

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

خُطْبَةُ الْجُمُعَةِ

Friday Sermon

Two Du'ās of Gratitude in the Qur'ān

DELIVERED AT

Masjid Adam

DELIVERED BY

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ŞİFAH

SCHOOL OF ISLAMIC
FOUNDATIONS &
ADVOCACY FOR HUMANITY

Two Du'ās of Gratitude in the Qur'ān

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.**

A Du‘ā So Important That Allah Placed It Twice

There is a supplication in the Book of Allah so precious that He did not record it only once. He placed it on two separate tongues, in two separate chapters, across the span of a lifetime. Once He put it on the tongue of a great Prophet who was also a king, a man at the very height of worldly power, and once He gave it as guidance to the ordinary believer when he reaches the middle of his life, at the age of forty. That Allah would repeat a single du‘ā, almost word for word, for both the mightiest of His servants and the most ordinary of them, tells us that its lesson is meant for every one of us, whatever our station. This morning, brothers and sisters, we will sit with these two du‘ās and learn what it truly means to be a grateful servant of Allah.

Let us begin with the first, the du‘ā of Sulaymān, ‘alayhi as-salām. Allah had given Sulaymān a kingdom such as He had given no one else, dominion over the wind, command of the jinn, and the understanding of the speech of birds and beasts. And yet, in a moment that reveals the heart of this great Prophet, it was not his power that he celebrated but his need to be grateful. As he marched at the head of his vast armies, he passed through a valley of ants, and he heard a single ant warn her people to retreat into their dwellings lest they be crushed underfoot. A lesser man would have been filled with pride at his own majesty. Sulaymān smiled at her words, and then he turned to his Lord with this:

رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَىٰ وَالِدَيَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ
وَأَدْخِلْنِي بِرَحْمَتِكَ فِي عِبَادِكَ الصَّالِحِينَ *

My Lord, enable me to be grateful for Your favour which You have bestowed upon me and upon my parents, and to do righteousness of which You approve. And admit me by Your mercy among Your righteous servants.

Sūrah an-Naml (27:19)

Reflect on the very first word of his request, brothers and sisters: awzi‘nī. The scholars of language explain that this is not merely to ask, enable me, but to ask Allah to instill within him a constant, driving urge to be grateful, a gratitude so woven into his being that it does not fade with time or comfort or success. Sulaymān did not ask only to say the words of thanks. He asked Allah to make his very heart a grateful heart, because he understood the danger that wealth and power pose to the soul, how easily they breed forgetfulness and entitlement. The one whom Allah has given much is the one most in need of asking for the strength to remain grateful, for blessings are a test no lighter than hardship, and many a soul that stood firm in difficulty was undone by ease.

This same lesson appears again in the life of Sulaymān, ‘alayhi as-salām, at the very peak of his miraculous power. When he wished to bring the throne of the Queen of Sheba across a great distance,

one who had knowledge of the Book offered to bring it to him in the blink of an eye, and in an instant the mighty throne stood before him. Now consider how a king might respond to such a marvel of his own court, what pride might swell in his chest. But watch the heart of a true servant of Allah. The moment the throne settled before him, Sulaymān did not boast of his kingdom. He read the entire event as a test of a single thing.

فَلَمَّا رَأَاهُ مُسْتَقَرًّا عِنْدَهُ قَالَ هَذَا مِنْ فَضْلِ رَبِّي لِيَبْلُوَنِي أَالشُّكْرُ أَمْ الْكُفْرُ وَمَنْ شَكَرَ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ رَبِّي غَنِيٌّ كَرِيمٌ *

Then when he saw it placed before him, he said: This is from the favour of my Lord to test me, whether I am grateful or ungrateful. And whoever is grateful, his gratitude is only for his own benefit; and whoever is ungrateful, then indeed my Lord is free of need and generous.

Sūrah an-Naml (27:40)

This is from the favour of my Lord to test me, whether I am grateful or ungrateful. Brothers and sisters, here is the wisdom of a heart that has understood the purpose of every blessing. Sulaymān knew that the gift was not a reward to make him proud, it was a test to see how he would respond. And this is true of every favour Allah places in our hands. Our wealth is a test, will we be grateful or heedless. Our health is a test, our families, our positions, even the very air we breathe. And notice the mercy in the words that follow: whoever is grateful, his gratitude is only for his own benefit. Allah gains nothing from our thanks, for He is free of all need. When we thank Him, the benefit returns entirely to us, in the increase of His favours and the peace of a contented heart. Allah asks us to be grateful not because He needs it, but because we do.

