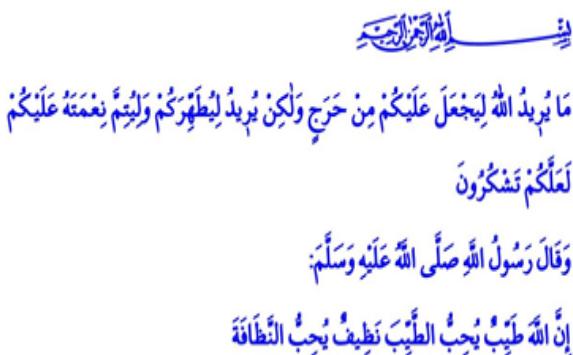


MATERIAL AND SPIRITUAL PURIFICATION: CLEANLINESS**Honorable Muslims!**

After commanding wudu (minor ablution), ghusl (major ablution), and tayammum (dry ablution), Allah the Almighty (swt) states in the Holy Qur'an: **"Allah does not intend to make difficulty for you, but He intends to purify you and complete His favor upon you that you may be grateful."**ⁱ

In the hadith I have read, our Prophet Muhammad Mustafa (saw) says: **"Allah is flawless from all kinds of imperfection, He loves his servants who are decent in their actions and words; He is clean, loves clean servants."**ⁱⁱ

Esteemed Believers!

Islam; is the religion of nature (fitrah) and life that encourages all kinds of material and spiritual cleaning. The universe is in a constant state of renewal and purification. All creatures on earth inherently try to be clean. Human being, however, has a special place and responsibility in terms of cleanliness among all other creatures as he is the most honorable of creatures. As a matter of fact, he is the one who both pollutes the nature and who will keep it clean.

Valuable Muslims!

When our Prophet (saw) received the revelation and was honored with the duty of prophethood after the seclusion period in the Cave of Hira, he was commanded: **"And your clothing purify. And uncleanliness avoid."**ⁱⁱⁱ It is not important whether the clothes are old, but it matters if they are dirty. Believers should be the exemplar of cleanliness, elegance and freshness wherever they are. When the Messenger of Allah

(saw) met a man with dirty clothes, he said, **"Could this man not find something to wash his garments with?"**^{iv}

In addition to cleaning the body and clothes, it is a religious and human duty to pay attention to the cleanliness of the environment and to keep clean the whole world that was made a place of worship for believers.

Honorable Believers!

Cleanliness also refers to becoming purified of non-material uncleanness. In this respect, it means for believers to protect their hearts, illuminated by Islam, from darkness and evil. It means recovering the heart from diseases such as arrogance, hypocrisy, envy, lie, stinginess, and embellishing it with beautiful traits such as humbleness, honesty, generosity, compassion, and decency. It means always turning towards the halal in everything they are engaged in. It means loading off the burden of sins by repenting for them. Our Lord Almighty (swt) says in the Holy Qur'an, **"Give glad tidings to those believers who repent, worship, praise Allah, travel for His cause, bow and prostrate in prayer for Him, and enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong, and observe the limits set by Allah."**^v

Esteemed Believers!

Being clean and decent is the requirement of our faith. Let us pay due attention to the criteria of material and spiritual cleanliness as ordered by our religion. As believers who hope for happiness in this world and in the Hereafter, let us be the exemplars of cleanliness and good morality. Let us give hope to others with our appearance; peace and reliance with our words and actions. Let our cleanliness be the evidence of our faith. Let us ensure that we keep our inside, outside, and surroundings clean.

i Ma''idah, 5/6.

ii Tirmidhi, Adab, 41.

iii Muddaththir, 74/4-5.

iv Abu Dawud, Libas, 14.

v Tawbah, 9/112.