When Life Becomes Difficult

15-minute standard · Free English Friday sermon

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First Khutbah — Arabic Opening

Innal hamda lillah,
nahmaduhu wa nasta‘eenuhu wa nastaghfiruhu,
wa na‘oodhu billahi min shuroori anfusina
wa min sayyi’aati a‘maalina. ▶ Audio

إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ لِلَّهِ، نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ، وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا.

Man yah-dihi-llahu falaa mudilla lah,
wa man yud-lil falaa haadiya lah. ▶ Audio

مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ، وَمَنْ يُضْلِلْ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ.

Wa ash-hadu an laa ilaaha illallahu wahdahu laa shareeka lah,
wa ash-hadu anna Muhammadan ‘abduhu wa rasooluh. ▶ Audio

وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلٰهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ.

Yaa ay-yuhal-ladheena aamanut-taqul-laha haqqa tu-qaa-tihi
wa laa tamootunna illaa wa antum muslimoon. ▶ Audio

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ.

Yaa ayyuhan-naasu-ttaqu rabbakumul-ladhee khalaqakum min nafsin waahidah,
▶ Audio

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ،

wa khalaqa minhaa zawjahaa,
wa baththa minhumaa rijaalan katheeran wa nisaa’aa. ▶ Audio

وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا، وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً.

Wattaqullahal-ladhee tasaa’aloona bihi wal-arhaam.
Innallaha kaana ‘alaykum raqeebaa. ▶ Audio

وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ، إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا.

Yaa ayyuhalladheena aamanu-ttaqullaha wa qooloo qawlan sadeedaa. ▶ Audio

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا.

Yuslih lakum a‘maalakum wa yaghfir lakum dhunoobakum. ▶ Audio

يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ.

Wa man yuti‘illaha wa rasoolahu faqad faaza fawzan ‘azeemaa. ▶ Audio

وَمَنْ يُطِعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا.

Ammaa ba‘d. ▶ Audio

أَمَّا بَعْدُ.

Fa inna asdaqal hadeethi kitaabullah, ▶ Audio

فَإِنَّ أَصْدَقَ الْحَدِيثِ كِتَابُ اللَّهِ،

wa khayral hadyi hadyu Muhammadin sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, ▶ Audio

وَخَيْرَ الْهَدْيِ هَدْيُ مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ،

wa sharral umoori muh-dathaa-tuhaa,
wa kulla muh-dathatin bid‘ah,
wa kulla bid‘atin dalaalah,
wa kulla dalaalatin fin-naar. ▶ Audio

وَشَرَّ الْأُمُورِ مُحْدَثَاتُهَا، وَكُلَّ مُحْدَثَةٍ بِدْعَةٌ، وَكُلَّ بِدْعَةٍ ضَلَالَةٌ، وَكُلَّ ضَلَالَةٍ فِي النَّارِ.

First Khutbah — English

And may Allah strengthen our faith during every test we face, Ameen.

May Allah ease the difficulties of those who are struggling financially.

May Allah grant healing to those who are sick.

May Allah bring relief to those who are suffering.

And do not be ashamed to accept help from people who genuinely care about you.

Keep taking the steps you can take.

Keep performing your salah.

Keep making dua.

And your hardship does not mean that your life has no blessings.

Your efforts are not worthless.

Your prayers are not meaningless.

You are not forgotten by Allah.

So if you are going through a difficult time today, remember this.

My dear brothers in Islam,

Whether life is easy or difficult, there is still an opportunity to earn Allah's pleasure.

Think about that.

Both situations can bring reward.

And when hardship comes, the believer remains patient.

When something good happens, the believer is thankful.

He explained that the situation of a believer can be good in both easy and difficult times.

The Prophet Muhammad, Sallahu Alayhi wa Salam, taught us another important lesson in Sahih Muslim, (Hadith 2999).

My dear brothers in Islam,

And when we make dua, we should remember that Allah hears us, even when the answer does not come in the way or at the time we expected.