Gratitude Is the Door Through Which Blessings Increase

Why did this Prophet-King place gratitude above every other request he could have made? Because Allah has tied the increase of His favours to the gratitude of His servants, and the loss of them to ingratitude. This is one of the firm promises of the Qur'an, a law as certain as any in this universe. Allah said:

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 deny, indeed My punishment is severe.

Sūrah Ibrāhīm (14:7)

Look at how Allah phrases His promise. He says if you are grateful I will surely increase you, and He leaves the increase unspecified, open, boundless. He does not say I will increase your wealth, or your

health, or your knowledge. He simply says I will increase you, so that the believer may hope for increase in every good thing. But when He speaks of ingratitude, notice that He does not say He will decrease them. He says His punishment is severe, for to deny the favours of Allah is not a small matter, it is a kind of theft, taking the gift and forgetting the Giver. As-Sa'dī, may Allah have mercy on him, explained that gratitude preserves existing blessings and draws down new ones, while ingratitude exposes a person to their removal. So the grateful heart lives in a rising tide of mercy, and the ungrateful heart lives always at risk of the tide going out.

But here we must be careful, brothers and sisters, not to misunderstand what gratitude actually is. Many people imagine that gratitude is a feeling, a warm sense of appreciation that visits the heart now and then, or a word we say, alḥamdulillāh, when something good arrives. True shukr is far greater than a passing feeling or a phrase upon the tongue. Ibn al-Qayyim, may Allah have mercy on him, gathered its full meaning into a definition that the people of knowledge have treasured ever since.

الشُّكْرُ ظُهُورُ أَثَرِ نِعْمَةِ اللَّهِ عَلَى لِسَانِ عَبْدِهِ ثَنَاءً وَاعْتِرَافًا، وَعَلَى قَلْبِهِ شُحُودًا وَمَحَبَّةً، وَعَلَى جَوَارِحِهِ
انْقِيَادًا وَطَاعَةً.

Gratitude is the appearance of the effect of Allah's blessing upon the tongue of His servant in praise and acknowledgement, upon his heart in witnessing and love, and upon his limbs in submission and obedience.

Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyya, Madārij as-Sālikīn

Look at how complete this is. Gratitude has a place upon the tongue, that we speak of the blessing and praise the One who gave it. It has a place in the heart, that we inwardly witness that every good thing is from Allah alone and that we love Him for it. And it has a place in the limbs, that we use the blessing in obedience to the One who gave it, not in disobedience to Him. This is the gratitude that Sulaymān asked for. Notice that his du'ā did not stop at thanks. He immediately joined it to action: and to do righteousness of which You approve. For gratitude that does not move the limbs to obedience is only half a gratitude. The truest thanks for a blessing is to use it in a way that pleases the One who bestowed it. To thank Allah for your wealth is to spend it in the lawful and give from it to the poor. To thank Him for your health is to carry your body to the masjid and to the service of others. To thank Him for your knowledge is to act upon it and to teach it. Gratitude is active, brothers and sisters, never passive.

This was the way of the Prophets, who were the most grateful of all people precisely because their gratitude moved their limbs. Allah commanded the household of one of the greatest of them with a single word:

اعْمَلُوا آلَ دَاوُودَ شُكْرًا وَقَلِيلٌ مِّنْ عِبَادِيَ الشَّكُورُ *

Work, O family of Dāwūd, in gratitude. And few of My servants are truly grateful.

Sūrah Saba' (34:13)

Work, in gratitude. Allah did not say feel grateful, He said work in gratitude, making thankfulness itself a kind of labour, a doing and not merely a feeling. And then He sealed the verse with a sobering truth that should make each of us examine his own heart: and few of My servants are truly grateful. The grateful are the minority, brothers and sisters. Most people, when given a thousand blessings and denied one, will speak only of the one they were denied. The believer trains himself to be among the few, to see the thousand and to thank the One who gave them.

