

خطب تعظيم قدر الصلاة

**Sermons on Magnifying the
Status of Prayer**

Sermons on Magnifying the Status of Prayer

Author

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In the Name of Allah, the Most Compassionate,
the Most Merciful

Introduction

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, and may Allah's peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and all his Companions. To proceed:

These are varied sermons on themes exalting the status of prayer. There are twelve sermons, corresponding to the months of the year, enabling the mosque preacher to devote one sermon each month to prayer on a new topic.

Due consideration was given, in preparing them, to the comprehensiveness of meanings that foster the magnification of the status of prayer and striving to establish it. They were prepared in accordance with a scholarly methodology for cultivating values. Thus, each sermon comprises information that addresses the intellect, sentiments that affect the emotions and the heart, and it also incorporates the practical and behavioral dimension that the listener is required to implement after hearing the sermon.

We deem that this methodology—by the grace of Allah and His assistance—will have an effect on the listeners and achieve the objectives of the sermon.

I ask Allah Almighty to make it a treasure for me on the Day I meet Him, and for everyone who participated in and contributed to its revision or printing,

or its translation, and all praise is due to Allah in the beginning and in the end.

Abdul-Karim ibn 'Awad al-Sulami

26/05/1442 A.H.

Makkah

Extolling and venerating

The First Sermon

Praise be to Allah. We praise Him, seek His help, and ask Him for forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allah from the evil of ourselves and from our bad deeds. Whoever Allah guides, none can misguide, and whoever He sends astray, none can guide. I testify that there is no god but Allah, alone, with no partner, and I testify that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا ءَامِنُوا بِاللّٰهِ وَتَنَتَضَرَّ نَفْسٍ مَّا قَدَمَتْ لِعِظْمٍ وَٱتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ خَبِيرٌ
بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ﴾

{O you who believe, fear Allah, and let every soul consider what it has sent forth for tomorrow. And fear Allah. Indeed, Allah is All-Aware of what you do.}

[Surat al-Hashr: 18]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾

{O you who believe, fear Allah as He should be feared, and do not die except as Muslims.}

[Surat Āl ‘Imrān: 102]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا، يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا﴾

{O you who believe, fear Allah and say what is right, He will amend for you your deeds and forgive you your sins. And whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger has certainly attained a great attainment.}

[Surat al-Ahzāb: 7-71]

Then, to proceed:

O servants of Allah! Our Lord—Glorified and Exalted—has magnified this prayer, exalted its standing, elevated its status, honored its people, and granted them alone the privilege of addressing Him in intimate supplication and drawing near to Him.

Thus, He chose it from among all other acts of worship as a reminder of Him.

﴿وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذِكْرِي﴾

{And establish prayer to remember Me.} [Surat Tā-ha: 14] And He made it the soundest of the pillars of His great religion and its straight pillar.

"بُنِيَ الْإِسْلَامُ عَلَى خَمْسٍ: شَهَادَةِ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ، وَإِقَامِ الصَّلَاةِ، وَإِيتَاءِ الزَّكَاةِ، وَالْحَجِّ، وَصَوْمِ رَمَضَانَ"

"Islam was built on five pillars: testifying that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, establishing prayer, giving Zakah, Hajj, and fasting Ramadan." [Agreed upon]¹

Among its marks of honor with Allah Almighty is that He ordained it in heaven during the Isrā' and Mi'rāj, when He made His servant Muhammad (ﷺ) travel by night and ascend to Him; He drew him near, addressed him, elevated him, and bestowed His favors upon him. And this obligation was His gift to him

"خَمْسٌ، وَهِيَ خَمْسُونَ"

"Five, and it is fifty." [Agreed upon]² He has executed His ordinance, and it has been lightened for His servants.

Such is its greatness in the sight of Allah Almighty that He ordained and enjoined it upon all the Prophets and Messengers, and He said to Moses (peace be upon him):

{وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذِكْرِي}

{and establish prayer to remember Me.} [Surat Taha: 14]

And He says to Moses and Aaron (peace be upon them):

{وَأَجْعَلُوا بُيُوتَكُمْ قِبْلَةً وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ}

¹ Narrated by Al-Bukhāri (1/11) and Muslim (1/45).

² Narrated by Al-Bukhāri (1/79), and Muslim (1/148).

{Make your houses face the qiblah direction, and establish prayer.} [Surat Yūnus: 87] And Allah Almighty enjoined it upon Jesus (‘Īsa) (peace be upon him), and caused him to speak in the cradle as a baby, saying:

﴿وَأَوْصِيَنِي بِالصَّلَاةِ وَالزَّكَاةِ مَا دُمْتُ حَيًّا﴾

{and has enjoined upon me prayer and zakah as long as I am alive,} [Surat Maryam: 31] And Allah made the supplication of His close Messenger Abraham (peace be upon him)—for himself and his children—to be for the establishment of the prayer, and made it the loftiest of wishes in his heart:

﴿رَبِّ اجْعَلْنِي مُقِيمَ الصَّلَاةِ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي رَبَّنَا وَتَقَبَّلْ دُعَاءِ﴾

{My Lord, make me steadfast in prayer and those of my offspring. Our Lord, accept my supplication.} [Surat Ibrāhīm: 40] And Allah Almighty honored His sacred city, Makkah, by making the goal of residing therein the establishment of prayer for Him:

﴿رَبَّنَا إِنِّي أَسْكَنْتُ مِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي بُوَادٍ غَيْرِ ذِي زَرْعٍ عِنْدَ بَيْتِكَ الْمُحَرَّمِ رَبَّنَا لِيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ﴾

{Our Lord, I have settled some of my offspring in a barren valley near Your Sacred House, our Lord, so that they may establish prayer.} [Surat Ibrāhīm: 37] And He distinguished thereby His Prophet Shu‘ayb (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him), to the extent that his people were amazed by him:

﴿قَالُوا يُشْعِبُكُمْ صَلَواتُكَ تَأْمُرُكَ أَنْ تَتْرَكَ مَا يَعْبُدُ آبَاؤُنَا وَأَنْ نَفْعَلَ فِي أَمْوَالِنَا مَا نَشَاءُ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْحَلِيمُ الرَّشِيدُ﴾

{They said, "O Shu'ayb, does your prayer command you that we should forsake what our forefathers worshiped, or that we should give up dealing with our wealth as we please? Indeed, you are such a forbearing and right-minded man!"} [Surat Hud: 87]

Moreover, Allah Almighty has rewarded His servants who call to it and enjoin it with His good pleasure toward them:

﴿وَكَانَ يَأْمُرُ أَهْلَهُ بِالصَّلَوةِ وَالزَّكَاةِ وَكَانَ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِ مَرْضِيًّا﴾

{He used to command his people to pray and give zakah, and his Lord was well pleased with him.} [Surat Maryam: 55] So whoever commands his people to pray and give Zakah, his Lord will be well pleased with him.

Because of its honor, perfection, and greatness with Allah Almighty, and because of its beauty and His love for it, He wants His servants to perform it completely, without deficiency; therefore, He commanded that it be established, performed with excellence, and maintained at its prescribed times that He has appointed for it.

﴿فَاقِيمُوا الصَّلَوةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَوةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا مَوْقُوتًا﴾

{But establish regular prayer. Indeed, prayer is prescribed for the believers at specific times.} [Surat an-Nisā': 103]

And He frequently commanded its establishment in His Noble Book

﴿وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَارْكَعُوا مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ﴾

{And establish prayer, give zakah, and bow [to Allah] with those who bow.} [Surat al-Baqarah: 43].

Prayer, O servants of Allah! In the sight of our Lord, Allah Almighty, it has a lofty status and an exalted and noble rank; it is a sign of Imān:

﴿الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ﴾

{those who believe in the unseen, establish prayer, and spend out of what We have provided for them,} [Surat al-Baqarah: 3] And he named it Imān

﴿وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضِيعَ إِيمَانَكُمْ﴾

{Allah would never let your [acts of] faith go to waste.} [Surat al-Baqarah: 143]

And He condemned whoever among His servants slackened concerning it, stripped him of the attribute of Imān, and reckoned him among the hypocrites.

﴿إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَهُوَ خَدِيعُهُمْ وَإِذَا قَامُوا إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ قَامُوا كُسَالَى يُرَاءُونَ النَّاسَ وَلَا يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا﴾

{The hypocrites seek to deceive Allah, but it is He Who deceives them. Whenever they stand up for prayer, they stand up reluctantly, only to be seen by people, and they do not remember Allah but a little,} [Surat an-Nisā': 142]

Among the great significance of prayer with Allah Almighty is that He has not exempted His

servants from it under any circumstances; rather, He loves that they pray to Him according to their capacity and ability.

﴿فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمُ الصَّلَاةَ فَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ قِيَمًا وَفُجُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُوبِكُمْ فَإِذَا اطْمَأْنَنْتُمْ فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا مَوْقُوتًا﴾

{When you have finished the prayer, remember Allah, standing, sitting, or lying down. But when you are safe again, establish regular prayer. Indeed, prayer is prescribed for the believers at specific times.} [Surat an-Nisā': 103] And because the enemy knows that prayer is the bond between the servants and their Lord, his greatest concern is to turn them away from it. Allah Almighty has informed us in His Noble Book that prayer is what the devil most wants to divert the servants of Allah from, as Allah Almighty says:

﴿إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ يُوقِعَ بَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ فِي الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ وَيَصُدَّكُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَعَنِ الصَّلَاةِ فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ مُنْتَهُونَ﴾

{Satan only wants to create enmity and hatred between you through intoxicants and gambling, and to prevent you from remembering Allah and from prayer. Will you not then abstain?} [Surat al-Mā'idah: 91]

Among the manifestations of the great status of prayer with Allah Almighty is that He has guaranteed sustenance for whoever establishes the prayer, calls his household to it, and remains patient and steadfast upon that.

﴿وَأْمُرْ أَهْلَكَ بِالصَّلَاةِ وَاصْطَبِرْ عَلَيْهَا لَا نَسْأَلُكَ رِزْقًا نَحْنُ نَرْزُقُكَ وَالْعِيبَةُ لِلتَّقْوَى﴾

{Enjoin your household to perform prayer and adhere to it firmly. We ask no provision from you; rather, it is We Who give you provision. And the best outcome is for those who fear Allah.} [Surat Tā-ha: 132].

Allah Almighty has informed in the Magnificent Qur'an that prayer is a condition for granting pardon to the combatant disbelievers if they repent and establish prayer, as Allah Almighty says:

﴿فَإِذَا أُنْصِلَ الْأَشْهُرُ الْحُرُمُ فَاقْتُلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ حَيْثُ وَجَدْتُمُوهُمْ وَخُذُوهُمْ وَأَحْصِرُوا لَهُمْ كُلَّ مَرْصَدٍ فَإِنْ تَابُوا وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوْا الزَّكَاةَ فَخَلُّوا سَبِيلَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ﴾

{Then when the [four] sacred months are over, kill the polytheists wherever you find them, seize them, besiege them, and lie in wait for them on every route. But if they repent, establish prayers and give zakah, then set them free, for Allah is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful.} [Surat at-Tawbah: 5] So if the combatants repent, establish prayer, and give Zakah, then set them free, for Allah is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

Allah has honored those who safeguard it and duly establish it with the manifest triumph and the ultimate triumph.

﴿قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ، الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ﴾

{The believers have attained true success, those who humble themselves in their prayers} [Surat al-Mu'minūn: 1-2] And He removed from them fear and grief and granted them security and happiness.

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَءَاتَوْا الزَّكَاةَ لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ﴾

{Those who believe, do righteous deeds, establish prayer, and give zakah, will have their reward with their Lord; and they will have no fear, nor will they grieve.} [Surat al-Baqarah: 277]

Verily, how great is prayer, how majestic, how noble, and how honored it is with Allah Almighty! For He has placed it in this position. He loves it and loves its people—those who establish it, maintain it, and call to it. Alas for those who are negligent concerning it, and what a huge regret for those who fall short in venerating it and who squander it!

May Allah bless the noble Qur'an for me and you, and may He make us benefit from the guidance of the master of the messengers (ﷺ). I say these words and ask Allah's forgiveness for me and you of every grave sin. Ask Him for forgiveness and turn to Him in repentance—how successful indeed are those who seek forgiveness!

The Second Sermon

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, and the best outcome is for the righteous. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, the Sovereign, the

True, the Manifest, and I bear witness that our Prophet Muhammad is His servant and Messenger. He conveyed the message, fulfilled the trust, sincerely advised the community, and strove in Allah's cause as was due to Him until certainty came to him. O Allah, bestow Your peace and blessings upon him and upon his family and all his Companions.

So fear Allah as He should be feared, for your bodies cannot bear Hellfire. Cling to the firm handhold of Islam, that you may succeed and prosper in the Hereafter and in this world.

O servants of Allah! Since prayer holds this rank in the religion of Islam and enjoys this tremendous status with our Exalted Lord, Glorified and Praised be He, it must have priority in our lives. We must magnify what Allah has magnified, for that is part of perfecting the affirmation of His Oneness, exalting Him, and believing in Him. We must enjoin one another regarding this—each of us advising and reminding the other. We should also review together with our sons and daughters and our spouses whatever strengthens the reverence of prayer in our hearts—by memorizing whatever is easy of the verses that indicate the exalted status of prayer with our Lord, Allah Almighty, and reading their exegesis; studying the Prophetic traditions on prayer and its virtues; and promoting care and attention to it. That strengthens its position in the

hearts and brings one nearer to the Knower of the unseen.

Indeed, among the finest ways in which time can be spent is studying the knowledge related to prayer—honoring it, and learning what aids in establishing it, perfecting it, and attaining humble submissiveness within it. Part of this is continual reminders about it and its gravity, and about the enormity of abandoning it, being lazy concerning it, or neglecting it; for it is the greatest right of Allah after affirming His Oneness, and it is a sign of the truthfulness of faith in Him, Glorified and Exalted be He. And among the sincere counsel of parents to their children is that they raise them upon magnifying the worth of prayer from early childhood, and that they choose from the means and methods what suit their circumstances, making beloved to them the worship of their Lord and drawing near to Him.

And now, invoke Allah's peace and blessings upon the one whom Allah Almighty enjoins you to invoke His peace and blessings upon; He Almighty says:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا﴾

{Indeed, Allah sends His blessings upon the Prophet, and His angels pray for him. O you who

believe, invoke Allah's blessings upon him and send him greetings of peace.} [Surat al-Ahzāb: 56]

O Allah, bestow Your peace and blessings upon our Prophet Muhammad, and upon his noble and pure family, and upon his wives, the Mothers of the Believers, and upon his radiant and blessed Companions. And be pleased, O Allah, with the Companions and the Tābi'is and those who follow them with righteousness, and be pleased with us along with them by Your grace and generosity, O Most Generous of those who show generosity.

O Allah, strengthen Islam and Muslims, humiliate disbelief and disbelievers, reform the conditions of all our Muslim brethren, guide the rulers of the Muslims to act upon Your Book and follow the Sunnah of Your Prophet, and forgive us and our parents, our spouses and our offspring, and all Muslims.

O Allah, help us to remember You, thank You, and worship You in the best manner. Our Lord, give us in this world that which is good and in the Hereafter that which is good, and protect us from the punishment of the Fire.

O servants of Allah!

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَايَ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ، وَأَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ إِذَا عَاهَدْتُمْ وَلَا تَنْقُضُوا الْأَيْمَانَ بَعْدَ تَوْكِيدِهَا وَقَدْ جَعَلْتُمُ اللَّهَ عَلَيْكُمْ كَفِيلًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ﴾

{Indeed, Allah enjoins justice, excellence, and giving to relatives, and forbids shameful acts, wrongdoing, and transgression. He admonishes you so that you may take heed. Fulfill the covenant of Allah when you have made a covenant, and do not break oaths after confirming them, for you have made Allah a surety over you. Indeed, Allah knows what you do.} [Surat an-Nahl: 90-91]

The Last Behest of the Messenger of Allah

(ﷺ)

The First Sermon

Praise be to Allah. We praise Him, seek His help, and ask Him for forgiveness. We seek refuge with Allah from the evil of ourselves and from our bad deeds. Whoever Allah guides, none can misguide, and whoever He sends astray, none can guide. I testify that there is no god but Allah, alone, with no partner, and I testify that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ
بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ﴾

{O you who believe, fear Allah, and let every soul consider what it has sent forth for tomorrow. And fear Allah. Indeed, Allah is All-Aware of what you do.}

[Surat al-Hashr: 18]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾

{O you who believe, fear Allah as He should be feared, and do not die except as Muslims.}

[Surat Āl ‘Imrān: 102]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَفُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا، يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا﴾

{O you who believe, fear Allah and say what is right, He will amend for you your deeds and forgive you your sins. And whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger has certainly attained a great attainment.}

[Surat al-Ahzāb: 7-71]

To proceed:

O servants of Allah! Indeed, just as the matter of prayer is great in the sight of Allah Almighty, it is great with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). There have come from him (ﷺ) regarding prayer—its veneration, the clarification of its status, and what it possesses of distinct characteristics, virtues, merits, and fruits—many narrations and numerous directives. They set forth its virtue and make manifest its status, encourage maintaining it, describe the state of those who establish it and what Allah has prepared for them of good and blessings in this world and in the Hereafter, and explain the condition of those who are negligent concerning it and what has been prepared for them of a miserable livelihood in this world, along with

what awaits them of a painful punishment in the Hereafter.

Indeed, it is prayer, O servants of Allah: the firmest pillar of the religion and its mainstay without which it does not stand. Due to its greatness, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) informed that it is the last of the religion to be lost. It has been reported in the Hadith of Abu Umāmah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"لَتُنْفَقَنَّ عَرَى الْإِسْلَامِ عُرْوَةٌ عُرْوَةٌ، فَكُلَّمَا انْتَفَضَتْ عُرْوَةٌ، تَسَبَّتِ النَّاسُ بِالَّتِي تَلِيهَا، فَأَوَّلُهُنَّ نَقْضًا: الْحُكْمُ، وَآخِرُهُنَّ: الصَّلَاةُ"

"The knots of Islam will be undone one by one. Whenever one knot is undone, people will hold on to the one that follows it. The first of them to be undone is the rule, and the last of them is the prayer." [Narrated by Ibn Hibbān¹; classified as Sahīh (authentic) by Al-Albānī]

It is the last advice that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) gave to his Ummah in his final moments, as he was bidding farewell to this life. Anas ibn Mālik (may Allah be pleased with him) reported: The last advice of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) while his chest was gurgling with it, and his tongue could barely utter it, was:

"الصَّلَاةُ الصَّلَاةُ، اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ فِيمَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ"

¹ Narrated by Ibn Hibbān (15/111).

“Prayer, prayer, and be mindful of Allah regarding those whom your right hands possess.” [Narrated by Ibn Hibbān; classified as Sahīh (authentic) by Al-Albānī]

Indeed, the first thing the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) did upon arriving in Madīnah to lay the foundations of the Islamic state was to exalt the status of the prayer by constructing a mosque where the Muslims would gather to perform the prayer.

The Prophet (ﷺ) used to magnify the status of the prayer in the hearts of his Companions by teaching them its proper manner and training them to establish it, as he once prayed on the pulpit so that the Companions could see the manner of his prayer, and he said:

"إِنَّمَا صَنَعْتُ هَذَا لِتَأْتُمُوا وَلِتَعْلَمُوا صَلَاتِي"

"I only did this so that you can follow me in prayer and to learn how I pray." [Narrated by Al-Bukhārī]² From the Hadīth of Sahl ibn Sa'd as-Sā'idi (may Allah be pleased with him), and he (ﷺ) said to Malik ibn Al-Huwayrith (may Allah be pleased with him):

"وَصَلُّوا كَمَا رَأَيْتُمُونِي أَصَلِّي"

"Pray as you have seen me pray." [Narrated by Al-Bukhārī]³.

¹ Narrated by Ibn Hibbān (14/571).

² Narrated by Al-Bukhārī (2/9).

³ Narrated by Al-Bukhārī (8/9).

Among the gravest matters that the Prophet (ﷺ) informed us of concerning prayer is that abandoning it is disbelief. He (ﷺ) said:

"إِنَّ بَيْنَ الرَّجُلِ وَبَيْنَ الشِّرْكِ وَالْكُفْرِ تَرَكَ الصَّلَاةَ"

"What stands between a man and Shirk and Kufr is the abandonment of prayer." [Narrated by Muslim¹ from the Hadīth of Jabir ibn Abdullah (may Allah be pleased with both of them)].

And that it is a Guarantee for Paradise, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"مَا مِنْ مُسْلِمٍ يَتَوَضَّأُ فَيُحْسِنُ وُضُوءَهُ، ثُمَّ يَقُومُ فَيُصَلِّي رَكْعَتَيْنِ، مُقْبِلٌ عَلَيْهِمَا بِقَلْبِهِ وَوَجْهِهِ، إِلَّا وَجِبَتْ لَهُ الْجَنَّةُ"

"There is no Muslim who performs ablution well and then stands and prays two Rak'ahs while focused on them with his heart and his face, except that Paradise will be guaranteed for him." [Narrated by Muslim² on the authority of 'Uqbah ibn 'Āmir (may Allah be pleased with him)]

And that it is the dearest deed to Allah. For when 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ood (may Allah be pleased with him) asked about the dearest of deeds to Allah, he (ﷺ) said:

"الصَّلَاةُ عَلَى وَقْتِهَا"

"Prayer at its appointed time." [Agreed upon]³

¹ Narrated by Muslim (1/88).

² Narrated by Muslim (1/209).

³ Narrated by Al-Bukhāri (1/112) and Muslim (1/90).

He informed that it is light, proof, and salvation on the Day of Judgment for whoever observes it regularly.

"ومن لم يحافظ عليها لم يكن له نورٌ ولا برهانٌ ولا نجاةٌ، وكان يوم القيامة مع قارون وفرعون وهامان وأبي بن خلف"

"And whoever does not observe it regularly, he will have no light, no argument in his favor, and no salvation, and he will be on the Day of Judgment with Qārūn (Korah), Pharaoh, Hamān, and 'Ubayy ibn Khalaf." [Narrated by Ahmad]¹, graded as Sahīh (authentic) by Al-Arna'ut, from the Hadīth of Abdullah ibn 'Amr (may Allah be pleased with him).

And so that the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) would increase in awareness of the great status of prayer, the Prophet (ﷺ) would exhort them with what would be a means to that.

Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) passed by a grave and said: "Whose grave is this?" They said, "So-and-so." He said:

"رَكْعَتَانِ أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ هَذَا مِنْ بَعِيَّةِ دُنْيَاكُمْ"

"Two Rak'ahs are more beloved to this one than the rest of your world." [Narrated by At-Tabarāni (11); Al-Albāni classified it as Sahīh (authentic)]²

¹ [Narrated by Ahmad (6/150) and classified as Sahīh (authentic) by Al-Arna'ut]

² Narrated by At-Tabarāni in "Al-Mu'jam Al-Awsat" (1/282).

He would sometimes address them with matters drawn from their own environment and familiar to them, as is evident from his statement (ﷺ):

"يَعْجَبُ رَبُّكُمْ مِنْ رَاعِي غَنَمٍ فِي رَأْسِ شَطِئَةٍ بِجَبَلٍ، يُؤَذِّنُ بِالصَّلَاةِ، وَيُصَلِّي، فَيَقُولُ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: انْظُرُوا إِلَى عَبْدِي هَذَا يُؤَذِّنُ، وَيَقِيمُ الصَّلَاةَ، يَخَافُ مِنِّي، قَدْ غَفَرْتُ لِعَبْدِي وَأَدْخَلْتُهُ الْجَنَّةَ"

"Your Lord wonders at a shepherd who calls to prayer at the peak of a mountain, and offers prayer. Allah Almighty says: 'Look at this servant of Mine; he calls to prayer and offers it, fearing Me. So, I forgave My servant and admitted him to Paradise.'" [Narrated by Abu Dāwūd¹, and Al-Albānī classified it as Sahīh (authentic), on the authority of 'Uqbah ibn 'Āmir (may Allah be pleased with him)].

The Prophet (ﷺ) informed us about the matter of the reckoning in the Hereafter, and that the first thing we will be held accountable for of our deeds is our prayer; thus, the soundness of deeds and their corruption follow the soundness of the prayer and its corruption. Anas ibn Malik (may Allah be pleased with him) reported: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"أَوَّلُ مَا يُحَاسَبُ بِهِ الْعَبْدُ صَلَاتُهُ فَإِنْ صَلَحَتْ صَلَحَ سَائِرُ عَمَلِهِ وَإِنْ فَسَدَتْ فَسَدَتْ سَائِرُ عَمَلِهِ"

"The first thing a servant will be held accountable for is his prayer. If it is sound, the rest of his deeds will be sound; and if his prayer is corrupt, the rest

¹ Narrated by Abu Dāwūd (2/4).

of his deeds will be corrupt." [Narrated by At-Tabarānī; Al-Albānī classified it as Sahīh (authentic)] In another version, Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) reported:

"إِنَّ أَوَّلَ مَا يُحَاسَبُ بِهِ الْعَبْدُ بِصَلَاتِهِ، فَإِنْ صَلَحَتْ فَقَدْ أَفْلَحَ وَأَنْجَحَ، وَإِنْ فَسَدَتْ فَقَدْ خَابَ وَخَسِرَ "

"Indeed, the first thing for which a person will be held accountable is his prayer. If it is sound, he will succeed and prosper; and if it is defective, he will fail and lose." [Narrated by An-Nasā'ī²; classified as Sahīh (authentic) by Al-Albānī]

Thus, one of the aspects of the greatness of prayer, O servants of Allah, is that we reflect upon the reckoning in the Hereafter; indeed, the first thing from our deeds for which we will be called to account on the Day of Resurrection is prayer, and the acceptance of prayer is a cause for the acceptance of all deeds, both the small and the great.

O servants of Allah! Prayer filled the life of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ); his life was in constant connection with his Lord, exalted is He, in remembrance, gratitude, glorification, and seeking forgiveness. Among the first revealed was His saying, exalted is He:

(يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَرْمَلُ، فَمِ اللَّيْلِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا.)

¹ Narrated by At-Tabarānī in "Al-Mu'jam Al-Awsat" (2/240)

² Narrated by An-Nasā'ī (1/232).

{O you the enwrapped one,
Stand up in prayer at night except a little,} [Surat al-Muzzammil: 1-2] Thus, the total number of his Rak'ahs in every day and night reached forty Rak'ahs: the five obligatory prayers together with the Sunnah Rawātib and Qiyām al-Layl. Prayer was ever-present in his military expeditions (ﷺ); he would resort to it and seek help through it. Whenever a matter distressed him, he would pray (ﷺ).