When we go into sujood, we can ask Allah for help with matters that we may be unable to explain to anyone else.

When we stand in prayer, we are standing before the One who knows everything we are going through.

It is one of the greatest ways we can turn to Allah during our difficulties.

But salah is not something we should abandon when life becomes difficult.

Or too busy trying to fix our situation.

Too tired.

We say we are too stressed.

Sometimes we become so focused on finding a solution to our problems that we begin neglecting our prayers.

My dear brothers in Islam,

And continue taking the steps available to you.

Ask Him for help.

Protect your salah.

When life becomes difficult, turn to Him.

This is a direct instruction from Allah.

"You who believe, seek help through steadfastness and prayer, for Allah is with the steadfast."

In Surah Al-Baqarah, (verse 153), Allah says:

But we must not allow these thoughts to destroy our trust in Allah.

There is no point in trying anymore.

My situation will never improve.

Allah is not listening to my duas.

He may make us think:

When difficulties continue for a long time, Shaytan may try to make us lose hope.

There is another danger we need to understand.

My dear brothers in Islam,

And do not assume that because someone looks fine, everything in their life is fine.

Speak kindly.

So be gentle with people.

The person who seems quiet may be carrying deep sadness.

The person who appears impatient may be facing problems we know nothing about.

We should remember this when dealing with others.

Or perhaps he feels lonely, even though he is surrounded by people.

Perhaps he is overwhelmed by debts.

Perhaps his child has gone down the wrong path.

Perhaps his marriage is struggling.

But inside, he may be carrying enormous worries.

He may appear completely happy.

He may greet everyone warmly.

A person may come to the masjid smiling.

Sometimes the greatest difficulties are the ones nobody else can see.

My dear brothers in Islam,

And we try not to allow our difficulties to lead us into disobedience.

We seek help when we need it.

We continue doing what is right.

It means that even while we are hurting, we try to remain faithful to Allah.

Patience does not mean that we feel no sadness.

And it does not mean that someone who is worried or struggling should be ashamed to ask for help.

It does not mean that someone who is grieving must never cry.

But this does not mean we should pretend that pain does not hurt.

Even the difficulties that nobody else notices can have value in the sight of Allah.

What a comforting reminder.

My dear brothers in Islam,

He taught us that when a Muslim experiences sickness, tiredness, sadness, pain or even the prick of a thorn, Allah may remove some of that person's sins through the suffering.

The Prophet Muhammad, Sallahu Alayhi wa Salam, gave us a beautiful reminder in Sahih al-Bukhari, (Hadith 5641).

And we should remember that our suffering is not necessarily wasted.

We should seek appropriate treatment, make dua and place our trust in Allah.

But seeking medical treatment does not mean that a person lacks faith.

This can be frightening.

He may become unable to work or do the things he once enjoyed.

He may experience pain.

He may need treatment.

A person may pray for good health, but then suddenly face a serious illness.

The same applies when we become sick.

My dear brothers in Islam,

We must make an effort while remembering that the final outcome is in Allah's hands.

Trusting Allah does not mean sitting back and doing nothing.

And place his trust in Allah.

Seek help and advice where necessary.

Look for halal opportunities.

He should continue making a sincere effort.

Of course not.

Should he begin earning money through haram means because he feels desperate?

Should he stop making dua?

Should he give up?

But what should he do?

He may look at other people and wonder why their lives seem so much easier.

He works hard, but there never seems to be enough money.

Every month, he worries about paying his bills.

Imagine someone who has been struggling financially.

My dear brothers in Islam,

But we should never believe that our present difficulties will last forever.

And sometimes the relief Allah gives us is different from what we had been asking for.

Sometimes it takes longer.

Sometimes relief comes sooner than we expect.

There is also ease.

He tells us that hardship is not the whole story.

Allah does not tell us that life will never be difficult.

Think about that.

"Truly with hardship comes ease."

And then Allah repeats this reminder.

"So truly with hardship comes ease."

