

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ لِلَّهِ ، نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ ، وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا
وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا. مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللّٰهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ، وَمَنْ يُضِلِّ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ.
وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ.

All Praise be to **اللّٰهُ**.

We praise him and ask him for help and forgiveness. We ask him for protection from the evilness in ourselves and from our own bad deeds. Whom-so-ever God guides to the truth no one will lead astray, and whom-so-ever He leads astray, no one will ever guide.

I testify that there is no God but **اللّٰهُ** to whom there is no partner
and I testify that Muhammad **ﷺ** is his servant and messenger

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا قُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ
وَالْحِجَارَةُ عَلَيْهَا مَلَائِكَةٌ غِلَاظٌ شِدَادٌ لَا يَعْصُونَ اللَّهَ مَا أَمَرَهُمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ
مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ ﴿٦﴾

“O you who believe! Protect yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is people and stones, over which are (appointed) angels stern (and) severe. They do not disobey Allah in what He commands them, and they do as they are commanded”(S66, A6).



Dear brothers and sisters, ASA.

The topic for today's khutbah is one that is very close to our hearts. Because of its importance, I have devoted the whole khutbah for this topic only. It is to do with the way we park when we come to this centre. We have spoken about this issue on many occasions. We are literally blue in the face from talking about this issue, and it is an absolute shame that we still have to address this issue five years on. We have had to employ a security guard to sort the problem out.

Just imagine how the neighbours see us as Muslims. Muslims will only behave proper when a security guard tells them to do so. It seems that Muslims just do not seem to know, or worst still, do not seem to care about their parking habits and about their neighbours.

None of us would dare park illegally or block our next door neighbour's drive. However, we are more than happy to behave irresponsibly when it comes to the call of Allah. Do we really think that the call to Allah is a call to disrespect our neighbours, a call to be abusive or is it a call that should bring the best within us? Our neighbours do not know what the call to Allah means, they are not Muslims. Their understanding of what the Friday prayers is comes from what they experience from the Muslims as a result. All they see is that at the time when the Muslims are closest to Allah, they are most irresponsible, most abusive and most chaotic. What a beautiful message to none Muslims. If I was not a Muslim living next to this centre, I would run a mile from here on a Friday.

When we go home at night, we park properly in our drives. We do not block anyone, and no one dares block us. But, when we come to the house of Allah, we express our devotion to Allah by abusing our neighbours. We as Muslims tell our neighbours that they mean nothing to us when it comes to Islam. The Muslims are absolutely brilliant in telling the world around them that we care less about you. Can it be that Islam teaches us that our neighbours are of no worth and can it be that Islam teaches us that we have absolutely no obligation towards them?

As witnessed by our brothers and sisters, our neighbours are now fully aware that the clear message of Islam is that if you are a non-Muslim and you have the misfortune of being a neighbour to a Muslim brother or sister, your best option is to move. It is as if the Muslims that come to this mosque have no respect to the message or to the example of the Prophet(SAAWS). We all know the story of the Jewish neighbour to the Prophet(SAAWS) who regularly placed his garbage at the entrance of the Prophet's home. One day, the Prophet(SAAWS) missed the garbage, so he visited the Jewish neighbour to check on his health and his needs. This neighbourly act was enough to convince this man what the message of Islam entailed. It is the message of love your neighbour.

Somehow, this message has passed us by without leaving any trace on our conduct. The way we come into this mosque, and the way we park is simply diabolical. Last Friday, the security guard failed to turn up. Having had a few weeks of descent parking, the brothers and sisters felt that it was pay back time. The brothers and sisters behaved as if they wanted to teach our neighbours a lesson. They are telling our neighbours; don't be fooled by our good parking of late, it was just because there was a security guard and not because we are descent people. It seems that our brothers and sisters were waiting for their moment to punish our neighbours and punish us by being repulsive. The behaviour of our brothers and sisters was so bad that the council was given exactly what they wanted to block our plans of renovation.

Brothers and sisters, if you are happy with the condition of this centre, then by all means park where ever you want. I am quite sure that some of you would care less about this center and about the brothers and sisters that come here. Some of you may be getting intimidated by the tone of this khutbah and would respond by saying I do not feel that way. The problem brothers and sisters is that the way you feel is of little value when your behaviour does not match it. We are behaving like that person sitting at the bottom of the ship drilling away and making a hole. We are sitting there and drilling away and we think it is none of anyone else's business to tell us that what we are doing is wrong. We just cannot see beyond our nose that what we are doing is so wrong that that person is about to drown himself and in the process, drown everyone else with him.

Our behaviour on the streets outside this centre has been the cause of multiple complaints to the council. We have had to meet the local councilors on many occasions and take a lot of abuse from them while making excuses for the mindless minority in our community. The success or failure of our bid to renovate this centre will very likely depend on the opinion of our neighbours. As it stands, they would love to see the back of us. They have had enough of the bunch of reckless, senseless, selfish, arrogant Muslims. If I was a neighbour to this centre, I would have the same feelings. I, as a Muslim, have had enough, imagine our neighbours.

Enough is enough brothers and sisters. The majority of you who come early are most likely parking in a satisfactory way, but this is not the case for those who come later. Our neighbours are mostly elderly. They go out on the Friday lunch time for their shopping. They have health visitors attending, and occasionally there is a need for an ambulance. They have lived peacefully until we the Muslims showed up on their doorsteps. Then the abuse started. We have had episodes of brothers shouting and abusing our neighbours. We have had the drives of our neighbours blocked. We have had neighbours that could not get to the GP or to hospital because of our behavior, and so on.

