

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

خطبة الجمعة

Friday Sermon

The Eight Gates of Paradise

DELIVERED AT

Masjid Adam



ŞİFAH

SCHOOL OF ISLAMIC
FOUNDATIONS &
ADVOCACY FOR HUMANITY

The Eight Gates of Paradise

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 أَصْدَقَ 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.**

A Mercy with Many Doors

Dear brothers and sisters, our Lord is generous beyond measure, and from His generosity is that He did not make the road to His pleasure a single narrow path that only one kind of person could walk. He opened many doors, so that the one whose nights are heavy with prayer and the one whose hand is open with charity, the one who fasts and the one who strives, the one who weeps in repentance and the one who swallows his anger in patience, each finds a way home to Him. The believer who hears the description of Paradise does not hear it as a distant tale. He hears it as the destination he is preparing for with every prayer, every coin given, every desire restrained. Allah has called us toward it, and He has told us to hasten.

وَسَارِعُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ *

And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord, and a Garden whose breadth is the heavens and the earth, prepared for those who have taqwā.

Sūrah Āl ‘Imrān (3:133)

A Garden as wide as the heavens and the earth, brothers and sisters, and it has been prepared. It is not a hope that may or may not exist. It waits, finished and adorned, for those who race toward it. And the Messenger of Allah ﷺ told us that this Garden does not have one entrance, but eight.

فِي الْجَنَّةِ ثَمَانِيَةُ أَبْوَابٍ، فِيهَا بَابٌ يُسَمَّى الرِّيَّانَ، لَا يَدْخُلُهُ إِلَّا الصَّائِمُونَ.

Paradise has eight gates, among them a gate called al-Rayyān, which none shall enter except those who fasted.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** Bukhārī 1896, Muslim 1152 **Authenticity:** Muttafaquun ‘Alayh

The scholars of tafsīr, among them Ibn Kathīr and al-Qurṭubī, may Allah have mercy on them, explain that these many gates are an honouring from Allah of the many paths of worship. Each gate calls to the people of a particular deed, as though each devoted servant has a door that knows his name. This morning let us walk together past these doors, one by one, and as we pass each, let each of us ask quietly, is this a door that would call to me?

Before we begin the walk, hold this thought, brothers and sisters. A gate is not opened by wishing. Each of these doors swings open only for the one who carried, in this life, the deeds of its people. So as we pass them, we are not sightseers admiring a far-off palace. We are workers being shown the very tools that build our place within it. Ibn al-Qayyim, may Allah have mercy on him, said that the people of Paradise are distinguished in this world before they are distinguished in the next, by the deeds

Allah made beloved to their hearts. Let us see, then, which of these deeds Allah has made beloved to ours.

The Doors, One by One

The Gate of Prayer

The first tie between a servant and his Lord is the prayer, brothers and sisters. It is the pillar upon which the whole religion stands, and it is the deed a person is asked about first on the Day of Judgement. The one who guards it has guarded the rope that binds him to Allah.

مَنْ حَافِظَ عَلَيْهَا كَانَتْ لَهُ نُورًا وَبُرْهَانًا وَنَجَاةً يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ.

Whoever guards the prayers, they will be a light, a proof, and a salvation for him on the Day of Judgement.

Source: Musnad Ahmad **Hadith No:** 6576 **Authenticity:** Ṣaḥīḥ

Imām al-Nawawī observed that the prayer is the ‘imād al-dīn, the central pillar of the faith, so it is only fitting that it be honoured with its own gate. Ibn al-Qayyim went further and noted that every other deed begins to collapse once the prayer is abandoned, for it is the prayer that keeps the heart attached to Allah through the hours of the day. Ask yourself, when the mu’adhdhin calls, do I rise as one being honoured, or do I leave my Lord waiting?

And the prayer is not merely a duty discharged and forgotten. It carries within it doors upon doors of reward for the one who lingers with his Lord. The Prophet ﷺ described a believer who prays the dawn prayer in congregation and then stays seated, remembering Allah until the sun has risen, and what Allah grants him for so small a patience.

