

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

خطبة الجمعة

Friday Sermon

Alhamdulillah in Every State: The People of Praise



ŞİFAH

SCHOOL OF ISLAMIC
FOUNDATIONS &
ADVOCACY FOR HUMANITY

Alhamdulillah in Every State: The People of Praise

The First Khutbah

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ، وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا، مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ، وَمَنْ يَضِلَّ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ. أَمَّا بَعْدُ: فَإِنَّ أصدقَ الْحَدِيثِ كِتَابُ اللَّهِ، وَخَيْرُ الْهَدْيِ هَدْيُ مُحَمَّدٍ ﷺ، وَشَرُّ الْأُمُورِ مُحْدَثَاتُهَا، وَكُلُّ مُحْدَثَةٍ بِدْعَةٌ، وَكُلُّ بِدْعَةٍ ضَلَالَةٌ، وَكُلُّ ضَلَالَةٍ فِي النَّارِ.

All praise belongs to Allah. We praise Him, we seek His help, and we seek His forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allah from the evil within ourselves and from our sinful deeds. Whomever Allah guides, none can lead astray, and whomever He leaves astray, none can guide. I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah alone, having no partner, and I bear witness that Muḥammad is His servant and His Messenger. To proceed: the truest speech is the Book of Allah, the best guidance is the guidance of Muḥammad ﷺ, the worst of affairs are the newly invented matters, every innovation is misguidance, and every misguidance is in the Fire.

نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ، أَمَّا بَعْدُ: فَأَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ، بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ.

رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي * وَيَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي * وَاحْلُلْ عُقْدَةً مِنْ لِسَانِي * يَفْقَهُوا قَوْلِي *

We praise Him, and we send blessings upon His noble Messenger. To proceed: I seek refuge with Allah from Satan, the accursed; in the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. My Lord, expand for me my breast, and ease for me my task, and untie the knot from my tongue, that they may understand my speech.

Sūrah Ṭā Hā (20:25 to 28)

Dear brothers and sisters, **assalāmu ‘alaykum wa raḥmatullāhi wa barakātuh.**

Alhamdulillah When It Is Hard to Say It

I begin by advising my own soul first, and then advising you, with a word that fills our days and yet hides a depth most of us never reach. That word is al-ḥamdu lillāh, all praise belongs to Allah. I do not want to speak this morning about the easy Alhamdulillah, the one that leaps from the tongue at a graduation, a wedding, the birth of a child. Even a person barely holding on to his religion says Alhamdulillah at such moments, because the blessing is obvious and the heart is glad. I want to speak about the Alhamdulillah that is hard to say. Alhamdulillah when it hurts. Alhamdulillah not in the moment of triumph but in the moment of trauma. Not when an obvious gift arrives, but when Allah tests you and a gift is taken away.

Consider the difference, brothers and sisters. It is one thing to praise Allah while carrying your newborn for the first time. It is another thing entirely to praise Him when He tests you to bury that same child you welcomed into the world. And yet the Prophet ﷺ taught us that for the one who praises Allah in that very loss, a house is built in Paradise, a house they call Bayt al-Ḥamd, the House of Praise. It is so much easier to say Alhamdulillah at the moment of receiving than at the moment of losing, and there is a great difference between the two, and a far greater reward. There are two phrases of remembrance that are among the most frequent on our tongues and the most difficult to say at the hardest moments of our lives, and the Prophet ﷺ named them both:

أَفْضَلُ الذِّكْرِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَأَفْضَلُ الدُّعَاءِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ.

The best remembrance is: there is no god but Allah; and the best supplication is: all praise belongs to Allah.

Source: Jāmi‘ at-Tirmidhī **Hadith No:** Tirmidhī 3383 **Authenticity:** Ḥasan (al-Albānī)

Look at the pairing. Lā ilāha illā Allāh is the most frequent dhikr a believer makes, and yet there will come a moment when it is harder to say than any other word in his vocabulary, and that is the moment he leaves this world. Allah said that He gives firmness to those who believe with a firm word, in this life and the next:

يُثَبِّتُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِالْقَوْلِ الثَّابِتِ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ وَيُضِلُّ اللَّهُ الظَّالِمِينَ
وَيَفْعَلُ اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ *

Allah keeps firm those who believe with the firm word in the life of this world and in the Hereafter. And Allah leaves the wrongdoers astray, and Allah does what He wills.