Allah says:

One of the most comforting reminders in the Quran is found in Surah Ash-Sharh, (verses 5–6).

My dear brothers in Islam,

And nothing that happens to us is hidden from Him.

He hears our duas.

What we do know is that Allah sees our struggles.

We do not know Allah's hidden reasons for another person's difficulties.

But we must also be careful not to tell someone who is suffering that we know exactly why Allah has tested them.

And sometimes, a difficult experience teaches us something that we would never have learned while life was easy.

A hardship may remind someone to turn back to Allah.

A person may be going through a test that strengthens his faith.

When something difficult happens, it does not automatically mean that Allah is angry with us.

Think about what this means.

My dear brothers in Islam,

Allah then gives good news to those who remain patient.

In Surah Al-Baqarah, (verse 155), Allah tells us that He will test people with fear, hunger, and loss of wealth, lives and crops.

And sometimes through difficulties.

Sometimes through blessings.

It is a place where we are tested.

We must understand that this world was never meant to be a place where everything goes according to our plans.

Yet they remained devoted to Allah.

They experienced loss, rejection, sickness and hardship.

The Prophets themselves faced great difficulties.

Being a good Muslim does not mean that our lives will always be easy.

My dear brothers in Islam,

And when will these difficulties come to an end?

What have I done to deserve this?

Why is this happening to me?

And when these things happen, we can find ourselves asking:

Or someone we love may suddenly pass away.

A marriage may be going through difficulties.

A family may begin struggling with money.

Someone may receive news of a serious illness.

A person may lose his job.

But sometimes, our lives can change very quickly.

And we feel that everything is under control.

We have food on our tables and somewhere comfortable to sleep.

Our work is going well.

Our families are healthy.

There are times when life seems to be going well.

My dear brothers in Islam,

When life becomes difficult.

Today's khutbah is about something that every one of us will experience.

Fear Allah, be aware of Allah, and remember that whatever difficulties we face in this life, we must never lose our trust in Him.

I advise myself first, and then all of you, to have taqwa of Allah.

My dear brothers in Islam,

End of First Khutbah — Asking for Forgiveness

Aqoolu qawlee haadhaa,
wa astaghfirullaha lee wa lakum,
wa li saa'i-ril muslimeena min kulli dhanb.
Fastaghfirooh, innahu huwal ghafoorur raheem. ▶ Audio

أَقُولُ قَوْلِي هَذَا، وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ لِي وَلَكُمْ، وَلِسَائِرِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ مِنْ كُلِّ ذَنْبٍ، فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ، إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ.

Sit briefly between the two khutbahs.

Second Khutbah — Arabic Opening

Alhamdulillahi rabbil 'aalameen, was-salaatu was-salaamu 'alaa ashrafil anbiyaa'i wal mursaleen, nabiyyinaa Muhammadin, wa 'alaa aalihi wa sahbihi ajma'een.
▶ Audio

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ، وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى أَشْرَفِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَالْمُرْسَلِينَ، نَبِيِّنَا مُحَمَّدٍ، وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ.

Ash-hadu an laa ilaaha illallahu wahdahu laa shareeka lah, wa ash-hadu anna Muhammadan 'abduhu wa rasooluh. Ammaa ba'd. ▶ Audio

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلٰهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ. أَمَّا بَعْدُ.

Second Khutbah — English

And may Allah grant us relief in this life and success in the Hereafter, Ameen.

May Allah protect our children and guide them through the challenges of this world.

May Allah bring peace to homes facing family difficulties.

May Allah grant patience to those who have lost loved ones.

May Allah ease the worries of every Muslim who is struggling.

Our difficulties may change our circumstances, but they should never make us give up on Allah.

And never to lose hope in His mercy.

To continue doing good.

To seek His help.

To worship Allah.

But through every situation, our duty remains the same.

And some questions may never be answered in this life.

Some losses will remain painful.

Some problems will be solved.

One day, the difficulties we are facing today will become part of our past.

My dear brothers in Islam,

When someone is finding life difficult, we should support them rather than judge them.