مَنْ صَلَّى الْغَدَاةَ فِي جَمَاعَةٍ ثُمَّ قَعَدَ يَذْكُرُ اللَّهَ حَتَّى تَطْلُعَ الشَّمْسُ، ثُمَّ صَلَّى رَكْعَتَيْنِ، كَانَتْ لَهُ كَأَجْرِ حَجَّةٍ وَعُمْرَةٍ، تَامَّةٍ تَامَّةٍ تَامَّةٍ.

Whoever prays the dawn prayer in congregation, then sits remembering Allah until the sun rises, then prays two units of prayer, will have a reward like that of a Hajj and an ‘Umrah, complete, complete, complete.

Source: Jāmi‘ at-Tirmidhī **Hadith No:** 586 **Authenticity:** Ḥasan

A complete Hajj and a complete ‘Umrah, brothers and sisters, for an hour of sitting in the masjid that most of us pass instead in sleep or in scrolling. This is the generosity of the gate of prayer. It does not only ask, it pours out.

The Gate of Striving in the Path of Allah

There is a gate for those who strive and stand guard, who give of their wealth, their comfort, and their very selves so that the word of Allah remains high. And the scholars widen this meaning for us. Al-Qurtubī said the striving intended here is every struggle, whether by wealth, by the tongue, or by the self. Al-Ghazālī reminded us that the truest striving is against one's own nafs, and that the outward struggle only mirrors the inward one. Every believer, then, has a share in this gate, for every believer wakes each day to a battle against his own desires.

We returned from the lesser jihād to the greater jihād, the struggle of a servant against his own self.

A meaning the scholars, including al-Ghazālī, drew from the way of the Prophet ﷺ

So do not imagine, brothers and sisters, that this gate is shut to the one who never lifted a sword. The mother who is patient through exhaustion for the sake of her children, the young man who turns his eyes away from what is forbidden when no one would know, the worker who refuses a dishonest gain, each of these is striving in a path of Allah, and each is building toward a gate. The greatest enemy most of us will ever face stands behind our own ribs.

رَبَّاطُ يَوْمٍ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَمَا عَلَيْهَا.

Standing guard for a single day in the path of Allah is better than the world and all that it contains.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** Bukhārī 2892, Muslim 1880 **Authenticity:** Muttafaqun ‘Alayh

The Gate of Charity

The hand that gives is a hand that Allah loves, and there is a gate for the people of charity. Ibn Rajab, may Allah have mercy on him, reminds us that charity is not money alone. It is time given, effort spent, knowledge taught, and a smile offered to a tired face. Al-Ghazālī said that giving cleanses the heart of its greed and waters the seed of faith within it. And the Prophet ﷺ taught that this giving does something to our sins.

وَالصَّدَقَةُ تُطْفِئُ الْخَطِيئَةَ كَمَا يُطْفِئُ الْمَاءُ النَّارَ.

And charity extinguishes sin as water extinguishes fire.

Source: Jāmi‘ at-Tirmidhī **Hadith No:** 2616 **Authenticity:** Ḥasan Ṣaḥīḥ

Imagine that, brothers and sisters. A sin like a fire in the record of a servant, and a quiet gift, given perhaps where no one saw it, falling upon that fire like water until it is gone. On the Day when the sun

draws near, the Prophet ﷺ told us that a person will stand in the shade of his charity. So who among us would not wish to build himself a shade for that day?

كُلُّ امْرِئٍ فِي ظِلِّ صَدَقَتِهِ حَتَّى يُفْصَلَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ.

Every person will be in the shade of his charity until the matter is judged between the people.

Source: Musnad Ahmad **Hadith No:** 17333 **Authenticity:** Ṣaḥīḥ

Imām al-Nawawī said that this gate places generosity at the very centre of the Muslim character, for a believer is not truly a believer while his neighbour goes hungry beside him. And the most beautiful charity is the one given in secret, where only Allah sees it, given not because the wealth is large but because the trust in Allah is larger than the fear of poverty.

The Gate of al-Rayyān, for Those Who Fast

This is the one gate the Prophet ﷺ named for us, and he gave it a beautiful name. Al-Rayyān means the quenched, the one whose thirst is satisfied, and how fitting it is for those who endured the long thirst of fasting for the sake of Allah. Ibn Hajar explained that fasting was singled out with its own named gate because it is a secret between the servant and his Lord. No one sees the fast. A person could eat in private and no creature would know, yet he holds back through the heat of the day for Allah alone. That is why Allah said of it what He said of no other deed.