Prayer is the practical training of the principles of Islam upon which the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) were nurtured directly from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ).

Among the manifestations of the greatness of the prayer is nurturing children upon it from early childhood. The Prophet (ﷺ) ordered fathers and mothers to teach their children prayer when they are seven years old, as reported in the Hadith of 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with both of them), who said: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"مُرُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ بِالصَّلَاةِ وَهُمْ أَبْنَاءُ سَبْعِ سِنِينَ، وَاضْرِبُوهُمْ عَلَيْهَا، وَهُمْ أَبْنَاءُ عَشْرِ
وَقَرِّفُوا بَيْنَهُمْ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ"

"Command your children to offer the prayer when they are seven years old, and beat them for (not offering) it when they are ten, and separate them in

beds.” [Narrated by Abu Dāwūd¹; graded hasan by al-Albānī]

Consider how the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) magnified this great rite about nurturing the younger generation to hold prayer in high esteem, and that fathers and mothers are commanded and directed to order their children and teach them to pray once they reach this age.

Due to its greatness, prayer is enjoined even upon the one who forgets and the one who sleeps; they are commanded to make up the prayer, and this underscores its importance. Anas ibn Mālīk (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"مَنْ نَسِيَ صَلَاةً فَلْيُصَلِّ إِذَا ذَكَرَهَا، لَا كَفَّارَةَ لَهَا إِلَّا ذَلِكَ "

“Whoever forgets a prayer should perform it when he remembers it, and there is no expiation for it except that.” [Narrated by Al-Bukhāri (16)]² In another narration:

"مَنْ نَسِيَ صَلَاةً، أَوْ نَامَ عَنْهَا، فَكَفَّارَتُهَا أَنْ يُصَلِّيَهَا إِذَا ذَكَرَهَا "

“Whoever forgets a prayer or sleeps through it, its expiation is to perform it once he remembers it.” [Narrated by Muslim (17)]³ This indicates the great status of prayer, as it never ceases to be due upon an accountable person.

¹ Narrated by Abu Dāwūd (1/ 133).

² Narrated by Al-Bukhāri (1/123).

³ Narrated by Muslim (1/ 477).

May Allah bless the noble Qur'an for me and you, and may He make us benefit from the guidance of the master of the messengers (ﷺ). I say what you hear, and I ask Allah's forgiveness for me, you, and all Muslims. So, what a triumph for those who seek forgiveness.

The Second Sermon

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, and the good outcome is for the righteous. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, the Sovereign, the True, the Manifest. And I bear witness that our Prophet Muhammad is His servant and Messenger, who conveyed the message, fulfilled the trust, advised the Ummah, and strove in the cause of Allah until certainty (death) came to him.

O Allah, send Your peace and blessings upon him, and upon his family and all his Companions. So, fear Allah as He should be feared, for indeed your bodies cannot bear Hellfire, and cling to the firm handhold of Islam, so that you may attain success and prosperity in the Hereafter and in this world.

O believers, one of the things that increases our love and reverence for this great rite is to realize that enjoying in Paradise the bliss of seeing the Face of our Lord, the Most Generous—Exalted and Glorified be He—is attained by maintaining our prayers. It is reported in the Hadīth of Jarīr ibn 'Abdullāh al-Bujali (may Allah be pleased with him)

that he said: We were in the presence of the Prophet (ﷺ), and he looked at the moon on the night of the full moon (the 14th night of the lunar month) and said:

«إِنَّكُمْ سَتَرَوْنَ رَبَّكُمْ، كَمَا تَرَوْنَ هَذَا الْقَمَرَ، لَا تُضَامُونَ فِي رُؤْيَيْهِ، فَإِنْ اسْتَطَعْتُمْ أَنْ لَا تَغْلِبُوا عَلَى صَلَاةٍ قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ غُرُوبِهَا فَافْعَلُوا» ثُمَّ قَرَأَ: «وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ الْغُرُوبِ» [ق: 39]

“Indeed, you will see your Lord just as you see this moon, without any difficulty in seeing Him. So, if you could avoid missing a prayer before sunrise and before sunset, then do so.” Then, he recited: {And glorify your Lord with praise before sunrise and before sunset.}” [Surah Qāf: 39]. [Narrated by Al-Bukhārī (18)].¹

Indeed, among the guidance of our beloved Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)—and he held the prayer in the highest esteem—was that he used to be at the service of his family. Still, when the time for prayer came, he would go out to the prayer, as ‘A’ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) related. Reported by Al-Bukhari².

Indeed, hastening to the prayer upon hearing the Adhān is a sign of the great significance of this rite and an indication of love for it and strong attachment to it. This is in accordance with the

¹ Narrated by Al-Bukhārī (1/115).

² Narrated by Al-Bukhārī (8/14).

guidance of our noble Prophet (ﷺ). Allah Almighty says:

﴿وَسَارِعُوا إِلَى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمُوتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ
لِلْمُتَّقِينَ﴾

{And hasten towards forgiveness from your Lord and a Paradise as wide as the heavens and earth, prepared for the righteous,} [Surat Āl ‘Imrān: 133] Anas ibn Mālik (may Allah be pleased with him) said regarding the meaning of the verse: And hasten to join the imām at the Takbīrat al-Ihrām (opening Takbīr)¹.

There is no doubt that whoever hastens to the opening Takbīr (Takbīrat al-Ihrām) hastens to good deeds and races to acts of obedience throughout his life, for prayer is the head of acts of obedience and the foremost of the means of drawing close to Allah.

Now, invoke Allah's peace and blessings upon the one whom Allah Almighty enjoins you to invoke His peace and blessings upon, saying:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا
تَسْلِيمًا﴾

{Indeed, Allah sends His blessings upon the Prophet, and His angels pray for him. O you who believe, invoke Allah's blessings upon him and send him greetings of peace.} [Surat al-Ahzāb: 56]

O Allah, bestow Your peace and blessings upon our Prophet Muhammad, and upon his noble and

¹ Tafsīr Al-Qurtubī (4/203).

pure family, and upon his wives, the Mothers of the believers, and upon his radiant and blessed Companions. And be pleased, O Allah, with the Companions and the Tābi'is and those who follow them with righteousness, and be pleased with us along with them by Your grace and generosity, O Most Generous of the generous.

O Allah, grant honor to Islam and Muslims, and humiliate disbelief and disbelievers, and reform the affairs of all our Muslim brothers, and guide the rulers of Muslims to act upon Your Book and follow the Sunnah of Your Prophet, and forgive us and our parents, their spouses, our offspring, and all Muslims.

O Allah, aid us to remember You, thank You, and worship You in a due manner. Our Lord, give us in this world that which is good and in the Hereafter that which is good, and protect us from the punishment of the Fire.

O servants of Allah!

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَايَ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ، وَأَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ إِذَا عَاهَدْتُمْ وَلَا تَنْقُضُوا الْأَيْمَانَ بَعْدَ تَوْكِيدِهَا وَقَدْ جَعَلْتُمُ اللَّهَ عَلَيْكُمْ كَفِيلًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ﴾

Allah enjoins justice, kindness, and giving relatives [their dues], and He forbids shameful acts, evil deeds, and oppression. He exhorts you, so that you may take heed,

{Fulfill the covenant of Allah when you pledge, and do not break oaths after confirming them, having made Allah your witness, for Allah knows all what you do.} [Surat an-Nahl: 90-91].

Conditions of Prayer

The First Sermon

Praise be to Allah. We praise Him, seek His help, and ask Him for forgiveness. We seek refuge with Allah from the evil of ourselves and from our bad deeds. Whoever Allah guides, none can misguide, and whoever He sends astray, none can guide. I testify that there is no god but Allah, alone, with no partner, and I testify that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ
بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ﴾

{O you who believe, fear Allah, and let every soul consider what it has sent forth for tomorrow. And fear Allah. Indeed, Allah is All-Aware of what you do.}

[Surat al-Hashr: 18]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾

{O you who believe, fear Allah as He should be feared, and do not die except as Muslims.}

[Surat Āl-‘Imrān: 102]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا، يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ
ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا﴾

{O you who believe, fear Allah and say what is right, He will amend for you your deeds and forgive you your sins. And whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger has certainly attained a great attainment.}

[Surat al-Ahzāb: 7-71]

To proceed:

Let it be known, O believers, that Allah Almighty has commanded the establishment of prayer, praised those who establish it, and promised them abundant reward and safety from punishment. The meaning of establishing the prayer is to perform it as Allah has commanded, fulfilling its conditions, pillars, and obligations, together with whatever is possible of its Sunnah acts. This necessitates and underscores the need for us to learn its rulings, to know what is prescribed therein, and what impairs it or diminishes it.

O servants of Allah, among the most important duties upon us is to learn about the conditions of the validity of prayer; for if any of these conditions is not fulfilled without a valid Shar'ī excuse, the prayer is rendered invalid, because the validity of what is conditioned is contingent upon the fulfillment of its condition.

The conditions of prayer are nine: Islam, sanity, discernment, ritual purity from hadath (ritual impurity), removal of impurity, covering the 'Awrah, the commencement of the prescribed time

of prayer, facing the Qiblah (direction of the Ka'bah), and the intention.

Islam is a condition for the validity of every act of worship, for the disbeliever's deeds are invalid and no act of worship will be accepted from him. Whoever's mind is absent due to insanity, fainting, sleep, or intoxication, no prayer is valid from him in that state. As for the non-discerning child, that is, one under seven, he is not commanded to pray, and his prayer would not be valid were he to perform it.

As for the discerning child, he is required to observe prayer, and his voluntary prayer is valid, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"امروا أولادكم بالصلاة لسبع، واضربوهم عليها لعشر، وفرقوا بينهم في المضاجع"

"Command your children to offer the prayer when they are seven years old, and beat them for (not offering) it when they are ten, and separate them in beds." [Narrated by Abu Dāwūd]¹ [Graded hasan by al-Albānī]

Among the conditions for the validity of prayer is Tahārah (ritual purity): this is done by performing Wudū' (ablution) for minor ritual impurity and Ghusl (ritual bath) for major ritual impurity, using pure water. Whoever does not find water, or finds it but is unable to use it due to illness or the like, should perform Tayammum (dry

¹ Narrated by Abu Dāwūd (1/133).

ablution) with earth by striking his hands upon the ground, or upon something that has pure dust, and then wiping his face and palms with them. Allah Almighty says:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا قُمْتُمْ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ فَاغْسِلُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ إِلَى الْمَرَافِقِ وَامْسَحُوا بِرُءُوسِكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ إِلَى الْكَعْبَيْنِ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ جُنُبًا فَاطَّهَّرُوا وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مَرْضَىٰ أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِنْكُم مِّنَ الْغَائِطِ أَوْ لَمَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَلَمْ تَجِدُوا مَاءً فَتَيَمَّمُوا صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا فَامْسَحُوا بِوُجُوهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ مِنْهُ﴾

{O you who believe, when you rise up for prayer, wash your faces, and your hands up to the elbows; wipe over your heads; and wash your feet up to the ankles. If you are in a state of major impurity, cleanse yourselves [by taking a bath]. But if you are ill, on a journey, or have relieved yourselves, or have had sexual contact with women and find no water, then purify yourselves with clean earth, and wipe your faces and hands therewith.} [Surat al-Mā'idah: 6]

Among the conditions of the validity of prayer are: removing impurity from the body, the clothes, and the place where the prayer is offered; Allah Almighty says:

﴿وَتَيَأْتِكُ فَطَهَّرْ﴾

{and purify your garments,} [Surat al-Muzzammil: 4]

Among the conditions of the prayer's validity is concealing the 'Awrah (the must-cover body parts). The 'Awrah is that which is shameful and improper

to expose, and its limits are from the navel to the knee. Allah Almighty says:

﴿يٰۤاَيُّهَا اٰدَمُ خُذْ وَاٰزِيْنَتَكَ مِنْ حٰدِثٍ مِّنْ اَمْرِكَ﴾

{O children of Adam, dress well for every prayer.} [Surat al-A'rāf: 31] Allah Almighty commanded that the 'Awrah (private parts) be covered at every prayer, and He called that an adornment. Hence, He commanded adorning oneself with clothing for prayer, and that is in addition to covering the 'Awrah.

It is befitting for the Muslim to wear his best and most beautiful clothes for the prayer, for he will be standing therein before Allah Almighty. It is also recommended that he observe cleanliness in his clothing and his body, in prayer and otherwise. As for the free woman, all of her (body) is 'Awrah (the must-cover body parts) in the prayer except her face; it is permissible for her to reveal it during the prayer. The garment with which she covers the 'Awrah must be ample and long, covering her entire body, and it must be opaque so that the color of the skin is not seen through it, and it must not be tight so as to delineate the contours of her body. The prayer is not valid except with the complete covering of the 'Awrah according to one's ability.

Among the conditions of the validity of prayer are: The commencement of the prayer's time. Allah Almighty says:

﴿إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا مَوْقُوتًا﴾

{Indeed, prayer is prescribed for the believers at specific times.} [Surat an-Nisā': 103] i.e., the prayers are obligatory at fixed times and are not valid outside them. Whoever prays before the time has commenced, his prayer is not valid; likewise, it is impermissible to delay the prayer beyond its prescribed time without a Shariah-approved excuse. Hence, Allah prescribed the Adhān as an announcement of the commencement of the prayer's time.

The time for Zhuhr prayer begins when the sun passes its zenith; the time for the 'Asr prayer begins when the shadow of an object becomes equal to its height; the time for Maghrib prayer begins after sunset; the time for the 'Ishā' prayer begins with the disappearance of the red twilight; and the time for Fajr prayer begins at true dawn.

These are clear signs recognized by both the layperson and the learned. Muslims must adhere to them and be diligent in performing the prayer in the mosques. The prayer of all Muslims together in the mosques is a guarantee for preserving its performance at its appointed times, and this is among the greatest benefits of prayer in congregation.

Among the conditions of prayer is facing the Qiblah, which is the honorable Ka'bah. Allah Almighty said:

﴿قُلْنَا لِيَنَّاكَ قِبْلَةً تَرْضَاهَا فَوَلَّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنْتُمْ فَوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُ﴾

{We will surely make you turn towards a prayer direction that will please you. So turn your face towards the Sacred Mosque [in Makkah], and wherever you are, turn your faces towards it.} [Surat al-Baqarah: 144] As for the one who sees the Ka'bah, he must face the Ka'bah itself with his entire body. Whoever is near to it but cannot see it due to a barrier between him and it should strive to face it as accurately as he can. And whoever is far from it in any part of the earth faces its direction. This is from the ease that Allah has granted to this Ummah. Allah Almighty says:

﴿وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنْتُمْ فَوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُ﴾

{Wherever you are, turn your faces towards it.} [Surat al-Baqarah: 144] i.e., wherever you are—on land, at sea, or in the air—face, in prayer, the direction of the Ka'bah; a slight deviation is not harmful.

Among the conditions of the validity of prayer is Niyyah (intention), which is the resolve and determination to perform the act of worship seeking closeness to Allah Almighty. It is a

condition for the validity of all acts of worship. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ وَإِنَّمَا لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مَا نَوَىٰ"

"Verily, deeds are judged according to intentions, and everyone will only have what he intended." [Narrated by Al-Bukhāri]¹. Intention lies in the heart.

May Allah bless the noble Qur'an for me and you, and may He make us benefit from the guidance of the master of the messengers (ﷺ). I say what you hear, and I ask Allah's forgiveness for me, you, and all Muslims. What a triumph for those who seek forgiveness.

The Second Sermon

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, and the good outcome is for the righteous. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, the Sovereign, the True, the Manifest, and I bear witness that our Prophet Muhammad is His servant and Messenger, who conveyed the message, fulfilled the trust, advised the Ummah, and strove in Allah's cause until certainty came to him.

May Allah's peace and blessings be upon him, his family, and his Companions, all of them. So, fear Allah as He should be feared, for your bodies cannot bear Hellfire, and cling to the firm handhold of

¹ Narrated by Al-Bukhāri (1/6).

Islam, so that you may succeed and prosper in the Hereafter and in this world.

To proceed:

Indeed, the conditions of prayer carry profound indications and meanings that the worshiper should know, so that he may gain further knowledge of prayer and establish it in the most complete manner. This is realized by recognizing that these conditions were prescribed due to the great significance and status of prayer, and that the stipulation of nine conditions for this act of worship points to its position and honor. Whoever Allah grants success to perform prayer has thereby attained that great honor.

Thus, guidance to Islam is not granted to everyone, for most people in every age are non-Muslims.

﴿وَأِنْ طُغِيَ أَكْثَرُ مَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَضِلُّوكَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ﴾

{If you obey most of those on earth, they will lead you away from the way of Allah.} [Surat al-An'ām: 116]

﴿وَمَا أَكْثَرُ النَّاسِ وَلَوْ حَرَصْتَ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾

{But most people will not believe, no matter how eager you may be.} [Surat Yūsuf: 103] A person enters Islam by pronouncing the two testimonies: "I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah." The prayer is not valid without this

testimony; thus, whoever has not testified to the testimony of truth is not permitted to pray, for he is not prepared for it. As for sanity: it is the basis of legal responsibility, and the one who prays stands in a position of intimate supplication with Allah. Thus, no one may be permitted to stand in that position unless he possesses sound intellect. Likewise, the young child who has not reached the age of discernment, for the prayer requires awareness and understanding of its words and actions, and a child who has not reached discernment does not comprehend that.

As for ritual purity: because prayer is a presence and an intimate supplication to Allah, it is not valid for one who is not in a state of ritual purity, nor for one whose garment or body bears Najāsah (tangible impurity), to come to it. Likewise, the requirement of proper attire and covering the 'Awrah (parts of the body that must be covered), for appearing before the dignitaries is not fitting with any clothing. As for fixing the times of the obligatory prayers: there are great wisdoms in that, known to the All-Wise, the All-Knowing. And in facing the Qiblah (direction of the Ka'bah), there is concordance—by the heart toward intimate supplication to Allah, and by the body toward His venerated House, where guidance, sanctity, and majesty are found. As for the requirement of the

intention: the intention is the sign of truthfulness in worship, and it is proof of the heart's direction, presence, and resolve for worship.

O servants of Allah, indeed, comprehending the purposes behind stipulating these conditions is among the purposes of prayer itself; and awareness of them, studying and reviewing them, and training upon them are matters that every Muslim needs. The teacher needs this with his students, the father with his children, and the Imam of the mosque with his congregation. Indeed, knowledge of the prayer, its conditions, and its rulings has a great effect on establishing the prayer and performing it in the manner that our Lord, Blessed and Exalted, wills.

Now, invoke Allah's peace and blessings upon him whom Allah Almighty enjoins you to invoke His peace and blessings upon. He Almighty says:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا﴾

{Indeed, Allah sends His blessings upon the Prophet, and His angels pray for him. O you who believe, invoke Allah's blessings upon him and send him greetings of peace.} [Surat al-Ahzāb: 56]

O Allah, bestow Your peace and blessings upon our Prophet Muhammad, his noble and pure family, his wives, the Mothers of the believers, and upon his illustrious and blessed Companions. And be pleased, our Lord, with the Companions and the

Tābi'is, and those who follow them with righteousness; and be pleased with us along with them by Your grace and generosity, O Most Generous of the generous.

O Allah, strengthen Islam and Muslims, humiliate disbelief and disbelievers, reform the conditions of all our Muslim brethren, and guide the rulers of the Muslims to act upon Your Book and follow the Sunnah of Your Prophet, and forgive us and our parents, their spouses, our offspring, and all Muslims.

O Allah, help us to remember You, thank You, and worship You as due. Our Lord, give us in this world that which is good and in the Hereafter that which is good and protect us from the punishment of the Fire.

O servants of Allah!

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَايَ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ، وَأَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ إِذَا عَاهَدْتُمْ وَلَا تَنْقُضُوا الْأَيْمَانَ بَعْدَ تَوْكِيدِهَا وَقَدْ جَعَلْتُمُ اللَّهَ عَلَيْكُمْ كَفِيلًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ﴾

{Allah enjoins justice, kindness, and giving relatives [their dues], and He forbids shameful acts, evil deeds and oppression. He exhorts you, so that you may take heed,

Fulfill the covenant of Allah when you pledge, and do not break oaths after confirming them, having made Allah your witness, for Allah knows all what you do.} [Surat an-Nahl: 90-91]

The Journey of Beauty: Wudū' (Ablution) and Tahārah (ritual purity)

The First Sermon

Praise be to Allah. We praise Him, seek His help, and ask Him for forgiveness. We seek refuge with Allah from the evil of ourselves and from our bad deeds. Whoever Allah guides, none can misguide, and whoever He sends astray, none can guide. I testify that there is no god but Allah, alone, with no partner, and I testify that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ
بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ﴾

{O you who believe, fear Allah, and let every soul consider what it has sent forth for tomorrow. And fear Allah. Indeed, Allah is All-Aware of what you do.}

[Surat al-Hashr: 18]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾

{O you who believe, fear Allah as He should be feared, and do not die except as Muslims.}

[Surat Āl 'Imrān: 102]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا، يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ
ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا﴾

{O you who believe, fear Allah and say what is right, He will amend for you your deeds and forgive you your sins. And whoever obeys Allah and His

Messenger has certainly attained a great attainment.}

[Surat al-Ahzāb: 7-71]

To proceed:

Ablution occupies a high status in Islam, for it constitutes half of Imān, as in Sahih Muslim, wherein the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Purification is half of Imān.”¹ Ablution is an act of worship and a pious deed. The matter is not merely about washing body parts and removing filth; it is higher and more sublime than that. Ablution eliminates sins, expiates misdeeds, elevates ranks, and leads to entering Paradise.

Wudū’ (ablution): it is Wadā’ah—brightness, cleanliness, and beauty. Thus, wudū’ is cleanliness, purity, beauty, and prettiness. It is a purification of the body from filth and grime, and a purification of hearts from sins, acts of disobedience, and offenses. And Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, loves those who purify themselves:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَّيِّبِينَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ﴾

{Allah loves those who frequently repent and He loves those who purify themselves.} [Surat al-Baqarah: 222]

Allah Almighty ordained it in His Noble Book and clarified to His servants its obligatory acts, as a mercy to them and to elucidate the importance of

¹ Narrated by Muslim (1/203).

this act of worship. For ablution is the key to the prayer and prayer is the key to Paradise. May Allah make us and you among its people.

Allah Almighty says:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا قُمْتُمْ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ فَاغْسِلُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ إِلَى الْمَرَافِقِ وَامْسَحُوا بِرُءُوسِكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ إِلَى الْكَعْبَيْنِ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ جُنُبًا فَاطَّهَّرُوا وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مَرْضَىٰ أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِنْكُمْ مِنَ الْغَائِطِ أَوْ لَمَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَلَمْ تَجِدُوا مَاءً فَتَيَمَّمُوا صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا فَامْسَحُوا بِوُجُوهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ مِنْهُ مَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيَجْعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ حَرَجٍ وَلَكِنْ يُرِيدُ لِيُطَهِّرَكُمْ وَلِيُنِمْ نِعْمَتُهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ﴾

{O you who believe, when you rise up for prayer, wash your faces, and your hands up to the elbows; wipe over your heads; and wash your feet up to the ankles. If you are in a state of major impurity, cleanse yourselves [by taking a bath]. But if you are ill, on a journey, or have relieved yourselves, or have had sexual contact with women and find no water, then purify yourselves with clean earth, and wipe your faces and hands therewith. Allah does not want to impose hardship on you, rather He wants to purify you and complete His favor upon you, so that you may be grateful.} [Surat al-Mā'idah: 6]

In the Prophetic Sunnah there are virtues, etiquettes, and rulings of ablution—for instruction, encouragement, and clarification. Among them is: Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"إِذَا تَوَضَّأَ الْعَبْدُ الْمُسْلِمُ - أَوِ الْمُؤْمِنُ - فَغَسَلَ وَجْهَهُ حَرَجَ مِنْ وَجْهِهِ كُلِّ خَطِيئَةٍ نَظَرَ إِلَيْهَا بِعَيْنَيْهِ مَعَ الْمَاءِ - أَوْ مَعَ آخِرِ قَطْرِ الْمَاءِ - ، فَإِذَا غَسَلَ يَدَيْهِ حَرَجَ مِنْ

يَدِيهِ كُلُّ خَطِيئَةٍ كَانَ بَطَشَتْهَا بَدَاهُ مَعَ الْمَاءِ أَوْ مَعَ آخِرِ قَطْرِ الْمَاءِ -، فَإِذَا غَسَلَ رِجْلَيْهِ خَرَجَتْ كُلُّ خَطِيئَةٍ مَسَّتْهَا رِجْلَاهُ مَعَ الْمَاءِ - أَوْ مَعَ آخِرِ قَطْرِ الْمَاءِ - حَتَّى يَخْرُجَ نَقِيًّا مِنَ الذُّنُوبِ"

"When a Muslim—or a believer—performs ablution, and he washes his face, every sin he has committed with his eyes is washed away with water—or with the last drop of water; when he washes his hands, every sin he has committed with his hands is washed away with water—or with the last drop of water; and when he washes his feet, every sin his feet walked towards is washed away with water—or with the last drop of water—until he comes out cleansed of sins." [Narrated by Muslim]¹

By virtue of ablution, the gates of Paradise are opened; so how great is the success of the one who, when he performs ablution and perfects his ablution, proclaims the two testimonies of faith, and asks Allah to make him among those who frequently purify themselves. 'Umar ibn al-Khattab (may Allah be pleased with him) reported: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"مَنْ تَوَضَّأَ فَأَحْسَنَ الْوُضُوءَ ثُمَّ قَالَ: أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ، اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْنِي مِنَ التَّوَّابِينَ، وَاجْعَلْنِي مِنَ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ، فُتِّحَتْ لَهُ ثَمَانِيَةُ أَبْوَابِ الْجَنَّةِ يَدْخُلُ مِنْ أَيِّهَا شَاءَ"

"If anyone performs ablution properly and then says, 'I bear witness that there is no god but Allah,

¹ Narrated by Muslim (1/215).

alone, with no partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger; O Allah, make me among those who frequently repent and make me among those who frequently purify themselves,' the eight gates of Paradise will be opened for him, and he may enter from whichever of them he wishes." [Narrated by At-Tirmidhi; classified as Sahih (authentic) by Al-Albani]

Repentance is renewed with every ablution. 'Uthman ibn 'Affan (may Allah be pleased with him) reported: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"مَنْ تَوَضَّأَ فَأَحْسَنَ الْوُضْوءَ خَرَجَتْ خَطَايَاهُ مِنْ جَسَدِهِ، حَتَّى تَخْرُجَ مِنْ تَحْتِ أَظْفَارِهِ" رواه مسلم،

"Whoever performs ablution perfectly, his sins will leave his body until they come out from under his fingernails." [Narrated by Muslim]² He (may Allah be pleased with him) also reported that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"مَا مِنْ أَمْرٍ مُسْلِمٍ تَحْضُرُهُ صَلَاةٌ مَكْتُوبَةٌ فَيَحْسِنُ وُضْوءَهَا وَخُشُوعَهَا وَرُكُوعَهَا، إِلَّا كَانَتْ كَفَّارَةً لِمَا قَبْلَهَا مِنَ الذُّنُوبِ مَا لَمْ يَأْتِ كَبِيرَةٌ وَذَلِكَ الدَّهْرُ كُلُّهُ"

"There is no Muslim person who, when an obligatory prayer becomes due, perfects its ablution, humility, and bowing except that it becomes an expiation for the sins that preceded it,

¹ Narrated by Al-Tirmidhi (1/78).