Sūrah Ibrāhīm (14:27)

How often we have seen it, a tongue tied, a heart shut, the eyes closing before a person can utter *lā ilāha illā Allāh*. That is why the Prophet ﷺ commanded us to help the dying with it:

لَقِّنُوا مَوْتَاكُمْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ.

Prompt your dying ones to say: there is no god but Allah.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** Muslim 916 **Authenticity:** Ṣaḥīḥ

And the lesson is the same for both phrases. The best dhikr is to be said at the hardest moment, the last moment, and you cannot summon a word at the end of your life that was a stranger to you throughout it. The one who trained his tongue and heart upon *lā ilāha illā Allāh* in his days of ease will find it on his tongue in the hour of death. And the one who trained himself upon *Alhamdulillah* in the small blessings will find it ready when the great trial comes.

The People of Praise

The Prophet ﷺ described a kind of believer who is not merely a person who happens to praise when things go well, but a person whose very identity is praise, in good times and in bad. They are not praising by circumstance. Praise has become their condition, their nature, who they are. Anything that strikes them, they answer with *Alhamdulillah*. And the most complete example of this was our beloved Messenger ﷺ himself, of whom it is reported:

كَانَ النَّبِيُّ ﷺ إِذَا أَتَاهُ الْأَمْرُ يَسْرُهُ قَالَ: الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي بِنِعْمَتِهِ تَمُّ الصَّالِحَاتُ، وَإِذَا أَتَاهُ الْأَمْرُ يَكْرَهُهُ قَالَ: الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ عَلَى كُلِّ حَالٍ.

When something that pleased him came to the Prophet ﷺ he would say: all praise belongs to Allah by whose favour good things are completed. And when something he disliked came to him, he would say: all praise belongs to Allah in every state.

Source: Sunan Ibn Mājah **Hadith No:** Ibn Mājah 3803 **Authenticity:** Ḥasan (al-Albānī)

Reflect on this, brothers and sisters. Both the thing that pleased him and the thing that grieved him drove him to the same place: praise. If you had walked into the masjid and seen him in sajdah, you would not have known whether something wonderful had just happened to him or something terrible, because both drove him to the same prostration, the same *Alhamdulillah*, the same tears of gratitude. He did not feel sorry for himself. When we read his *Sirah* we weep at the moments of devastation, the burying of his children, the rejection at Ṭā'if, and yet he himself did not sink into

self-pity. He praised. And that is the example for us: not to drown in sorrow for ourselves, but to say Alhamdulillah for everything Allah has given us to be grateful for, even inside the loss.

Two Praises, Two Blessings

Now let us understand why the harder Alhamdulillah is the greater one. When Allah gives you an obvious blessing, your Alhamdulillah is a thanks for a visible gift and a recognition of His obvious generosity, His karam that you can see and touch. But when Allah tests you, and you still say Alhamdulillah ‘alā kulli ḥāl, all praise belongs to Allah in every state, you are praising Him for an unseen blessing hidden behind the trial, and you are praising Him from a place of tawakkul, of trust in His unseen wisdom rather than His visible generosity. You are connecting yourself to a different attribute of Allah entirely. And which of the two is harder to recognise? Obviously the second. The first is meant to prepare you for the second, just as your lā ilāha illā Allāh in the days of strength is training for the lā ilāha illā Allāh of your final breath.

This is why all the great phrases the believer reaches for in calamity are, at their root, expressions of praise. Ḥasbunā Allāhu wa ni‘ma al-wakīl, Allah is sufficient for us and the best of guardians. Innā lillāhi wa innā ilayhi rāji‘ūn, indeed we belong to Allah and to Him we return. Each one is an admission of our own deficiency and a declaration of Allah's knowledge, power, and authority, and so each one is a form of ḥamd. Allah commanded this very response and attached glad tidings to it:

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ * الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ *

And We will surely test you with something of fear and hunger and a loss of wealth, lives, and fruits; but give good tidings to the patient, who, when disaster strikes them, say: indeed we belong to Allah, and indeed to Him we will return.

Sūrah al-Baqarah (2:155 to 156)

The Praise that Erases Sins

So that we never imagine praise is reserved for the great crises of life, the Prophet ﷺ tied forgiveness to the smallest daily blessings, the food we eat and the clothes we wear, blessings we receive every day and rarely pause over. He said:

مَنْ أَكَلَ طَعَامًا فَقَالَ: الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَطْعَمَنِي هَذَا وَرَزَقَنِيهِ مِنْ غَيْرِ حَوْلٍ مِنِّي وَلَا قُوَّةٍ،
غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ.

