects His justice and the measure of His decree and providential destiny. For it is one of the demands of truth and justice that our religious community be afflicted with tests similar to those that God willed to afflict upon the religious communities that were before us. Indeed, it was even proper that our affliction should be greater than theirs because of the special status this middle community enjoys among all other nations as the best community brought forth for humankind. Thus, the renewal of our community and its return to truth and goodness after the general corruption that have afflicted it will prove to be among the great miracles of God's Messenger, may God extol him and grant him perfect peace, at the end of time. Shaykh 'Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani said: "Do not flee from affliction. For affliction in conjunction with patience is the foundation of all good. It is the foundation of prophecy and messengerhood, of the true knowledge [of God] and the love [of God]."

والتجديد المتكرر في تاريخ الحضارة الإسلامية من أعظم عجائب هذه الأمة. وقال المرحوم الشيخ أبو زهرة: (إنما التجديد هو أن يعاد إلى

الدين رَوْنَقَهُ، وَيُزَالُ عَنْهُ مَا عَلِقَ بِهِ مِنَ الْأَوْهَامِ، وَيُبَيَّنُ لِلنَّاسِ صَافِيًا كَجَوْهَرِهِ، نَقِيًّا كَأَصْلِهِ). وكان الزمن الذي عاش فيه الشيخ عبد القادر الجيلاني - وهو عصر الحروب الصليبية - كثير الشبه بما يواجهه المسلمون اليوم. وكان الشيخ عبد القادر الجيلاني من أكبر أسباب الإصلاح والتجديد في هذا الجيل حتى قيل إنه لم يظهر في الإسلام بعد الخلافة الراشدة من أصلح هذه الأمة كما أصلحها الشيخ عبد القادر في زمنه. فقد ضَبَطَ أمر العلماء والمدارس وأصلح الصوفية ونظم صفوفهم، وفتح أبواب نهضة أهل السنة والجماعة الكبرى، وأخذ بيد الملوك العظماء عماد الدين زنكي وابنه نور الدين وقام بتربية الشاب الفتى صلاح الدين الأيوبي وجملة المجاهدين وبشر الشيخ عبد القادر مريده صلاح الدين بمستقبل كريم ودعا له بالتوفيق والحماية العجيبة من أعدائه، فجاء الخير بعد الشر العميم وظهرت أسباب الرجاء بعد اليأس. والعبرة من هذا الكلام هي أن نَحْرِصَ على أن يَعْرِفَ الناس أن اليأس غير مقبول شرعاً، لأنَّ حكمة الله بالغة ورحمته واسعة، قال الله تعالى: "وإن مسه الشرف فيئوس قنوط." وقال سبحانه: "قال ومن يقنط من رحمة ربه إلا الضالون". فلا بد أن تستعمل الأساليب السياسية والإعلامية لبعث الأمل في المسلمين ودفع اليأس والانحيار النفسي عن عقولهم.

Among the greatest wonders of our world community of Islam are its repeated renewals throughout the history of its civilization. In defining the phenomenon of renewal, the late Azhari shaykh Muhammad Abu Zahra said: "Renewal is simply that this religion be given back its [true] splendor once again, that all of the false illusions that have been appended to it be removed, and that it be displayed to the people again in its purity just like its [true] essence and unstained like its [original] foundation." The time in which Shaykh 'Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani lived was the time of the crusades. It was very similar to this time that faces Muslims today. Shaykh 'Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani was among the greatest reasons for the renewal and rectification

