

## حة حداد وعدام والمعادة والمعا

## From the Episcopal Office of Mar Mattai Beita d'Mshikha By the Grace of Alaha, Catholicos Patriarch

To the venerable bishops, clergy, and faithful children of the Holy Church: Shlama lukh!

Grace and peace be multiplied unto you from Maran, who has called us "with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace" (2 Timothy 1:9). May His light ever shine upon the household of faith.

Brethren beloved in Mshikha, as we stand upon the threshold of a new season in the life of the Church, our eyes are drawn to the words of the Apostle: "But one thing I know, that I forget the things behind me, and reach for the things before me; and I run straight for the goal, that I may obtain the prize of victory of the call of Alaha from on high, by Yeshua Mshikha." (Philippians 3:13, 14). The call to us should be very clear. We are to go forward with resolve, not in haste nor in disorder, but with proper and attainable goals that will strengthen the household of Alaha in conjunction with the guidance of our Teachers.

Let us not set our aspirations in vain ambition, nor weigh ourselves with burdens grievous to be borne, but let us fix before us tasks that may be achieved in faith, charity, and diligence. The Scripture teaches us that "Alaha is not the author of tumult, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints" (1 Corinthians 14:33), and thus every work that is set before us must proceed in order, guided by prayer and tempered by wisdom. We must guard jealously the simplicity of our holy faith, for the Apostle warns us: "I fear, lest, as the serpent beguiled Eve by his craftiness, so your minds should be corrupted from simplicity towards Mshikha" (2 Corinthians 11:3).

It is not by the weight of ceremonies, nor by the pride of human wisdom, that the Church endures, but by her steadfast devotion to the Word of Alaha and the pure confession of Mshikha. Let us then be vigilant that no unnecessary adornment, nor novel doctrine, obscure the plain and saving truth of the Gospel. The faith of the Church must remain ever accessible, clear to the little child and to the wise alike, for "the law of Mar-Yah is perfect, restoring the soul; the testimony of Mar-Yah is sure, making wise the unwise" (Psalm 19:7).

Our first goal must be the deepening of prayer, for it is written: "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17). Without prayer, no work prospers; with prayer, even small labours yield great fruit.

Secondly, we must strengthen the teaching of the Scriptures in every home, that the faithful may say with the Psalmist: "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (Psalm 119:105).

Thirdly, we must nurture charity among brethren, remembering that "faith without works is dead" (James 2:26). In giving to the poor, in visiting the sick, in comforting the sorrowful, we embody the life of Mshikha among us.

And lastly, let us never forsake unity. For the Apostle beseeches us: "that to you all there may be one language; and that there may be no divisions among you: but that you may become perfectly of one mind, and of one way of thinking" (1 Corinthians 1:10).

Therefore, my dearly beloved, as we go forward, let us keep our eyes upon the Lord, who alone is the Author and Finisher of our faith (Hebrews 12:2). Let us pursue no lofty designs apart from Him, but in every endeavour let us pray, "If the Lord please, and we live, we will do this or that" (James 4:15).

May all that is set before us be marked by humility, order, charity, and that holy simplicity which belongs to the Gospel of Mshikha. Thus may we walk in the old paths, wherein is the good way, and find rest for our souls (Jeremiah 6:16).

Given this day, with a heart resolved to serve, and with trust in Maran's unfailing mercy:

+Mar Mattai Beita d'Mshikha By the Grace of Alaha Catholicos Patriarch 7 September 2025