

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

خطبة الجمعة

Friday Sermon

*Shukr: A Heart That Sees the
Blessing*



ŞİFAH

SCHOOL OF ISLAMIC
FOUNDATIONS &
ADVOCACY FOR HUMANITY

Shukr: A Heart That Sees the Blessing

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 Tā Hā (20:25 to 28)

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

Two People, One Set of Circumstances

There is something quietly profound in the way the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ used to speak about his own circumstances, and it holds a lesson that can change the texture of an entire life. There is a thread that ties how we speak about a thing to how we come to experience it. Speak about your life in the language of complaint, and your life will almost always begin to answer you in the same language, even if it is, in truth, a beautiful life. This is why you can place two people inside the exact same circumstances and watch them live in two different worlds. Ask the first how he is, and he will find the good in his condition and praise Allah for it. Ask the second, and he will speak to you as though he were Ayyūb in the depth of his trial, as though no one alive carries a heavier burden than his. Same house, same income, same health. Different hearts, and so different lives.

The Qur'an itself gives us this lesson through the family of Ibrāhīm, peace be upon him. When Ibrāhīm came to visit his son Ismā‘īl in Makkah, he came twice. On the first visit Ismā‘īl was away, and Ibrāhīm met his wife and asked her about their state of living. She answered only with the hardships, the narrowness, the want, complaining of their condition. He left her a message and departed. He came again later, and by then Ismā‘īl had married a different woman, and Ibrāhīm asked this one the same question about their life. She praised Allah, she spoke of ease and good, she answered with gratitude, though their circumstances were nearly the same as before. It was never about the circumstances, brothers and sisters. It was about the heart that received them and the tongue that spoke of them, and the unbreakable link between the two.

Speak of the Blessing

Allah commands us, in a verse we often pass over too quickly, to make our speech itself an act of gratitude.

وَأَمَّا بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ فَحَدِّثْ *

But as for the favour of your Lord, speak of it.

Sūrah aḍ-Ḍuḥā (93:11)

The scholars of tafsīr explain that to speak of the blessing of your Lord is itself a form of thanking Him, a taḥadduth bi ni‘matillāh, a declaring of His favour upon you. It is not the boasting that wounds the poor, for that is forbidden. It is the heart overflowing onto the tongue, naming what Allah has given so that the giving is not forgotten. And this is meant to descend even into the smallest moments of the day. When you take a sip of water and say alḥamdulillāh, did you truly mean it for that sip, did you let your heart register, even for a breath, that Allah just gave you cool water down a healthy throat when so many cannot swallow without pain? There is a quiet power in that. The

grateful believer is a person of fikr, of constant pondering, who connects the gifts to the Giver instead of letting them pour through his hands unnamed.

Look Down, Not Up

Then the Prophet ﷺ gave us a practical instruction, a discipline for the eyes, that protects the heart from the disease of always wanting more.

انظُرُوا إِلَى مَنْ هُوَ أَسْفَلَ مِنْكُمْ، وَلَا تَنْظُرُوا إِلَى مَنْ هُوَ فَوْقَكُمْ، فَهُوَ أَجْدَرُ أَنْ لَا تَزْدُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ.

Look to those who are below you and do not look to those who are above you, for that is more fitting so that you do not belittle the blessing of Allah upon you.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** Bukhārī 6490, Muslim 2963 **Authenticity:** Muttafaqun ‘Alayh

Notice that the hadith has two halves, and both are about gratitude. The first half is about where you point your eyes, look to those who have less, not to those who have more, for the upward stare breeds resentment and the downward glance breeds thankfulness. The second half is about how you speak, do not belittle the blessing of Allah upon you. One part guards your vision, the other guards your tongue. And this reaches every corner of life. It governs our self-talk, the words we mutter to ourselves about our own days. It governs how we speak inside our families and to our communities. It is the whole difference between the optimist and the pessimist, who may stand before the very same scene and read two opposite verdicts in it. The believer is trained to refuse the belittling word, even in the privacy of his own thoughts.

Blessings Beyond Counting

Part of why we belittle the blessing is that we have never sat down to count it, and Allah tells us plainly that we could not finish the count if we tried.

وَإِنْ تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ لَا تُحْصُوهَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَغَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ *

And if you were to count the favours of Allah, you could never enumerate them. Indeed, Allah is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful.