of his generation. His work was so great that it has been said that never did there appear in the history of Islam after the rightly guided caliphs a person who set the Islamic community aright more effectively than Shaykh 'Abd al-Qadir in his time. He brought order and sincerity to the ranks of the scholarly community and their schools. He disciplined the Sufis, set them right, and organized their ranks. He laid the foundations for the Great Sunni Renaissance. He guided the two great *mujahid* kings, 'Imad al-Din and his son Nur al-Din Zangi. He personally raised and supervised Salah al-Din al-Ayubi from his youth and directed the jihad movement against the crusaders. He gave Salah al-Din good news of an illustrious future in store for him and asked God to give Salah al-Din ultimate success and to protect him miraculously from his enemies. Ultimately, great good came again to this community after the general evil that had encompassed it, and there appeared real reasons for hope after a long period of darkness and despair. The objective of our saying this is that we all endeavor to make our people understand that, according to the *shari'a*, despair is not acceptable. God's wisdom is all-encompassing and his mercy is vast. God, exalted be He, says: "Man wearies not of supplicating for good, and if evil befalls him, he is despondent, despairing" (Expounded 41:49). God also says: "...Who despairs of the Mercy of his Lord, save those who are astray?" (Hijr 15:56). Therefore, we must use all means available to us through policy and the media to spread hope among the Muslims and remove depression and despair from their hearts.

قال الله تعالى في كتابه العزيز: ﴿وَسَارِعُوا إِلَى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ

وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ﴾ (آل عمران،

3: 133). وهذه المسابقة تستوجب العلم والعمل والتواضع والإيثار

والصدق مع الحق وحسن الخلق مع الخلق. فالعمل يحتاج إلى العلم

والعلم يحتاج إلى التوفيق، وقليل من الأدب خير من كثير من العلم من

غير أدب. وروي عن السلف الصالح: (من عمل بما علم ورثه الله علم ما

لم يعلم ووفقه فيما يعمل حتى يستوجب الجنة، ومن لم يعمل بما

يعلم تاه فيما يعلم ولم يوفق فيما يعمل حتى يستوجب النار). وكذلك

قيل: (إن العلم لا يهمل صاحبه، بل يهلكه هلاك الأبد إن لم يعمل به

ويحييه حياة السعادة الأبدية إن عمل به). ومن خير وجوه العلم والعمل

وأصدقها عند الله تعالى إسداء الخير للعالمين بالخدمة والمحبة على

منهج رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم.

God says in His noble Book: "And hasten unto forgiveness from your Lord, and for a garden whose breadth is the heavens and the earth—prepared for the reverent" (The House of 'Imran, 3:133). This spiritual hastening requires of us knowledge and practice, humility and the preference of others over ourselves. It requires of us to be truthful with God, the Real, and to have good character with His creation. Practice requires knowledge, and knowledge requires divine facilitation (*tawfiq*). A little bit of good courtesy (*adab*) is better than much knowledge without good courtesy. It is transmitted from the upright among the first generations of Islam: "Whoever puts into practice what he knows, God will give him as an inheritance the knowledge of what he does not know. God will give him divine facilitation (*tawfiq*) in what he does so that he earns the Garden. And whoever does not practice the knowledge that he knows will be deluded in what he does know. He will not be given divine facilitation in what he does so that he earns the Fire." It is also said: "Knowledge does not overlook the one who possesses it. Rather, it [either] destroys him with an eternal destruction if he does not practice it or it gives him eternal life in infinite felicity if he puts it into practice." Among the best types of knowledge and practice and the most truthful of them all in God's presence, exalted be He, is that we as Muslims seek to do good to all others by way of service and love according to the pattern of behavior established by God's Messenger, God extol him and grant him perfect peace.

اللهم بك نستعين فأعنا، وبك نستغيث فأغننا، وعليك توكلنا فاكفنا يا
كافي المهمات اكفنا أمور الدنيا والآخرة.

وصلى الله على سيدنا محمد وعلى آله وصحبه وسلم.

God we seek Your help, so help us. We seek your aid, so give us aid. We have placed our reliance in You, so be sufficient for us, O God, Who are the All-Sufficient in all undertakings of importance, suffice us in all our undertakings in this world and the next.

May God extol our noble lord and master Muhammad and his family and Companions and grant them perfect peace.