² Narrated by Muslim (1/216).

as long as he has not committed a major sin; and this applies at all times." [Narrated by Muslim]¹

Persistent performance of ablution is one of the traits of perfection for the believers. No one has the patience to assume it but them. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"اسْتَقِيمُوا وَلَنْ تُحْصُوا، وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ خَيْرَ أَعْمَالِكُمُ الصَّلَاةُ، وَلَنْ يُحَافِظَ عَلَى الْوُضُوءِ إِلَّا مُؤْمِنٌ"

"Keep to the straight path, which you will not be able to do, and know that the best of your deeds is prayer and none maintains ablution but a believer." [Narrated by Imam Ahmad²; classified by Al-Albāni as Sahīh (Authentic)]

May Allah bless the noble Qur'an for me and you, and may He make us benefit from the verses and the message contained therein. I say these words and ask Allah's forgiveness for me, you, and all Muslims for every sin. Ask Him for forgiveness, for He is the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful.

The Second Sermon

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, and the good outcome is for the righteous. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, the Sovereign, the True, the Manifest, and I bear witness that our Prophet Muhammad is Allah's servant and His Messenger, who conveyed the message, fulfilled the

¹ Narrated by Muslim (1/206).

² Narrated by Ahmad (37/110).

trust, advised the Ummah, and strove for Allah truly until certainty (death) came to him.

O Allah, send Your peace and blessings upon him, his family, and all his companions. So, fear Allah as He should be feared, for your bodies cannot bear Hellfire; and cling to the firm handhold of Islam, so that you may succeed and prosper in the Hereafter and in this world.

To proceed:

O Muslims, the manner of complete Wudū' (ablution) is as follows: to intend purification as an act of worship to Allah Almighty, then says: Bismillāh (in the Name of Allah), and washes his two hands three times; then he rinses his mouth three times and sniffs water into the nose three times; then he washes his face three times; then he washes his hands along with the elbows three times each, beginning with the right then the left; then he wipes over his head once, wetting his hands and passing them from the front of his head to his nape and then returning them to the front; then he wipes his ears, inserting his forefingers into their orifices and wiping their outer parts with his thumbs; then he washes his feet along with the ankles three times each, beginning with the right then the left; then he says thereafter:

"أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ، اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْنِي مِنَ النَّوَابِينَ، وَاجْعَلْنِي مِنَ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ."

"I bear witness that there is no god but Allah alone, with no partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger. O Allah, make me among those who constantly repent and make me among those who purify themselves."

And among the matters that must be emphasized, O servants of Allah, is that fathers and mothers must devote care to teaching their children the ablution in its correct manner while teaching them the prayer from an early age, and they should not leave that to others, for they are more entitled to teach and train them. Since ablution accompanies them throughout their lives, it is imperative that great attention and profound care be devoted to it, for it is the key to the prayer, and the prayer is the key to Paradise. May Allah make us and you among its people.

Now, invoke Allah's peace and blessings upon the one whom Allah Almighty has commanded you to invoke His peace and blessings upon; He Almighty says:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا﴾

{Indeed, Allah sends His blessings upon the Prophet, and His angels pray for him. O you who believe, invoke Allah's blessings upon him and send him greetings of peace.} [Surat al-Ahzāb: 56]

O Allah, bestow Your peace and blessings upon our Prophet Muhammad, and upon his pure family, his wives—the Mothers of the Believers, and his illustrious and blessed Companions. And be pleased, O Allah, with the Companions and the Tābi'is and those who follow them with righteousness; and be pleased with us along with them by Your grace and generosity, O Most Generous of the generous.

O Allah, grant honor to Islam and Muslims, humiliate disbelief and disbelievers, reform the affairs of all our Muslim brethren, and guide the rulers of the Muslims to act upon Your Book and to follow the Sunnah of Your Prophet, and forgive us and our parents, their spouses, our offspring, and all Muslims.

O Allah, aid us to remember You, thank You, and worship You as due. Our Lord, give us in this world that which is good and in the Hereafter that which is good, and protect us from the punishment of the Fire.

O servants of Allah!

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَنِ وَإِيتَايَ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ، وَأَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ إِذَا عَاهَدْتُمْ وَلَا تَنْفُسُوا الْأَيْمَانَ بَعْدَ تَوْكِيدِهَا وَقَدْ جَعَلْتُمُ اللَّهَ عَلَيْكُمْ كَفِيلًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ﴾

{Allah enjoins justice, kindness, and giving relatives [their dues], and He forbids shameful acts,

evil deeds and oppression. He exhorts you, so that you may take heed,

Fulfill the covenant of Allah when you pledge, and do not break oaths after confirming them, having made Allah your witness, for Allah knows all what you do.} [Surat an-Nahl: 90-91]

As you have seen me pray

The First Sermon

Praise be to Allah. We praise Him, seek His help, and ask Him for forgiveness. We seek refuge with Allah from the evil of ourselves and from our bad deeds. Whoever Allah guides, none can misguide, and whoever He sends astray, none can guide. I testify that there is no god but Allah, alone, with no partner, and I testify that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ
بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ﴾

{O you who believe, fear Allah, and let every soul consider what it has sent forth for tomorrow. And fear Allah. Indeed, Allah is All-Aware of what you do.}

[Surat al-Hashr: 18]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾

{O you who believe, fear Allah as He should be feared, and do not die except as Muslims.}

[Surat Āl ‘Imrān: 102]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَفُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا، يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ
 دُنُوبَكُمْ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا﴾

{O you who believe, fear Allah and say what is right, He will amend for you your deeds and forgive you your sins. And whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger has certainly attained a great attainment.}

[Surat al-Ahzāb: 7-71]

To proceed:

O servants of Allah! Prayer, linguistically, means supplication. Allah Almighty says:

﴿وَصَلِّ عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ صَلَاتَكَ سَكَنٌ لَهُمْ﴾

{And pray for them. Your prayer is a source of comfort for them.} [Surat at-Tawbah: 103] In the technical sense, it is worshiping Allah by specific words and acts; it starts with Takbīr (saying: Allāhu Akbar, i.e., Allah is the Greatest) and ends with Taslīm (the salutation of peace that ends the prayer). Prayer has been prescribed with a precise, clear description: the Trustworthy of heaven, Jibrīl (peace be upon him), descended with its description to the Trustworthy of earth, Muhammad (ﷺ), following the Night Journey and Ascension (al-Isrā' and al-Mi'rāj), when the five daily prayers were enjoined. He (ﷺ) said:

"أَمَنِي جِبْرِيلُ عِنْدَ النَّبِيِّ مَرَّتَيْنِ"

"Jibrīl (Gabriel) led me in prayer at the House (the Ka'bah) twice." [Narrated by At-Tirmidhi; classified as Sahīh (authentic) by Al-Albānī] So the Prophet (ﷺ) followed Jibreel in prayer in his standing, bowing in Rukū', prostration, sitting, and concluding salutation. Then the Prophet (ﷺ) taught the Companions this manner of prayer and commanded them to pray as they had seen him pray. It is reported in the Hadīth of Mālik ibn al-Huwayrith (may Allah be pleased with him): We came to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) when we were young and of about the same age. We stayed with him for twenty nights. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was gentle; so, when he thought that we had grown desirous of our families—or that we had longed for them—he asked us about those whom we had left behind, and we told him. He said:

"ارْجِعُوا إِلَىٰ أَهْلِيكُمْ، فَاقِيمُوا فِيهِمْ، وَعَلِّمُوهُمْ وَمُرُوهُمْ، - وَذَكَرَ أَسْيَاءَ أَحْفَظَهَا أَوْ لَا أَحْفَظَهَا، - وَصَلُّوا كَمَا رَأَيْتُمُونِي أَصْلِي، فَإِذَا حَضَرَتِ الصَّلَاةُ فَلْيُؤَذِّنْ لَكُمْ أَحَدُكُمْ، وَلْيُؤَمِّمْ أَكْبَرُكُمْ"

"Go back to your families and stay with them. Teach them (religion) and command them (to adhere to it)—and he mentioned things which I remember or do not remember—and pray as you have seen me pray. When prayer becomes due, let

¹ Narrated by Al-Tirmidhi (1/279) on the authority of 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās (may Allah be pleased with him and his father).

one of you call the Adhān, and let the oldest among you lead you in prayer.” [Narrated by Al-Bukhārī]¹.

As part of the Prophet’s (ﷺ) care to teach his Companions the proper manner of the prayer, he taught them while he was on the pulpit, as reported by Sahl ibn Sa’d al-Sā’idī (may Allah be pleased with him), who said:

أرسل رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إلى امرأة "انظري غلامك النجار، يعمل لي أعوادًا أكلمُ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا" فعمل هذه الثلاث درجات، ثم أمر بها رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، فوضعت هذا الموضع، فهي من طرفاء الغابة، ولقد رأيت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قام عليه فكبر وكبر الناس وراءه، وهو على المنبر، ثم رفع فنزل القهقري حتى سجد في أصل المنبر، ثم عاد، حتى فرغ من آخر صلاته، ثم أقبل على الناس فقال: "يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنِّي صَنَعْتُ هَذَا لِتَأْتُوا بِي، وَلِتَعْلَمُوا صَلَاتِي"

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) sent to a woman, saying: “Tell your carpenter slave to make me something of wood that I can speak to the people from.” So he made these three steps. Then the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) commanded that it be set up, and it was placed here. It is made from Tamarisk wood from Al-Ghābah. I indeed saw the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) stand on it and say the Takbīr, and the people said the Takbīr behind him while he was on the Pulpit. Then he rose and came down backward until he prostrated at the base of the Pulpit, then he went back, until he finished the rest of his prayer. Then he turned to the people and said: “O people, I

¹ Narrated by Al-Bukhārī (1/129).

only did this so that you can follow me in prayer and learn my prayer.” [Agreed upon]¹ This is all because the proper approach to teaching prayer is by imitation and training.

The Prophet’s noble Companions began to transmit this manner in which they had seen the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) perform the prayer to the Tābi’is, and the Tābi’is transmitted it to those who came after them until it reached us.

Among those who meticulously conveyed the description of the prayer of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was Abu Humayd as-Sā’idi (may Allah be pleased with him), who said:

رَأَيْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا كَبَّرَ جَعَلَ يَدَيْهِ حَذْوَ مَنْكِبَيْهِ، وَإِذَا رَكَعَ أَمَكَّنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنْ رُكْبَتَيْهِ، ثُمَّ هَضَرَ ظَهْرَهُ، فَإِذَا رَفَعَ رَأْسَهُ اسْتَوَى حَتَّى يَعُودَ كُلُّ فَقَارٍ مَكَانَهُ، فَإِذَا سَجَدَ وَضَعَ يَدَيْهِ غَيْرَ مُفْتَرِشٍ وَلَا قَابِضِهِمَا، وَاسْتَقْبَلَ بِأَطْرَافِ أَصَابِعِ رِجْلَيْهِ الْقِبْلَةَ، وَإِذَا جَلَسَ فِي الرَّكْعَتَيْنِ جَلَسَ عَلَى رِجْلِهِ الْيُسْرَى وَنَصَبَ الْيُمْنَى، وَإِذَا جَلَسَ فِي الرَّكْعَةِ الْآخِرَةِ قَدَّمَ رِجْلَهُ الْيُسْرَى وَنَصَبَ الْآخَرَى، وَقَعَدَ عَلَى مَقْعَدَيْهِ

I saw the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), when he made Takbīr, he raised his hands to the level of his shoulders. When he bowed, he placed his hands firmly on his knees, then he bent his back. When he raised his head, he straightened until every vertebra returned to its place. When he prostrated, he placed his hands without spreading or clasping them and directed the tips of his toes towards the

¹ [Narrated by Al-Bukhārī (2/9) and Muslim (1/386)]

Qiblah. When he sat after two Rak'ahs, he sat on his left leg and kept the right one erect. In the final sitting, he brought forward his left leg, kept the other erect, and sat on his buttocks. [Narrated by Al-Bukhāri].¹

Reports have been mass-transmitted from the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) clarifying what the Prophet (ﷺ) used to say and do in his prayer; thus, the Ummah received the complete manner of his prayer—its sayings, deeds, and postures.

Imam 'Abdul-'Aziz ibn Bāz (may Allah have mercy on him) said: The prayer of the Prophet (ﷺ) is the most balanced and the most perfect of prayers. He said: "Pray as you have seen me pray." He used to perform a prayer characterized by tranquility, stillness, and submissive devotion.

He begins it with Takbīr, raising his hands and saying: "Allah is the Greatest." Then, before the recitation, he says the opening supplication. Most often he opens with the words: "O Allah, distance me from my sins as You have distanced the east from the west. O Allah, purify me from my sins as a white garment is purified from filth. O Allah, wash me from my sins with water, snow, and hail." It is reported like this in the two Sahīh collections, in the Hadith of Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with

¹ Narrated by Al-Bukhāri (1/165).

him), that he asked him about his brief silence after the Takbīr, and he said that he would say this supplication—in the obligatory prayers and likewise in the supererogatory ones. If he opens with the other wording: “Glory be to You, O Allah, and praise; Blessed is Your name; Exalted is Your greatness; and there is no god but You,” that is good; all of it is good.

Then he says: “I seek refuge with Allah from the accursed Satan. In the Name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful.” Then he recites Surat al-Fātihah; he recites it in a measured and tranquil manner, giving each letter its due. When he says:

﴿وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ﴾

{or of those who went astray.} [Surat al-Fātihah: 7] He says “Āmīn” aloud in the audible prayers—such as Maghrib, ‘Ishā’, Fajr, and the Friday prayer—and silently in the inaudible ones. He then recites what he can from the Qur’an. He would lengthen the Fajr prayer, reciting from the long Surahs of the Mufasssal, and he would sometimes recite sixty to one hundred verses in the two Rak’āhs. He would sometimes perform it with Surat Qāf and the like—such as Surat at-Tūr and Surat adh-Dhāriyāt—in Fajr, and he would sometimes perform it with

﴿قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ﴾

{The believers have attained true success:}
[Surat al-Mu'minūn: 1] in the two Rak'ahs.

In the Maghrib prayer, at times he would recite from the long Sūrah's; he recited Sūrat At-Tūr in Maghrib, and he sometimes recited Sūrat al-A'rāf in both Rak'ahs, and he recited Sūrat Al-Mursalāt in Maghrib. Most of the time, however, he would recite from the short ones—the short Sūrah's of the Mufasssal—such as Sūrat Az-Zalzalah, Sūrat Al-'Ādiyāt, Sūrat Al-Infitar, Sūrat At-Tāriq, and Sūrat Ash-Shams. Therefore, the believer should do as the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) did: at times lengthen the recitation and at times recite the short Sūrah's in the Maghrib prayer.

In 'Ishā', Zhuhr, and 'Asr, one recites from the medium Mufasssal—such as: "Lam yakun" (al-Bayyinah), "By the sky with constellations" (al-Burūj), "When the sun is folded up" (al-Takwīr), and "He frowned and turned away" ('Abasa)—and the like in 'Ishā'.

In Zhuhr and in 'Asr, with the Zhuhr being slightly longer than the 'Asr; this is his Sunnah (ﷺ).

While bowing, he remains tranquil and does not hasten. He says: "Subhāna rabbiy-al-'azhīm" (Glory be to my Lord, the Magnificent) five times, or seven times; and during bowing he may add: "Subhānaka Allāhumma Rabbana wa bihamdika, Allāhumma ighfir li," (Glory be to You, O Allah, our Lord, and by Your praise, O Allah, forgive me) and "Subbūhun

Quddūsun Rabb-ul-malā'ikati war-rūh." (Glorified, Holy, Lord of the angels and the Spirit) He places his hands on his knees, keeping his head level with his back, upright and at ease. Then he raises his head saying: "Sami'a Allāhu liman ḥamidah' (Allah hears the one who praises Him) if he is the Imām or praying alone; but if he is a follower, he rises saying: "Our Lord, and to You is all praise" or "O Allah, our Lord, to You is all praise." He then completes: "O Allah, our Lord, to You is all praise," then he continues: "A praise that is abundant, pure, and blessed, filling the heavens, and filling the earth, and filling what is between them, and filling whatever You will of anything after that." And sometimes, peace and blessings be upon him, would add after this: (O Lord, You are worthy of all praise and glory, the most truthful thing a servant can say, and we are all Your servants. O Allah, none can withhold what You have given, and none can give what You have withheld, and the might of the mighty cannot benefit him against You.) That is, he lengthens this pillar, standing straight and tranquil.

Then he prostrates and maintains balance in prostration on his seven body parts: the tips of both feet, the two knees, the two palms, and his face—placing his forehead along with his nose on the ground. He keeps balanced by raising his abdomen away from his thighs, keeping his arms away from his sides, and lifting his forearms off the ground

while supporting himself on his palms. He remains tranquil and says: “Subhāna Rabbī al-A‘la” (Glory be to my Lord, the Most High), repeating it five, seven, or ten times; and he says: “Allāhumma ighfir lī dhanbī kullahū, diqqahū wa jillahu, awwalahū wa ākhirahū, ‘alāniyatahū wa sirrahū” (O Allah, forgive all my sins—its minor and its major, its first and its last, its public and its private); and: “Allāhumma yā Muqalliba al-qulūb, thabbit qalbī ‘alā dīnik” (O Allah, O Turner of the hearts, keep my heart firm upon Your religion). The Prophet used to supplicate in prostration and say:

"أما الركوع فعظموا فيه الرب، وأما السجود فاجتهدوا في الدعاء فقمن أن يستجاب لكم يعني"

"As for bowing, glorify the Lord therein, and as for prostration, strive hard in supplication, for it is more deserving that it be answered for you—i.e., your supplication." [Narrated by Muslim]¹ Meaning: it is likely that you will be answered. Moreover, the Prophet (ﷺ) would say:

"أَقْرَبُ مَا يَكُونُ الْعَبْدُ مِنْ رَبِّهِ، وَهُوَ سَاجِدٌ، فَأَكْثِرُوا الدُّعَاءَ"

"The nearest a slave to his Lord is while he is prostrating, so increase supplication." [Narrated by Muslim]²

Thus, the Sunnah is to remain tranquil in Sujūd (prostration) and to make abundant supplication

¹ Narrated by Muslim (1/348).

² Narrated by Muslim (1/350).

while saying: “Subhāna rabbiyal-A‘lā” (Glory be to my Lord, the Most High) — three times, or five, or seven; and in Rukū’ (bowing): “Subhāna rabbiy-al-‘Azhīm” (Glory be to my Lord, the Majestic), along with supplication, and by saying: “Subhānaka Allāhumma Rabbana wa bihamdika, Allāhummi-ghfir lī” (Glory be to You, O Allah Our Lord, and praise. O Allah, forgive me), “Subbūhun Quddūsun Rabb-ul-malā’ikati war-rūh” (Most Glorious, Most Holy, Lord of the angels and of the Spirit), and “Subhāna dhī al-jabarūti wal-malakūti wal-kibriyā’i wal-‘āzamah” (Glory be to the Possessor of might, dominion, majesty, and greatness), without hastening.

Then one sits between the two prostrations, remains tranquil and still, not hasty, and says: “My Lord, forgive me; my Lord, forgive me; my Lord, forgive me. O Allah, forgive me, have mercy on me, guide me, mend my shortcomings, provide for me, grant me well-being, and elevate me.” Between the two prostrations, he is to be at ease; he sits on his left foot, spreading it and sitting on it, and sets the right foot erect, if he is able. Then he performs the second prostration like the first, being tranquil therein, and he says therein as he said in the first. Such is the prayer of the Prophet (ﷺ).

At the end of it, after the two rak‘ahs, he sits for Tashahhud and reads: “Greetings are due to Allah and prayers and good things. May the peace, mercy,

and blessings of Allah be upon you, O Prophet. Peace be upon us and upon the righteous slaves of Allah. I bear witness that there is no true god but Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger.”

Then he rises for the third Rak’ah. If he invokes Allah’s peace and blessings upon the Prophet (ﷺ), that is better. The Prophet (ﷺ) would sometimes stand up right away, and sometimes invoke Allah’s peace and blessings upon the Prophet (ﷺ) and then rise for the third. Then, in the third, he recites only Al-Fātihah. This is as narrated by Abū Qatādah al-Ansārī (may Allah be pleased with him) from the Prophet (ﷺ): that he would recite Al-Fātihah in the third and fourth Rak’ahs of Zhuhr and ‘Asr; likewise, in the third of Maghrib and the third and fourth of ‘Ishā’, he recites Al-Fātihah. If he recites, in the third and fourth of Zhuhr, something beyond Al-Fātihah on some occasions, there is no harm.

Then he sits after the third Rak’ah of Maghrib, after the fourth of Zhuhr, ‘Asr, and ‘Ishā’, and after the second of Fajr. He recites Tashahhud and invokes Allah’s peace and blessings upon the Prophet (ﷺ), and says: O Allah, I seek refuge with You from the punishment of the Hellfire, the punishment of the grave, the trials of life and death, and the trial of the Anti-Christ. He should also make abundant supplication, saying frequently: “O Allah,

I have wronged myself greatly, and none forgives sins but You; so forgive me with a forgiveness from You and have mercy on me; indeed, You are the All-Forgiving, the Most Merciful.” “O Allah, help me to remember You, give thanks to You, and worship You in the best manner.” “O Allah, I seek refuge with You from miserliness; I seek refuge with You from cowardice; I seek refuge with You from being returned to the feeblest age; and I seek refuge with You from the trials of this world and from the punishment of the grave.” If he supplicates with other than that, then praise be to Allah; he should supplicate with whatever is easy. He may also say: “O Allah, forgive my past and future sins, my hidden and apparent sins, my transgression, and the sins that You know of more than I do. You are the One Who puts forward and the One Who holds back. There is no god but You.” The Prophet (ﷺ) said: Then he should supplicate, and then choose from supplication what he likes most. This is among his supplications (ﷺ) in the final Tashahhud before he makes Taslīm: “O Allah, I seek refuge with You from the punishment of the Hellfire, the punishment of the grave, the trials of life and death, and the trial of the Anti-Christ.” After that, he should strive in supplication with whatever is easy.

Then he makes Taslīm twice: “Peace be upon you and the mercy of Allah” to his right, and “Peace be

upon you and the mercy of Allah” to his left. This completes the prayer; it is opened with Takbīr and concluded with Taslīm.

Hence, it is incumbent upon every believing man and woman to observe this and to pray in the exact manner the Prophet (ﷺ) prayed, for he said: “Pray as you have seen me pray.” O Allah, send Your peace and blessings upon him.

May Allah bless the noble Qur’an for me and you, and may He make us benefit from the guidance of the master of the messengers (ﷺ). I say what you hear, and I ask Allah’s forgiveness for me, you, and the Muslims—so what a triumph for those who seek forgiveness!

The Second Sermon

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, and the good outcome is for the righteous. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, the Sovereign, the Truth, the Manifest, and I bear witness that our Prophet Muhammad is the servant of Allah and His Messenger. He conveyed the message, fulfilled the trust, gave sincere advice to the Ummah, and conducted Jihad in the cause of Allah until the end of his life.

May Allah send His peace and blessings upon him and upon his family and all his Companions. So, fear Allah as He should be feared, for your bodies cannot bear Hellfire. And cling to the firm handhold

of Islam, so that you may succeed and prosper in the Hereafter and in this world.

To proceed:

O servants of Allah, indeed, perfecting the manner of prayer that is authentically reported from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and being keen to adhere to it is of great importance. For the properly established prayer—the prayer we are commanded to perform—is the prayer whose manner is correct in its pillars, obligations, and utterances. And the effect of prayer upon the worshiper and the attainment of all its fruits are realized only in a prayer wherein he follows the guidance of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) in his prayer. So whoever desires the guidance of prayer, its enabling grace, its light, its bliss, and its effect in his life, let him perfect his prayer and refine its manner, and strive that it be in full conformity with the manner of the prayer of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ).

It is incumbent on the Muslim to be keen on perfecting the correct manner of performing prayer by learning it and reviewing it from time to time. What must be emphasized, O servants of Allah, is teaching sons and daughters the correct manner of prayer from their early years so that they grow up observing it properly, and one should not suffice with what they learn in their schools, for parental instruction has a great and lasting impact on their lives. Therefore, the Prophetic guidance came from

the Prophet (ﷺ) to fathers and mothers to teach their children prayer and order them to perform it from an early age, from the age of seven.

"مُرُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ بِالصَّلَاةِ وَهُمْ أَبْنَاءُ سَبْعِ سِنِينَ، وَاضْرِبُوهُمْ عَلَيْهَا، وَهُمْ أَبْنَاءُ عَشْرٍ وَفَرِّقُوا بَيْنَهُمْ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ"

“Command your children to offer the prayer when they are seven years old, and beat them for (not offering) it when they are ten, and separate them in beds.” [Narrated by Abu Dāwūd]¹ and graded as ḥasan (sound) by al-Albānī]

Now, invoke Allah's peace and blessings upon the one upon whom Allah commanded you to invoke His peace and blessings; He Almighty says:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا﴾

{Indeed, Allah sends His blessings upon the Prophet, and His angels pray for him. O you who believe, invoke Allah's blessings upon him and send him greetings of peace.} [Surat al-Ahzāb: 56]

O Allah, bestow Your peace and blessings upon our Prophet Muhammad, and upon his noble and pure family, and upon his wives, the Mothers of the Believers, and upon his illustrious and blessed Companions. And be pleased, O Allah, with the Companions and the Tābi'is and those who follow them with righteousness, and be pleased with us

¹ Narrated by Abu Dāwūd, 1/133.

along with them by Your bounty and generosity, O the Most Generous of those who are generous.

O Allah, grant honor to Islam and Muslims, humiliate disbelief and disbelievers, reform the conditions of all our Muslim brethren, guide the rulers of the Muslims to act upon Your Book and to follow the Sunnah of Your Prophet, and forgive us and our parents, and their spouses, our offspring, and all Muslims.

O Allah, aid us to remember You, thank You, and worship You as due. Our Lord, give us in this world what is good and in the Hereafter what is good, and protect us from the punishment of the Fire.