Sūrah an-Naḥl (16:18)

The scholars of tafsīr noted the gentleness with which Allah closes this verse. He tells us that we cannot count His favours, and then, instead of rebuking us for our failure to thank Him for each one,

He names Himself the Most Forgiving and the Most Merciful, as if to reassure the servant who is overwhelmed by the sheer mass of blessing he could never repay. Imām as-Sa’dī observed that the blessings of Allah upon us are of two kinds that we constantly overlook, the blessings He has granted and the harms He has turned away, and that the harms turned away are a vast ocean we never see. Think only of your own body for a moment, the heart that has beaten through this entire khuṭbah without your command, the breath drawn and released thousands of times since you woke, the eyes reading these lines, the limbs that carried you here. Not one of these did you earn, and not one of them can you count to the end. The disease is not a shortage of blessing, brothers and sisters. It is a sleeping eye that has stopped seeing the blessing it is drowning in. Gratitude begins the moment you wake that eye and simply look.

The Prophet ﷺ and the Plate of Food

So how did this begin in the person of the Prophet ﷺ himself? Sit for a moment with one small sunnah, and let it work on you.

مَا عَابَ النَّبِيُّ ﷺ طَعَامًا قَطُّ، إِنْ اشتهَاهُ أَكَلَهُ، وَإِنْ كَرِهَهُ تَرَكَهُ.

The Prophet ﷺ never once found fault with any food. If he desired it he ate it, and if he disliked it he simply left it.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** Bukhārī 3563, Muslim 2064 **Authenticity:** Muttafaqun ‘Alayh

He never once pointed to a flaw in his food. Now hold that against the reality of who this man was, the one whose authority reached across so much of the known world, who carried power and honour, ﷺ. And hold it against ourselves. When a person has tasted hard times and easy times, he tends to grow selective, even fussy, with his blessings. We sit before a plate and our minds begin writing reviews. The bread is a little dry today. This is overcooked. That is not how I like it. We have become, in our hearts, a panel of critics scoring every meal that Allah lays before us. The Prophet ﷺ, with all his rank, did not do this with a single morsel for the whole of his life. Whether the food came from the rich or the poor, whether it was placed by a host or by his own family, he never disparaged it. He was simply grateful for it. And see how that gratitude transforms a thing.

Jābir, may Allah be pleased with him, told of a day when the Prophet ﷺ took him by the hand and led him home to eat together, and all they had in the house were some dry pieces of bread. They were set out before him, and the Prophet ﷺ asked, is there anything to dip the bread in? They said the only thing they had was some vinegar. And he ﷺ said, at once and without a pause, the words that turned the whole meal around.

نَعَمَ الْإِدَامُ الْخَلُّ.

What an excellent condiment vinegar is.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** 2052 **Authenticity:** Ṣaḥīḥ

He did not say, I wish we had some honey. He did not sigh over the dryness of the bread. He found the good that was present and named it, and Jābir said, after that day, I came to love vinegar. And the one who narrated from Jābir said, I came to love vinegar too, and the one after him said the same. A single grateful sentence travelled down the generations and made people love a humble thing. That is the contagion of gratitude, brothers and sisters, and we should ask which contagion we are spreading in our own homes. Because complaint is contagious in exactly the same way. A child who grows up hearing his parents endlessly belittle the gifts of Allah learns to do the same, and passes it to his own children, until ingratitude becomes the family tongue. Do not be the source of that. The Prophet ﷺ said alḥamdulillāh over dry bread and vinegar, and if he, who deserved more than any of us ever will, was grateful for that, then who am I to scorn what I have been given?

Good in the Bleakest Hour

What made the Prophet ﷺ so remarkable in this was that even in the bleakest of circumstances he found something to praise Allah for. Take the day of Ḥudaybiyyah. The Muslims stood in a tense and dangerous standoff, the air thick with the threat of slaughter, and Quraysh sent out their chief negotiator, Suhayl ibn ‘Amr, who would later become a great Companion but at that time stood against them. When the Companions saw him approaching, their hearts sank, and one of them said his name with dread, Suhayl. But the Prophet ﷺ smiled, and he said, your affair has been made easy. He took the very name, Suhayl, which carries the meaning of ease, and read it as a sign from Allah that ease was on its way, that something good was about to come from this hardship. He was not being naive, and he was not being reckless. He was doing what the grateful heart trained itself to do, finding the thread of good woven into a difficult moment and pulling on it, saying alḥamdulillāh, there is something here. There is good in the small morsel of food, and there is good even in the great tragedy, something I can find and hold up and thank Allah for. When you carry instead the constant negative lens, you ruin the moment for yourself first, and then for everyone around you, because the pessimism spreads.