It is not a reason to dismiss someone's suffering or tell them they should never struggle.

This is a reminder of Allah's justice and mercy.

"Allah does not burden a soul beyond that it can bear."

In Surah Al-Baqarah, (verse 286), Allah reminds us:

My dear brothers in Islam,

Most importantly, let them see patience and trust in Allah through our own behaviour.

And to understand that their worth is not decided by one mistake or one difficult experience.

To make dua.

To keep trying.

Teach them to be patient.

Teach them that one disappointment does not mean their future is ruined.

And sometimes, things they work hard for will not happen.

They may lose a friendship.

They may fail an exam.

They will experience disappointment.

Life will not always go according to their wishes.

We should also teach our children how to deal with difficulties.

My dear brothers in Islam,

Do not underestimate the good you can do.

A phone call, a visit, a meal or a small amount of financial help can make an enormous difference.

Or perhaps someone simply needs another person to listen to them.

Perhaps a family is having difficulty buying food.

Perhaps an elderly person is struggling with loneliness.

Perhaps someone in our community has lost his job.

Sometimes, we become so busy with our own lives that we forget the difficulties people around us may be facing.

The third thing we should remember is to help others when they are struggling.

My dear brothers in Islam,

Sometimes, Allah places people in our lives who can help us through the difficulties we are facing.

Seeking help is not a sign of weakness.

And if you are overwhelmed by sadness or worry, speak to someone trustworthy and seek professional support when needed.

If your marriage is struggling, try to communicate honestly and seek appropriate help.

If you are sick, seek medical care.

If you have financial problems, seek advice and make a plan.

The second thing we should do is take practical steps to improve our situation.

And do not allow your difficulties to make you forget the blessings Allah has already given you.

Do not stop making dua because your prayers have not yet been answered.

Do not abandon your salah because you are going through problems.

The first thing we must do is turn towards Allah, not away from Him.

My dear brothers in Islam,

What should we do when life becomes difficult?

But now we need to ask ourselves:

We have spoken about the difficulties we face in this life and the importance of remaining patient.

Again, I advise myself and all of you to have taqwa of Allah.

My dear brothers in Islam,

Closing Dua — Arabic Transliteration

In-nal-laaha wa ma-laaa-e-ka-ta-hoo yu-sal-loo-na 'alan-na-bee,
yaaa ay-yu-hal-la-thee-na aa-ma-noo sal-loo 'a-lay-hi wa sal-li-moo tas-lee-maa.
▶ Audio

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ، يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا.

Allah humma Sali wa salam wa barik ala Muhammadin wa ala alley Muhammad
▶ Audio

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ وَبَارِكْ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ.

Allahummaghfir lil-muslimeena wal-muslimaat, wal-mu'mineena wal-mu'minaat, al-ahyaa'i minhum wal-amwaat. ▶ Audio

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ، وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ، الْأَحْيَاءِ مِنْهُمْ وَالْأَمْوَاتِ.

Rabbanaa zalamnaa anfusanaa, wa illam taghfir lanaa wa tarhamnaa, lanakoonanna minal-khaasireen. ▶ Audio

رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَا أَنْفُسَنَا وَإِنْ لَمْ تَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ.

Rabbanaa aatinaa fid-dunyaa hasanah, wa fil-aakhirati hasanah, wa qinaa 'adhaaban-naar. ▶ Audio

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

Final Khutbah Closing — Arabic Transliteration

Ibaadallah,
innallaha ya’muru bil-‘adli
wal-ihsaani
wa eetaa’i dhil-qurbaa,
wa yanhaa ‘anil fahshaa’i wal-munkari wal-baghy.
Ya‘izukum la‘allakum tadhakkaroon. ▶ Audio

عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ، وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ، يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ.

Wa akhiroo da3wanal humdoolilahi rubul Alameen.
Wa Aqimis-salaah. ▶ Audio

وَآخِرُ دَعْوَانَا أَنِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ. وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ.