

**Arab Republic of Egypt**

**Ministry of Awqaf**

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### **The Value of Respect**

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of all worlds, Who says in His Ever Glorious Book, "And indeed, you are of a great moral character." I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, and that Muhammad is His Servant and Messenger. May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him, his Household, Companions and upon those who follow their path to the Day of Judgment.

Adherence to virtuous morals and noble values is one of the most important pillars on which nations and civilizations are based. A civilization cannot be built in a sound manner and proceed to stability and excellence unless it is founded on morals and values. Allah, Glory be to Him, says, " You are the best nation produced [as an example] for mankind. You enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and believe in Allah."

Societies become cohesive and harmonious through their respect for and compliance with their values. A poet once said:

*Nations prevail as long as they preserve their morals*

*If their morals are gone, they perish*

It goes without saying that respect is one of the most significant human values that Islam calls for, and which every person wishes to be characterized with. Our purified religion urges us to adhere to all aspects of this value. Such aspects entail that man should preserve his integrity by

avoiding what may make him a target for vilification, suspicion or accusation. The Prophet (PBUH) said, " So he, who saves himself from these suspicious things, he saves his religion and his honor," and " It is not for the believer to humiliate himself."

These aspects also include showing respect those who are different in terms of faith, ethnicity or culture. This is to be done through honoring their physical and moral rights. The different other has the right to respect for his body, money, property, freedom, dignity and faith. Islam is indeed a religion that honors man and calls for respecting him. Allah says, "There shall be no compulsion in [acceptance of] the religion." He also says, " Allah does not forbid you from those who do not fight you because of religion and do not expel you from your homes - from being righteous toward them and acting justly toward them. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly." A clear example of this is when a funeral passed the Messenger of Allah and he stood up, and it was said to him: It Is a Jew. He said: 'Is it not a soul?'"

Respect likewise entails showing reverence for those who are senior to us in terms of age or status. The Prophet (PBUH) said, " He is not one of us who does not have mercy on our young and does not respect our elders." He also said "Treat people according to their status." A clear example of this behavior was when the Prophet ordered the Companions to stand up in respect for Sa'd ibn Mu'adh (May Allah be Pleased with him), saying, "Stand up in respect for your chief!" Omar ibn Al-Khattab is reported to have said, " Abu Bakr is our chief, and he emancipated our chief," meaning Bilal. Another case in point is when our Prophet (PBUH) asked his Companions a tree that bears fruit by God's will, and whose leaves do not fall and is like a Muslim. Ibn Umar said, "It crossed my mind that it could be the date-palm tree, but as I saw senior Companions, including

Abu Bakr and Umar observe silence, I did not deem it fit that I should speak."

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of all worlds, May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his Household and Companions.

One of the most sublime forms of respect is showing reverence for teachers and being dutiful to them, especially since Islam holds them in deep esteem and regard. Allah the Exalted has associated His testimony with that of scholars, saying, "Allah witnesses that there is no deity except Him, and [so do] the angels and those of knowledge - [that He is] maintaining [creation] in justice. There is no deity except Him, the Exalted in Might, the Wise." He also says, "Allah will raise those who have believed among you and those who were given knowledge, by degrees." The Prophet (PBUH) is reported to have said, "The inhabitants of the heavens and the earth and the fish in the depth of the water will ask forgiveness for the knowledgeable. The superiority of the learned man over the devout man is like that of the moon at night when it is full over the rest of the stars. The learned are the heirs of the prophets." A poet once said:

*Stand up for in (due) respect for your teacher, for a teacher's status  
is almost as high as that of a messenger*

How in dire need we are for respect to prevail in our societies, and for it to become a public culture among youth and elders, men and women so that society may advance and prosper, and that stability and cordiality may prevail!

O Allah, guide us to the best manners and preserve our nation and all world's nations!