O servants of Allah!

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَايَ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ، وَأَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ إِذَا عَاهَدْتُمْ وَلَا تَنْقُضُوا الْأَيْمَانَ بَعْدَ تَوْكِيدِهَا وَقَدْ جَعَلْتُمُ اللَّهَ عَلَيْكُمْ كَفِيلًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ﴾

{Allah enjoins justice, kindness, and giving relatives [their dues], and He forbids shameful acts, evil deeds and oppression. He exhorts you, so that you may take heed,

Fulfill the covenant of Allah when you pledge, and do not break oaths after confirming them, having made Allah your witness, for Allah knows all what you do.} [Surat an-Nahl: 90-91]

Rest assured!

The First Sermon

Praise be to Allah. We praise Him, seek His help, and ask Him for forgiveness. We seek refuge with Allah from the evil of ourselves and from our bad deeds. Whoever Allah guides, none can misguide, and whoever He sends astray, none can guide. I testify that there is no god but Allah, alone, with no partner, and I testify that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ
بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ﴾

{O you who believe, fear Allah, and let every soul consider what it has sent forth for tomorrow. And fear Allah. Indeed, Allah is All-Aware of what you do.}

[Surat al-Hashr: 18]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾

{O you who believe, fear Allah as He should be feared, and do not die except as Muslims.}

[Surat Āl ‘Imrān: 102]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا، يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ
ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا﴾

{O you who believe, fear Allah and say what is right, He will amend for you your deeds and forgive you your sins. And whoever obeys Allah and His

Messenger has certainly attained a great attainment.}

[Surat al-Ahzāb: 7-71]

To proceed:

O servants of Allah! How greatly are we in need of reassurance in this life? How often does each of us strive, morning and evening, to live happy, tranquil, and with peace of mind, even as we live in an age of rapidly unfolding events and successive changes? Indeed, the soul's reassurance, its serenity, and its ease are great objectives upon which all people agree.

Did it not cross our minds, O servants of Allah, that tranquility and comfort, and moments of happiness, are very near to us and not beyond reach? Rather, we are in continual companionship with them; we only need to reassess our priorities and hold ourselves—we, the believers—to account in our daily actions, in the hours of our days and nights, and in how we spend them, and how that relates to comfort and tranquility.

Let us ask ourselves this question: Has the age of haste affected our lives? Everything is fast—transportation, devices, work, even food. Has the impact of the contemporary civilizational and technological acceleration reached all our daily affairs—even the acts of worship?!

Why do we hasten and rush in all our affairs, striving in everything to catch what comes next—

even in our prayers? No sooner does the worshiper stand before his Lord than he hastens to bowing, then hastens to rising, then rushes to prostration, as though something were driving us headlong into this haste. Is there anything more important than our prayer and our intimate supplication to our Almighty Lord? Is there anything greater than this great honor in which we stand?

What is our state regarding tranquility in our prayer? We know that whoever achieves tranquility in his prayer has performed it well, and whoever does not achieve tranquility has done poorly therein. And he who does poorly in his prayer—what then will he do well? And whoever does not achieve tranquility in his prayer, in what state will he ever achieve tranquility?

O servants of Allah! A believer spends each day approximately two hours in performing the five prayers—Fajr, Zhuhr, ‘Asr, Maghrib, and ‘Ishā’—together with their Sunnah prayers before and after them, as well as Duha (forenoon), Qiyām al-Layl (midnight) and Witr prayers. During this time devoted to prayer, he leaves everything and sets aside all else to turn wholly to Allah Almighty, directing his face toward Allah—magnifying Him, declaring His greatness, glorifying Him, privately entreating Him, and seeking His forgiveness—supplicating for peace, safety, and tranquility for

himself and for the righteous servants of Allah. In such states, serenity becomes manifest.

Tranquility in prayer is not a burdensome task; it is easy to perform. Tranquility in prayer is: stability and stillness when performing the actions of prayer—by giving each pillar its due share of sufficient time, avoiding haste in moving on to the next pillar, and reflecting upon the utterances of that pillar with deliberation and tranquility.

Dear noble brother! Here is the Hadith that relates the story of the man who came to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), prayed but did not perfect his prayer and was not at ease in its pillars—so much so that scholars named this Hadith “The Hadith of the one who did not pray well.” So look—may Allah protect you—at what the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said to him and how he taught him: On the authority of Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him):

أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ دَخَلَ الْمَسْجِدَ فَدَخَلَ رَجُلٌ، فَصَلَّى، فَسَلَّمَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، فَرَدَّ وَقَالَ: "ارْجِعْ فَصَلِّ، فَإِنَّكَ لَمْ تُصَلِّ"، فَارْجَعَ يَصِلِي كَمَا صَلَّى، ثُمَّ جَاءَ، فَسَلَّمَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، فَقَالَ: "ارْجِعْ فَصَلِّ، فَإِنَّكَ لَمْ تُصَلِّ" ثَلَاثًا، فَقَالَ: وَالَّذِي بَعَثَكَ بِالْحَقِّ مَا أَحْسَنَ غَيْرَهُ، فَعَلِمَنِي، فَقَالَ: «إِذَا قُمْتَ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ فَكَبِّرْ، ثُمَّ اقْرَأْ مَا تيسَّرَ مَعَكَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ، ثُمَّ ارْجِعْ حَتَّى تَطْمِئِنَّ رَاكِعًا، ثُمَّ ارْفَعْ حَتَّى تَعْدِلَ قَائِمًا، ثُمَّ اسْجُدْ حَتَّى تَطْمِئِنَّ سَاجِدًا، ثُمَّ ارْفَعْ حَتَّى تَطْمِئِنَّ جَالِسًا، وَافْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فِي صَلَاتِكَ كُلِّهَا»

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) entered the mosque, and then a man came in and prayed. He greeted the Prophet (ﷺ), who responded and said: “Go back and

pray, for you have not prayed.” He went back and prayed as he had prayed, then he came and greeted the Prophet (ﷺ). He said: “Go back and pray, for you have not prayed,” three times. Then he said: “By the One Who sent you with the truth, I cannot do better than that. So teach me.” He said: “When you stand to pray, say *Takbīr* (*Allāhu Akbar*), then recite whatever you can of the Qur’an; then bow until you are at ease in bowing; then rise until you are standing up straight; then prostrate until you are at ease in prostration; and then sit up until you are at ease in sitting. Do that throughout your prayer.” [Agreed upon]¹

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) commanded him to go back and pray three times because he had not observed tranquility in his prayer. Whoever fails to actualize tranquility in his prayer has not prayed. From this Hadīth, the scholars deduced that tranquility in all the actions of prayer is one of its pillars.

O servants of Allah! Indeed, the moments of prayer are the most precious moments of life, the most pleasing, the sweetest, and the most delightful for the believer. The minutes we spend from our lifetimes in our prayers—standing, bowing, prostrating, and sitting—are moments that no

¹ Narrated by Al-Bukhāri (1/152) and Muslim (1/298).

other minutes spent in the pursuits of life can equal in greatness, sanctity, majesty, and beauty.

Thus, if we contemplate our daily actions, we will find that the dearest of them to our hearts, and the most beneficial to us in our lives and our Hereafter, is our prayer. Do not our prayers—being the dearest deed to our hearts—deserve that we observe tranquility in its pillars, obligations, and recommended acts, and that we grant it sufficient time for reflection and deliberation?

Is it not comfort? Is it not the delight of our eyes?

Does the worshiper not find in his prayer intimacy with Allah Almighty, tranquility by means of His remembrance, and yearning to meet Him?

May Allah bless the noble Qur'an for me and you, and may He make us benefit from the guidance of the master of the messengers (ﷺ). I say what you hear, and I ask Allah's forgiveness for me, you, and all Muslims. And what a triumph for those who seek forgiveness!

The Second Sermon

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, and the best outcome is for the righteous. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, the Sovereign, the True, the Manifest, and I bear witness that our Prophet Muhammad is Allah's servant and His Messenger. He conveyed the message and fulfilled the trust, gave sincere advice to the Ummah, and

conducted Jihad in the cause of Allah till the end of his life.

O Allah, send Your peace and blessings upon him, his family, and all his Companions. So, fear Allah as He should be feared, for your bodies cannot bear Hellfire. And cling to the firm handhold of Islam, and you will succeed and prosper in the Hereafter and in this world.

To proceed:

So I call upon you, my brothers, from this moment, seeking the help of Allah, that we will review the matter of tranquility in our prayers, remembering that tranquility in life—and the happiness within it—depends upon our tranquility in our prayers; for whoever is tranquil in his prayer is tranquil in his life.

"Tuma'nīnah" (tranquility/peacefulness) in prayer leads the believer to a state of contentment, comfort through the remembrance of Allah, readiness for the Hereafter, and maintaining the awareness of Allah's companionship at all times. And when the heart finds familiarity through the remembrance of Allah, finds tranquility thereby, and places its trust in Him, he has attained satisfaction and tasted the savor of happiness and the sweetness of faith.

This daily repetition of the prayers—along with practical training in attaining tranquility within them, performing them with excellence, finding

solace in intimate supplication to Allah Almighty therein, and abundant Dhikr of Him—will surely manifest its effect on the life of the one who prays, in all aspects of his life: tranquility, happiness, and comfort.

And among what will aid you in maintaining tranquility in prayer—after seeking the help of Allah and continually supplicating Him, dear brother—is adherence to the following practical steps:

First: Concentrate on the pillar you are performing, setting aside the one that follows until you reach it. Thus, if you are bowing, devote yourself to bowing and do not think of rising until you complete the Dhikr of bowing, for allowing the thought of rising to enter your mind while you are bowing leads to haste and a lack of tranquility. The same applies to the rest of the pillars.

Second: Pondering the meanings of what you say in that pillar, and understanding the intended aims of the remembrance that you repeatedly utter with your tongue.

Third: Be keen to follow the Sunnah by perfecting the prescribed form of the pillar you are performing, remembering the words of the Prophet (ﷺ):

«وَصَلُّوا كَمَا رَأَيْتُمُونِي أُصَلِّي»

"Pray as you have seen me pray." [Narrated by Al-Bukhāri]¹

Fourth: Alternate among the Adhkār you recite in each pillar of the prayer, for variation in the utterances of the prayer helps with concentration and attentiveness of the heart, whereby tranquility is attained.

Fifth: Remember that Allah Almighty sees you, hears you, and knows your condition.

﴿الَّذِي يَرْنٰكَ جِيْنٌ تَقُوْمُ، وَتَقْلَبُكَ فِي السَّجْدِيْنَ، اِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيْعُ الْعَلِيْمُ﴾

{Who sees you when you stand up [for prayer], and your movement among those who prostrate. Indeed, He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing.} [Surat ash-Shu'arā': 218-220] He who knows that Allah sees his actions and hears his words in his standing, bowing, prostration, and sitting ought to be tranquil and perfect his prayer.

I ask Allah Almighty to bless us and you with the tranquility of prayer, the sweetness of faith, and the bliss of this world and the Hereafter.

Now, invoke Allah's peace and blessings upon the one upon whom Allah commanded you to invoke His peace and blessings, as He Almighty says:

﴿اِنَّ اللّٰهَ وَمَلٰٓئِكَتُهٗ يُصَلُّوْنَ عَلٰى النَّبِيِّ يَاۤيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ ءَامَنُوْا صَلُّوْا عَلَیْهِ وَسَلِّمُوْا
تَسْلِيْمًا﴾

¹ Narrated by Al-Bukhāri (1/129).

{Indeed, Allah sends His blessings upon the Prophet, and His angels pray for him. O you who believe, invoke Allah's blessings upon him and send him greetings of peace.} [Surat al-Ahzāb: 56]

O Allah, bestow Your peace and blessings upon our Prophet Muhammad, upon his noble and pure family, upon his wives, the Mothers of the Believers, and upon his illustrious and blessed Companions. And be pleased, O Allah, with the Companions, their followers and those who follow them with righteousness; and be pleased with us along with them by Your grace and generosity, O Most Generous of the generous.

O Allah, grant honor to Islam and Muslims, and humiliate disbelief and disbelievers. Reform the conditions of all our Muslim brethren, and guide the leaders of the Muslims to act by Your Book and follow the Sunnah of Your Prophet. Forgive us and our parents, their spouses, our offspring, and all Muslims.

O Allah, aid us to remember You, thank You, and worship You as due. Our Lord, give us in this world that which is good and in the Hereafter that which is good and protect us from the punishment of the Fire.

O servants of Allah!

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَايَ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ، وَأَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ إِذَا عَاهَدْتُمْ وَلَا تَنْقُضُوا الْأَيْمَانَ بَعْدَ تَوْكِيدِهَا وَقَدْ جَعَلْتُمُ اللَّهَ عَلَيْكُمْ كَفِيلًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ﴾

{Allah enjoins justice, kindness, and giving relatives [their dues], and He forbids shameful acts, evil deeds and oppression. He exhorts you, so that you may take heed,

Fulfill the covenant of Allah when you pledge, and do not break oaths after confirming them, having made Allah your witness, for Allah knows all what you do.} [Surat an-Nahl: 90-91]

Prayer of the Hearts and the Limbs

The First Sermon

Praise be to Allah. We praise Him, seek His help, and ask Him for forgiveness. We seek refuge with Allah from the evil of ourselves and from our bad deeds. Whoever Allah guides, none can misguide, and whoever He sends astray, none can guide. I testify that there is no god but Allah, alone, with no partner, and I testify that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ
بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ﴾

{O you who believe, fear Allah, and let every soul consider what it has sent forth for tomorrow. And fear Allah. Indeed, Allah is All-Aware of what you do.}

[Surat al-Hashr: 18]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾

{O you who believe, fear Allah as He should be feared, and do not die except as Muslims.}

[Surat Āl ‘Imrān: 102]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَفُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا، يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا﴾

{O you who believe, fear Allah and say what is right, He will amend for you your deeds and forgive you your sins. And whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger has certainly attained a great attainment.}

[Surat al-Ahzāb: 7-71]

To proceed:

The ultimate purpose behind creating the jinn and mankind is to worship Allah, Lord of the worlds. Allah Almighty says: {And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me.} [Surat adh-Dhāriyāt: 56] And worship is the perfection of love and submission to the All-Knower of the unseen, Glorified and Exalted be He. Since these meanings of love, submission, and humility are matters of the heart—inner acts of worship that are not manifest on the limbs, but rather sentiments that reside in the heart of the Muslim—and since they are the objective of outward acts of worship, then, O servants of Allah, it is necessary that there be special care for the prayer of the hearts along with the prayer of the limbs, and attention to what the heart ought to uphold while the limbs are

engaged in worship and devotion to Allah Almighty. For the heart is the locus of the gaze of the Lord, Glorious and Most High. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَنْظُرُ إِلَى صُورِكُمْ وَأَمْوَالِكُمْ، وَلَكِنْ يَنْظُرُ إِلَى قُلُوبِكُمْ وَأَعْمَالِكُمْ"

"Indeed, Allah does not look at your appearances and wealth, but He looks at your hearts and deeds." [Narrated by Muslim]¹ This depends on the proper understanding of the essence of worship.

In essence, prayer comprises three categories, without which its completeness cannot be attained:

First: The acts of prayer, such as standing, bowing, prostration, and sitting.

Second: The words of prayer, such as recitation, Takbīr, Tasbīḥ, praise, and supplication.

Third: The meanings of these words and actions of prayer that the worshiper ought to be mindful of while performing this great act of worship.

The path to knowing these meanings and to experiencing these heartfelt sentiments is: sound knowledge and sound practice—sound knowledge of the meanings of the words and the implications of actions.

Its correct performance should be in accordance with the Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ), who said:

«وَصَلُّوا كَمَا رَأَيْتُمُونِي أُصَلِّي»

¹ Narrated by Muslim (4/1987).

"And pray as you have seen me pray." [Narrated by Al-Bukhārī].¹

When the worshiper stands for his prayer, he is mindful of the greatness of this standing—that it is a standing to supplicate to his Creator and Master. What assists him in this standing is remembering that he is facing the Qiblah—the Ka'bah, the House of Allah, Blessed and Exalted—where there is guidance, security, and safety.

﴿إِنَّ أَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ لَلَّذِي بِبَكَّةَ مُبَارَكًا وَهُدًى لِلْعَالَمِينَ﴾

{The first House [of worship] established for mankind was the one at Bakkah [i.e., Makkah], full of blessings and guidance for the worlds.} [Surat Āl 'Imrān: 96] Then he enters into the sanctity of the prayer with the Takbīr of Ihrām, pronouncing the Takbīr with his tongue, saying: "Allāhu Akbar" (Allah is the Greatest), and with his state, as he raises his hands in magnification and reverence, and in submission to his Lord, Glorified and Exalted—realizing that he stands before the Most Great, Who is Greater than all things, and that all else is lesser. At times, he opens his prayer with further magnification, glorification, and declaration of transcendence, saying: "Glory be to You, O Allah, and praise be to You; blessed is Your name; Exalted is Your greatness; there is no god but You." At other times, with supplication, repentance, and seeking

¹ Narrated by Al-Bukhārī (1/129).

forgiveness, he says: “O Allah, distance me from my sins as You have distanced the East and the West. O Allah, purify me from my sins and offenses as a white garment is purified from filth. O Allah, wash me of my sins with water, snow, and hail,” and other opening invocations.

Then he seeks refuge in Allah from Satan, his foremost enemy, who wants to spoil his prayer with his whisperings and evil distractions, and he says from his heart: “I seek refuge with Allah from the accursed Satan.” At that very moment, he realizes its meaning: that he is resorting to and seeking protection in his Lord Almighty from this accursed enemy. Thereafter, he recites Al-Fātihah, seeking help by saying: “In the Name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful,” and he senses in his heart that he is engaging in a private conversation with Allah. Private conversation is a hidden conversation between the two. So when you are in your prayer, you are in a discourse between you and Allah that none of creation knows. You say, praising your Lord Almighty for His favors upon you in your present, your past, and your future: “All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.” You sense that Allah Almighty answers you from above His heavens, saying: “My slave has praised Me.” Allah is the Greatest! What a tremendous honor we attain through our prayers, O servants of Allah.

Indeed, prayer is an honor not granted to everyone among mankind.

Then you extol your Lord with the attribute of mercy, saying, {The Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful}, and you sense Allah's response to you: "My servant has extolled Me." Then you glorify Him by saying, {Master of the Day of Judgment}, saying it mindful of the Day of Judgment—the Day of recompense and reckoning, the Day when people are judged for their deeds—whereupon Allah responds to you: "My servant has glorified Me."

After this praise, commendation, and extollment, your heart draws near to your Lord until it is as though you behold Him addressing you. You then say, proclaiming the perfection of love, the perfection of sincere devotion, and the perfection of Tawhīd: {You alone we worship and You alone we ask for help}. Then comes the response: "This is between Me and My servant, and for My servant is what he asks." Thus, you attain this special distinction between you and your Lord alone; none of creation stands between you and your Lord, Exalted be He. He is the One Who knows the truthfulness of your worship and your seeking help; He is the One Who knows what you desire; and He is the One Who knows of your standing before Him at that very moment.

Then, after this nearness, comes the greatest supplication, the most important supplication, the

grandest supplication: it is the supplication for guidance, the request for success, the request for divine company and help—asking that Allah guide you in your life, that He place you upon the straight path, upon the upright way, the path that leads you to the pleasure of Allah Almighty. It is success in life. And you, my brother who prays, should remember Allah’s mercy toward you, His generosity and His kindness to you, that He has placed you in this position every day seventeen times to seek His guidance and to ask Him for success. How Generous Allah is, how Great Allah is, and how Merciful He is to us.

Then you further affirm this path upon which you wish to be, and you say, “the Path of those You have blessed—not those You are displeased with, or those who are astray.” For this path you desire is a single path, a clear path, a distinct path. It is the path of the blessed and those granted success, the path of the saved, the successful, the path of the prophets and the truthful, the path of the martyrs and the righteous. These are the ones with whom you wish to be—among their ranks and in their company—and you do not wish to be with others, those who have earned Allah’s anger and whom He has led astray from the straight way.

It is the path.

﴿وَمَنْ يُطِعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ
وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ وَحَسُنَ أُولَٰئِكَ رَفِيقًا، ذَلِكَ الْفَضْلُ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ عَلِيمًا﴾

{Those who obey Allah and the Messenger will be with those whom Allah has blessed: the prophets, the people of Truth, the martyrs, and the righteous. What excellent companions they are!

That grace is from Allah, and sufficient is Allah as Knower.} [Surat an-Nisā': 69-70]

Then, say: "Āmīn" to this request and supplication, which means: O Allah, answer my supplication and guide me to Your straight path.

After that, he recites whatever is easy from the Qur'an—reciting with reflection upon the Speech of his Lord while standing before Him. How magnificent that recitation is, and how beautiful that reading is, when the one praying recites the Words of his Lord while standing before Him, knowing that his Lord sees him—for He is the All-Seeing, Glorified be He, and hears him—for He is the All-Hearing whose hearing encompasses all voices despite the differences of their languages.

After the recitation, you move by making Takbīr, raising your hands and saying: "Allāhu Akbar" (Allah is the Greatest), while remembering that you stand before al-Kabīr (the Most Great). Then you make Rukū' (bowing) in magnification of the Most Great, saying: "Subhāna rabbiy-al-'azhīm" (Glory be to my Lord, the Most Magnificent), recalling the Lordship of the Most Magnificent, Exalted is He. You bow to Him, declaring Him free of every deficiency and affirming for Him every perfection, majesty,

and beauty, and you repeat that Tasbīḥ while sensing the greatness of your Lord, Glorified and Exalted is He.

Then raise your head saying: “Sami’a Allahu liman hamidah.” (Allah hears the one who praises Him), consciously sensing Allah’s hearing of you and His response to your praise and extolling, acknowledging that all praise belongs to Him and imploring for the full acceptance of this praise: “Allāhumma rabbana laka al-hamd.” (O Allah, our Lord, to You is the praise). Then, out of love for Him, further extol Him as you stand upright, saying: “Hamdan kathīran tayyiban mubārakan fih mil’a as-samā’i wa mil’a al-ardi wa mil’a ma baynahuma wa mil’a ma shi’ta min shay’in ba’d, ahlu ath-thanā’i wal-majd, ahaquq ma qāl al-‘abd wa kulluna laka ‘abd, la mani’a lima a’tayta wa la mu’tiya lima mana’ta wa la yanfa’u dhal-jaddi minka al-jadd.” (Praise that is abundant, good, and blessed, that fills the heavens and the earth, that fills what exists between them, and that fills anything You desire afterward. O Worthy of praise and glory, that is the most truthful thing to be said by a slave and we all are slaves to You. None can withhold what You give, and none can give what You withhold, and the greatness of the great will be of no avail to them against You).

After this standing for private discourse, magnifying Him with Rukū’, and offering praise and

laudation in the standing that follows, you increase in love for Him; then you prostrate, placing all seven parts of your body upon the ground, glorifying Him and declaring Him transcendent, and sensing your nearness to Him.

{الَّذِي يَرَاكَ حِينَ تَقُومُ، وَتَقْلُبُكَ فِي السُّجْدَيْنِ، إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ}

{Who sees you when you stand up [for prayer], and your movements among those who prostrate,

Indeed, He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing.} [Surat ash-Shu'arā': 218-220] You repeat your glorification of Him: "Subhāna rabbi al-A'la" (Glory be to my Lord, the Most High), "Subhāna rabbi al-A'la," and you supplicate Him and ask Him for your needs in this world and the Hereafter.

The moments of prostration are moments of nearness to Allah; there is no state that Allah Almighty loves to see His worshiper in more than this.

{وَأَسْجُدْ وَاقْتَرِبْ}

{Prostrate and draw near [to Allah].} [Surat al-'Alaq: 19] In the state of prostration, the heart is very close to Allah, Glorified and Exalted be He. It is surely the nearest state.

"أَقْرَبُ مَا يَكُونُ الْعَبْدُ مِنْ رَبِّهِ، وَهُوَ سَاجِدٌ، فَأَكْثَرُوا الدُّعَاءَ"

"The nearest a slave to his Lord is while he is prostrating, so increase supplication." [Narrated by Muslim]¹ In another version by him also:

"وَأَمَّا السُّجُودُ فَاجْتَهِدُوا فِي الدَّعَاءِ، فَقَمِنْ أَنْ يُسْتَجَابَ لَكُمْ"

"As for prostration, make supplication diligently in it, for it is worthy to be accepted." [Narrated by Muslim]²

﴿وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ﴾

{When My slaves ask you concerning Me, I am indeed near. I respond to the call of the supplicant when he calls upon Me; so they should respond to Me and believe in Me, so that they may be guided.}
[Surat al-Baqarah: 186]

May Allah bless the noble Qur'an for me and you, and may He make us benefit from the guidance of the master of the messengers (ﷺ). I say what you hear, and I ask Allah's forgiveness for me, you, and the Muslims. So, how great the success of those who seek forgiveness is!

The Second Sermon

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, and the good outcome is for the righteous. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, the Sovereign, the True, the Manifest, and I bear witness that our

¹ Narrated by Muslim (1/350).

² Narrated by Muslim (1/348).

Prophet Muhammad is the servant of Allah and His Messenger. He conveyed the message, fulfilled the trust, gave sincere advice to the Ummah, and conducted Jihad in the cause of Allah till the end of his life.

May Allah's peace and blessings be upon him, his family, and his Companions. So, fear Allah as He should be feared, for your bodies cannot bear the Hellfire. And cling to the firm handhold of Islam so that you may succeed and prosper in the Hereafter and in this world.

To proceed:

Along this great journey, which we began with the opening Takbīr, then the opening supplication, seeking refuge, the Basmalah, and private communication with Allah by reciting Al-Fātihah, and reciting some verses of the Qur'an; then magnifying Him with Rukū', and extolling Allah and praising Him after rising from Rukū' (bowing); then experiencing that great nearness in Sujūd (prostration)—we have reached the sitting between the two prostrations.

The sitting between the two prostrations—O servants of Allah—is a pillar of the prayer, requiring complete tranquility in it as with the other pillars, and its posture is that of asking and entreaty. Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) described the Prophet's (ﷺ) sitting between the two prostrations: "He would sit between the two

prostrations until we would say, ‘He has forgotten.’” Narrated by Muslim¹. Sitting between the two prostrations is for seeking forgiveness, and by forgiveness needs are fulfilled, distresses are relieved, ranks are raised, and through it sustenance and good things are attained.

﴿فَقُلْتُ اسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّكُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ غَفَّارًا، يُرْسِلَ السَّمَاءَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِدْرَارًا، وَيُمْدِدْكُمْ بِأَمْوَالٍ وَبَنِينَ وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ جَنَّاتٍ وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ أَنْهَارًا﴾

{I said, ‘Seek forgiveness from your Lord. Indeed, He is Most Forgiving.