Brothers and sisters, if any of you so far feels that I have no right in speaking to you like that, and that it is our right as Muslims to park in the way that we like when we come seeking the pleasure of Allah, then let me make it very clear. You are not the type of Muslim that we want to have in this centre. If you must block someone's drive, go to another mosque and abuse their

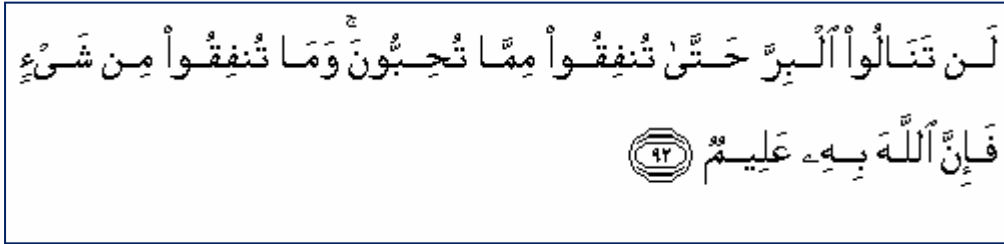
neighbours. Do not come here and abuse our neighbours. As a committee of this centre, we have a greater obligation to looking after our neighbours than to provide you with a place of worship. Our neighbours are a greater priority to us. If some of you cannot understand that and feel offended then so be it. We do not want you here abusing our neighbours. Go and seek the pleasure of Allah somewhere else.

We need to be clear that for those who are abusive in your parking, you are offending us as Muslims and you are offending our neighbours in the name of Islam. We cannot tolerate his any further. When I was told about the behaviour of some of us last week, I seriously considered that this mosque should stop offering Friday's prayers. If this is the only way we can look after our neighbours, then I would rather stop coming here and let our neighbours know that Islam is the "Deen" of compassion and neighbourly love. Another idea that came to mind was to continue with the Friday prayers but limit the whole episode to no more than ten minutes, or even to lock the door after 1.30, and send away late comers. I care about our neighbours. We should all care about our neighbours. If you do not wish to care about our neighbours do not come to this mosque.

You are wasting your time coming here. In fact, if you stay at home you may actually get more reward than coming to this mosque because you have not offended anyone.

In a hadeeth sahih, the Prophet(SAAWS) kept on reminding us as to the status of the neighbour to the extent that the sahabah thought that the neighbour would be included in the will. If we, the local Muslims of this community want to ignore the advice of our Prophet(SAAWS), what is the point of coming here.

Brothers and sisters, the point of this khutbah to us as Muslims trying to gain the pleasure of Allah can be summarized in this aya:



“You will not attain righteousness until you expend of that which you love. And whatsoever you expend, Allah surely knows of it” (S3, A92)

أَقُولُ قَوْلِي هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ لِي وَلكم

الحمدُ لله ثم الحمد لله. الحمد لله نستعينه ونستغفره ، ونعوذ بالله من شرور
أنفسنا وسيئات أعمالنا . أما بعد :

2nd Khutbah:

Brothers and sisters forgive me for getting on with this issue, but it is so important. It is not only about our neighbours and about our parking. It is much more serious than that. It is about us as Muslims. It is about our Islam. At the end of the day, our conduct is a reflection of us. If we continue to ignore the sanctity of our neighbours despite the clear principles in Islam, this tells us that our Islam is not good enough. Islam is the religion of “behaviour” and the religion of “interaction”. Our interaction with others is underpinned by the ethos of Islam. When our interaction is faulty, it is the message to others that Islam is faulty.

Islam is not simply about offering prayers to Allah, but it is about offering everything to Allah. Offering our behaviour to Allah is just as important. Islam is behaviour, and it is underpinned by praying:



“It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards East or West. Righteousness is to believe in Allah and the Last Day, the Angels, the Book, and the Messengers. Righteousness is to spend of your wealth out of love for Allah, for your kin, for orphans, for the needy, for the wayfarer, for those who ask, and for the ransom of slaves. Righteousness is to be steadfast in prayer, and practice regular charity. Righteousness is to fulfil the contracts which you have made, and to be firm and patient in periods of suffering and adversity, and in periods of conflict. Such are the people of truth and such are the Mutaqoon” (S2, A177)

When we put these verses into practice, we quickly recognize that it is not righteousness for us to simply come to this mosque and face east. Righteousness goes much further than that. We have to fulfil our contracts with our neighbours. We have to fulfil our contracts with Allah. We have to be steadfast and patient.

Because of the behaviour of the few, the Council is to introduce parking restrictions that would affect all of us. At the back are leaflets that we ask you all to take one. The Council has been consulting with neighbours to introduce double yellow lines and residents parking bays. If these go ahead it is going to make life difficult for all especially the elderly and those with children who use the centre. It will become difficult for them to come to this centre. By your actions, you are forcing Muslims away from this mosque, so think about it. If you have no consideration for our neighbours, at least have some consideration for our elders.

We are all aware that Islam defines two levels of sin; the minor sins and the major sins. Islam defines 70 major, or grave sins.

Number one is “Associating anything with Allah”

Number 2 is “Murder” and Number 4 is “Not Praying”

Number 6 is “Not fasting on a Day of Ramadan without excuse”

Number 10 is “Fornication and Adultery”

Number 12 is “earning Interest (Riba)”

Number 19 is “Drinking alcohol” and Number 20 is “Gambling”

Have I so far mentioned any grave sin that we feel happy with? Absolutely not!

Number 30 is “Frequent lying”

Number 39 is “Betrayal of trust” and Number 52 is “Offending one's neighbour”

Can we now see what we are doing? When we come to this centre to pray and we abuse a neighbour in the process we have committed a major sin. It is therefore certainly better for those who are offending our neighbours to stay and pray at home. They will gain more reward by doing so. It will be a win/win situation.

If however you want to make it a win/win/win situation, then come here and park as Allah has dictated for you to park and then pray with the rest of us.