Whoever eats food and says: all praise belongs to Allah who fed me this and provided it for me without any might or power of my own, will be forgiven his past sins.

Source: Jāmi‘ at-Tirmidhī **Hadith No:** Tirmidhī 3458 **Authenticity:** Ḥasan (al-Albānī)

Notice the words he taught us, that Allah provided it without any might or power of my own. The praise is not only thanks for the food; it is an admission that the food, and the strength to earn it, and the very hand that lifts it, are all from Allah. He taught the same words for putting on a new garment. How often do we clothe ourselves each day and never once thank the One who clothed us? The believer who trains himself to praise over the bread and the garment is the believer who will praise over the trial, because the tongue and the heart go, in the hardest moment, to the place they have always gone.

Praise in an Age of Complaint

Brothers and sisters, look at the world we now live in and ask where this leaves us. We live in a culture of complaint. The platforms in our pockets reward the loudest grievance, train us to broadcast every annoyance, and teach the heart to scan constantly for what is wrong rather than what is good. Someone asks how you are, and the tongue reaches first for a complaint. And here is the danger: what makes a person think that if he curses and complains all his life, he will suddenly summon the most important praise of his existence under the crushing weight of a real calamity? You do not gather that up at the last moment. It must be a familiar place visited a thousand times before.

So the believer trains differently. He answers Alhamdulillah and means it. He resists the pull to perform his misery for an audience. He thanks Allah for the roof, the meal, the breath, the eyes reading these words, before he lists what he lacks. And he raises his children upon gratitude rather than entitlement, teaching them to see the hand of Allah behind the gift, so that they grow into people of praise rather than people of grievance. Ask yourself honestly this Friday: when something good reaches me, do I trace it back to Allah, or do I treat it as my due? And when something hard strikes me, where does my tongue go first? These questions are not meant to shame us. They are the training ground of the heart that hopes to say Alhamdulillah when it is hardest of all to say.

I say these words of mine, and I seek the forgiveness of Allah for me and for you, so seek His forgiveness, for indeed He is the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful.

أَقُولُ قَوْلِي هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ لِي وَلَكُمْ فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ.

I say this statement of mine, and I seek the forgiveness of Allah for myself and for you, so seek His forgiveness, for He is the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful.

Closing of the First Khutbah

The Second Khutbah

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ، وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى أَشْرَفِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَالْمُرْسَلِينَ، نَبِيِّنَا مُحَمَّدٍ
وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ. اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ، كَمَا صَلَّيْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ
وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مُجِيدٌ.

All praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the worlds, and may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon the noblest of the Prophets and Messengers, our Prophet Muḥammad, and upon his family and all his Companions. O Allah, send blessings upon Muḥammad and upon the family of Muḥammad as You sent blessings upon Ibrāhīm and upon the family of Ibrāhīm. Indeed, You are Praiseworthy and Glorious.

A Reminder Carried Home

Dear brothers and sisters, in the first khuṭbah we sat with the difference between the easy Alhamdulillah and the hard one, between praising Allah for an obvious gift and praising Him for the unseen mercy hidden inside a trial. We learned that the people of praise are not praising by circumstance, that praise has become their very condition, and that the way to be ready for the great Alhamdulillah of calamity is to train the tongue upon the small Alhamdulillah of every meal and every garment. Now let us look at the sheer weight of this word on the scale of Allah, and how to make it a constant companion.

The Word that Fills the Scale

Do not let the lightness of this word on the tongue deceive you about its weight with Allah. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ told us that Alhamdulillah, by itself, fills the scale of good deeds:

وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ تَمْلَأُ الْمِيزَانَ، وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ تَمْلَأَانِ مَا بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ.

And 'all praise belongs to Allah' fills the scale, and 'glory be to Allah' and 'all praise belongs to Allah' together fill what is between the heaven and the earth.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** Muslim 223 **Authenticity:** Ṣaḥīḥ

And this word is among the most beloved speech to Allah of all. The Prophet ﷺ said that Allah chose, from among all words, four that are dearest to Him:

أَحَبُّ الْكَلَامِ إِلَى اللَّهِ أَرْبَعٌ: سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ، وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ، وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ، لَا يَضُرُّكَ بِأَيِّنَ بَدَأْتَ.