He will shower you with abundant rain from the sky,

and He will give you wealth and children, and bestow upon you gardens and rivers.} [Surat Nūh: 10-12]

And in the sitting between the two prostrations, the worshiper asks along with forgiveness, mercy, sustenance, well-being, guidance, the mending of deficiencies, and elevation; and these are the requirements of happiness and success.

If Allah forgives you, has mercy on you, guides you, grants you well-being, provides for you, compensates for your shortcomings, and raises you in rank, then what remains?! It is Prayer, O servants of Allah! It is your connection with your Lord, the One Who brings happiness to your life, and in His Hand lies your triumph and success.

¹ Narrated by Muslim (1/344).

After the worshiper completes the two Rak'ahs, he sits for the Tashahhud and the At-Tahiyyāt. The sitting of the Tashahhud—O servants of Allah—is one in which the heart alights upon lofty stations and ascends through degrees of elevation and sublimity to noble and exalted ranks. The worshiper reaches in it the point of offering greetings to Allah, saying: “At-tahiyyātu lillāhi wa as-salawātu wa at-tayyibāt,” (All greetings, prayers, and good things belong to Allah), and his heart increases in magnification and reverence of Allah. Then he sends salutations upon the Messenger of Allah, saying: “As-Salāmu ‘alayka ayyuha an-Nabiyyu wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh,” (Peace be upon you, O Prophet, and the mercy of Allah and His blessings), and his love for the Messenger of Allah grows. Then he sends salutations upon himself—feeling tranquility fill his heart and soul—and upon the righteous servants of Allah, and he feels love for them, saying: “As-Salāmu ‘alayna wa ‘alā ‘ibādillāhi as-sālihīn,” (Peace be upon us and upon the righteous servants of Allah). Thereafter, he proclaims the everlasting testimony of monotheism, saying: “Ash-hadu an lā ilāha illa Allah, wa ash-hadu anna Muhammadan ‘abduhu wa rasūluh” (I bear witness that there is no true deity but Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger). In the last Tashahhud, increased love for the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) is

proclaimed; thus he invokes the peace and blessings of Allah upon him with As-Salāt al-Ibrāhimiyyah (Abrahamic supplication), wherein the worshiper asks Allah Almighty to bestow His praise upon His Prophet in the Higher Assembly, and that mercy and blessing be sent down upon him, upon his Ummah, and upon his mission and call. How beautiful is this heartfelt feeling that the worshiper experiences, as he supplicates for the Messenger of Allah and for the entire Ummah in every prayer he performs. Such is the prayer when the heart is present, not absent or distracted.

The worshiper concludes his prayer through seeking refuge and turning to his Lord Almighty from trials—those which are apparent and those which are hidden. He thus seeks refuge from the punishment of Hell, which is the torment therein; from the punishment of the grave, which is the torment of the Barzakh (the intermediate life); from the trial of life, namely the trials of the worldly life with its desires and doubts; from the trial of death, namely what befalls the servant at the moments of his demise; and from the trial of al-Masīh ad-Dajjāl (the Antichrst). Then he supplicates his Lord Almighty for whatever he wishes of the good of this world and the Hereafter. And he exits his prayer with Taslīm, which is a supplication from the worshiper for his fellow

worshippers to his right and to his left, and a salutation upon the noble angels.

This is the prayer of the hearts and the limbs—O servants of Allah—. It behooves us to learn it and teach it to our sons and daughters and our families, for indeed prayer is not merely actions and words of the limbs; rather, it is inner meanings of the heart that must be established in the heart of the worshiper, and thereby comes acceptance. He (ﷺ) said:

" إِنَّ الْعَبْدَ لَيُصَلِّي الصَّلَاةَ مَا يُكْتَبُ لَهُ مِنْهَا إِلَّا عَشْرُهَا، تُسْعُهَا، ثَمَنُهَا، سُبْعُهَا، سُدُسُهَا، خُمُسُهَا، رُبْعُهَا، ثُلُثُهَا نِصْفُهَا "

"Verily, one may offer a prayer, and nothing good is written for him thereof but a tenth of his prayer, or a ninth, or an eighth, or a seventh, or a sixth, or a fifth, or a fourth, or a third, or a half of it." [Narrated by Ahmad: (43); classified by Al-Albāni as Sahīh (Authentic)]¹

Now, invoke Allah's peace and blessings upon the one whom Allah Almighty enjoins you to invoke His peace and blessings upon; He Almighty says:

﴿ إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا ﴾

{Indeed, Allah sends His blessings upon the Prophet, and His angels pray for him. O you who believe, invoke Allah's blessings upon him and send him greetings of peace.} [Surat al-Ahzāb: 56]

¹ Narrated by Ahmad (31/189).

O Allah, bestow Your peace and blessings upon our Prophet Muhammad, upon his pure family, upon his wives, the Mothers of the Believers, and upon his radiant and blessed Companions. And be pleased, our Lord, with the Companions and their successors and those who follow them with righteousness, and be pleased, our Lord, with us along with them, by Your grace and generosity, O the Most Generous of those who are generous.

O Allah, grant honor to Islam and Muslims, put disbelief and disbelievers in humiliation, reform the conditions of all our Muslim brethren, and guide the rulers of the Muslims to act upon Your Book and follow the Sunnah of Your Prophet. Forgive us and our parents, our spouses and our offspring, and all Muslims.

O Allah, aid us to remember You, thank You, and worship You as due. Our Lord, give us in this world that which is good and in the Hereafter that which is good, and protect us from the punishment of the Fire.

O servants of Allah!

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَنِ وَإِيتَايَ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ، وَأَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ إِذَا عَاهَدْتُمْ وَلَا تَنْفُسُوا أَلِيَمِينَ بَعْدَ تَوْكِيدِهَا وَقَدْ جَعَلْتُمُ اللَّهَ عَلَيْكُمْ كَفِيلًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ﴾

{Allah enjoins justice, kindness, and giving relatives [their dues], and He forbids shameful acts,

evil deeds and oppression. He exhorts you so that you may take heed.

Fulfill the covenant of Allah when you pledge, and do not break oaths after confirming them, having made Allah your witness, for Allah knows all what you do.} [Surat an-Nahl: 91]

Khushū' (Humbleness/Humility) and khudū' (Submissiveness)

The First Sermon

Praise be to Allah. We praise Him, seek His help, and ask Him for forgiveness. We seek refuge with Allah from the evil of ourselves and from our bad deeds. Whoever Allah guides, none can misguide, and whoever He sends astray, none can guide. I testify that there is no god but Allah, alone, with no partner. And I testify that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ
بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ﴾

{O you who believe, fear Allah, and let every soul consider what it has sent forth for tomorrow. And fear Allah. Indeed, Allah is All-Aware of what you do.}

[Surat al-Hashr: 18]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾

{O you who believe, fear Allah as He should be feared, and do not die except as Muslims.}

[Surat Āl ‘Imrān: 102]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَفُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا، يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ
ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا﴾

{O you who believe, fear Allah and say what is right, He will amend for you your deeds and forgive you your sins. And whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger has certainly attained a great attainment.}

[Surat al-Ahzāb: 7-71]

To proceed:

For indeed, Khushū’ (humility) in prayer—O servants of Allah—is its spirit by which it lives, its pillar upon which it stands, and the essence without which prayer loses its reality. Prayer without Khushū’ is like a lifeless body without a soul. Khushū’ in prayer is an indispensable requirement for whoever seeks to comply with the Divine command to establish the prayer, for the Book of Allah Almighty has urged it by depicting the state of those who have Khushū’, their qualities, and what Allah has prepared for them of lofty positions in the everlasting Paradise.

Allah Almighty says:

﴿قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ، الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ، وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ اللَّغْوِ
مُعْرِضُونَ، وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِلزَّكَاةِ فَاعِلُونَ، وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِفُرُوجِهِمْ حَافِظُونَ، إِلَّا عَلَى
أَزْوَاجِهِمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مَلُومِينَ، فَمَنْ أَتَبَغَىٰ وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ
الْعَادُونَ، وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لَا مُنْتَبِهَةٍ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رُغْوَنَ، وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَىٰ صَلَاتِهِمْ
يُحَافِظُونَ، أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْوَارِثُونَ، الَّذِينَ يَرِثُونَ الْفِرْدَوْسَ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ﴾

{The believers have attained true success:

those who humble themselves in their prayers,
and those who turn away from all that is vain,
and those who give zakah,
and those who guard their sexual desires,
except with their wives or slave women they
may own, for then they are free of blame,

But whoever seeks anything beyond that, it is
they who are the transgressors,

And those who are faithful to their trusts and
pledges,

and who take due care of their prayers,

Such will be the inheritors, who shall inherit
Paradise. They will abide therein eternally.} [Surat
al-Mu'minūn: 1-11]

﴿وَأَسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ وَإِنَّهَا لَكَبِيرَةٌ إِلَّا عَلَى الْخَاشِعِينَ، الَّذِينَ يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّهُمْ
مُلْقُوا رَبِّهِمْ وَأَنَّهُمْ إِلَيْهِ رُجْعُونَ﴾

{Seek help through patience and prayer. It is
strenuous except for the humble, who are certain
they will meet their Lord and to Him they will
return.}

[Surat al-Baqarah: 45-46] The Prophetic
encouragement to humility in prayer is found in the
Hadīth of 'Ubādah ibn as-Sāmīt (may Allah be
pleased with him), who reported: The Messenger of
Allah (ﷺ) said:

«خَمْسُ صَلَوَاتٍ افْتَرَضَهُنَّ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى مِنْ أَحْسَنَ وَضُوءِهِنَّ وَصَلَاهُنَّ لَوْ قُتِلَتْ
وَأَنْتُمْ رُكُوعُهُنَّ وَخُشُوعُهُنَّ كَانَ لَهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ عَهْدٌ أَنْ يَغْفِرَ لَهُ، وَمَنْ لَمْ يَفْعَلْ فَلَيْسَ
لَهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ عَهْدٌ، إِنْ شَاءَ غَفَرَ لَهُ وَإِنْ شَاءَ عَذَّبَهُ»

"There are five prayers that Allah has enjoined. Whoever performs their ablution well, prays them at their appointed times, and completes their bowing and humility, has a covenant with Allah to forgive him. And whoever does not do so has no covenant with Allah; if He wills, He will forgive him, and if He wills, He will punish him." [Narrated by Abu Dāwūd¹; Al-Albāni classified it as Sahīh (authentic)] Humility in prayer is a sign that the heart is filled with love of Allah and reverence for Him, and a sign of knowledge of Him, Blessed and Exalted is He, and of His Most Beautiful Names and His Most Sublime Attributes.

Whoever comprehends, knows, is certain, and is mindful, and whose heart is present when he stands before Allah in prayer, knowing that he stands before the Almighty, Whom hearts worship in love and reverence, Who is greater than all things; the All-Hearing, Who hears everything; the All-Knowing, Whose knowledge encompasses whatever is in the heavens and the earth, and He is All-Knowing of all things; the All-Seeing; nothing is hidden from Him.

﴿وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى الْعَزِيزِ الرَّحِيمِ، الَّذِي يَرَاكَ حِينَ تَقُومُ، وَتَقْلُبُكَ فِي السُّجُودِ، إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ﴾

{And put your trust in the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful, Who sees you when you stand, and your

¹ Narrated by Abu Dawūd (1/115).

movements among those who prostrate. Indeed, He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing.} [Surat ash-Shu'arā': 217-220] Whoever knows, with a present heart, that when he rises for prayer he stands to converse with his Lord—the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate, the Sovereign of the Day of Recompense—from Whom comes guidance and through Whom help is sought; that He is the One Who guides to the straight path and the upright way; and that his task and duty in his prayer is to stand in reverence and magnification of this Magnificent Lord, to declare the perfection and transcendence of his Generous Creator, to offer praise and commendation, to seek forgiveness, and to ask and supplicate for the fulfillment of needs and requests in this world and the Hereafter—whenever the one praying knows this and his knowledge of his Lord increases, his turning to Him, his humility, and his humble submission to Him increase.

Al-Husayn ibn 'Ali ibn Al-Husayn was asked about the change in his face when he prepared for prayer, he said:

"تَدْرُونَ بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ مَنْ أَقُومُ وَمَنْ أُنَاجِي "

"Do you know before who I stand and who I address in supplication?"¹ It is the knowledge of Allah—O servants of Allah—for the more one

¹ Siyar A'lām An-Nubalā' (4/392).

knows Allah, the more humble he becomes before Him and the greater love he has for Him.

O you who desire humility in your prayer, how is your knowledge of your Lord? What do you know of His Names and Attributes?

O you who desire to be devoutly humble in your prayer, how are you with your remembrance of your Lord before your prayer, in your mornings and your evenings?

O you who seek devout humility in your prayer, have you contemplated this vast universe so that it increases you in glorifying and remembering Allah Almighty?

O you who seek humility in your prayer, how are you with the Word of your Lord—reciting and pondering it—so that it may guide you to His greatness, grandeur, might, and perfection?

O you who seek humility in your prayer, where do you stand when it comes to thanking Allah for His blessings and praising Him for them?

O you who seek humility in your prayer, how are you in avoiding sins and shameful acts and all forms of wrongdoing? How steadfast is your piety before your Lord when desire and doubtful matters confront you? When you fall into a sin and commit an error, do you return to Him? Do you turn back to Him? Do you repent to Him?

﴿وَتُوبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا أَيُّهَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ﴾

{And turn to Allah in repentance altogether, O believers, so that you may be successful.} [Surat an-Nūr: 31]

O servants of Allah! The khushū' of the heart in prayer and its tranquility are contingent upon its presence. Whenever the heart is present and senses the greatness of its Lord, Allah Almighty, it becomes still and serene, humble and submissive. The heart is only present when it perceives the significance of what it is engaged in, and it perceives that significance by realizing that the fulfillment of its aims, its rectitude, its success, its divine facilitation, and its salvation are all bound to its prayer. So when the worshiper knows that through the prayer everything he desires in his worldly life and his Hereafter—everything he asks for and longs for—is realized, he strives against his soul to secure presence of mind, and exerts himself in seeking and inquiring about the means and causes by which his presence and khushū' increase.

O servants of Allah! Khushū' is a state of stillness that the worshiper feels when he perceives the meaning of what he says and does in his prayer. When the worshiper comprehends the meanings of the words and acts of the prayer and his heart is attentive therein, he will inevitably have Khushū'. For the position of prayer is tremendous, awe-inspiring, and majestic; it necessitates that the

worshiper reach a degree of stillness and Khushū' before his Lord, the Knower of the Unseen.

Among the things that strengthen striving to attain Khushū' is knowing the great fruits that are realized for the worshiper through his Khushū', in obedience to the command of Allah Almighty and in following the guidance of His noble Messenger (ﷺ).

The foremost of those fruits is: earning good deeds and the expiation of sins, for the reward of the prayer and the good deeds it yields are in proportion to the humility in it, and the worshiper receives good deeds according to the measure of his humility in his prayer. Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

"إِنَّ الْعَبْدَ لَيَصَلِّي الصَّلَاةَ مَا يَكْتَبُ لَهُ مِنْهَا إِلَّا عَشْرُهَا، تُسْعُهَا، ثَمَنُهَا، سُبْعُهَا، سُدُسُهَا، خُمُسُهَا، رُبْعُهَا، ثُلُثُهَا نِصْفُهَا"

"Verily, one may offer a prayer, and nothing good is written for him thereof but a tenth of his prayer, or a ninth, an eighth, a seventh, a sixth, a fifth, a fourth, a third, or a half of it." [Narrated by Ahmad¹; classified by Al-Albāni as Sahīh (Authentic)]

There is no doubt that the utmost loss is for a servant to neglect the very prayers he performs; and among the great loss is to come on the Day of Judgment—the Day of Reckoning and Recompense—only to find that of the prayers he performed, but little has been recorded for him,

¹ Narrated by Ahmad (31/189).

because he lacked Khushū' (humility) and did not strive against himself to attain it therein.

Indeed, knowledge of this—O servants of Allah—makes each one of us strive against himself in every prayer to emerge from it with as many good deeds as possible, and to have as many of his sins expiated as possible.

The second of these fruits is: the delight of the prayer, its sweetness, the comfort it brings, and the enjoyment it affords. All of that is connected to humble concentration in it. Thus, the one who is humble and attentive therein will find comfort in prayer; the one whose heart is present in his private communication with his Lord will enjoy prayer; and the one who senses nearness to his Lord, Glorified and Exalted, will find the bliss of prayer.

O you who seek comfort through the prayer, and O you who desire that your eyes be cooled by the prayer and that you find delight in it—indeed, the gateway to that is Khushū' (humility and focus) within it.

The eminent Tabi'i, Thābit al-Bunāni, tasted the sweetness of prayer and its bliss through continual striving, for he used to say: "I strove with the prayer for twenty years, and I took delight in it for twenty years."¹

¹ Hilyat al-Awliyā' wa Tabaqāt al-Asfiyā' (2/321).

And the third of these fruits is: the impact of prayer. Yes, O servants of Allah, for the impact of prayer, namely, turning to Allah and abundant Dhikr of Him, guidance and success, rectifying the soul and keeping it upright, and keeping away from indecency and wrongdoing, is not achieved by merely performing the prayer, but rather through humility in prayer. The humble prayer is the properly established prayer, and it is the prayer whose impact appears in the life of the one who prays.

I seek refuge in Allah from the cursed Satan

﴿أَتْلُ مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ﴾

{Recite [O Prophet] what is revealed to you of the Book, and establish prayer, for indeed prayer restrains one from immoral acts and wickedness.}

[Surat al-‘Ankabūt: 45]

May Allah bless the noble Qur’an for me and you, and may He make us benefit from the guidance of the master of the messengers (ﷺ). I say what you hear, and I ask Allah's forgiveness for me, you, and all Muslims. So, successful indeed are those who seek forgiveness!

The Second Sermon

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, and the best outcome is for the righteous. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, the Sovereign, the

True, the Manifest, and I bear witness that our Prophet Muhammad is His servant and Messenger. He conveyed the message, fulfilled the trust, gave sincere advice to the Ummah, and conducted Jihad in the cause of Allah until the end of his life.

May Allah's peace and blessings be upon him, his family, and his Companions altogether. So, fear Allah as He should be feared, for your bodies cannot bear Hellfire; and cling to the firm handhold of Islam so that you may succeed and prosper in the Hereafter and in this world.

To proceed:

Fear Allah, O servants of Allah. Indeed, Allah accepts only from the pious. The fear of Allah Almighty includes perfecting the prayer and displaying humility in it, and being keen, earnest, and diligent to perform it with excellence and complete it in the manner that pleases our Almighty Lord.

Indeed, some challenges and obstacles confront us in attaining humility in prayer, and the worshiper must strive to overcome them. Among the obstacles that stand between the worshiper and his humility is the whispering of Satan, who does not want us to pray, nor does he want us to obey Allah, and who has taken upon himself the determination and resolve to come between us and our worship of our Lord, and between us and our guidance to the straight path.

﴿لَأَقْعُدَنَّ لَهُمْ صِرَاطَكَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ، ثُمَّ لَا يَنَالُهُمْ مِّنْ بَيْنِ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ وَعَنْ أَيْمَانِهِمْ وَعَنْ شَمَائِلِهِمْ وَلَا تَجِدُ أَكْثَرَهُمْ شَاكِرِينَ﴾

{I will certainly lie in wait for them on Your straight path, then I will come at them from before them and from behind them and on their right and on their left, and You will not find most of them grateful.} [Surat al-A'rāf: 16]

And the devil who whispers to the worshiper and prevents him from offering prayer with Khushū' is mentioned in the Hadith of the noble Companion 'Utbah ibn Abi al-Ās (may Allah be pleased with him), when he complained to the Prophet (ﷺ) about the devil's whisperings during the prayer, so the Prophet informed him that

"ذاك شيطان يقال له خنزب"

"That is Satan, who is known as Khinzab." [Narrated by Muslim]¹ Then he guided him as to what to do to rid himself of his whispering: to seek refuge with Allah from him and blow three times to his left. So 'Utbah did that, and Allah caused Satan to depart from him.

Among the verbal Sunnah acts of the prayer is: seeking refuge before reciting Al-Fātihah: namely, to say, "I seek refuge with Allah from the accursed Devil," or, "I seek refuge in Allah, the All-Hearing and All-Knowing, from the accursed Devil, from his whisper, his arrogance, and his poetry." This is an

¹ Narrated by Muslim (4/1728).

impregnable fortress against the Devil at the beginning of the prayer, and in accordance with the strength or weakness of that seeking refuge will be the Devil's distance from the worshiper and his ability to distract him from his prayer.

Among the obstacles and challenges that weaken Khushū' (humility) are the whims of the soul and the heart's attachments and objects of love. When the heart is burdened with many such objects, it becomes scattered in pursuing them and thinking about them. Likewise, the more the soul's whims and desires increase, the more they preoccupy a person's mind and thoughts, until he becomes distracted, absentminded, and beset by a multitude of wandering thoughts. This is what befalls a worshiper in his prayer unless he hastens to remedy it and seeks the means by which to counter this distraction and cure this affliction.

And let us realize—O servants of Allah—that the heart follows its beloved. Thus, if we find our hearts absent in our prayers, they are not lost; rather, they are where they love to be. Never does a servant satiate his heart with the love of this world—its desires, pleasures, and wealth—except that this appears in his distraction in prayer and the wandering of his mind in worship, and he is thereby deprived of the delight of intimate supplication and the sweetness of communion with his Lord and Master.

And the remedy for that is to strive to strengthen the love of Allah Almighty in the heart and to expel from it the love of this world; and that is by increasing knowledge of Allah through knowing His excellent names and sublime attributes, reflecting and contemplating His signs, increasing in thanking Him and remembering Him constantly, hastening to that which He loves, and following the guidance of His Prophet and intimate friend (ﷺ).

﴿قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ، قُلْ أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْكَافِرِينَ﴾

{Say, "If you love Allah then follow me; Allah will love you and forgive you your sins: for Allah is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful."

Say, "Obey Allah and the Messenger." But if they turn away, then Allah does not like the disbelievers.} [Surat Āl 'Imrān: 31-32]

Among the obstacles and challenges we face in the journey toward humility in prayer are those related to the characteristics of how the human brain functions with repetition. One of the properties of the human brain is that it does not focus on a task once it has become accustomed to it; rather, one performs it without awareness, due to its exceptional capacity for thinking. If it does not encounter anything new, it begins generating new thoughts. This explains the frequent mental distraction during prayer and the recalling of

matters outside the prayer that call for thinking about them; it may even consume the whole time of the prayer—and there is no power nor strength except with Allah.

And to overcome this obstacle and get out of this distressing state, on account of which the prayers of many have been devoid of reverence and humility, it should be known that prayer is not a mere repetition; every prayer we perform is new, and it takes place at a time that will never recur for you until the Day of Resurrection. You are obliged to devote that time to the worship of Allah in a special manner, and each of the five times in your day and night has a prayer specific to it.

Once the praying person realizes this, he will strive to be focused in every prayer he performs. Among the means that also help to overcome this obstacle are the transition Takkīrs between the pillars of the prayer, for they serve as a prompt to the mind of the praying person—if he becomes preoccupied with matters outside the prayer—to return to Allah and to converse with Him, glorify Him, remember Him, and supplicate Him.

O servants of Allah!

The path to Khushū' (humility and focus) in prayer begins with increasing awareness of the need to hold prayer in high esteem, understanding that its essence is standing before Allah to converse

with Him, and engaging in earnest practical striving to attain that.

{وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَمَعَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ}

{As for those who strive in Our cause, We will surely guide them to Our ways, for Allah is certainly with those who do good.} [Surat al-‘Ankabūt: 69]
Seeking the means that lead to the love of Allah Almighty; filling the heart with veneration for Him through knowing Him; remembering Him constantly and showing abundant gratitude to Him; keeping away from everything that Allah Almighty does not love; and hastening to whatever He loves and is pleased with.

And now, invoke Allah's peace and blessings upon the one upon whom Allah commanded you to invoke His peace and blessings, saying:

{إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا}

{Indeed, Allah sends His blessings upon the Prophet, and His angels pray for him. O you who believe, invoke Allah's blessings upon him and send him greetings of peace.} [Surat al-Ahzāb: 56]

O Allah, bestow Your peace and blessings upon our Prophet Muhammad, his pure household, his wives, the Mothers of the Believers, and his radiant and blessed Companions. And be pleased, our Lord, with the Companions, the Tābi'is, and those who follow them with righteousness, and be pleased

with us along with them by Your favor and generosity, O Most Generous of the generous.

O Allah, grant honor to Islam and Muslims, and humiliate disbelief and disbelievers, and reform the affairs of all our Muslim brothers, and guide the rulers of the Muslims to act upon Your Book and to follow the Sunnah of Your Prophet, and forgive us and our parents, and their spouses, and our offspring, and all Muslims.

O Allah, aid us to remember You, thank You, and worship You as due. Our Lord, give us in this world that which is good and in the Hereafter that which is good, and protect us from the punishment of the Fire.

O servants of Allah!

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَنِ وَإِيتَايَ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ، وَأَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ إِذَا عَاهَدْتُمْ وَلَا تَنْفُسُوا أَلِيَمَنَ بَعْدَ تَوْكِيدِهَا وَقَدْ جَعَلْتُمُ اللَّهَ عَلَيْكُمْ كَفِيلًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ﴾

{Allah enjoins justice, kindness, and giving relatives [their dues], and He forbids shameful acts, evil deeds and oppression. He exhorts you, so that you may take heed,

Fulfill the covenant of Allah when you pledge, and do not break oaths after confirming them, having made Allah your witness, for Allah knows all what you do. [Surat an-Nahl: 91]

Sufficiency and Refuge

The First Sermon

Praise be to Allah. We praise Him, seek His help, and ask Him for forgiveness. We seek refuge with Allah from the evil of ourselves and from our bad deeds. Whoever Allah guides, none can misguide, and whoever He sends astray, none can guide. I testify that there is no god but Allah, alone, with no partner, and I testify that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ
بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ﴾

{O you who believe, fear Allah, and let every soul consider what it has sent forth for tomorrow. And fear Allah. Indeed, Allah is All-Aware of what you do.}

[Surat al-Hashr: 18]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾

{O you who believe, fear Allah as He should be feared, and do not die except as Muslims.}

[Surat Āl ‘Imrān: 102]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا، يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ
ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا﴾

{O you who believe, fear Allah and say what is right, He will amend for you your deeds and forgive you your sins. And whoever obeys Allah and His

Messenger has certainly attained a great attainment.}

[Surat al-Ahzāb: 7-71]

To proceed:

In this life, man has aims he works to attain and needs he seeks to fulfill; and his pursuits and needs cease only when he leaves this worldly life for the Hereafter. Man is always toiling and striving. So long as he lives, he needs provision, health, and guidance, and needs to achieve all his religious and worldly interests.

Indeed, our Lord—glory be to Him—has made for every request and need, and for every interest and benefit, a cause by which it is realized and a means that leads to it. These causes are either material or Shar'i (intangible). A Muslim is required to seek out the means that lead him to the benefits he seeks.

However, a Muslim differs from others by his belief in Allah Almighty, the Creator of the means and the One Who brings about their results. He knows that these means do not produce their results by themselves; rather, it is by Allah Almighty's permission, will, and power. And when his certainty in Allah Almighty and His power increases, together with his belief in His might and sufficiency, the Muslim begins to depend upon Allah in everything truly, and begins to truly rely upon his Lord Almighty for the fulfillment of his

needs and requirements and the interests of his religion and his worldly life.

﴿وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَتَوَكَّلُوا إِن كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ﴾

{And put your trust in Allah, if you are believers.} [Surat al-Mā'idah: 23] At that point, the tranquility of life, peace of mind, and eternal happiness are attained.

The divine sufficiency—O servants of Allah—is that the Muslim believes with absolute certainty, without doubt, that Allah, Blessed and Exalted, suffices him in all things, and that everything he seeks is with Allah Almighty. If Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, wills to grant him something, there is none—whoever he may be—who can prevent it; and if He withholds something from him, there is none who can give him that which has been withheld.

Divine sufficiency means: that the Muslim believes that the needs he seeks, the aims he pursues, and the requests he strives to attain—all of them are truly owned by Allah, the Most High.

The Divine Sufficiency: to find sufficiency in Allah, the Most High, and to increase in certainty and conviction regarding this matter: that all needs, whether small or great, the One Who owns and controls them all is Allah, the One, the Unique; the Causer of all causes, the Possessor of Sovereignty, the Self-Sufficient, Glorified and Exalted is He.

﴿قُلِ اللَّهُمَّ مَلِكُ الْمَلِكِ تُؤْتِي الْمَلِكَ مَن تَشَاءُ وَتَنزِعُ الْمَلِكَ مِمَّن تَشَاءُ وَتُعِزُّ مَن تَشَاءُ وَتُذِلُّ مَن تَشَاءُ بِيَدِكَ الْخَيْرُ إِنَّكَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ﴾

{Say, "O Allah, Lord of the dominion, You give dominion to whom You will and take it away from whom You will; You honor whom You will and humiliate whom You will. All good is in Your Hand. You are Most Capable of all things.} [Surat Āl 'Imrān: 23] Out of Allah's mercy toward His servants, He has prescribed for them what brings them close to Him and the means by which they call upon Him for the fulfillment of their needs in their religious and worldly affairs.

O servants of Allah! The reality of prayer is the servant's standing before his Lord, the Blessed and Exalted, in Whose Hand lies all his affairs; he stands proclaiming Allah's greatness, extolling and revering Him, privately invoking Him and asking of Him, humble and drawing close to his Lord. He hears his glorification and his seeking forgiveness, and He answers his supplication.

"أَقْرَبُ مَا يَكُونُ الْعَبْدُ مِنْ رَبِّهِ، وَهُوَ سَاجِدٌ، فَأَكْثِرُوا الدُّعَاءَ "

"The nearest a slave to his Lord is while he is prostrating, so increase supplication."

[Narrated by Muslim (49)]¹

O believers! Let us realize that when certainty in Allah Almighty's sufficiency for His servant increases, and one constantly keeps in mind the

¹ Narrated by Muslim (1/350).

essence of prayer, his understanding of prayer is renewed and his approach to it is transformed; and he will have a share of the state of the noble Companion 'Adi ibn Hatim (may Allah be pleased with him) as he said: "Never did the prayer come except that I was filled with yearning for it."¹

Man by nature is in need, and he always strives to attain what he wants; from morning to evening, every day he is in pursuit of fulfilling what he wants. If he becomes certain that Allah is sufficient for him, and that the One Who owns all these needs is Allah Almighty, and that when he stands for prayer, he is before Him, asking Him for all his needs, then his approach to prayer is transformed, and prayer takes a renewed meaning for him. So whenever he is in need, the first thing he remembers is prayer; and when he prays, he recalls his needs at the places of supplication and supplicates his Lord, Allah Almighty, to fulfill them.

Bakr ibn 'Abdullāh al-Muzani said: "Who is like you, O son of Adam? The place of prayer and water have been left open for you; whenever you wish, you enter into the presence of Allah, with no interpreter between you and Him."²

Allah Almighty informed us in His Book that He would suffice His servants.

¹ Narrated by Ibn Abi Shaybah in his 'Musannaf' (7/193).

² Al-Zuhd by Ahmad ibn Hanbal, (1/510).

﴿الَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِكَافٍ عَبْدَهُ﴾

{Is Allah not sufficient for His slave?} [Surat az-Zumar: 36]

And Allah Almighty informs us that the ultimate sufficiency is His alone,

﴿وَكَفَىٰ بِرَبِّكَ هَادِيًا وَنَصِيرًا﴾

{And your Lord is sufficient as a Guide and Helper.} [Surat al-Furqān: 31]

And He ordered us to seek Allah's help:

﴿وَأَسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ وَإِنَّهَا لَكَبِيرَةٌ إِلَّا عَلَى الْخَاشِعِينَ﴾

{Seek help through patience and prayer. It is strenuous except for the humble,} [Surat al-Baqarah: 54] The Prophet (ﷺ) taught us through his Sunnah that whenever anything distressed him, he would hasten to prayer, as is reported in the Hadith of Hudhayfah ibn al-Yamān (may Allah be pleased with him) who said:

"كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا حَزَبَهُ أَمْرٌ، صَلَّى"

"Whenever anything distressed the Prophet (ﷺ), he would pray." [Narrated by Abu Dāwūd¹; graded as hasan (sound) by al-Albānī]

Listen—may Allah take care of you—to this great Qudsi (divine) Hadīth: Allah, the Exalted and Glorified, says:

"ابْنِ آدَمَ ارْكَعْ لِي أَرْبَعَ رَكَعَاتٍ مِنْ أَوَّلِ النَّهَارِ أَكْفِكَ آخِرَهُ"

¹ Narrated by Abu Dāwūd (2/35).

"O son of Adam! Offer four Rak'ahs for My sake at the beginning of the day, and I suffice you against any harm at the end of it (the day)." [Narrated by At-Tirmidhi¹; classified as Sahīh (authentic) by Al-Albāni] I will suffice you with complete sufficiency, and these Rak'ahs are the first with which a Muslim begins his day: the two Rak'ahs of Fajr - the Sunnah - and the two Rak'ahs of the obligatory prayer.

Then also listen to the confirmation of this in the words of the Prophet (ﷺ), in the Hadīth of Abu Mālik al-Ashja'i, reported from his father (may Allah be pleased with him and his father):

"مَنْ صَلَّى الْفَجْرَ فَهُوَ فِي ذِمَّةِ اللَّهِ"

"Whoever performs the Fajr prayer will be under the protection of Allah." [Narrated by At-Tabarāni²; Al-Albāni classified it as Sahīh (authentic)]

"Under the protection of Allah" means: in Allah's care, in His protection throughout that day. For Allah protects him, guides him, and undertakes to bring about what he seeks. All of this is linked to the Fajr prayer—to a single obligatory prayer—so how much more so with all five obligatory prayers together.

Sufficiency is achieved through the prayer, O servants of Allah, also when the worshiper is mindful of the occasions for supplications and

¹ Narrated by Al-Tirmidhi (2/340).

² Narrated by At-Tabarāni in "Al-Mu'jam Al-Awsat" (4/229).

petitions in prostration, for the Prophet (ﷺ) informed us of the nearness of the worshiper to his Lord while he is prostrating. So he (ﷺ) said in the Hadith of Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him):

"أَقْرَبُ مَا يَكُونُ الْعَبْدُ مِنْ رَبِّهِ، وَهُوَ سَاجِدٌ، فَأَكْثِرُوا الدُّعَاءَ"

"The nearest a slave to his Lord is while he is prostrating, so increase supplication." [Narrated by Muslim]¹. ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās (may Allah be pleased with him), reported: the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"وَأَمَّا السُّجُودُ فَاجْتَهِدُوا فِي الدُّعَاءِ، فَقَمِنْ أَنْ يُسْتَجَابَ لَكُمْ"

"As for prostration, make supplication diligently therein, for it is worthy to be answered." [Narrated by Muslim]² Meaning: supplication is more likely to be answered for you, and this state of prostration is the state in which the Muslim worshiper is very close to Allah, Glorified and Exalted be He. There is no state in which Allah loves to see His servant more than when He sees him rubbing his forehead in the dust. Here he calls upon Him and beseeches, filled with hope in this condition—that Allah will fulfill for him what he desires and grant him what he has asked for—being certain of the response, remembering the saying of the Prophet (ﷺ):

¹ Narrated by Muslim (1/350).

² Narrated by Muslim (1/348).

"ادْعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَنْتُمْ مُوقِنُونَ بِالْإِجَابَةِ"

"Supplicate Allah while being certain that your supplication will be answered." [Narrated by At-Tirmidhi¹; classified as Hasan (sound) by Al-Albānī]

Also, in his supplication before making Taslīm in the prayer, as reported in the Hadīth of ‘Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ūd (may Allah be pleased with him), when the Prophet (ﷺ) taught him the Tashahhud at the end of the prayer, then the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"ثُمَّ لِيُتَخَيَّرَ بَعْدُ مِنَ الْمَسْأَلَةِ مَا شَاءَ أَوْ مَا أَحَبَّ"

"Then, let him choose whatever request he wills or whatever he likes." [Narrated by Muslim]² In another version:

"ثُمَّ يَتَخَيَّرُ مِنَ الدُّعَاءِ أَعْجَبَهُ إِلَيْهِ"

"Then he may choose whatever supplication he likes most." [Narrated by Al-Bukhārī]³ That means: whatever he desires and prefers, and all that he wishes for and requests of whatever good in this life and the Hereafter.

—Allāhu Akbar (Allah is the Greatest), O slaves of Allah— By Allah, this is indeed a great treasure, yet some people have turned away from it, either out of ignorance of it or because they are preoccupied, while others search to the right and to the left for something by which to seek assistance,

¹ Narrated by At-Tirmidhi (5/517).

² Narrated by Muslim (1/302).

³ Narrated by Al-Bukhārī (1/167).

to which to flee for refuge, by which to strengthen themselves against weakness, and by which to be guided out of misguidance. True indeed are the words of the one who said:

"Like camels in the desert: thirst kills them *** while water is carried upon their backs."¹

I seek refuge with Allah from the accursed devil:

﴿أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِكَافٍ عَبْدَهُ وَيُخَوِّفُونَكَ بِالَّذِينَ مِنْ دُونِهِ وَمَنْ يُضْلِلِ اللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ هَادٍ﴾

{Is Allah not sufficient for His slave? Yet they frighten you with those [whom they worship] besides Him. Whoever Allah causes to stray, there is none to guide him.} [Surat az-Zumar: 36]

May Allah bless the noble Qur'an for me and you, and may He make us benefit from the guidance of the master of the messengers (ﷺ). I say these words and ask Allah's forgiveness for me and you for every grave sin. So ask Him for forgiveness and repent to Him. How great is the success of those who seek forgiveness!

The Second Sermon

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds. The good outcome is for the righteous, and I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, the King, the Truth, the Manifest. And I bear witness that our Prophet Muhammad is Allah's servant and

¹ Dīwān of 'Abd al-Ghanī an-Nābulusī (p.426)

Messenger. He conveyed the message, fulfilled the trust, advised the Ummah, and strove in Allah's cause until certainty came to him.

O Allah, send Your peace and blessings upon him and upon his family and all his companions. So, fear Allah as He should be feared, for indeed your bodies cannot bear Hellfire, and cling to the firm handhold of Islam, so you will succeed and prosper in the Hereafter and in this world.

Fear Allah, O servants of Allah, and attach your hearts to your Most Generous Lord—the Self-Sufficient, the Bountiful, the Bestower—in Whose Hand are the treasures of the heavens and the earth, the Healer, the All-Sufficing, the Lord of lords and the Causer of causes, and the Creator Who brought His creation into being from dust.

O believers! The third occasion in which divine sufficiency is manifest is the sitting between the two prostrations. The sitting between the two prostrations, O servants of Allah, is not for separating the two prostrations; rather, it is a particular sitting. It is a pillar of the prayer, like the prostration and like rising from bowing. This sitting is designated for the petitions the worshiper seeks, and among the greatest of what the worshiper seeks is forgiveness. It has been reported from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he would repeat: "My Lord, forgive me; my Lord, forgive me; my Lord, forgive me."

Seeking Allah's forgiveness is a cause for the fulfillment of needs, as Allah Almighty says:

﴿فَقُلْتُ اسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّكُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ غَفَّارًا، يُرْسِلِ السَّمَاءَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِدْرَارًا، وَيُمْدِدْكُمْ بِأَمْوَالٍ وَبَنِينَ وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ جَنَّاتٍ وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ أَنْهَارًا﴾

{I said, 'Seek forgiveness from your Lord. Indeed, He is Most Forgiving, He will send the sky upon you in showers,

and He will give you wealth and children, and bestow upon you gardens and rivers.} [Surat Nūh: 10-12]

Also, among what has been reported concerning the sitting between the two prostrations, in addition to seeking forgiveness, is asking for mercy, well-being, provision, guidance, the mending of deficiencies, and elevation in this world and the Hereafter, in the supplication: "Allāhumma ighfir li, warhamni, wahdini, wa āfini, warzuqni, wajburni, warfa'ni" (O Allah, forgive me, have mercy on me, guide me, grant me well-being, provide for me, mend my deficiencies, and elevate me). These seven requests encompass all that you need in this world and the Hereafter. If Allah forgives you, has mercy on you, guides you, grants you well-being, provides for you, mends your deficiencies, and elevates you, then what remains of what you desire in this life?

How beautiful is Ibn al-Qayyim's (may Allah have mercy on him) description of the fruits and benefits

of prayer when he said: "Prayer: a bringer of provision, a preserver of health, a repeller of harm, an expeller of ailments, a strengthener of the heart, a brightener of the face, a joy to the soul, a remover of laziness, an energizer of the limbs, a replenisher of strength, a bringer of relief to the breast, a nourisher of the spirit, an illuminator of the heart, a preserver of favor, a repeller of displeasure, a bringer of blessing, a shield against Satan, and a means of nearness to the Most Merciful."¹

O servants of Allah! Let us take refuge in prayer at times of tribulation, and let us seek help with prayer in calamities. Let our prayer be our refuge and sanctuary, always and forever—what an excellent refuge, and what an excellent helper. And let us raise our children upon that: we teach them and guide them to seek help with prayer and to turn to Allah, whenever they are in need and whenever the paths and circumstances of life become constricted for them. Let them remember prayer and seek help with it, for in it is guidance and in it is sufficiency.

Now, invoke Allah's peace and blessings upon the one upon whom Allah commanded you to invoke His peace and blessings. He Almighty says:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا﴾

¹ Zād al-Ma'ād Fi Hady Khayr al-'Ibād (4/304).

{Indeed, Allah sends His blessings upon the Prophet, and His angels pray for him. O you who believe, invoke Allah's blessings upon him and send him greetings of peace.} [Surat al-Ahzāb: 56]

O Allah, bestow Your peace and blessings upon our Prophet Muhammad, and upon his noble and pure household, and upon his wives, the Mothers of the Believers, and upon his illustrious and blessed Companions. And be pleased, O Allah, with the Companions and the Tābi'is and those who follow them with righteousness, and be pleased with us along with them by Your grace and generosity, O Most Generous of the generous.

O Allah, grant honor to Islam and Muslims, humiliate disbelief and disbelievers, and reform the conditions of all our Muslim brethren. Guide the rulers of Muslims to act by Your Book and to follow the Sunnah of Your Prophet, and forgive us and our parents, their spouses, our offspring, and all Muslims.

O Allah, aid us to remember You, thank You, and worship You as due. Our Lord, give us in this world what is good and in the Hereafter what is good, and protect us from the punishment of the Fire.

O servants of Allah!

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَايَ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ، وَأَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ إِذَا عَاهَدْتُمْ وَلَا تَنْفُسُوا أَلِيَمَنَ بَعْدَ تَوْكِيدِهَا وَقَدْ جَعَلْتُمُ اللَّهَ عَلَيْكُمْ كَفِيلًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ﴾

{Allah enjoins justice, kindness, and giving relatives [their dues], and He forbids shameful acts, evil deeds and oppression. He exhorts you, so that you may take heed,

Fulfill the covenant of Allah when you pledge, and do not break oaths after confirming them, having made Allah your witness, for Allah knows all what you do.} [Surat an-Nahl: 90-91]

Guidance and Success

The First Sermon

Praise be to Allah. We praise Him, seek His help, and ask Him for forgiveness. We seek refuge with Allah from the evil of ourselves and from our bad deeds. Whoever Allah guides, none can misguide, and whoever He sends astray, none can guide. I testify that there is no god but Allah, alone, with no partner, and I testify that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ
بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ﴾

{O you who believe, fear Allah, and let every soul consider what it has sent forth for tomorrow. And fear Allah. Indeed, Allah is All-Aware of what you do.}

[Surat al-Hashr: 18]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾

{O you who believe, fear Allah as He should be feared, and do not die except as Muslims.}

[Surat Āl 'Imrān: 102]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَفُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا، يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا﴾

{O you who believe, fear Allah and say what is right, He will amend for you your deeds and forgive you your sins. And whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger has certainly attained a great attainment.}

[Surat al-Ahzāb: 7-71]

To proceed:

Guidance is a comforting word, a pleasant term to the souls. No sooner does it reach our ears than we are cheered and rejoice, and its meaning touches the heart and brings ease. That is because everyone seeks guidance; there is no one but that he desires guidance, desires success, and desires to be among the guided and with the guided. He seeks to tread the path of guidance leading to the Straight Path and the upright way. 'Ali ibn Abi Talib (may Allah be pleased with him) reported: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said to me:

"قُلِ اللَّهُمَّ اهْدِنِي وَسَلِّدْنِي، وَادْكُرْ، بِالْهُدَى هِدَايَتِكَ الطَّرِيقَ، وَالسَّادَاتِ، سَدَادَ السَّهْمِ"

"Say: O Allah, guide me and keep me steadfast on the right path, and when asking for Huda (guidance), think of your being guided to the right

path, and Sadād (adherence to the straight path) is the straightness of the arrow." [Narrated by Muslim]¹

Indeed, Al-Hādi (The Guide) is Allah, Blessed and Exalted be He, and He has guided all of His creation.

﴿قَالَ رَبُّنَا الَّذِي أَعْطَى كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلْقَهُ ثُمَّ هَدَى﴾

{He said, "Our Lord is the One Who gave everything its form and then guided it."} [Surat Taha: 50]

﴿سَبِّحْ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ الْأَعْلَى، الَّذِي خَلَقَ فَسَوَّى، وَالَّذِي قَدَّرَ فَهَدَى﴾

{Glorify the name of your Lord, the Most High, Who created and fashioned in due proportion, and Who determined [the creation] then inspired them,} [Surat al-A'la: 1-3]

His guidance is general for all His creatures: He has guided them to their interests in terms of their living and subsistence and to the purposes for which they were created; and He has granted a special guidance to some of His accountable servants from among the jinn and humankind by clarifying good from evil and truth from falsehood.

﴿إِنَّا هَدَيْنَاهُ السَّبِيلَ إِمَّا شَاكِرًا وَإِمَّا كَفُورًا﴾

{Indeed, We showed him the way, whether he is grateful or ungrateful.} [Surat al-Insān: 50] And He guided some of His legally accountable servants

¹ Narrated by Muslim (4/2090).

with the guidance of granting success to His straight path in this worldly life.

﴿وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَهَادِ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ﴾

{Allah surely guides those who believe to the straight path.} [Surat al-Hajj: 54] And guide them to enter Paradise in the Hereafter.

﴿وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي هَدَانَا لِهَذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لِنَهْتَدِيَ لَوْلَا أَنَّ هَدَانَا اللَّهُ لَقَدْ جَاءَتْ
رُسُلُ رَبِّنَا بِالْحَقِّ وَنُودُوا أَنْ تَتَّخِذُوا الْآخِرَةَ أَوْرَثًا وَمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ﴾

{“All praise be to Allah Who has guided us to this, for We would not have been guided to this if Allah had not guided us. The messengers of our Lord came with the truth.” They will be called, “This is Paradise that you are made to inherit for what you used to do.”} [Surat al-A’rāf: 43]

Guidance to the straight path is a divine grant and a divine gift; Allah singles out for it whomever He wills among His servants—He guides whom He wills to the straight path.

Allah guided to it His servants, the messengers, as Allah Almighty says about Moses and Aaron:

﴿وَهَدَيْنَاهُمَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ﴾

{and guided them to the straight path;} [Surat as-Sāffāt: 118]

And He guided our Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) to his straight path.

﴿وَيُتِمُّ نِعْمَتَهُ عَلَيْكَ وَيَهْدِيكَ صِرَاطًا مُسْتَقِيمًا﴾

{and complete His favor upon you, and guide you to a straight path,} [Surat al-Fat'h: 2] Allah Almighty made him a guide to His straight path.

﴿وَأِنَّكَ لَنَهْدِي إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ، صِرَاطَ اللَّهِ الَّذِي لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمُوتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۖ لَا إِلَى اللَّهِ تَصِيرُ الْأُمُورُ﴾

{And you are truly leading people to a straight path,

the path of Allah, to Whom belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is on earth. Indeed, to Allah return all matters.} [Surat ash-Shūra: 52-53] And He made all guidance in obedience to Him.

﴿وَإِنْ تُطِيعُوهُ تَهْتَدُوا﴾

{If you obey him, you will be guided.} [Surat an-Nūr: 118]

He informed us that guidance lies in His Speech.

﴿إِنَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَهْدِي لِلَّتِي هِيَ أَقْوَمُ وَيُنَشِّرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ الَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ الصَّالِحَاتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ أَجْرًا كَبِيرًا﴾

{Indeed, this Qur'an guides to what is most upright and gives glad tidings to the believers who do righteous deeds that they will have a great reward.} [Surat al-Isrā': 9]

He also informed us that guidance lies in following the Sunnah of His Prophet (ﷺ)

﴿وَأِنَّكَ لَنَهْدِي إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ﴾

{And you are truly leading people to a straight path,} [Surat ash-Shūra: 52]

And Allâh informed us that He has made the Ka'bah, the Sacred House, a guidance for all creation.

﴿إِنَّ أَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ لَلَّذِي بِبَكَّةَ مُبَارَكًا وَهُدًى لِلْعَالَمِينَ﴾

{The first House [of worship] established for mankind was the one at Bakkah [i.e., Makkah], full of blessings and guidance for the worlds.} [Surat Āl 'Imrān: 96]

And this Prayer, O servants of Allah, encompasses the pillars of guidance and contains its foundations: in the Prayer is the speech of Allah that guides; in the Prayer is following the Sunnah of the noble Prophet by which we are guided; and in the Prayer is turning towards the Qiblah, wherein is guidance.

Guidance in life is in proportion to the establishment of prayer; the more one establishes prayer, the greater the guidance and success in one's life.

This prayer was enjoined, O servants of Allah, so that Muslims may be guided by it to the straight path; every worshiper, in every prayer, repeats:

﴿أَهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ﴾،

{Guide us to the straight path,} The recurring request in every prayer that Muslims perform is the request for guidance. Seventeen times each day, Muslims turn to their Lord, asking Him for guidance; they ask Him for success. What then

should we think of our Generous Lord when this plea and this supplication come from truthful tongues and humble hearts? Our good opinion of our Lord, as we call upon Him morning and evening, is that He will grant us our request and answer our supplication—and He is the One Who says, Exalted is He:

﴿ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ﴾

{Call upon Me; I will respond to you.} [Surat Ghāfir: 60] He Almighty also says:

﴿فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ أَجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ﴾

{I am indeed near. I respond to the call of the supplicant when he calls upon Me.} [Surat al-Baqarah: 186] and grant us guidance, and admit us among His servants whom He has guided

﴿أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمْ أُولُوا الْأَلْبَابِ﴾

{They are the ones whom Allah has guided, and they are the people of understanding.} [Surat az-Zumar: 18]

﴿أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ فَبِهِدْلِهِمْ اقْتَدِهْ﴾

{They are those whom Allah has guided, so follow their guidance.} [Surat al-An‘ām: 90] The Muslim, O servants of Allah, needs guidance in all the affairs of his life. He therefore needs the guidance of clarification and knowledge in matters he does not know, nor where the truth lies therein. Thus, among the guidance to the straight path is

that Allah guides him to the knowledge of that truth.

He needs to be guided in desire and will regarding matters he knows; yet he does not have the desire to act upon them. Thus, part of the guidance to the straight path is that he be guided to desire it and to will it.

He needs guidance to perform what he desires and to be enabled for that; and guidance to the straight path is the granting of success to do good and aid in it.

He needs to remain steadfast upon the goodness and righteous deeds he is upon, and guidance to the straight path is guidance to that.

O servants of Allah! How greatly do we need guidance; how greatly does our Ummah need guidance in every sphere of life! We need Allah's guidance to discern truth from falsehood amid this media deluge broadcast across the airwaves. We need guidance to distinguish right from wrong among the ideas propagated here and there. We need Allah's guidance to know the solutions and means by which we confront the challenges of contemporary life—challenges that have preoccupied us and our sons and daughters from that for which they were created.

We need guidance for our desire and will toward what Allah Almighty loves and His good pleasure: that Allah place in our hearts His love and the love

of obeying Him, and the will to do good for ourselves and for others. We seek guidance for our souls that makes it easy to direct and harness them to fulfill what Allah Almighty wills. And we need the guidance of granting success to do good in our lives; for not everyone who knows the good does it, and not everyone who desires righteous deeds is granted success to carry them out.

We desire guidance of success to establish the obligatory acts and perfect them, and the supererogatory acts and complete them. We desire success to perform righteous deeds and to increase in acts of obedience and acts of drawing near to Him. And we need guidance of steadfastness upon our Islam and faith; for indeed the most frequent supplication of the Prophet (ﷺ) was

"يَا مُقَلِّبَ الْقُلُوبِ ثَبِّتْ قَلْبِي عَلَى دِينِكَ"

"O Turner of the hearts, keep my heart firm upon Your religion." [Narrated by At-Tirmidhi¹; classified as Sahīh (authentic) by Al-Albānī] And he (ﷺ) said:

"إِنَّ الْقُلُوبَ بَيْنَ أَصْبُعَيْنِ مِنْ أَصَابِعِ اللَّهِ يُقَلِّبُهَا كَيْفَ يَشَاءُ"

"Indeed, the hearts are between two fingers of the Fingers of Allah, He turns them as He wills." [Narrated by At-Tirmidhi²; classified as Sahīh (authentic) by Al-Albānī]

¹ Narrated by Al-Tirmidhi (4/448).