كُلُّ عَمَلٍ ابْنِ آدَمَ يُضَاعَفُ، قَالَ اللَّهُ: إِلَّا الصَّوْمَ فَإِنَّهُ لِي وَأَنَا أَجْزِي بِهِ.

Every deed of the son of Adam is multiplied, but Allah said: except fasting, for it is for Me, and I Myself shall reward it.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** Bukhārī 1904, Muslim 1151 **Authenticity:** Muttafaqun ‘Alayh

And the one who fasts is promised a joy that the people of food and drink never taste, a joy at the two moments that matter most.

لِلصَّائِمِ فَرْحَتَانِ: فَرَحَةٌ عِنْدَ فِطْرِهِ، وَفَرَحَةٌ عِنْدَ لِقَاءِ رَبِّهِ.

The fasting person has two moments of joy: a joy when he breaks his fast, and a joy when he meets his Lord.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** 1151 **Authenticity:** Ṣaḥīḥ

Imām al-Nawawī noted the meaning of the name al-Rayyān, the quenched, and how perfectly it answers the thirst of the one who held back water through the long heat of the day. He thirsted for Allah in this world, so Allah will quench him at a gate that no one else may enter.

The Right-Hand Gate, for Those Who Trust Their Lord

There is a gate through which a vast company will pass with no reckoning at all, no account, no questioning. The Prophet ﷺ told us of seventy thousand of this Ummah who enter Paradise with their faces shining, and he described them not by the number of their deeds but by the state of their hearts.

يَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ مِنْ أُمَّتِي سَبْعُونَ أَلْفًا بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ، هُمُ الَّذِينَ لَا يَسْتَرْقُونَ وَلَا يَتَطَيَّرُونَ وَعَلَى رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ.

Seventy thousand of my Ummah will enter Paradise without reckoning. They are those who do not ask others to recite over them, nor seek omens, and upon their Lord they place their trust.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** Bukhārī 5705, Muslim 220 **Authenticity:** Muttafaqun ‘Alayh

Ibn Kathīr and Ibn al-Qayyim noted that this is the gate of pure tawḥīd and complete reliance upon Allah. These are not people who did little. They are people whose hearts leaned on no one but their Lord, who did not let fear and superstition rule them, who handed the outcome of every affair back to the One who owns it. In an age that sells us a thousand idols of worry, this gate belongs to the heart that rests in Allah alone.

And how will they appear as they enter? The Prophet ﷺ told us that the first to pass through will carry a light upon their faces from the certainty that filled their hearts.

أَوَّلُ زُمْرَةٍ تَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ عَلَى صُورَةِ الْقَمَرِ لَيْلَةَ الْبَدْرِ.

The first group to enter Paradise will be in the form of the moon on the night it is full.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** Bukhārī 3245, Muslim 2834 **Authenticity:** Muttafaqun ‘Alayh

Al-Qurṭubī said that to be spared the reckoning altogether is among the highest of Allah's mercies, for the standing on that Day will be long and heavy, and to be waved through its gate without account is a gift beyond imagining. It is the harvest of a heart that, in this short life, refused to fear anyone but Allah.

The Gate of Repentance, Which Never Closes

And for every one of us who has fallen, and that is all of us, there is a door that does not close until the sun rises from the west. The Prophet ﷺ described the mercy of Allah toward the returning servant in an image that should melt the hardest heart.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَبْسُطُ يَدَهُ بِاللَّيْلِ لِيَتُوبَ مُسِيءُ النَّهَارِ، وَيَبْسُطُ يَدَهُ بِالنَّهَارِ لِيَتُوبَ مُسِيءُ اللَّيْلِ.

Allah stretches out His Hand by night so that the sinner of the day may repent, and stretches out His Hand by day so that the sinner of the night may repent.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** 2759 **Authenticity:** Ṣaḥīḥ

Day and night the door stands open and the Hand is outstretched, waiting. Ibn al-Qayyim said that repentance renews the very soul, and al-Qurṭubī reminded us that no sin is too great for sincere repentance to wash away. The Prophet ﷺ even taught that the one who repents from a sin is like the one who never committed it. So let no brother and no sister here despair of a door that Allah has refused to close.

