The Reality of the Grave

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

My dear brothers in Islam,

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

Fear Allah, be aware of Allah, and remember that one day we will stand before Him and answer for how we lived our lives.

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

Something that no amount of money can prevent.

Something that nobody can escape.

The reality of the grave.

My dear brothers in Islam,

Every one of us knows that we will die.

We have attended funerals.

We have visited cemeteries.

We have stood beside graves as our family members and friends were buried.

And yet, how often do we stop and think about the day when we ourselves will be placed in the ground?

We spend years building our homes.

We work hard to buy cars, furniture and everything that makes our lives comfortable.

We make plans for our retirement.

But how much time do we spend preparing for the place where we will remain after death?

My dear brothers in Islam,

Our homes in this world are temporary. But the grave is a reality that awaits us all.

Allah says in Surah Ali Imran, (verse 185):

"Every soul will taste death"

These few words are enough to remind us that nobody is excluded.

Not the wealthy.

Not the powerful.

Not the healthy.

And not the young.

Every one of us will eventually leave this world.

My dear brothers in Islam,

Imagine the day of your own funeral.

Your family and friends have gathered.

They have performed your Janazah prayer.

They carry your body to the cemetery.

And then they lower you into the grave.

The soil is placed over you.

People make dua for you.

And slowly, they begin to leave.

Your children return home.

Your friends return to their families.

Your neighbours continue with their lives.

But you remain behind.

My dear brothers in Islam,

The life you once knew has come to an end.

You can no longer return to your home.

You can no longer earn money.

You can no longer perform another salah.

And you can no longer ask someone for forgiveness for the wrong you did to them.

Your opportunity to perform new deeds in this world has ended.

The Prophet Muhammad, Sallahu Alayhi wa Salam, explained something remarkable about this moment.

In Sahih al-Bukhari, (Hadith 1338), the Prophet, Sallahu Alayhi wa Salam, taught us that when a person is placed in the grave and the people leave, the deceased hears their footsteps as they walk away.

Think about that.

The very people who loved us and cared for us have returned to their lives.

But our journey has entered a new stage.

My dear brothers in Islam,

The grave is not simply a place where the body is buried.

It is the beginning of a life that we cannot see.

A life known as Barzakh.

This is the period between death and the Day of Resurrection.

In Surah Al-Mu'minun, (verses 99–100), Allah tells us about those who reach death and wish they could return to the world to do good.

But that opportunity is gone.

Allah says:

"a barrier stands behind such people until the very Day they are resurrected."

My dear brothers in Islam,

Think about how serious this is.

A person who neglected his prayers may wish to return and perform them properly.

A person who refused to give charity may wish for another opportunity.

Someone who treated his family badly may wish to go back and make things right.

But the opportunity to return to this world has ended.

That is why we must prepare before death arrives, not after it.

My dear brothers in Islam,

The Prophet Muhammad, Sallahu Alayhi wa Salam, also taught us about the questioning in the grave.

In Sahih al-Bukhari, (Hadith 1338), he explained that two angels come to the deceased and question him about the Prophet Muhammad, Sallahu Alayhi wa Salam.

Other authentic narrations describe the questioning concerning one's Lord and religion.

For the believer who was sincere in his faith, Allah grants firmness and the ability to answer correctly.

But the one who lived without true faith cannot give the answer that would save him.

My dear brothers in Islam,

These are not questions we should treat lightly.

We may know the correct answers today.

We may have heard them many times.

But the questioning in the grave is not simply a school examination where memorising words guarantees success.

It is a serious test of our faith.

We should live in a way that shows we truly believe in Allah, follow Islam and obey His Messenger, Sallahu Alayhi wa Salam.

My dear brothers in Islam,

The grave can be a place of comfort and mercy for the believer.

But it can also be a place of punishment.

And this is something we must take seriously.

The Prophet Muhammad, Sallahu Alayhi wa Salam, taught us that punishment in the grave is real.

In Sahih Muslim, (Hadith 292a), he passed by two graves and explained that their occupants were being punished.

One had been spreading stories between people to cause trouble.

The other had failed to take proper care to protect himself from being made unclean by urine.

My dear brothers in Islam,

Think carefully about these two matters.

One concerns the way we speak about others.

The other concerns cleanliness.

Things that some people may not consider particularly serious.

Yet the Prophet, Sallahu Alayhi wa Salam, warned us about their consequences.

We should never treat a sin as unimportant simply because it has become common.

Backbiting, spreading gossip and causing arguments between people can destroy relationships.

And neglecting cleanliness can affect the purity required for our worship.

These are matters that deserve our attention.

My dear brothers in Islam,

We must also understand that Allah is completely just.

We do not know the condition of every person who has died.

We cannot look at someone's grave and decide that they are being punished.

And we cannot claim that someone has received a particular reward unless we have clear evidence.

These matters belong to Allah.

Our responsibility is to learn from the warnings and prepare ourselves.

My dear brothers in Islam,

Sometimes, people become very concerned about what their funeral will look like.

They worry about who will attend.

Where they will be buried.

And how people will remember them.