² Narrated by Al-Tirmidhi (4/449).

It was part of the Prophet's guidance (ﷺ) to ask for guidance in his prayer. It has been reported from him (ﷺ), among the wordings of his opening supplication for prayer, that he would say in his supplication:

"اللَّهُمَّ اهْدِنِي لَأَحْسَنِ الْأَعْمَالِ وَأَحْسَنِ الْأَخْلَاقِ لَا يَهْدِي لِأَحْسَنِهَا إِلَّا أَنْتَ، وَقِنِي سَيِّئَ الْأَعْمَالِ وَسَيِّئَ الْأَخْلَاقِ لَا يَقِي سَيِّئَهَا إِلَّا أَنْتَ"

"O Allah, guide me to the best of deeds and the best of character; none guides to the best of them except You. And save me from evil deeds and evil character; none saves from their evil except You." [Narrated by An-Nasā'i; classified as Sahīh (authentic) by Al-Albānī]

May Allah bless the noble Qur'an for me and you, and may He make us benefit from the guidance of the master of the messengers (ﷺ). I say these words and ask Allah's forgiveness for me and you for every grave sin. So, ask Him for forgiveness and turn to Him in repentance—how great is the success of those who seek forgiveness!

The Second Sermon

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, and the good outcome is for the righteous. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, the Sovereign, the True, the Manifest. And I bear witness that our Prophet Muhammad is the servant of Allah and His

¹ Narrated by An-Nasā'i (2/129).

Messenger, who conveyed the message, fulfilled the trust, advised the Ummah, and strove in Allah's cause until death came to him.

O Allah, send Your peace and blessings upon Muhammad, his family, and all his Companions. So, fear Allah as He should be feared, for your bodies cannot bear Hellfire, and cling to the firm handhold of Islam, so that you may succeed and prosper in the Hereafter and in this world.

Then, to proceed:

Among the things that underscore the great importance of seeking guidance from Allah, Glorified and Exalted, in a Muslim's life—even in matters of his worldly livelihood—is what has come regarding the legislated practice of Istikhārah. Jābir ibn 'Abdullah (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) said: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) used to teach us Istikhārah in all matters just as he taught us a Sūrah of the Qur'an. He said:

" إِذَا هَمَّ أَحَدُكُمْ بِالْأَمْرِ، فَلْيَرْكَعْ رَكَعَتَيْنِ مِنْ غَيْرِ الْفَرِيضَةِ، ثُمَّ لِيَقُلْ: اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْتَخِيرُكَ بِعِلْمِكَ وَأَسْتَقْدِرُكَ بِقُدْرَتِكَ، وَأَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ فَضْلِكَ الْعَظِيمِ، فَإِنَّكَ تَقْدِرُ وَلَا أَقْدِرُ، وَتَعْلَمُ وَلَا أَعْلَمُ، وَأَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ، اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّ هَذَا الْأَمْرَ خَيْرٌ لِي فِي دِينِي وَمَعَاشِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أَمْرِي - أَوْ قَالَ عَاجِلِ أَمْرِي وَآجِلِهِ - فَاقْدُرْهُ لِي وَيَسِّرْهُ لِي، ثُمَّ بَارِكْ لِي فِيهِ، وَإِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّ هَذَا الْأَمْرَ شَرٌّ لِي فِي دِينِي وَمَعَاشِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أَمْرِي - أَوْ قَالَ فِي عَاجِلِ أَمْرِي وَآجِلِهِ - فَاصْرِفْهُ عَنِّي وَاصْرِفْنِي عَنْهُ، وَاقْدِرْ لِي الْخَيْرَ حَيْثُ كَانَ، ثُمَّ أَرْضِنِي " قَالَ: «وَيُسَمَّى حَاجَتَهُ»

"When one of you intends to do something, let him perform two Rak'ahs other than the obligatory

prayer and then say: Allāhumma innī astakhīruka bi‘ilmika, wa astaqdiruka biqudratika, wa as‘aluka min fadlik al-‘azhīm, fa‘innaka taqdiru wa lā aqdir, wa ta‘lamu wa lā a‘lam, wa anta ‘allām al-ghuyūb. Allāhumma in kunta ta‘lamu anna hādha al-amra khayrun lī fī dīnī wa ma‘āshī wa ‘āqibati amrī — or he said: fī ‘ājili amrī wa ājilihi — faqdurhu lī wa yassirhu lī, thumma bārik lī fih. Wa in kunta ta‘lamu anna hādha al-amra sharrun lī fī dīnī wa ma‘āshī wa ‘āqibati amrī — or he said: fī ‘ājili amrī wa ājilihi — fasrifhu ‘annī wasrifnī ‘anhu, waqdur lī al-khayra haythu kāna, thumma ardinī (O Allah, I consult You for Your knowledge, and I seek strength from You for Your power, and I ask of Your great bounty. Indeed, You are capable and I am not, and You know and I do not, and You are the All-Knower of the unseen. O Allah, if You know that this matter is good for me concerning my religion, my livelihood, and the outcome of my affairs — or he said: my immediate and future affairs — then decree it for me, make it easy for me, and then bless it for me. And if You know that this matter is bad for me concerning my religion, my livelihood, and the outcome of my affairs — or he said: my immediate and future affairs — then turn it away from me, and turn me away from it, and decree for me what is good wherever it may be, and make me content).”

He said: “And let him mention his need.” [Narrated by Al-Bukhāri (66)]¹

O servants of Allah! Indeed, this prayer is a great treasure in our hands. Allah Almighty guided us to it and bestowed it upon us; it is a mercy from Him by which He has had mercy upon us, and a great honor with which He has honored us.

So let us nurture ourselves, our sons, and our daughters on magnifying the significance of prayer, instill in them a desire for it and make it beloved to them; and let us make it clear to them in the clearest terms that being granted success in life is linked to the performance of prayer, and that whoever desires guidance in all the affairs of his life should seek help through his prayers, be among those who perform the prayer and maintain it, and strive to complete it and perfect it in the manner that his Lord, Allah Almighty, wills.

And then invoke Allah's peace and blessings upon the one upon whom Allah commanded you to invoke His peace and blessings; He Almighty says:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا﴾

{Indeed, Allah sends His blessings upon the Prophet, and His angels pray for him. O you who believe, invoke Allah's blessings upon him and send him greetings of peace.} [Surat al-Ahzāb: 56]

¹ Narrated by Al-Bukhāri (2/57).

O Allah, bestow Your peace and blessings upon our Prophet Muhammad, his pure family, his wives, the Mothers of the Believers, and upon his illustrious and blessed Companions. And be pleased, our Lord, with the Companions and the Tābi'is and those who follow them with righteousness, and be pleased, our Lord, with us along with them by Your grace and generosity, O Most Generous of the generous.

O Allah, grant honor to Islam and Muslims, and humiliate disbelief and disbelievers, and reform the affairs of all our Muslim brothers, and guide the rulers of Muslims to act upon Your Book and follow the Sunnah of Your Prophet, and forgive us and our parents, our spouses and our offspring, and all Muslims.

O Allah, aid us to remember You, thank You, and worship You in the best manner. Our Lord, give us in this world that which is good and in the Hereafter that which is good, and protect us from the punishment of the Fire.

O servants of Allah!

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَنِ وَإِيتَايَ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ، وَأَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ إِذَا عَاهَدْتُمْ وَلَا تَنْفُسُوا أَلِيَمَنَ بَعْدَ تَوْكِيدِهَا وَقَدْ جَعَلْتُمُ اللَّهَ عَلَيْكُمْ كَفِيلًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ﴾

{Allah enjoins justice, kindness, and giving relatives [their dues], and He forbids shameful acts,

evil deeds and oppression. He exhorts you, so that you may take heed,

Fulfill the covenant of Allah when you pledge, and do not break oaths after confirming them, having made Allah your witness, for Allah knows all what you do.} [Surat an-Nahl: 90-91].

Comfort and Coolness of the Eyes

The First Sermon

Praise be to Allah. We praise Him, seek His help, and ask Him for forgiveness. We seek refuge with Allah from the evil of ourselves and from our bad deeds. Whoever Allah guides, none can misguide, and whoever He sends astray, none can guide. I testify that there is no god but Allah, alone, with no partner, and I testify that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ
بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ﴾

{O you who believe, fear Allah, and let every soul consider what it has sent forth for tomorrow. And fear Allah. Indeed, Allah is All-Aware of what you do.}

[Surat al-Hashr: 18]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾

{O you who believe, fear Allah as He should be feared, and do not die except as Muslims.}

[Surat Āl ‘Imrān: 102]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَفُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا، يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا﴾

{O you who believe, fear Allah and say what is right, He will rectify your deeds and forgive you your sins. And whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger has certainly attained a great attainment.}

[Surat al-Ahzāb: 7-71]

To proceed:

It is of human nature in this life to seek happiness and comfort; indeed, one loves to enjoy his life and to take delight in such sensory and intangible pleasures as Allah has made allowable for him, and Allah has made that allowable for His servants.

﴿قُلْ مَنْ حَرَّمَ زِينَةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي أَخْرَجَ لِعِبَادِهِ وَالطَّيِّبَاتِ مِنَ الرِّزْقِ قُلْ هِيَ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا خَالِصَةً يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ﴾

{Say, “Who has forbidden the adornments and lawful provisions that Allah has brought forth for His slaves?” Say, “They are for the believers in the life of this world, and they will be exclusively for them on the Day of Resurrection.”} [Surat al-A’rāf: 32] Allah has made happiness and a good life attainable through faith in Him and obedience to Him.

﴿مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أَنشَأَ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيَاةً طَيِّبَةً وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ﴾

{Whoever does righteous deeds, male or female, while being a believer, We will surely grant him a good life, and We will surely reward them according to the best of their deeds.} [Surat an-Nahl: 97]

Ibn Kathīr (may Allah have mercy upon him) said: "This is a promise from Allah Almighty to whoever does a righteous deed—namely, a deed that accords with the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger (ﷺ), and is prescribed by Allah—that He will grant him a good life in this world and will reward him in the Hereafter according to the best of what he used to do. The good life encompasses all forms of ease, from whatever direction they may come."¹ End of quote, may Allah have mercy upon him.

In every act of worship and righteous deed that a Muslim performs, there is happiness and sweetness in proportion to his perfection and Ihsān. Thus, the more a deed is marked by Ihsān and the more complete its perfection, the more complete is the happiness obtained from it and the greater the comfort therein. For our Almighty Lord is Most Appreciative to His servants; He recompenses them for their deeds in this world with a sweetness they find in the righteous deed itself. Allah Almighty says:

¹ Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr (4/516).

(إِنَّ الْأَبْرَارَ لَفِي نَعِيمٍ)

{Indeed, the righteous will be in Bliss,}

[Surat al-Infītār: 13] This bliss encompasses the bliss in the worldly life and the Hereafter.

The Prophet of guidance (ﷺ) informed us, by his state and his words, that the acts of worship have a delight and sweetness. He used to prolong his supererogatory prayer for as long as Allah willed, and he would say:

"وَجُعِلَ قُرَّةُ عَيْنِي فِي الصَّلَاةِ"

"My comfort has been provided in prayer."
[Narrated by An-Nasā'i; classified as Sahīh (authentic) by Al-Albāni] And saying:

"يَا بِلَالُ أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ أَرْحَنَا بِهَا"

"O Bilāl, call the Iqāmah for prayer; give us comfort with it." [Narrated by Abu Dāwūd; Al-Albāni classified it as Sahīh (authentic)]

And he informed that Imān has a sweetness.

"ثَلَاثٌ مَنْ كُنَّ فِيهِ وَجَدَ حَلَاوَةَ الْإِيمَانِ: أَنْ يَكُونَ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِ مِمَّا سِوَاهُمَا، وَأَنْ يُحِبَّ الْمَرْءَ لَا يُحِبُّهُ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ، وَأَنْ يَكْرَهُ أَنْ يَعُودَ فِي الْكُفْرِ كَمَا يَكْرَهُ أَنْ يُقْفَلَ فِي النَّارِ"

"There are three qualities; whoever has them will taste the sweetness of Imān (faith): that Allah and His Messenger are more beloved to him than everything else; that he loves a person only for the sake of Allah; and that he hates to return to Kufr

¹ Narrated by An-Nasā'i (7/61).

² Narrated by Abu Dāwūd (4/296).

(disbelief) as he hates to be thrown into the fire."
[Agreed upon]¹

And that Imān and good deeds have a taste that is tasted by the believer.

"ذَاقَ طَعْمَ الْإِيمَانِ مَنْ رَضِيَ بِاللَّهِ رَبًّا، وَبِالْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا، وَبِمُحَمَّدٍ رَسُولًا"

"He finds the taste of Imān who is pleased with Allah as Lord, with Islam as religion, and with Muhammad as Messenger." [Narrated by Muslim]²

And the most comforting and blissful of acts of worship—the most joyful and delightful—is prayer, for prayer encompasses the meanings of the entire religion; it is the mainstay of the religion, without which the religion does not stand. Within it is affirming Allah's Oneness and proclaiming the testimony of faith—to Allah's Oneness and to His Prophet's Messengership. In it is the purification and cleansing of the soul, and abstention from food and drink. In it is directing oneself to the honored Ka'bah by facing it. The worshiper's faith in Allah, His angels, His books, and His messengers is strengthened therein; he remembers the Last Day, and his submission to Allah's decree and predestination increases. In his prayer, he reaches the highest rank of the religion, which is the rank of Ihsān (excellence), by perfecting his prayer and drawing near to his Lord, saying:

¹ Agreed upon, narrated by Al-Bukhārī (1/12) and Muslim (1/66).

² Narrated by Muslim (1/62).

﴿إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ﴾

{You alone we worship, and You alone we ask for help.} [Surat al-Fātihah: 5]

When the worshipper stands before Allah in prayer, he thereby proclaims his complete servitude to Allah Almighty, and by this, he earns the pleasure of his Lord Almighty—Allah's pleasure corresponds with the degree to which he perfects this act of worship, and he attains of Allah's pleasure—and of bliss, delight, joy, and happiness—in proportion to his excellence in his prayer. For what prayer contains of Dhikr (remembrance of Allah), private communication with Him, intimacy with Him, and yearning for what is with Him Almighty, makes prayer a garden in which the worshipper delights whenever he stands for it. That bliss varies among those who pray according to their attentiveness and humility therein.

Servants of Allah! Since the greatest bliss to be enjoyed by the dwellers of Paradise is seeing the Countenance of the Most Generous, the Beautiful, the Almighty King, Lord of Majesty and Honor, when a caller proclaims: O dwellers of Paradise, O dwellers of Paradise! You have an appointment with Allah, which He wishes to fulfill for you. They will say: What is it? Did He not brighten our faces—O Allah, brighten our faces, Lord of the worlds—

forgive our sins, admit us into Paradise, and save us from the Fire? Then the veils will be lifted for them and they will see Allah Almighty. No bliss will ever be given to them greater than that bliss, nor any delight greater than that delight. Then it will be said to them: "Today I bestow upon you My good pleasure, and thereafter I shall never be displeased with you."

Since that gaze and that visitation are the greatest bliss of the Hereafter, the believer has been granted the greatest worldly bliss, namely: communing with Him and standing before Him, magnifying Him and praising Him and glorifying Him, extolling Him, venerating Him, asking of Him, bowing to Him, and prostrating before Him. Glory be to Him, the Exalted.

O servants of Allah! One who clears his heart for his prayer, understands what he says and does, and strives with his heart to be present therein, will taste that sweetness and feel that bliss. Indeed, in prayer there is a complete freeing from worldly concerns and preoccupations. Indeed, in prayer there is a focus on what benefits a person and secures his true interests. Indeed, standing for prayer reminds the Muslim of the Paradise he anticipates entering—the Paradise that is the promise of Allah Almighty to His servants.

﴿وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَمَسْكِنٍ طَيِّبَةٍ فِي جَنَّاتٍ عَدْنٍ وَرِضْوَانٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ﴾

{Allah has promised the believers, both men and women, gardens under which rivers flow, abiding therein forever, and splendid dwellings in the Gardens of Eternity, and Allah's pleasure, which is the greatest of all; that is the supreme triumph.}

[Surat at-Tawbah: 72]

﴿مَثَلُ الْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي وُعدَ الْمُتَّقُونَ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ كُلُّهَا دَائِمٌ وَظِلُّهَا تِلْكَ عُقْبَى الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا وَعُقْبَى الْكَافِرِينَ النَّارُ﴾

{The likeness of Paradise, which is promised to the righteous is that under it rivers flow; its fruit is eternal, so is its shade. Such is the end of those who fear Allah, but the end of the disbelievers is the Fire!} [Surat ar-Ra'd: 35]

The worshiper remembers Paradise when he faces the honorable Ka'bah, where the Black Stone and the Maqām of Ibrāhīm (the Station of Abraham) are—two rubies from the rubies of Paradise. His remembrance of Paradise entails forgetting the worries of this world—its distractions and vexations. His remembrance of Paradise, together with his good opinion of his Lord, the Generous, the Merciful, helps him to free his heart and attain the presence of heart to supplicate to Allah Almighty.

And indeed, sensing the praise of Allah Almighty, extolling and glorifying Him, openly declaring one's love for Him, devoting worship sincerely to Him, affirming that seeking help is to be directed to Him alone, asking Him for guidance to the straight path,

and recalling those upon whom Allah Almighty has bestowed favor—the Prophets, the truthful, the martyrs, and the righteous; and how excellent those are as companions! Indeed, sensing these meanings while reciting al-Fātihah is a tremendous preoccupation that distracts the worshiper from all worldly thoughts, desires, and pleasures. And the beloved Prophet, the Chosen One (ﷺ), has informed us in what is authentically reported from him:

"إِنَّ فِي الصَّلَاةِ لَشُغْلًا"

"Indeed, in prayer there is preoccupation."

[Narrated by Al-Bukhāri]¹.

When the heart of the worshiper is present as he glorifies Allah Almighty in his bowing and prostration—remembering that the dwellers of Paradise glorify Allah morning and evening, that they are inspired to glorify Him as naturally as breathing, and that he partakes of that reality with them—and when he invokes salutations upon the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) in his prayer, he recalls his love for the Messenger of Allah and his companionship with him in Paradise; and when he extends salutations to the noble angels, he brings to mind their greeting to him in Paradise—for the angels greet the dwellers of Paradise with "Peace!"

(وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ يَدْخُلُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ كُلِّ بَابٍ، سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ بِمَا صَبَرْتُمْ فَنِعَمَ عُقْبَى الدَّارِ.)

¹ Narrated by Al-Bukhāri (2/66).

{Angels will enter upon them from every gate, "Peace be on you, for what you have patiently endured. How excellent is the final abode!"} [Surat ar-Ra'd: 23-24] And they will greet them with "Peace" as they are welcomed at the gates of Paradise.

(وَقَالَ لَهُمْ خَزَنَتُهَا سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ طَابْتُمْ فَادْخُلُوهَا خَالِدِينَ)

{And its keepers will say to them, "Peace be upon you. You have done well, so enter it, abiding forever."} [Surat az-Zumar: 73]

May Allah bless the noble Qur'an for me and you, and may He make us benefit from the guidance of the master of the messengers (ﷺ). I say these words and ask Allah's forgiveness for me and you for every grave sin. Ask Him for forgiveness and turn to Him in repentance; how great is the triumph of those who seek forgiveness!

The Second Sermon

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds. The good outcome is for the righteous. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, the Sovereign, the True, the Manifest. And I bear witness that our Prophet Muhammad is His servant and Messenger, who conveyed the message, fulfilled the trust, advised the Ummah, and strove in the cause of Allah until certainty came to him.

O Allah, send Your peace and blessings upon him, his family, and all his Companions. So, fear Allah as

He should be feared, for indeed your bodies cannot bear Hellfire. And cling to the firm handhold of Islam, so that you may succeed and prosper in the Hereafter and in this world.

To proceed:

Indeed, the greatest gateway through which a Muslim enters the expanses of sweetness, happiness, comfort, and bliss in his prayer is the strength of his love for Allah Almighty. The more the love of Allah increases in the heart, the greater the comfort in His remembrance, the more abundant the delight in showing gratitude to Him, and the sweeter the obedience to Him and working for His sake. The strength of this love depends on the increase of knowledge of Him, Exalted be He; for whoever knows Allah will undoubtedly love Him, and whoever loves Him yearns to meet Him and finds ease in His worship. For whoever loves something mentions it often; and whoever loves someone rejoices in nearness and union with him, and nothing brings him more happiness than continued connection and conversation with him.

Knowledge of Allah Almighty and knowing Him are increased through knowing His names and attributes, pondering His signs and reflecting upon them, frequent remembrance of Him and gratitude to Him, and hastening to what He loves.

So, let us strive against ourselves and nurture those under our care to love Allah Almighty,

respond to Him, and hasten to good deeds, following the example of the Messengers and Prophets of Allah.

﴿إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يُسْرِعُونَ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ وَيَدْعُونَنَا رَغَبًا وَرَهَبًا وَكَانُوا لَنَا خُشِعِينَ﴾

{They used to hasten in doing good deeds and used to call upon Us with hope and fear, and they were humble before Us.} [Surat al-Anbiyā': 90]

The Prophet (ﷺ) used to supplicate to Allah in his prayer, saying:

"اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ فِعْلَ الْخَيْرَاتِ، وَتَرْكَ الْمُنْكَرَاتِ، وَحُبَّ الْمَسَاكِينِ"

"O Allah, I ask You to help me do good deeds, abstain from evil ones, and love the poor and needy." [Narrated by At-Tirmidhi; classified as Sahīh (authentic) by Al-Albānī]

So let us seek the means and ways by which we may increase in comfort and joy in our worship of our Lord, Allah Almighty; for well-being, happiness, bliss, comfort, and tranquility are in obeying Him and following His command.

And let us know, O servants of Allah, that what is with Allah Almighty is not attained by disobeying Him and contravening His command. So let us steer away from immorality and evil-doing, whether apparent or hidden, for they have an effect on the uprightness of the servant's state and his happiness. Whoever does not safeguard his limbs

¹ Narrated by Al-Tirmidhi (5/367).

and persists in contraventions of the Sacred Law—how can he taste the sweetness of worship and its bliss? Rather, he may be deprived of being granted success in it. One of the predecessors said: “I was deprived of the night prayer because of a sin I committed”¹. Our Lord Almighty said in His decisive Revelation:

﴿وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَنْ ذِكْرِي فَإِنَّ لَهُ مَعِيشَةً ضَنْكًا وَنَحْشُرُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ أَعْمَى، قَالَ رَبِّ لِمَ حَشَرْتَنِي أَعْمَى وَقَدْ كُنْتُ بَصِيرًا، قَالَ كَذَلِكَ أَتَتْكَ آيَاتُنَا فَنَسِيَتْهَا وَكَذَلِكَ الْيَوْمَ تُنْسَى﴾

{But whoever turns away from My Reminder will have a miserable life, and on the Day of Resurrection We will raise him blind,

He will say, “My Lord, why have you raised me blind when I was able to see before?”

Allah will say, “Similarly Our verses came to you, but you ignored them, so you will be ignored Today.”} [Surat Ta Ha: 124-126] And let us, O slaves of Allah, have a share among those whose delight of the eyes is in prayer.

Now, invoke Allah's peace and blessings upon the one upon whom Allah commanded you to invoke His peace and blessings, as He Almighty says:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا﴾

¹ Hilyat al-Awliyā' wa Tabaqāt al-Asfiyā' (7/17).

{Indeed, Allah sends His blessings upon the Prophet, and His angels pray for him. O you who believe, invoke Allah's blessings upon him and send him greetings of peace.} [Surat al-Ahzāb: 56]

O Allah, bestow Your peace and blessings upon our Prophet Muhammad, his noble and pure family, his wives—the Mothers of the believers—and upon his radiant and blessed Companions. And be pleased, O Allah, with the Companions, the Tābi'is, and those who follow them with righteousness, and be pleased with us along with them by Your grace and generosity, O Most Generous of the generous. O Allah, make Islam and Muslims mighty, humiliate disbelief and the disbelievers, reform the affairs of all our Muslim brethren, grant success to the leaders of the Muslims to act in accordance with Your Book and to follow the Sunnah of Your Prophet, and forgive us and our parents, their spouses, our offspring, and all the Muslims.

O Allah, aid us to remember You, thank You, and worship You as due. Our Lord, give us in this world that which is good and in the Hereafter that which is good, and protect us from the punishment of the Fire.

O servants of Allah!

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَايَ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ، وَأَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ إِذَا عَاهَدْتُمْ وَلَا تَنْفُسُوا أَلِيَمَنَ بَعْدَ تَوْكِيدِهَا وَقَدْ جَعَلْتُمُ اللَّهَ عَلَيْكُمْ كَفِيلًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ﴾

{Allah enjoins justice, kindness, and giving relatives [their dues], and He forbids shameful acts, evil deeds and oppression. He exhorts you, so that you may take heed.

Fulfill the covenant of Allah when you pledge, and do not break oaths after confirming them, having made Allah your witness, for Allah knows all what you do.} [Surat an-Nahl: 90-91]

With Those Whom You Have Blessed

The First Sermon

Praise be to Allah. We praise Him, seek His help, and ask Him for forgiveness. We seek refuge with Allah from the evil of ourselves and from our bad deeds. Whoever Allah guides, none can misguide, and whoever He sends astray, none can guide. I testify that there is no god but Allah, alone, with no partner, and I testify that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ
بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ﴾

{O you who believe, fear Allah, and let every soul consider what it has sent forth for tomorrow. And fear Allah. Indeed, Allah is All-Aware of what you do.}

[Surat al-Hashr: 18]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾

{O you who believe, fear Allah as He should be feared, and do not die except as Muslims.}

[Surat Āl ‘Imrān: 102]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَفُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا، يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا﴾

{O you who believe, fear Allah and say what is right, He will amend for you your deeds and forgive you your sins. And whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger has certainly attained a great attainment.}

[Surat al-Ahzāb: 70-71]

To proceed:

Success in life, the fulfillment of aspirations, overcoming obstacles, and prevailing over challenges are among the matters that are often raised and widely discussed here and there. How to attain a successful life? What are the means that assist in attaining success, triumph, and the highest ranks? What are the ways to achieve the greatest gains and benefits? And what is the path to realizing leadership and ascendancy? People differ regarding that, and they vary in reaching those lofty states. Such is life.