And Allah does not merely accept the one who returns. He rejoices at his return, with a joy the Prophet ﷺ likened to the joy of a man who had lost everything in a barren desert and then found it again.

لِلَّهِ أَفْرَحُ بِتَوْبَةِ عَبْدِهِ مِنْ أَحَدِكُمْ سَقَطَ عَلَى بَعِيرِهِ وَقَدْ أَضَلَّهُ فِي أَرْضٍ فَلَاةٍ.

Allah is more joyful at the repentance of His servant than one of you who, having lost his mount in a barren land, suddenly finds it again.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** 2747 **Authenticity:** Ṣaḥīḥ

Reflect on that, brothers and sisters. The Owner of the heavens and the earth, who needs nothing from us, describes His response to our return as joy. Al-Ghazālī observed that the one who keeps returning to Allah may rise even above the one who never felt the need, because his repeated repentance keeps him forever humble and forever turning his face toward his Lord.

The Gate of Patience

Patience is half of faith, brothers and sisters, and without it no deed survives the storms of this life. The patient one holds firm when wealth is lost, when a loved one is buried, when the body is ill, when the heart is tested, and he does not let his tongue or his trust break. The Prophet ﷺ told us there is no gift greater than it.

وَمَا أُعْطِيَ أَحَدٌ عَطَاءً خَيْرًا وَأَوْسَعَ مِنَ الصَّبْرِ.

No one has been given a gift better and more expansive than patience.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** Bukhārī 1469, Muslim 1053 **Authenticity:** Muttafaqun ‘Alayh

And Allah attached to patience a reward He attached to nothing else, for He said that the patient will be given their reward without measure. Ibn Kathīr drew our attention to this, that while every other deed is weighed and counted, the reward of ṣabr is poured out without a scale. Ibn Rajab said that patience transforms a calamity into a mercy, and that is why its people are honoured with a gate of their own.

And there is a patience that visits us many times each day, the patience of swallowing an anger we are well able to unleash. The Prophet ﷺ promised that this restraint fills the heart with something far better than the fleeting pleasure of revenge.

مَنْ كَظَمَ غَيْظًا وَهُوَ قَادِرٌ عَلَى أَنْ يُفْذَهُ، مَلَأَ اللَّهُ قَلْبَهُ أَمْنًا وَإِيمَانًا.

Whoever restrains his anger while he is able to act upon it, Allah will fill his heart with security and faith.

Source: Musnad Aḥmad **Hadith No:** 23623 **Authenticity:** Ḥasan

إِنَّمَا يُوفَّى الصَّابِرُونَ أَجْرَهُمْ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ *

Indeed, the patient will be given their reward without measure.

Sūrah az-Zumar (39:10)

The Eighth Gate, and the Worship That Fills the Heart

The scholars differed over the naming of the remaining gates, and among the strongest of what they mentioned were the gate of Hajj and the gate of the remembrance of Allah. Hajj, as Ibn al-Qayyim observed, gathers within it prayer, fasting, charity, patience, and remembrance all at once, so it deserves its own entrance. And the remembrance of Allah is the worship that needs no special time and no special place, the worship of the tongue in the car, in the queue, and on the pillow. The Prophet ﷺ drew a line between the heart that remembers and the heart that forgets.

مَثَلُ الَّذِي يَذْكُرُ رَبَّهُ وَالَّذِي لَا يَذْكُرُ رَبَّهُ مَثَلُ الْحَيِّ وَالْمَيِّتِ.

The likeness of the one who remembers his Lord and the one who does not remember his Lord is like the likeness of the living and the dead.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** Bukhārī 6407, Muslim 779 **Authenticity:** Muttafaqun ‘Alayh

And Hajj, that journey of a lifetime, gathers the worshipper's whole life into a few days and returns him as pure as the day he was born.

مَنْ حَجَّ فَلَمْ يَرْفُثْ وَلَمْ يَفْسُقْ رَجَعَ كَيَوْمَ وَلَدَتْهُ أُمُّهُ.