The most beloved speech to Allah is four: glory be to Allah, all praise belongs to Allah, there is no god but Allah, and Allah is the greatest. It does not harm you with which of them you begin.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** Muslim 2137 **Authenticity:** Ṣaḥīḥ

And the angels themselves race to carry this praise to Allah. A man once said, while rising from rukū' behind the Prophet ﷺ, Rabbanā wa laka-l-ḥamd, ḥamdan kathīran ṭayyiban mubārakan fih, our Lord, to You belongs all praise, abundant, pure, and blessed. When the prayer ended the Prophet ﷺ asked who had said it, and then he said:

لَقَدْ رَأَيْتُ بِضْعَةَ ثَلَاثِينَ مَلَكًا يَتَدَرُونَهَا أَيُّهُمْ يَكْتُبُهَا أَوَّلُ.

I saw some thirty-odd angels hastening to be the one who would record it first.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī **Hadith No:** Bukhārī 799 **Authenticity:** Ṣaḥīḥ

Reflect on that, brothers and sisters. Words we let fall so carelessly from our tongues set the angels of Allah competing to be the first to write them down. The scholars explained why ḥamd carries such weight. The word ḥamd, as they say, gathers two things into one: praise and gratitude. You are not only thanking Allah, and not only praising Him; you are doing both at once with a single word. And it is no accident that the very first words of Allah's Book, after the basmalah, are His own praise of Himself, al-ḥamdu lillāhi rabbi-l-‘ālamīn, for the first to praise Allah in the Qur'an is Allah Himself.

Making Alhamdulillah a Constant Companion

So how do we live with this word, day by day, until it becomes our nature? Begin with the prayer, for after every obligatory ṣalāh the Sunnah is to say Alhamdulillah thirty-three times alongside the tasbīḥ, and you may join the two together. Begin your day with it, for the very first blessing you wake to is life itself returned to you after a small death in sleep, and the Prophet ﷺ taught us to praise Allah for it upon waking. Say it over your food and over your clothing, as we heard, and let it be the answer on your tongue when anyone asks how you are. And when good reaches you, do not only enjoy it, but trace it back to its Giver, for the Prophet ﷺ taught that Allah is pleased with the servant who eats a morsel and praises Him for it, and who drinks a sip and praises Him for it. The one who fills the ordinary hours of his day with this small, light word is quietly filling his scale with something that weighs more than the heavens and the earth.

And let your praise open your supplication, for ḥamd is itself a du‘ā and the doorway to every other. Begin by praising Allah, then mention His names and His favours, and then ask Him for whatever you need, for your Lord loves to be praised, and the praise that opens your hands is the praise most likely to see them filled. Between hope in His boundless generosity and awareness of His perfect wisdom, let the believer keep his tongue moist with Alhamdulillah in ease and in hardship, in the gift and in its loss, until the last word he speaks in this world is the testimony that there is no god but Allah.

Closing Du‘ā

Dear brothers and sisters, let us raise our hands to the One whose praise has no end, and who loves to be praised by His servants.

O Allah, make us among the Ḥammādūn, those who praise You in every state, in ease and in hardship, in the gift and in its loss. O Allah, enable us to praise You as You deserve to be praised, to thank You and to remember You as is Your right. O Allah, let our Alhamdulillah be sincere, and let it fill our scales on the Day we meet You. O Allah, keep our tongues firm upon the testimony, and let the last words we speak in this world be lā ilāha illā Allāh. O Allah, set right the affairs of this Ummah, protect our families and our children, and keep our young ones firm upon faith in an age of trial. O Allah, relieve the suffering of the oppressed in every land, and grant safety, provision, and a clear relief to our brothers and sisters who are wronged and afraid, for You are the All Powerful and they have none besides You.

O Allah, forgive us and our parents, and have mercy upon them as they raised us when we were small. O Allah, forgive the believing men and the believing women, the living among them and those who have passed. O Allah, make the Qur'an the spring of our hearts and the light of our chests, grant us beneficial knowledge and hearts that truly fear You, and let our deeds be sincere for Your Face alone. O Allah, do not leave for us on this day a sin except that You have forgiven it, nor a worry except that You have relieved it, nor a debt except that You have settled it, nor a need from the needs of this world and the next except that You have fulfilled it and made it easy for us. O Allah, seal our lives with the best of deeds. Our Lord, give us good in this world and good in the Hereafter, and protect us from the punishment of the Fire.

The Final Reminder

Remember the command of your Lord, the same command with which we opened and with which Allah closes the affair, the command of justice and excellence.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ
يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ *

Indeed, Allah commands justice, excellence, and giving to relatives, and He forbids immorality, wrongdoing, and oppression. He admonishes you that you may take heed.

Sūrah an-Nahl (16:90)

So remember Allah, the Most Great, and He will remember you. Thank Him for His favours and He will increase you. And establish the prayer.

وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