﴿وَلَا يَزَالُونَ مُخْتَلِفِينَ، إِلَّا مَنْ رَّحِمَ رَبُّكَ وَلِذَلِكَ خَلَقَهُمْ﴾

{But they will not cease to differ,
except those whom Allah has given mercy, and
for this He created them,} [Surat Hūd: 118-119]

And the Muslim—O servants of Allah—knows with certain knowledge that he has come to this life for a limited period and numbered days, and that he will, without doubt, depart from it. He will spend therein only what Allah has decreed for him of a written lifespan and an appointed term; then he will move to the Hereafter—the abode of permanence and eternity, of abiding bliss and everlasting happiness.

Among the matters that profoundly affect a Muslim's life and lead him by the hand to the highest ranks is his high aspiration, which drives him to lofty matters. Allah Almighty loves lofty matters and hates low and minor ones. What elevates a Muslim's aspiration, raises the ceiling of his aspirations, and magnifies his hopes within him is to live in the company of the people of high aspiration, noble souls, and great achievements: to reflect upon their states, follow their news, and closely contemplate their traits and morals.

In pursuit of that, he displays patience and perseverance, making every effort and doing his best, and struggles:

And he whose soul's aspiration is loftiness *** all that he encounters therein is beloved.¹

This daily, repeated supplication—which every Muslim recites in his prayer seventeen times each

¹ Dīwān al-Bārūdī (1/56).

day—asks for guidance to the path of those upon whom Allah bestowed favor, who are the prophets, the affirmers of truth, the martyrs, and the righteous. This daily repetition, this emphasis, and this persistence greatly elevate his aspiration every time he prays and supplicates to be with those favored ones—the people of lofty aspiration.

Prayer—O servants of Allah—elevates one's aspiration to the highest possible degree; for there is no loftier resolve, no greater success and achievement, and no fuller divine facilitation and happiness than that of those upon whom Allah has bestowed His favor. What, then, will be the portion of one who follows their example, persists in remembering them, and lives his day and night recalling those righteous ones—those whom Allah has chosen, preferred, elected, and bestowed His favor upon? What does a Muslim feel as he repeats, every day and night, his plea to be with the Prophets, with the truthful, with the martyrs, and with the righteous? How will that affect his soul, with what aspiration will he face life, and how will he deal with his psychological and social circumstances?

The Muslim—O servants of Allah—when he remembers the states of the righteous elite, his soul soars and his heart becomes illuminated, and he is inspired to perform righteous deeds; indeed, that

becomes fuel for a lofty flame of high aspiration that none can rival.

He remembers Prophet Noah (peace be upon him), who spent one thousand years minus fifty in calling people to Allah, all with high resolve:

(وَأَتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ نُوحٍ إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ يَفْقَوْمَ إِنَّ كَانَ كَبُرَ عَلَيْكُمْ مَقَامِي وَتَذْكِيرِي بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ فَعَلَى اللَّهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ)

{Relate to them the story of Noah when he said to his people, "O my People, if my presence among you and my reminding you of Allah's signs have become unbearable to you, then in Allah I have put my trust."} [Surat Yūnus: 71]

He called his people to Allah day and night, in private and in public, morning and evening, abiding among them through long centuries and extended ages, calling with patience and seeking reward with Allah. And out of Prophet Noah's (peace be upon him) keen concern that his progeny continue upon the lofty resolve he himself exemplified, he called his son to him at the time of his death and said:

"إِنِّي قَاصٌّ عَلَيْكَ الْوَصِيَّةَ: أَمُرُكَ بِاثْنَتَيْنِ، وَأَنْهَاكَ عَنْ اثْنَتَيْنِ، أَمُرُكَ بِلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، فَإِنَّ السَّمَوَاتِ السَّبْعَ، وَالْأَرْضِينَ السَّبْعَ، لَوْ وُضِعَتْ فِي كِفَّةٍ، وَوُضِعَتْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ فِي كِفَّةٍ، رَجَحَتْ بِهِنَّ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَلَوْ أَنَّ السَّمَوَاتِ السَّبْعَ، وَالْأَرْضِينَ السَّبْعَ، كُنَّ حَلَقَةً مُبْهَمَةً، قَصَمْتُهُنَّ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ، فَإِنَّهَا صَلَاةٌ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ، وَبِهَا يُرْزَقُ الْخَلْقُ، وَأَنْهَاكَ عَنِ الشِّرْكِ وَالْكَبْرِ "

"I am imparting to you a counsel: I enjoin upon you two things, and I forbid you from two. I enjoin upon you, "There is no deity worthy of worship but

Allah", for if the seven heavens and the seven earths were placed in one pan of the scale, and "There is no deity worthy of worship but Allah" were placed in the other, "There is no deity worthy of worship but Allah" would outweigh them. And if the seven heavens and the seven earths were an obscure ring, "There is no deity worthy of worship but Allah" would shatter them. And [I enjoin upon you to say:] "Glorified is Allah, and praise is to Him," for it is the prayer of all things, and by it the creation is granted provision. And I forbid you from associating partners with Allah and from arrogance." [Narrated by Ahmad, and by Al-Bukhāri in Al-Adab Al-Mufrad¹; Al-Albāni classified it as Sahīh (Authentic)]

And the father of the prophets, Abraham (peace be upon him), reached such heights in his Tawhīd, his faith in his Lord, and his affirmation of His promise and His warning, that he offered the apple of his eye and the delight of his heart as a sacrifice by which he sought closeness to his Lord.

﴿فَلَمَّا أَسْلَمَا وَتَلَّهُ لِلْجَبِينِ، وَنَدَيْنَاهُ أَنْ يَا إِبْرَاهِيمَ﴾

{When they both submitted [to Allah's command] and Abraham laid him on his forehead, and We called out to him, "O Abraham,"} [Surat as-Sāffāt: 103-104] The Prophet (ﷺ) reached, in his

¹ Narrated by Ahmad in "Al-Musnad" (11/150); Al-Bukhāri in "Al-Adab Al-Mufrad" (p. 192).

aspiration during his supplication, imploring, and intimate entreaty, the point that he chose to supplicate for lasting nearness to Allah Almighty and for a sound bond with Him through establishing the prayer for himself and his offspring.

﴿رَبِّ اجْعَلْنِي مُقِيمَ الصَّلَاةِ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي رَبَّنَا وَتَقَبَّلْ دُعَاءِ﴾

{My Lord, make me steadfast in prayer and those of my offspring. Our Lord, accept my supplication.} [Surat Ibrāhīm: 40] When he settled his offspring in Makkah, he stated that he had settled them so that they may be closer to Allah by establishing prayer.

﴿رَبَّنَا إِنِّي أَسْكَنْتُ مِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي بِوَادٍ غَيْرِ ذِي زَرْعٍ عِنْدَ بَيْتِكَ الْمُحَرَّمِ رَبَّنَا لِيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ﴾

{Our Lord, I have settled some of my offspring in a barren valley near Your Sacred House, our Lord, so that they may establish prayer.} [Surat Ibrāhīm: 37] And among the manifestations of the lofty resolve of Abraham (peace be upon him) are his testament to his descendants after his death and his compassion for them.

﴿وَوَصَّى بِهَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ بَنِيهِ وَيَعْقُوبُ يُبْنِي إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَى لَكُمُ الدِّينَ فَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾

{This was enjoined by Abraham and Jacob to their offspring, “O my children, Allah has chosen for you this religion; so do not die except as Muslims.”} [Surat al-Baqarah: 132]

And from the offspring of Abraham (peace be upon him) was Ishmael (peace be upon him), whose earnest concern was to call his household to the prayer and the zakah, so he was well-pleasing to his Lord. Likewise, everyone who enjoins his household to the prayer and the zakah will be well-pleasing to his Lord. May Allah make us and you among them.

This is the upright path upon which the resolve of all of Allah's prophets and messengers was set, and that is the proof by which Allah Almighty elevated all the prophets.

﴿وَتِلْكَ حُجَّتُنَا آتَيْنَاهَا إِبْرَاهِيمَ عَلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ نَرْفَعُ دَرَجَاتٍ مِّنْ نَّشَأٍ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ حَكِيمٌ عَلِيمٌ﴾

{That was Our argument which We gave Abraham against his people. We elevate in ranks whom We will. Your Lord is All-Wise, All-Knowing.}
[Surat al-An'ām: 83]

And on it are Isaac, Jacob, David, Solomon, Job, Joseph, Moses, Ishmael, Elisha, Jonah, Lot, Zachariah, John, Jesus, and Elias—and before that, Noah, Hūd, Salih, and Shu'aib.

Those are the ones whom Allah has guided; those are the people of understanding; and those are the people of high resolve, the best of humankind, the best of those who have trodden the earth; and they are the ones whom Allah has

commanded to be emulated and whose path is to be followed.

{أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ هَدَىٰ اللَّهُ فَبِهِدَّتْهُمْ آفَتُهُ}

{They are those whom Allah has guided, so follow their guidance.} [Surat al-An'ām: 90] Those were the ones upon whom Allah bestowed favor from among the prophets of the descendants of Adam, and of those We carried [in the ship] with Noah, and of the descendants of Abraham and Israel [i.e., Jacob], and of those whom We guided and chose, and of those whose guidance, path, and straight way we have been commanded to follow.

After them there came the manifest light, the leader of the messengers and the final Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him and upon his family and all his followers). He is the perfect example and the supreme model in lofty resolve and noble morals. In courage and boldness, as he led over the course of ten years twenty-seven expeditions. And he (ﷺ) used to say:

"وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ لَوْلَا أَنَّ رَجُلًا مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ لَا تَطِيبُ أَنْفُسُهُمْ أَنْ يَتَخَلَّفُوا عَنِّي، وَلَا أَجِدُ مَا أَحْمِلُهُمْ عَلَيْهِ مَا تَخَلَّفْتُ عَنْ سَرِيَّةٍ تَعَزَّوْا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ، وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ لَوِدِدْتُ أَنِّي أَقْتُلُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ، ثُمَّ أَحْيَا، ثُمَّ أَقْتُلُ، ثُمَّ أَحْيَا، ثُمَّ أَقْتُلُ، ثُمَّ أَحْيَا، ثُمَّ أَقْتُلُ"

"By Him in Whose Hand my soul is, were it not that there are men among the believers whose souls would not be content to remain behind me, and that I do not find the means to provide them riding

mounts, I would not lag behind any expedition to fight in the cause of Allah. By Him in Whose Hand my soul is, I would love to be killed in the cause of Allah, then be brought to life, then be killed, then be brought to life, then be killed, then be brought to life, then be killed." [Narrated by Al-Bukhāri]¹ He was the supreme exemplar in worship, as 'A'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) used to stand in prayer at night until the skin of his feet would crack. I ('A'ishah) said to him: "Why do you do this, O Messenger of Allah, when Allah has forgiven your past and future sins?" He said:

"أَفَلَا أَحِبُّ أَنْ أَكُونَ عَبْدًا شَكُورًا"

"Should I not like to be a grateful slave?" [Narrated by Al-Bukhāri]².

He was a man of the loftiest aspiration in choosing what is with Allah Almighty. When he was given the choice between this world and the meeting with Allah, he chose the meeting with Allah, and he would say:

"مَا لِي وَلِلدُّنْيَا، مَا أَنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا كَرَاجِبٍ اسْتِظَلَّ تَحْتَ شَجَرَةٍ ثُمَّ رَاحَ وَتَرَكَهَا"

"What do I have to do with this worldly life? I am in this worldly life like a rider who seeks shade under a tree, then he goes away and leaves it." [Narrated

¹ Narrated by Al-Bukhāri (4/17).

² Narrated by Al-Bukhāri (6/135).

by At-Tirmidhi¹; classified as Sahīh (authentic) by Al-Albānī]

The Prophet (ﷺ) possessed the loftiest resolve in patience and steadfast perseverance; his enemies inflicted upon him the utmost harm—upon his person, his family, and his companions—and he would say:

"اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِقَوْمِي فَإِنَّهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ"

"O Allah, forgive my people for they do not know."

[Narrated by Al-Bukhārī]².

He is the possessor of the highest resolve in his dealings, and of noble character—marked by forbearance, truthfulness, generosity, faithfulness, tolerance, and modesty.

He is like the sea: from whichever side you approach it *** its depths are kindness and its shores are generosity.³

﴿وَمَنْ يُطِعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ
وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ وَحَسُنَ أُولَٰئِكَ رَفِيقًا﴾

Those who obey Allah and the Messenger will be with those whom Allah has blessed: the prophets, the people of Truth, the martyrs, and the righteous. What excellent companions they are!

[Surat an-Nisā': 69]

¹ [Narrated by Al-Tirmidhi] (4/588).

² Narrated by Al-Bukhārī (4/175).

³ "Akhhār Abī Tammām" (1/103).

May Allah bless the noble Qur'an for me and you, and may He make us benefit from the guidance of the master of the messengers (ﷺ). I say these words and ask Allah's forgiveness for me and you for every grave sin. So, ask Him for forgiveness and turn to Him in repentance; how great is the triumph of those who seek forgiveness!

The Second Sermon

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, and the good outcome is for the righteous. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, the Sovereign, the True, the Manifest. And I bear witness that our Prophet Muhammad is His servant and Messenger, who conveyed the message, fulfilled the trust, advised the Ummah, and strove in the cause of Allah until certainty came to him.

O Allah, send Your peace and blessings upon Muhammad (ﷺ), his family, and all his Companions. So, fear Allah as He should be feared, for indeed your bodies cannot bear Hellfire, and cling to the firm handhold of Islam, so that you may succeed and prosper in the Hereafter and in this world.

To proceed:

Indeed, the foremost of the people of truth, the righteous, and the martyrs are the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) (may Allah be pleased with them, and may He make them pleased, his noble family, and those who followed them in

righteousness). Their aspirations reached the highest stations and the loftiest peaks in worship, striving in the cause of Allah, noble character, and beautiful virtues.

So here is Abu Bakr as-Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him): his aspiration soars to the point that he does not content himself with entering through a single gate of Paradise; rather, he wishes to be called from all eight gates of Paradise. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"فَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الصَّلَاةِ دُعِيَ مِنْ بَابِ الصَّلَاةِ، وَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْجِهَادِ دُعِيَ مِنْ بَابِ الْجِهَادِ، وَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الصِّيَامِ دُعِيَ مِنْ بَابِ الرِّيَّانِ، وَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الصَّدَقَةِ دُعِيَ مِنْ بَابِ الصَّدَقَةِ"، فَقَالَ أَبُو بَكْرٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ: يَا أَبَا أَنْتَ وَآمِي يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ مَا عَلَى مَنْ دُعِيَ مِنْ تِلْكَ الْأَبْوَابِ مِنْ ضَرُورَةٍ، فَهَلْ يُدْعَى أَحَدٌ مِنْ تِلْكَ الْأَبْوَابِ كُلِّهَا، قَالَ: "نَعَمْ وَأَرْجُو أَنْ تَكُونَ مِنْهُمْ"

"Whoever is among the people of prayer will be called from the gate of prayer; whoever is among the people of jihad will be called from the gate of jihad; whoever is among the people of fasting will be called from the gate of Ar-Rayyān; and whoever is among the people of charity will be called from the gate of charity."

Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) said: "O Messenger of Allah, may my mother and father be sacrificed for you! Those who are called from these gates will stand in need of nothing. Will anybody be called from all of those gates?" He replied: "Yes, and

I hope that you will be one of them.” [Agreed upon]¹
It is the aspiration of those upon whom Allah has bestowed His Grace, O servants of Allah!

‘Abdullah ibn Mas‘ūd (may Allah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) entered the mosque, with Abu Bakr and ‘Umar at his sides, and there was Ibn Mas‘ūd praying, reciting Surat An-Nisā’. When he reached the hundredth verse, he began supplicating while standing in prayer. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«اسْأَلْ تُعْطَى، اسْأَلْ تُعْطَى»، ثُمَّ قَالَ: «مَنْ سَرَّهُ أَنْ يَقْرَأَ الْقُرْآنَ غَضًّا كَمَا أُنْزِلَ، فَلْيَقْرَأْهُ بِقِرَاءَةِ ابْنِ أُمِّ عَدِيٍّ»، فَلَمَّا أَصْبَحَ عَدَا إِلَيْهِ أَبُو بَكْرٍ، لِيُبَشِّرَهُ، وَقَالَ لَهُ: مَا سَأَلْتَ اللَّهَ الْبَارِحَةَ؟ قَالَ: قُلْتُ: اإِلَهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ إِيْمَانًا لَا يَزِيدُ، وَنَعِيْمًا لَا يَنْقُذُ، وَمُرَافَقَةً مُحَمَّدٍ فِي أَعْلَى جَنَّةِ الْخُلْدِ، ثُمَّ جَاءَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ عُمَرُ فَقِيلَ لَهُ إِنَّ أَبَا بَكْرٍ قَدْ سَبَقَكَ، قَالَ: يَرْحَمُ اللَّهُ أَبَا بَكْرٍ، مَا سَبَقْتُهُ إِلَى خَيْرٍ قَطُّ، إِلَّا سَبَقَنِي إِلَيْهِ.

“Ask and you will be given; ask and you will be given.” Then he said: “Whoever would love to recite the Qur’an fresh as it was revealed, let him recite it according to the recitation of Ibn Umm ‘Abd.”

When morning came, Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) came to him to give him glad tidings and said to him: “What did you ask Allah last night?” He said: “I said: O Allah, I ask You for faith that never declines, bliss that will never cease, and the companionship of Muhammad (ﷺ) in the highest Garden of Eternity.”

¹ [Narrated by Al-Bukhāri (5/6) and Muslim (2/711)].

Then ‘Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) came, and it was said to him: “Abu Bakr has preceded you.” He said: “May Allah have mercy on Abu Bakr. I have never preceded him to any good at all except that he preceded me to it.” [Narrated by Ahmad:; classified by Al-Albāni as Sahīh (Authentic)]

This is Rabi‘ah ibn Ka‘b al-Aslami (may Allah be pleased with him); his noble life story speaks of his high resolve. When a precious opportunity presented itself for him to ask, to wish, and to request whatever he desired—when the Prophet offered him, “Ask me, O Rabi‘ah,” meaning, “Ask for whatever you wish, O Rabi‘ah”—his high resolve would not allow him to ask for anything of the worldly life. And had he asked, it would have been permissible for him. But people of resolve and great souls always seek what is better, more enduring, and superior. So he said, decisively and with certainty:

”أَسْأَلُكَ مِرَافَقَتَكَ فِي الْجَنَّةِ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ“

“I request your companionship in Paradise, O Messenger of Allah (ﷺ).”² Indeed, it is high aspiration, O servants of Allah, by which Rabi‘ah transcended the bounds of this world—its demands and its adornment—and even with

¹ Narrated by Ahmad (7/360); classified by Al-Albāni as Sahīh (Authentic).

² Narrated by Muslim (1/353).

regard to Paradise itself, for he does not desire just any place, but rather seeks the companionship of the Beloved, the Chosen One, in al-Firdaws al-A'lā, beneath the Throne of the Most Merciful, Majestic is His Majesty. Have you seen what high aspiration does to its owner? Have you seen how the people of high aspirations are?

Let us continue with Rabī'ah's story and recall that moving conversation that took place as the Messenger of Allah (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) was preparing for the prayer, and Rabī'ah (رضي الله عنه) had prepared his water for ablution. He said: O Rabī'ah, or something else? Do you seek anything besides accompanying me in Paradise? He replied: That is it, O Messenger of Allah. He said: Then help me to accomplish this for you by devoting yourself to frequent prostration. Allah is the Greatest—O servants of Allah—look where frequent prostration leads the Muslim.

“Allāhu Akbar (Allah is the Greatest)” — O servants of Allah — look at the abundance of the prayers: to what degree the believer is elevated by them.

O servant of Allah, you will not make a single prostration to Allah except that Allah raises you one degree therewith and remits one of your sins therewith.

The aspiration of 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with both of them) was elevated after a

dream he saw, which the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) interpreted for him, as he said:

"نِعْمَ الرَّجُلُ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ لَوْ كَانَ يُصَلِّي مِنَ اللَّيْلِ "

"What an excellent man 'Abdullāh is if only he observes the night prayer." [Agreed upon]¹ He did not abandon Qiyām al-Layl thereafter; rather, he would increase in prayer to the extent that he would enliven the time between Dhuhr and 'Asr with prayer.

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) took 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) by the shoulders and said:

"كُنْ فِي الدُّنْيَا كَأَنَّكَ غَرِيبٌ أَوْ غَابِرُ سَبِيلٍ "

"Be in this world as if you are a stranger or a wayfarer." [Narrated by Al-Bukhārī]² So 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) acted upon this instruction regarding the will to the extent that he used to say:

"إِذَا أَمْسَيْتَ فَلَا تَتَنَظَّرُ الصَّبَاحَ، وَإِذَا أَصْبَحْتَ فَلَا تَتَنَظَّرُ الْمَسَاءَ، وَخُذْ مِنْ صِحَّتِكَ لِمَرْضِكَ، وَمِنْ حَيَاتِكَ لِمَوْتِكَ "

"If you reach the evening, do not wait for the morning, and if you reach the morning, do not wait for the evening. Take from your health for your sickness, and from your life for your death." Narrated by Al-Bukhārī³.

¹ Narrated by Al-Bukhārī (5/24) and Muslim (4/1927).

² Narrated by Al-Bukhārī (8/89).

³ Narrated by Al-Bukhārī (8/89).

Those are my fathers; then bring me the like of them *** Those are my fathers; then bring me the like of them¹

As for Khālīd ibn al-Walīd (may Allah be pleased with him), the unsheathed Sword of Allah, his resolve reached the point that he uttered his famous words: “There is no night in which a bride is presented to me—whom I love—that is more beloved to me than a night of severe cold, with abundant frost, in a detachment in which I wake at dawn to face the enemy.”²

O servants of Allah! Indeed, these prayers that we perform remind us of those people. A servant who mentions his Prophet (ﷺ), invokes Allah’s peace and blessings upon him, and bears witness to his Message more than thirty times each day is most worthy of emulating him, being upon his path, and increasing in love and longing for him. And when the Muslim remembers the Intimate Friend of the Most Merciful—Abraham (peace be upon him)—the adherent of the easy, upright Hanīfiyyah (pure monotheism), the possessor of the great creed, the father of the Prophets and the leader of the monotheists; when he remembers him more than twenty times each day, his resolve is lifted and his soul rises toward that great Abrahamic perfection.

¹ Dīwān Al-Farazdaq (p. 360).

² al-Jihād by Ibn al-Mubārak (p. 91).

And whoever remembers the righteous servants of Allah many times each day by sending peace upon them—"As-salāmu 'alayna wa 'ala 'ibādillāhi as-sālihīn"—while hoping to be with them and upon their path and way, it befits him that his way, thought, conduct, and deeds conform to what he seeks and hopes for, and that he take from their guidance, counsel, and example that which spurs him to noble virtues and raises his aspiration to the highest ranks.

O servants of Allah! It is a sincere call to embody the meanings of our prayers, to derive our vitality from them, and to raise our children upon these great meanings. How great these prayers are, and how merciful Allah is to us that He ordained for us five prayers every day and night—prayers that uplift our aspirations, elevate our status, illuminate the path for us, and gather us with the chosen humankind: the prophets, the truthful, the martyrs, and the righteous.

Now, invoke Allah's peace and blessings upon the one upon whom Allah commanded you to invoke His peace and blessings; He Almighty says:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا﴾

{Indeed, Allah sends His blessings upon the Prophet, and His angels pray for him. O you who

believe, invoke Allah's blessings upon him and send him greetings of peace.} [Surat al-Ahzāb: 56]

O Allah, bestow Your peace and blessings upon our Prophet Muhammad, and upon his noble and pure family, and upon his wives, the Mothers of the Believers, and upon his illustrious and blessed Companions. And be pleased, our Lord, with the Companions, the Tābi'is, and those who follow them with righteousness, and be pleased with us along with them by Your grace and generosity, O Most Generous of the generous.

O Allah, strengthen Islam and Muslims, humiliate disbelief and disbelievers, reform the conditions of all our Muslim brethren, and guide the rulers of the Muslims to act by Your Book and follow the Sunnah of Your Prophet, and forgive us, our parents, their spouses, our progeny, and all Muslims.

O Allah, aid us to remember You, thank You, and worship You as due. Our Lord, give us in this world what is good and in the Hereafter what is good, and protect us from the punishment of the Fire.

O servants of Allah!

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَايَ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ، وَأَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ إِذَا عَاهَدْتُمْ وَلَا تَنْقُضُوا الْأَيْمَانَ بَعْدَ تَوْكِيدِهَا وَقَدْ جَعَلْتُمُ اللَّهَ عَلَيْكُمْ كَفِيلًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ﴾

{Allah enjoins justice, kindness, and giving relatives [their dues], and He forbids shameful acts,

evil deeds and oppression. He exhorts you, so that you may take heed,

Fulfill the covenant of Allah when you pledge, and do not break oaths after confirming them, having made Allah your witness, for Allah knows all what you do.} [Surat an-Nahl: 90-91]

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This book

Given that the prayer holds such an immense status in the religion of Allah, Muslims require continual reminders of its importance, its proper manner, humility in it, and its impact on their lives.

This book comprises twelve Friday sermons (one for each month of the year). They serve as a reference for the khatīb, from which he may draw what contributes to reminding the Muslims and admonishing them to establish the Prayer as Allah, Glorified and Exalted, has willed.

Index

Sermons on Magnifying the Status of Prayer.....	2
Introduction	2
Extolling and venerating.....	3
The First Sermon.....	3
The Second Sermon.....	11
The Last Behest of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ).....	15
The First Sermon.....	15
The Second Sermon.....	25
Conditions of Prayer	29
The First Sermon.....	29
The Second Sermon.....	36
The Journey of Beauty: Wudū' (Ablution) and Tahārah (ritual purity)	41
The First Sermon.....	41
The Second Sermon.....	46
As you have seen me pray	50
The First Sermon.....	50
The Second Sermon.....	63
Rest assured!.....	67
The First Sermon.....	67
The Second Sermon.....	72
Prayer of the Hearts and the Limbs	77
The First Sermon.....	77
The Second Sermon.....	87
Khushū' (Humbleness/Humility) and khudū' (Submissiveness)	94
The First Sermon.....	94
The Second Sermon.....	103

Sufficiency and Refuge.....	111
The First Sermon.....	111
The Second Sermon.....	120
Guidance and Success.....	125
The First Sermon.....	125
The Second Sermon.....	134
Comfort and Coolness of the Eyes	139
The First Sermon.....	139
The Second Sermon.....	148
With Those Whom You Have Blessed	153
The First Sermon.....	153
The Second Sermon.....	164
Sources and References	173
This book	178