وَإِذْ تَأَذَّنَ رَبُّكُمْ لَئِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ وَلَئِنْ كَفَرْتُمْ إِنَّ عَذَابِي لَشَدِيدٌ *

And remember when your Lord proclaimed: If you are grateful, I will surely increase you, but if you are ungrateful, indeed My punishment is severe.

Sūrah Ibrāhīm (14:7)

If you are grateful, I will increase you. This is a contract that Allah Himself has signed. Gratitude is not merely a pleasant manner, it is the very mechanism by which Allah expands the blessing. And alongside this promise stands a sobering observation that Allah makes about His own servants, twice repeated in His Book in different words, that the truly grateful are few.

وَقَلِيلٌ مِّنْ عِبَادِيَ الشَّاكِرُونَ *

And few of My servants are deeply grateful.

Sūrah Saba' (34:13)

Few. Of all the servants of Allah, only a few reach the rank of the shakūr, the one whose whole being is given over to thankfulness. It is the most beautiful of qualities, and it ought to be the most natural, for Allah pours blessings upon us without our asking, so gratitude should rise in us as naturally as breath. And yet it is rare. Allah lays out the two roads before every human being and tells us plainly which way each soul will turn.

إِنَّا هَدَيْنَاهُ السَّبِيلَ إِمَّا شَاكِرًا وَإِمَّا كَفُورًا *

Indeed, We guided him to the way, whether he be grateful or ungrateful.

Sūrah al-Insān (76:3)

Shākiran or kafūran. Grateful, or ungrateful. The word that stands opposite to shukr is kufr, and that is no accident, for ingratitude is the seed from which disbelief grows, and gratitude is woven into the very fabric of faith. To deny the blessing is the first cousin of denying the One who gave it.

Whoever Does Not Thank People

And here the religion makes a move that should reorder how we treat every person in our lives. The Prophet ﷺ tied our gratitude to Allah directly to our gratitude to the people around us, and made the one impossible without the other.

مَنْ لَا يَشْكُرُ النَّاسَ لَا يَشْكُرُ اللَّهَ.

Whoever does not thank people has not thanked Allah.

Source: Sunan Abī Dāwūd and Jāmi' at-Tirmidhī **Hadith No:** Abū Dāwūd 4811, Tirmidhī 1954
Authenticity: Ṣaḥīḥ (graded by al-Albānī)

Read it slowly, brothers and sisters. The one who does not show gratitude to people has not, in reality, shown gratitude to Allah. The two cannot be separated. You cannot stand before Allah claiming a grateful heart while you are cold and ungrateful toward your spouse, your parents, your neighbour,

the one who served you, the one who stood by you. The quality cannot be claimed in the abstract and then withheld from every concrete human being who has done you good. Suddenly so many of the warnings of the Sharī'ah fall into place. There was a woman, as the Prophet ﷺ informed us, who prayed much and fasted much and gave much charity, and yet she was threatened with the Fire because she was abusive to her neighbours. How could a person be foul and harsh toward those around her, and still imagine herself a devoted, loving servant of Allah? There was a disconnect between her claimed relationship with her Lord and the way it failed to reach the people at her own door. Gratitude that does not flow outward to people is not the gratitude Allah accepts.

How the Companions Thanked

The Companions understood this link between thanking people and thanking Allah, and they lived it. When the muhājirūn arrived in Madīnah with nothing, having left their homes and their wealth behind in Makkah, the anṣār received them with a generosity the world had not seen, sharing their homes, their wealth, and their land, asking nothing in return. The muhājirūn were so moved that they came to the Prophet ﷺ and said that they had never seen a people more generous when they had much nor more comforting when they had little, and that they feared the anṣār would carry away the entire reward for all this good. Listen to how the Prophet ﷺ answered them, because it is the very heart of our khuṭbah.

لَا، مَا أَثْنَيْتُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَدَعَوْتُمْ اللَّهَ لَهُمْ.

No, not as long as you praise them and supplicate to Allah for them.

Source: Jāmi' at-Tirmidhī (from Anas ibn Mālik) **Hadith No:** 2487 **Authenticity:** Ḥasan Ṣaḥīḥ

As long as you praise them and make du'ā for them, the reward is shared, and you have not been left in their debt. The Prophet ﷺ taught the Companions that the spoken word of thanks and the sincere supplication for the one who helped you are themselves a real repayment, weighed in the scales of Allah. So the muhājirūn could not match the wealth of the anṣār, but they could thank them, and praise them, and pray for them, and that was enough to make them partners in the reward. Brothers and sisters, how many people in our own lives have carried us, our parents above all, who fed us and stayed awake over us when we could do nothing for ourselves? We may never repay them in kind. But we can thank them, openly and often, and we can raise our hands and beg Allah to reward them with a good we could never give. That is within the reach of the poorest among us, and the Prophet ﷺ called it the utmost in praise.

The Plate, the Phone, and the Restless Eye

Let us bring this into the texture of our own days, because the diseases the Prophet ﷺ warned against have only grown louder in our time. We have, many of us, become professional critics of our blessings. We sit before food that millions would weep to be offered, and we score it in our heads like a review

left online. We have devices in our hands that give us instant access to the lives of others, and we have turned the command of the Prophet ﷺ upside down. Instead of looking to those below us, we scroll all day through the carefully chosen highlights of those who appear to be above us, the better house, the better trip, the better body, the better life, and we rise from the screen quietly poisoned, our own genuine blessings made to look small and grey beside the staged brilliance of strangers. This is the engine of modern misery, and the Prophet ﷺ named its cure fourteen centuries ago: look down, not up, and you will not belittle the blessing of Allah upon you.

And consider our self-talk, the running commentary we keep about our own lives. Some of us have trained ourselves into a reflex of negativity, where the first thing the tongue reaches for is the flaw, the lack, the thing that went wrong, while the hundred things that went right pass without a word. A person says, this is just how I am, I always go to the negative. And that is true, it is a habit, and habits do not change overnight. But the Prophet ﷺ pointed us to the way out precisely through the small things, the daily things, the sip of water and the dry bread. Train yourself to say alḥamdulillāh for something so small that other people would belittle it, and do it again tomorrow, and slowly the channel of the heart is recut, until gratitude becomes the reflex and not the exception. And watch what Allah does in response, for He promised to take the small good you are grateful for and grow it, to colour the rest of your circumstances with it, and to open doors you did not know were there. Catch yourself, brothers and sisters. The next time the belittling word rises to your tongue, swallow it, and reach instead for the alḥamdulillāh that is always, always available, because there is no breath you take that is not itself a blessing worth thanking Allah for.

What Will They Remember Hearing

Before we close, let each of us carry one honest question home. What is the sound of my house? When my family thinks of me at the table, do they hear a man who names the good and thanks Allah for it, or one who finds the flaw in every dish and the cloud in every sky? Our children are listening more closely than we know, and they are not only learning our words, they are inheriting our lens. A child raised in a home where the blessings of Allah are belittled learns that the world is a disappointment and that nothing is ever enough, and he will carry that poverty of heart into a house full of provision. A child raised among alḥamdulillāh learns to see the gift in the small things, and he will be wealthy in a house that has little. We are not only thanking Allah for ourselves, brothers and sisters. We are handing our children either the eye that sees blessing or the eye that sees lack, and they will keep whichever one we give them for the rest of their lives, and pass it on again.

So ask yourself, as you would examine your ṣalāh and your Qur'an: how is my gratitude? When did I last thank Allah for a blessing so ordinary that I had stopped noticing it? When did I last look my mother or my father or my spouse in the eye and thank them with real warmth? When did I last catch the complaint on my tongue and turn it, by an act of will, into praise? These are not abstract questions. They are the daily work of remaking a heart, one small alḥamdulillāh at a time, until the grateful word becomes the first word and not the last, and until we are counted, by the mercy of Allah, among the few He named as truly thankful.

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

I say these words of mine, and I seek the forgiveness of Allah for myself and for you, so seek His forgiveness; indeed 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 khuṭbah we saw that gratitude is a lens through which two people can read the same life in opposite ways, that Allah commands us to speak of His favour, to look to those below us, and never to belittle His blessing, and that the Prophet ﷺ never once disparaged the food on his plate. We saw that ingratitude to people is ingratitude to Allah. Now let us turn these meanings into something we can actually live, by understanding where gratitude truly lives in the human being.

Gratitude of the Heart, the Tongue, and the Limbs

The scholars taught that true shukr stands on three pillars, and it is not complete until all three are present. The first is the gratitude of the heart, that you genuinely feel thankful, and to feel it you must first pause and contemplate the blessing, take a step back and actually count what has been done for you, by Allah and even by the people in your life. The second is the gratitude of the tongue, that you praise Allah openly and thank the people who do you good, and do so constantly. And the third is the gratitude of the limbs, that you take the blessing Allah gave you and use it in His obedience, so that the gift itself becomes an act of worship. Ibn al-Qayyim, may Allah have mercy on him, gathered these into a single description that is worth carrying in the heart.

Gratitude is built upon three pillars: that the heart acknowledge the blessing as coming from Allah, that the tongue speak openly in praise of Him, and that the limbs be employed in the obedience of the One who bestowed it. Whoever falls short in any of the three has fallen short in his thankfulness.

Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, may Allah have mercy on him

See how these three weave together. You feel the blessing, then you confirm the feeling with your words, then your deeds confirm your words. And there is no greater proof of the third pillar than the Prophet ﷺ himself. ‘Ā’ishah, may Allah be pleased with her, described how he would stand in the night in prayer until his feet became swollen, and when she asked him why he burdened himself so when Allah had already forgiven him his past and future faults, he gave the answer that defines a grateful servant for all time.

أَفَلَا أَكُونُ عَبْدًا شَكُورًا.

Shall I not, then, be a grateful servant?

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** Bukhārī 4837, Muslim 2819 **Authenticity:** Muttafaqun ‘Alayh

His gratitude was not only words upon the tongue. It stood him on his feet through the night until they swelled. And consider Dāwūd, peace be upon him, whom Allah blessed with kingdom and strength and a beautiful voice, and who answered every gift with worship, until his fasting and his night prayer became the standard the Prophet ﷺ himself praised, for the most beloved fasting to Allah is the fasting of Dāwūd, who fasted a day and broke a day. He took the blessings Allah gave him, thanked Allah for them, and then turned them around to become a blessing to the world. That is the full circle of shukr, brothers and sisters: to feel it, to speak it, and to let your deeds carry it.

Be Generous in Thanking People

And do not neglect the second pillar with the people in your life, for this is where many of us are weakest, especially with those closest to us. How often does a person excuse his coldness by saying, I show my love through my actions, my actions speak louder than my words? But know this: you will never love the people around you more than the Messenger of Allah ﷺ loved his Companions and his family, and he was constant in thanking people and voicing his gratitude to them. So let your actions be loud, yes, but do not let your words of thanks fall silent. The Prophet ﷺ taught us that even when we have nothing material to repay a kindness with, the tongue can complete the debt.

مَنْ صَنَعَ إِلَيْهِ مَعْرُوفٌ فَقَالَ لِفَاعِلِهِ: جَزَاكَ اللَّهُ خَيْرًا، فَقَدْ أْبْلَغَ فِي الشَّنَاءِ.

Whoever has a kindness done for him and says to the one who did it, may Allah reward you with good, has indeed done the utmost in praising and thanking him.

Source: Jāmi‘ at-Tirmidhī (from Usāmah ibn Zayd) **Hadith No:** Tirmidhī 2035 **Authenticity:** Ṣaḥīḥ (graded by al-Albānī)

There is a world of difference between a cold, unspoken acknowledgement and a warm jazākAllāhu khayran said while looking a person in the eye. And remember the second principle the Prophet ﷺ

gave us, that shukr is for the small things and the large alike, and that whoever is not grateful for the little will not be grateful for the much. It is exactly like ṣabr. If you cannot be patient with the small annoyances of a day, how will you bear a great trial when it comes? And so the believer trains on the small, thanking Allah and thanking people for the little kindnesses, and in doing so he magnifies them, for when you show a person that his small gift truly reached your heart, you make that gift large in his eyes, you make him glad he gave, and you make him want to give again. This is the very mechanism Allah described, if you are grateful I will increase you, working its way through human hearts.

Between Hope and Caution

Let no one leave this place imagining that gratitude is a small or optional grace. It is the dividing line between the two roads Allah set before us, and it is the key that unlocks increase. Yet let no one despair either over a tongue grown used to complaint, for habits are remade the way they were made, one small choice repeated. So begin small and begin today. And fear, even a little, the day we belittle the greatest blessing of all, the blessing of īmān, of being guided to lā ilāha illa Allah when so many were not. Brothers and sisters, guard that gift above every other, and thank Allah for it morning and evening, for a person may be grateful for his health and his wealth and forget to be grateful that Allah opened his heart to Islam, and there is no blessing on the earth that comes near to that one.

Closing Du‘ā

Dear brothers and sisters, let us raise our hands to the One who answers the grateful and the repentant alike.

O Allah, make us among the few who are truly grateful, grateful to You and grateful to our parents and grateful to the people in our lives. O Allah, do not let us belittle any blessing You have given us, above all the blessing of faith, and keep us upon it until the moment You take us. O Allah, set right the affairs of this Ummah, relieve the oppressed and the indebted, heal the sick, and grant safety and provision to our brothers and sisters in every land of trial. 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, increase us when we thank You, and let our last words in this world be the testimony that there is no god but You. 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 command of justice and excellence with which Allah seals 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-Naḥl (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