The Prayer Taught at the End of Every Salah

So central is this du'ā of gratitude that the Prophet ﷺ taught it, in its own form, to one of the Companions he loved most, instructing him to never abandon it after a single prayer. Mu'adh ibn Jabal, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ took him by the hand and said to him:

يَا مُعَاذُ، وَاللَّهِ إِنِّي لَأُحِبُّكَ، فَلَا تَدَعَنَّ فِي دُبُرِ كُلِّ صَلَاةٍ أَنْ تَقُولَ: اللَّهُمَّ أَعِنِّي عَلَى ذِكْرِكَ وَشُكْرِكَ وَحُسْنِ عِبَادَتِكَ.

O Mu'adh, by Allah, I truly love you, so never fail to say at the end of every prayer: O Allah, help me to remember You, to thank You, and to worship You in the best way.

Source: Sunan Abī Dāwūd **Hadith No:** 1522 **Authenticity:** Ṣaḥīḥ (graded Ṣaḥīḥ by al-Albānī)

Look closely, brothers and sisters, at what the Prophet ﷺ is teaching, for it is the very same lesson as the du'ā of Sulaymān. Help me to remember You, and to thank You, and to worship You well. Just as Sulaymān asked to be enabled to be grateful, the Prophet ﷺ taught us to ask for help to be grateful, because gratitude is not something we can sustain by our own strength. We need the help of Allah even to thank Allah, for the very ability to praise Him is itself one of His blessings that calls for further praise. And notice that he placed this between the remembrance of Allah and the excellence of worshipping Him, so that thankfulness sits at the heart of a believer's whole relationship with his Lord. He tied this counsel to his love, by Allah I love you, so that Mu'adh would hold it dear and never let it go. Let us take it as said to us as well, and let none of us leave a prayer without asking Allah to make us among the grateful.

Gratitude That Reaches Back to Our Parents

Now look again at both du'ās and notice a remarkable thing. Sulaymān did not say, enable me to thank You for Your favour upon me. He said, upon me and upon my parents. He reached his gratitude backward, to the blessings Allah had poured upon those who came before him, the faith and the guidance and the care that he had inherited. For a person does not arrive in this world from nowhere. Whatever good we have, we received much of it through our parents, through their sacrifice, their teaching, and the mercy Allah showed them before us. To be truly grateful is to recognise this chain, and so Allah ties our thanks to Him together with kindness to them. This is why, in the second of our two du'ās, Allah introduces the very same supplication by first reminding us of what our parents endured for our sake.

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ إِحْسَانًا ۚ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ كُرْهًا وَوَضَعَتْهُ كُرْهًا وَحَمَلُهُ وَفَصَالُهُ
ثَلَاثُونَ شَهْرًا *

And We have enjoined upon man, to his parents, good treatment. His mother carried him with hardship and gave birth to him with hardship, and his bearing and his weaning is thirty months.

Sūrah al-Aḥqāf (46:15)

Before Allah even mentions the du'ā of gratitude, He sets before our eyes the hardship of the mother who carried us, the pain of the bearing and the pain of the birth, the long months of nursing and care. Why does He place this here? Because a person cannot honestly thank Allah while forgetting those through whom Allah's mercy first reached him. Ingratitude to parents and gratitude to Allah cannot truly live in the same heart. This is why Allah, in another place, joined the two commands in a single breath, leaving no space between thankfulness to Him and thankfulness to those who raised us.

أَنْ أَشْكُرَ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيْكَ إِلَيَّ الْمَصِيرُ *

Be grateful to Me and to your parents. To Me is the final destination.

Sūrah Luqmān (31:14)

Be grateful to Me, and to your parents. Allah mentions His own right and the right of the parents in one command, an honour He gave to no one else in this way. And the Prophet ﷺ made plain that this is no minor branch of our religion but woven into the very meaning of gratitude itself, for the one who cannot bring himself to thank a human being who did him good has a heart not yet ready to truly thank Allah. Abū Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated that he said:

مَنْ لَا يَشْكُرُ النَّاسَ لَا يَشْكُرُ اللَّهَ.

Whoever does not thank people has not thanked Allah.

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

How many of us, brothers and sisters, are quick to thank a stranger for the smallest courtesy, yet slow to thank the mother who gave us years of sleepless nights, or the father who wore himself out so that we could be comfortable? Gratitude to Allah that does not soften the heart toward our parents has not yet reached its root. If your parents are still living, let this khutbah move you to go to them, to thank them in plain words, to serve them in their weakness as they served you in yours. And if they have passed, then thank Allah for them by making du'ā for them and by being righteous, for the righteousness of a child is among the greatest gifts that still reaches a parent in the grave.

The Believer at Forty, and the Gratitude That Reaches Forward

And here we come to the most striking difference between the two du'ās. The first was made by a Prophet-King at the height of his power. The second, almost identical, is placed by Allah upon the tongue of the ordinary believer at a very particular moment of his life, when he reaches the age of forty. Allah completes the second du'ā with a request that Sulaymān's did not contain, a request that reaches not backward to the parents but forward, to the generations still to come.

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَبَلَغَ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً قَالَ رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَىٰ وَالِدَيَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ وَأَصْلِحْ لِي فِي ذُرِّيَّتِي إِنِّي تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَإِنِّي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ *

Until, when he reaches full maturity and reaches the age of forty, he says: My Lord, enable me to be grateful for Your favour which You have bestowed upon me and upon my parents, and to do righteousness of which You approve, and make righteous for me my offspring. Indeed, I have turned to You in repentance, and indeed I am among the Muslims.

Sūrah al-Aḥqāf (46:15)

Consider why Allah chose the age of forty for this du'ā. By forty, a person has reached the fullness of his strength and his understanding. His life has largely taken its shape. His ambitions, if they were only for this world, have either been met or have slipped away, and the soul stands at a turning point. It is the age at which a wise person stops asking only what he will gain and begins asking what he will leave behind, and what he will carry to his Lord. So Allah teaches the believer that this is the moment

to turn fully to Him, to take stock, to be grateful for all that has come before, and to set his face toward his ending. Notice the two new pieces Sulaymān's du'ā did not have. First, make righteous for me my offspring, a plea that the gratitude and faith he received from his parents will continue through his children after him, so that the chain of guidance is not broken. And second, indeed I have turned to You in repentance, for the grateful heart is also a returning heart, one that knows its shortcomings and runs back to Allah.

What a complete vision of a life this is, brothers and sisters. The believer stands at forty and looks in three directions at once. He looks back with gratitude to his parents and all who came before. He looks at himself with repentance, turning to Allah from his sins. And he looks forward with hope, asking Allah to make his children righteous so that the good he was given will outlive him. This is how a Muslim is meant to grow old, not chasing the fading pleasures of youth, but deepening in thankfulness, in repentance, and in care for the generation he will leave behind. And though Allah named the age of forty, none of us should wait for it. The one who is younger should begin this posture now, and the one who is past it should adopt it today, for the door is never closed.

And take seriously, brothers and sisters, that second plea of the believer at forty: make righteous for me my offspring. In our time this has become one of the hardest of all du'ās to see answered, for we are raising children in an age that pulls at their hearts from every direction, through the very screens we place in their hands. It is not enough to provide for our children and then hand them over to be raised by whatever the world streams into their eyes. Gratitude to Allah for the gift of a child is expressed by guarding that gift, by sitting with them, teaching them the names of their Lord, praying with them, and showing them by our own example what a grateful servant looks like. The believer at forty did not only ask Allah to make his children righteous, he turned to Allah in repentance in the same breath, knowing that the surest way to righteous children is to be a righteous parent whom Allah blesses. So let our homes be places where Allah is remembered and thanked aloud, where the children hear their parents say alḥamdulillāh and see them rise for prayer, for the gratitude we model today is the faith they will carry tomorrow, long after we are gone.

The Most Grateful of All Creation

If we wish to see this gratitude not as words but as a living example, we need only look to our own Prophet ﷺ, who was the most grateful servant Allah ever created. Allah had forgiven him all that came before and all that would come after, and yet he would stand in prayer through the night until his blessed feet became swollen and cracked. 'Ā'ishah, may Allah be pleased with her, seeing this, asked him why he burdened himself so when Allah had already forgiven him, and his answer is one every believer should carry in his heart.

أَفَلَا أَكُونُ عَبْدًا شَكُورًا؟

Should I not then be a grateful servant?

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī / Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** Bukhārī 1130, Muslim 2820 **Authenticity:** Muttafaqun 'Alayh

Should I not be a grateful servant? Reflect on this, brothers and sisters. The Prophet ﷺ did not worship out of fear of punishment alone, for he had been given the assurance of forgiveness. He worshipped out of gratitude, as a response of love to a Lord who had blessed him beyond measure. He understood that worship is the highest form of thanks, that when Allah has given you everything, the only fitting reply is to give Him your nights, your bowing, your tears. This turns our whole understanding of worship on its head. We often treat our prayers as a debt grudgingly paid. The grateful servant treats them as a gift gladly offered, a chance to say thank you to the One who gave him his very breath. When you next stand to pray, brothers and sisters, do not stand as one paying a fine. Stand as one saying thank you.

And gratitude, in the life of the believer, is not only for the days of ease. This is the secret that sets the believer apart from all others, that his gratitude and his patience together turn every condition of his life into pure gain. The Prophet ﷺ described it in words of wonder.

عَجَبًا لِأَمْرِ الْمُؤْمِنِ، إِنَّ أَمْرَهُ كُلَّهُ خَيْرٌ، وَلَيْسَ ذَلِكَ لِأَحَدٍ إِلَّا لِلْمُؤْمِنِ: إِنْ أَصَابَتْهُ سَرَاءٌ شَكَرَ فَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُ، وَإِنْ أَصَابَتْهُ ضَرَاءٌ صَبَرَ فَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُ.

How wonderful is the affair of the believer, for all of his affair is good, and that is for no one except the believer. If ease comes to him, he is grateful, and that is good for him; and if hardship comes to him, he is patient, and that is good for him.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** 2999 **Authenticity:** Ṣaḥīḥ

See how the believer cannot lose, brothers and sisters. When good comes to him, he meets it with gratitude, and his gratitude turns the blessing into reward and increase. When difficulty comes to him, he meets it with patience, and his patience turns the trial into reward and elevation. Gratitude and patience are the two wings by which the believer flies through every season of his life, and the one who has them both is in a state of profit whether the sky is clear or stormed. This is why the people of gratitude are the people of peace, for they have learned to see the hand of Allah in everything that reaches them, and to respond to it with the response He loves.

And gratitude, when it truly takes hold of a heart, does not remain a private affair between the servant and his Lord. It overflows into how he treats the creation of Allah. For the one who is grateful that Allah fed him cannot bear to let his neighbour go hungry, and the one who is grateful that Allah

sheltered him is moved to shelter others. This is why the righteous understood that among the highest forms of thanking Allah for a blessing is to let that blessing reach others through you. The Companions lived this. Abū Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, the wealthiest among them, did not hoard what Allah had given him, but poured it out in the path of Allah, freeing slaves and feeding the poor, until he gave away nearly all that he owned. That was his gratitude, made visible in his hands. When Allah raises your station or widens your provision, brothers and sisters, ask yourself who else Allah intends to reach through you, for a blessing held selfishly is a blessing whose thanks has not yet been completed.

Gratitude in an Age of Endless Complaint

Let us bring this into the world we actually live in, brothers and sisters, for we have been placed in an age that is, in many ways, engineered to make us ungrateful. We carry in our pockets a window into the lives of millions of others, and through it we are shown, hour after hour, what we do not have. We see the houses we do not own, the holidays we did not take, the successes we did not achieve, until the heart grows quietly bitter and the thousand blessings we do possess fade from view behind the one or two we lack. This endless comparison is a thief of gratitude, and it is making a generation miserable in the midst of plenty. The cure is not more, brothers and sisters, for the one who is not grateful for a little will not be grateful for much. The cure is to lift our eyes from what others have and to count what Allah has given us.

So train your heart in the daily practice of shukr. Begin, as Sulaymān began, by asking Allah Himself to make you grateful. Make the du'ā the Prophet ﷺ taught Mu'ādh a fixed companion after every prayer. And then look honestly at your life and name the blessings, the breath in your chest that came without your asking, the sight in your eyes, the roof above you, the food before you, the faith in your heart that Allah did not give to so many others. The one who scrolls past a hundred images of what he lacks and never once thanks Allah for what he has has let the device starve his soul. Turn it around. Let the sight of another's blessing remind you to thank Allah for your own, and to ask Him to bless that person too, for envy and gratitude cannot share a single heart.