Whoever performs Hajj and does not speak obscenely or commit sin returns as pure as the day his mother bore him.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** Bukhārī 1521, Muslim 1350 **Authenticity:** Muttafaqun ‘Alayh

So whether the eighth door is the door of Hajj or the door of remembrance, brothers and sisters, both teach us the same lesson. There is no moment of our lives that cannot be turned toward Allah, and no servant so ordinary that a gate of Paradise cannot be made to call his name.

Called from Every Gate

Now a question rises in the heart, brothers and sisters. If there are eight gates and each calls to the people of a particular deed, must a person choose only one and enter through it alone? The answer the Prophet ﷺ gave is a glad tiding that should set our ambition on fire. He taught that the one who gives a pair of anything in the path of Allah will be called from the gates of Paradise, and that there are servants who will be summoned from all of them.

مَنْ أَنْفَقَ زَوْجَيْنِ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ نُودِيَ مِنْ أَبْوَابِ الْجَنَّةِ... فَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الصَّلَاةِ
دُعِيَ مِنْ بَابِ الصَّلَاةِ، وَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْجِهَادِ دُعِيَ مِنْ بَابِ الْجِهَادِ، وَمَنْ كَانَ
مِنْ أَهْلِ الصَّدَقَةِ دُعِيَ مِنْ بَابِ الصَّدَقَةِ، وَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الصِّيَامِ دُعِيَ مِنْ بَابِ
الرَّيَّانِ.

Whoever spends a pair of anything in the path of Allah will be called from the gates of Paradise. The people of prayer will be called from the gate of prayer, the people of striving from the gate of striving, the people of charity from the gate of charity, and the people of fasting from the gate of al-Rayyān.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** Bukhārī 3666, Muslim 1027 **Authenticity:** Muttafaqun ‘Alayh

When Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq, may Allah be pleased with him, heard this, he asked the Prophet ﷺ whether there would be anyone called from all of the gates together, and the Prophet ﷺ answered that he hoped Abū Bakr would be among them. And was he not? This was the man who guarded his prayer, who poured out his wealth in charity until ‘Umar despaired of ever outgiving him, who freed the weak and the enslaved, who fasted, who bore the harm of Makkah with patience, and whose heart was soft with repentance and remembrance. He did not pick one door. He filled his life with deeds from every door, and so every door called his name. Imām al-Nawawī mentioned that the Prophet ﷺ gave this glad tiding to him directly.

Which Door Is Calling You?

Brothers and sisters, these gates are not relics of a distant past. Every one of them stands open to us in the lives we are living right now. The gate of prayer opens for the one who guards the five prayers in the middle of a crowded schedule, who puts the phone down when the adhān is called. The gate of charity opens for the one who gives quietly, even a small transfer sent in secret to a family in need. The gate of fasting and self-restraint opens for the one who turns away from what the screen offers him in private. The gate of striving opens for everyone who fights the daily war against his own desires. The gate of patience opens for the one who holds his tongue in the argument and holds his faith firm through loss and illness. The gate of repentance stands open through the night for the one who sinned by day and is ashamed. And the gate of remembrance opens for the tongue that stays moist with the name of Allah while the hands are busy with the world.

So let each of us take account this morning. Which of these doors is nearest to me, and which have I neglected for years? If I were to die before the next Jumu‘ah, which gate would have reason to call my name? Am I a person of a single deed who has forgotten the others, or am I building a life that knocks on many doors at once? The lesson of these eight gates is not that we should choose one and abandon

the rest. It is that we should strive for balance, reaching toward Allah with prayer and charity and fasting and patience and repentance together, until we are among those whom every gate is honoured to receive.

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.

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 مَجِيدٌ.

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 khutbah we walked past the eight gates of Paradise: the gate of prayer, of striving, of charity, of fasting, the right-hand gate of those who trust their Lord, the gate of repentance, the gate of patience, and the gate of Hajj and remembrance. We saw that these many doors are a mercy from Allah, a sign that He has opened more than one road to His pleasure, and we heard the glad tiding that a servant can be called from all of them at once. The danger now is that we admire this for an hour and then live as people of one deed, or worse, of none. So let us turn it into a plan.

Build a Life That Knocks on Many Doors

Do not try to seize all eight gates in a single week and then collapse. Choose instead a small and lasting deed from several of the doors and hold to it. Guard one prayer that you have been praying late and return it to its time. Give one charity each week, even a little, even in secret. Fast one day, perhaps a Monday or a Thursday, and taste the gate of al-Rayyān. Hold your tongue in one moment of anger and earn from the gate of patience. Make sincere repentance tonight before you sleep, and walk through the door that never closes. And keep a daily portion of remembrance on your tongue so that your heart stays among the living. The Prophet ﷺ taught us that it is consistency, not quantity, that Allah loves most.

Notice what this plan does, brothers and sisters. It does not ask you to become a different person overnight. It asks you to place a single small stone at each of several doors, and then to return tomorrow and place another, and another, until a path is worn between you and each gate. The one who gives a little every week has built the habit of charity more surely than the one who gives a fortune once and never again. The one who guards a single prayer until it is solid has begun to rebuild

the pillar. Small and constant is the way of the people of Paradise, for the rivers of the Garden were not carved by floods but by water that never stopped flowing.

أَحَبُّ الْأَعْمَالِ إِلَى اللَّهِ أَدْوَمُهَا وَإِنْ قَلَّ.

The most beloved of deeds to Allah are the most constant of them, even if they are few.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** Bukhārī 6464, Muslim 783 **Authenticity:** Muttafaqun ‘Alayh

Between Hope and Fear

And let us be honest with ourselves about a quiet danger. It is easy to fall in love with one door and to let it become an excuse for neglecting the rest. A person may give generously and tell himself that his charity will cover his abandoned prayers. Another may guard every prayer yet keep a hard and unyielding heart. But the gates were not opened so that we could choose one and ignore the warnings at the others. They were opened so that our worship would be whole. Let each of us look for the door we have been avoiding, the prayer we keep delaying, the charity we keep postponing, the anger we keep unleashing, and let us begin there, for that is precisely where Allah is waiting for us to turn.

Let none of us leave this place in despair, and let none leave deceived by false hope. The gates are wide and the mercy of Allah is wider still, yet a door is only of use to the one who walks toward it. Hope should carry us forward, for the Garden is as vast as the heavens and the earth and its doors are many. Fear should keep us honest, for the doors are reached by deeds and not by wishes. The believer walks toward Allah upon both wings, hoping like one who knows the generosity of his Lord, and fearing like one who knows His justice, until he arrives at a gate that calls his name.

And let us not forget, brothers and sisters, that the doors are reached not by a single great deed at the end of life, but by a thousand small and steady steps taken now. The Companions did not wait to become perfect before they began. They began where they stood, with the prayer in front of them, the coin in their hand, the anger in their chest, and they handed each of these to Allah as it came. We are asked for nothing more than that.

Closing Du‘ā

Dear brothers and sisters, let us raise our hands to the One who opens every door of good. O Allah, we ask You for guidance, taqwā, chastity, and contentment.

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّا نَسْأَلُكَ الْهُدَى وَالتَّقَى وَالْعِفَافَ وَالْغِنَى.

O Allah, we ask You for guidance, God-consciousness, chastity, and sufficiency.

From the supplication of the Prophet ﷺ, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 2721

O Allah, make us among the people of every gate, and let us be called from all the doors of Your Garden. O Allah, make us of the people of prayer, the people of charity, the people of fasting, the people of patience, and the people who turn back to You in repentance. O Allah, admit us into Paradise without reckoning and without prior punishment. O Allah, forgive us and our parents, and have mercy upon them as they raised us when we were small. O Allah, accept our deeds, overlook our shortcomings, and seal our lives with the best of them. O Allah, set right the affairs of this Ummah, relieve the distressed, heal the sick, and grant safety and provision to our oppressed brothers and sisters in every land. 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

O Allah, You are the One who opens and none can close, and who closes and none can open. Open for us every door of good, and do not close upon us a single door of Your mercy. O Allah, make the Qur'an the spring of our hearts, keep our tongues moist with Your remembrance, and let not this gathering end until You have forgiven every one of us. Allāhumma āmin.

The Final Reminder

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

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