

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

خُطْبَةُ الْجُمُعَةِ

Friday Sermon

Your Lord Loves Praise: Alhamdulillah as Supplication



ŞİFAH

SCHOOL OF ISLAMIC
FOUNDATIONS &
ADVOCACY FOR HUMANITY

Your Lord Loves Praise: Alhamdulillah as Supplication

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.**

The Most Important Words on the Greatest Day

I begin by advising my own soul first, and then advising you. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ described for us a scene from the Day of Judgement, a day when the whole of creation will stand in terror, the sun drawn near, and the people overwhelmed, searching desperately for someone to intercede with Allah so that the reckoning may begin. They will go from Prophet to Prophet until they come to our Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ, and he will say, I am for it. And then, brothers and sisters, consider what he does in that moment, the greatest moment of intercession in the history of mankind. He does not begin by asking. He falls down in prostration beneath the Throne of Allah, and he praises. He told us:

فَيَفْتَحُ اللَّهُ عَلَيَّ مِنْ مَحَامِدِهِ وَحُسْنِ الثَّنَاءِ عَلَيْهِ شَيْئًا لَا يَحْضُرُنِي الْآنَ، فَأَحْمَدُهُ بِتِلْكَ
الْمَحَامِدِ وَأَخِرُّ لَهُ سَاجِدًا.

Then Allah will open to me of His praises and the beauty of extolling Him things that do not come to me now, and I will praise Him with those praises and fall down before Him in prostration.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** Bukhārī 7410, Muslim 193 **Authenticity:** Muttafaqun ‘Alayh

Sit with this, brothers and sisters. The Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ, with his face upon the ground on the Day of Judgement, and Allah inspiring him with the most beautiful praises, praises he says he does not even know now, so that through them he may intercede for all of creation. The most important supplication ever to be made will open not with a request but with praise. And this is the heart of what we will sit with this morning: that Alhamdulillah is the most natural form of supplication and the most open-ended, the doorway through which every other du‘ā passes.

Your Lord Loves to Be Praised

A man once praised his Lord beautifully and then let his supplication flow wherever it went, mentioning whatever came to his heart. When this reached the Prophet ﷺ, he did not correct the man. He said, in essence, that the man had done well, for your Lord loves to be praised. Think about what that opens for us. When a servant begins to make du‘ā, he can simply say Alhamdulillah, praise Allah, and then mention any of His names and attributes he wishes, any of His favours, any blessing he is grateful for or longing for. You truly cannot go wrong with this remembrance, and you can use it to carry your supplication forward.

Alhamdulillah for who You are. Alhamdulillah for what You have given me. Alhamdulillah for the very thing I am asking You for. And this is why the Prophet ﷺ named it the greatest of supplications:

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

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

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

Notice how ḥamd carries a double role. It is at once the greatest form of remembrance and a supplication in its own right. How can praise be a supplication when you are not asking for anything? Because in praising Allah you are acknowledging your need of Him, your dependence upon Him, your smallness before His greatness, and that admission is itself a request answered by the One who loves to give. The believer who has nothing to ask still has everything to say, and what he says is Alhamdulillah.

Begin Your Supplication with Praise

Because praise is the doorway, the Prophet ﷺ taught us the order of supplication. He once heard a man making du‘ā in his prayer who rushed straight to his requests without praising Allah or sending blessings upon the Prophet ﷺ, and he said, this one has hastened. Then he called him and taught him, and taught all of us:

إِذَا صَلَّى أَحَدُكُمْ فَلْيَبْدَأْ بِتَمْجِيدِ رَبِّهِ وَالثَّنَاءِ عَلَيْهِ، ثُمَّ لِيُصَلِّ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ ﷺ، ثُمَّ لِيَدْعُ بَعْدَ بَمَاءٍ شَاءَ.

When one of you supplicates, let him begin by glorifying his Lord and praising Him, then let him send blessings upon the Prophet ﷺ then let him ask afterward for whatever he wishes.

Source: Jāmi‘ at-Tirmidhī **Hadith No:** Tirmidhī 3477 **Authenticity:** Ṣaḥīḥ (al-Albānī)

How many of us, brothers and sisters, rush to Allah only with our list of needs, and never pause to praise the One we are asking? The Prophet ﷺ is teaching us etiquette with our Lord: you do not burst into the presence of the King and begin demanding. You praise Him first, you extol Him as He deserves, you send blessings upon His Messenger, and then you lay your need before Him. And the beauty is that the praise which opens the door is itself the supplication most beloved to Him.

What Does It Mean to Praise Allah?

So what is this word ḥamd, that it should carry such weight? The scholars of language explain that ḥamd is comprehensive in a way few words are, for it gathers two things into one. It is not only praise, and it is not only thanks. It is both at once, joined in a single word, so that when you say Alhamdulillah

you are praising Allah for His perfection and thanking Him for His favour in the same breath. And Ibn al-Qayyim, may Allah have mercy on him, captured what lifts ḥamd above mere description:

الْحَمْدُ: إِبْرَارٌ عَنْ مَحَاسِنِ الْمَحْمُودِ مَعَ مَحَبَّتِهِ وَإِجْلَالِهِ وَتَعْظِيمِهِ.

Praise is to declare the perfections of the One praised, joined with love for Him, and reverence, and magnification of Him.

Ibn al-Qayyim, may Allah have mercy on him

So ḥamd is not the cold listing of attributes. It is praise warmed by love and lifted by reverence, which is why it is such a special way to speak to Allah. And consider this wonder: the very first words of Allah's Book, after His name, are His own praise of Himself. The one who opens the Qur'an is met immediately by Allah praising Allah:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ *

All praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of all the worlds.