But there is something far more important.

What condition will our souls be in when we meet Allah?

Will we have protected our salah?

Will we have repented from our sins?

Will we have treated our parents properly?

Will we have earned our money honestly?

Will we have fulfilled the rights of our spouses and children?

And will we have made an effort to become better Muslims?

My dear brothers in Islam,

The grave should remind us that our possessions cannot save us.

Our expensive homes will remain behind.

Our cars will remain behind.

Our bank accounts will remain behind.

And the positions we held in this world will no longer matter.

What will matter is our faith and the deeds we sent ahead.

The Prophet Muhammad, Sallahu Alayhi wa Salam, taught us in Sahih al-Bukhari, (Hadith 6514), that three things follow a person to the grave.

His family.

His wealth.

And his deeds.

Two return, but one remains.

His family and wealth return.

His deeds remain with him.

My dear brothers in Islam,

This is why we should never become so busy with this world that we forget the Hereafter.

There is nothing wrong with owning a nice home.

There is nothing wrong with working hard or enjoying the halal blessings Allah has given us.

But we must remember that these things are temporary.

And we must not allow them to distract us from preparing for the life to come.

My dear brothers in Islam,

Let us ask ourselves something today.

If we knew that our death would arrive tomorrow, what would we change?

Would we continue neglecting our prayers?

Would we continue carrying hatred towards family members?

Would we continue earning money through haram means?

Would we continue committing the same sins that we have been promising to leave behind?

Or would we turn to Allah and sincerely ask Him for forgiveness?

My dear brothers in Islam,

The truth is that we may not have tomorrow.

Our time could end today.

And once death arrives, we cannot return to correct our mistakes.

So let us use the opportunity Allah has given us.

Let us protect our salah.

Let us repent sincerely.

Let us make things right with those we have wronged.

And let us prepare for the day when we will be placed in our graves.

May Allah forgive our sins.

May Allah protect us from the punishment of the grave.

May Allah grant us firmness when we are questioned.

And may Allah make our graves places of peace and mercy, Ameen.

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 إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ. أَمَّا بَعْدُ.

Second Khutbah — English

My dear brothers in Islam,

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

We have spoken about the reality of the grave and the importance of preparing for what comes after death.

But now we need to ask ourselves:

What can we do today to prepare for the grave?

My dear brothers in Islam,

The first thing we must do is protect our salah.

Do not continue delaying your prayers.

Do not treat salah as something you perform only when you have spare time.

Make it a priority in your life.

And remember that the time will come when you will wish you could perform just one more prayer.

The second thing we should do is make sincere repentance.

Every one of us has committed sins.

But Allah has given us the opportunity to ask for forgiveness while we are still alive.

If you have been doing something haram, make a sincere effort to stop.

If you have neglected your responsibilities, begin correcting them.

And if you have wronged another person, try to make things right.

Do not wait until you are lying in your grave wishing you had changed.

My dear brothers in Islam,

The third thing we can do is perform good deeds that may continue benefiting us after death.

The Prophet Muhammad, Sallahu Alayhi wa Salam, taught us in Sahih Muslim, (Hadith 1631), that when a person dies, his deeds come to an end except for three things.

Ongoing charity.

Beneficial knowledge that people continue to use.

And a righteous child who makes dua for him.

My dear brothers in Islam,

Think about these opportunities.

You may help provide water for people who need it.

You may support a masjid or an Islamic educational project.

You may teach someone something beneficial about Islam.

Or you may raise children who remember you in their prayers long after you have passed away.

These are things that can continue bringing reward even when we are no longer here.

My dear brothers in Islam,

We should also remember those who have already returned to Allah.

Make dua for your deceased parents.

Remember your family members who have passed away.

Ask Allah to forgive them and have mercy upon them.

And when we attend a funeral, let it remind us of our own future.

Do not simply attend, offer condolences and return to life as though nothing has happened.

Remember that one day, people will be attending our funeral.

My dear brothers in Islam,

There is another important practice we should never neglect.

Seeking Allah's protection from the punishment of the grave.

The Prophet Muhammad, Sallahu Alayhi wa Salam, taught us in Sahih Muslim, (Hadith 588a), to seek Allah's protection from the punishment of Hellfire, the punishment of the grave, and the trials of life and death.

This reminds us that even the Prophet, Sallahu Alayhi wa Salam, taught his companions to take these matters seriously.

So we should make dua regularly and ask Allah to protect us.

My dear brothers in Islam,

The grave is a serious reminder.

But it should not cause us to lose hope in Allah.

As long as we are alive, we have the opportunity to repent, worship Him and do good.

We can still change our behaviour.

We can still repair relationships.

And we can still prepare for the Hereafter.

One day, all of these opportunities will come to an end.

But today, we are still here.

Let us use the time Allah has given us before it is too late.

May Allah forgive our parents and all the Muslims who have passed away.

May Allah fill their graves with light and mercy.

May Allah protect us from the punishment of the grave and the punishment of Hellfire.

May Allah allow us to die upon true faith.

And may Allah grant us a peaceful grave and admit us into Jannah, Ameen.

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.