And let your gratitude take the shape Allah loves, moving from the heart to the limbs. Thank Allah for your wealth by keeping it lawful and giving from it to those in need. Thank Him for your health by carrying yourself to His worship and to the service of your family and community. Thank Him for your children by raising them upon faith and praying, as the believer at forty prayed, that He make them righteous. Thank Him for your parents by serving them while you still can. And thank Him for the gift of Islam, the greatest gift of all, by living it and by being, as the verse said, among the Muslims. Ask yourself this Friday: when did I last truly thank Allah, not with a passing word, but with my heart, my tongue, and my hands all at once?

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, for 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. أَمَّا بَعْدُ:

All praise is for Allah, Lord of the worlds, and may peace and blessings be upon the noblest of the Prophets and Messengers, our Prophet Muḥammad, and upon his family and all his companions. To proceed:

Dear brothers and sisters, we have seen how Allah placed a single du'ā of gratitude upon the tongue of a Prophet-King and upon the tongue of the believer at forty, how true shukr lives upon the tongue, in the heart, and in the limbs, how it reaches back to our parents and forward to our children, and how the Prophet ﷺ, the most grateful of creation, made his worship itself an act of thanks. The question now is how we carry this gratitude out of the masjid and into the days ahead.

Begin with the du'ā that gathers it all, the one the Prophet ﷺ loved enough to tie to his own love for Mu'adh: O Allah, help me to remember You, to thank You, and to worship You in the best way. Say it after every prayer, brothers and sisters, and let it shape the day that follows. Then make the praise of Allah a habit of your tongue, returning often to alḥamdulillāh, not as an empty reflex but as a real acknowledgement that every good thing is from Him. Let your eyes learn to count blessings rather than lacks, and when the pull of comparison comes, answer it at once with thanks. Move your gratitude into your hands, keeping your earning lawful, giving from your wealth, and using your strength in obedience. Honour your parents with your service and your du'ā while you are able, and make du'ā for your children that Allah make them righteous and keep the chain of faith unbroken after you. And let your gratitude always be joined to repentance, as the believer at forty joined them, for the one who thanks Allah for His blessings while turning back to Him from his sins has gathered the two halves of a sound heart.

And hold fast to the balance of hope and fear that this teaching carries within it. Let the promise, if you are grateful I will surely increase you, fill you with hope and drive you to thankfulness, for the door of increase is opened by the grateful hand. And let the warning that follows it keep you from heedlessness, for the favours of Allah are a trust, and to take them while forgetting the Giver is to put them at risk. The believer lives between these two, hoping in the boundless generosity of a Lord who

multiplies the reward of the thankful, and fearful of becoming one of the heedless who are given everything and thank Him for nothing. Let us strive to be among the few of whom Allah said that they are truly grateful.

Closing Du'ā

Dear brothers and sisters, let us raise our hands and make the very du'ā that Allah taught us through His Prophets, asking Him to make us among His grateful servants.

O Allah, enable us to be grateful for Your favour which You have bestowed upon us and upon our parents, and grant us the strength to do righteous deeds that please You. O Allah, help us to remember You, to thank You, and to worship You in the best way. O Allah, make righteous for us our offspring, and keep the chain of faith unbroken through our children and theirs.

O Allah, forgive our parents and have mercy upon them as they raised us when we were small, and make us a source of righteousness that reaches them. O Allah, set right the affairs of this Ummah, relieve the distress of the distressed, heal the sick, settle the debts of the indebted, and grant safety, mercy, and relief to our oppressed brothers and sisters in every land. O Allah, forgive the believing men and the believing women, the living among them and those who have passed on. O Allah, accept from us our worship, make the Qur'an the spring of our hearts, grant us beneficial knowledge and grateful hearts, and seal our lives with the best of deeds and our words with the testimony that there is no god but You.

رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ *

Our Lord, give us good in this world and good in the Hereafter, and protect us from the punishment of the Fire.

Sūrah al-Baqarah (2:201)

The Final Reminder

Remember the command of your Lord, with which He gathers the whole of right conduct in a single verse, the command of justice, excellence, and generosity.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ
يَعْظُمُ 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