Sūrah al-Fātiḥah (1:2)

The first to praise Allah in His Book is Allah Himself, for He is praiseworthy whether or not anyone praises Him, and He is exalted whether or not anyone acknowledges Him. He does not need our ḥamd. It is we who need to give it, for in praising Him we are lifted, and our scales are filled. As al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr noted, tasbīḥ declares Allah's freedom from every flaw, and taḥmīd affirms His perfection and His grace, and together these two are the words that fill the scale on the Day of Judgement and fill what lies between the heavens and the earth.

Praise in the Age of Complaint

Let us bring this into the life we actually live. We move through a world that trains the heart to complain. The devices in our hands reward the loudest grievance and teach us to scan endlessly for what is missing rather than to trace what we already hold back to the One who gave it. Someone asks how we are, and the tongue reaches first for a complaint. But the believer who has learned that his Lord loves praise answers differently. He says Alhamdulillah and means it, before he lists what he lacks. He opens his supplications with praise rather than demands. And he raises his children upon gratitude rather than entitlement, so they grow up seeing the hand of Allah behind every gift. And there is a promise attached to this, for gratitude is not only beautiful, it is the very key to increase:

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

And 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)

So the one who praises is not only rewarded for the praise; he is increased in the very blessing he praised Allah for. Ask yourself this Friday: when good reaches me, do I trace it back to Allah and praise Him, or do I treat it as my due? When I raise my hands to ask, do I begin by praising the One I am asking? And when I am asked how I am, what does my tongue reach for first? These questions are not meant to shame us. They are an invitation to become people whose first instinct, in every state, is Alhamdulillah.

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

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

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

Closing of the First Khutbah

The Second Khutbah

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ، وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى أَشْرَفِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَالْمُرْسَلِينَ، نَبِيِّنَا مُحَمَّدٍ
وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ. اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ، كَمَا صَلَّيْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ
وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ 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 learned that Alḥamdulillah is the most natural and open-ended of supplications, the doorway through which every du‘ā should pass. We saw the Prophet ﷺ himself open the greatest intercession in history with praise, we heard that our Lord loves to be praised, and we learned to begin our own supplications with praise before our requests. We saw that ḥamd unites praise and gratitude in a single word, warmed by love and reverence. Now let us see how Allah cherishes this word, and how to weave it through our days.

Among the Words Most Beloved to Allah

From among all the words a tongue can utter, Allah chose four as the dearest to Him, and ḥamd is among them. The Prophet ﷺ said:

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

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

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

Light upon the tongue, beloved to the Lord, and heavy upon the scale. These are words within the reach of every one of us, in every moment, whether we are walking, working, resting, or waiting, and

yet most of us let the hours pass without them. The believer who fills the gaps of his day with Alhamdulillah is quietly trading empty moments for treasure stored with Allah.

Begin the Day, and Each Blessing, with Praise

And the very first blessing the believer meets each day is one we almost never pause over: that we woke at all. Sleep is a small death, and waking is a small resurrection, and the Prophet ﷺ taught us to open our eyes upon praise:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَحْيَانَا بَعْدَ مَا أَمَاتَنَا وَإِلَيْهِ النُّشُورُ

All praise belongs to Allah who gave us life after He had caused us to die, and to Him is the resurrection.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī **Hadith No:** Bukhārī 6312 **Authenticity:** Ṣaḥīḥ

So begin your day with His praise, and let it run through the day after that. The Sunnah is to say Alhamdulillah thirty-three times after every obligatory prayer, joined with the tasbiḥ. Say it over your food, thanking the One who fed you without any power of your own. Say it over the clothing you put on. Say it when you sneeze, for the Prophet ﷺ taught that the one who praises Allah at a sneeze is answered with mercy by his brother, while the one who neglects it is left to the mockery of Shayṭān. And let your praise open every supplication you make, so that you come to Allah the way He loves to be approached. A life laced with Alhamdulillah, morning to night, is a life that meets Allah with a scale already heavy with the words dearest to Him.

Closing Du‘ā

Dear brothers and sisters, let us raise our hands to the One who loves to be praised, and let us begin, as we were taught, with His praise.

All praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the worlds, praise abundant, pure, and blessed, as our Lord loves and is pleased with. O Allah, make us among those who praise You in every state, and let our praise be the doorway to every good we ask of You. O Allah, teach us to thank You as You deserve, to remember You as is Your right, and to worship You with excellence. O Allah, let our Alhamdulillah be sincere, and let it fill our scales on the Day we stand before You. O Allah, keep our tongues firm upon Your remembrance, and let the last words we speak in this world be the testimony that there is no god but You. O Allah, set right the affairs of this Ummah, protect our families and our children, and keep our young ones firm upon faith in an age of trial. O Allah, relieve the suffering of the oppressed in every land, and grant safety, provision, and a clear relief to our brothers and sisters who are wronged and afraid, for You are the All Powerful and they have none besides You.

O Allah, forgive us and our parents, and have mercy upon them as they raised us when we were small. O Allah, forgive the believing men and the believing women, the living among them and those who

have passed. O Allah, make the Qur'an the spring of our hearts and the light of our chests, grant us beneficial knowledge and hearts that truly fear You, and let our deeds be sincere for Your Face alone. O Allah, do not leave for us on this day a sin except that You have forgiven it, nor a worry except that You have relieved it, nor a debt except that You have settled it, nor a need from the needs of this world and the next except that You have fulfilled it and made it easy for us. O Allah, seal our lives with the best of deeds. Our Lord, give us good in this world and good in the Hereafter, and protect us from the punishment of the Fire.

The Final Reminder

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

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

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

Sūrah an-Nahl (16:90)

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

وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