

Steadfastness in the Face of Trials

First Khutbah

إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ لِلَّهِ , نَحْمَدُهُ , وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ , وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا , مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ , وَمَنْ يَضِلَّ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ , وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

Verily, all praise is for Allah. We praise Him, we seek His assistance and we ask for His forgiveness. And we seek refuge in Him from the evils of our selves. Whoever Allah guides, none can misguide. Whoever He misguides, none can guide. And I bear witness that there is no deity other than Allah and I bear witness that Mohammad is His servant and messenger.

(يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٠٢﴾ [آل

عمران:102]

Al Imran(3) 102 : **O you who believe! Fear Allah as He should be feared, and die not except in a state of Islam.**

Oh Believers:

Iman (faith) and Allah-consciousness are reasons for test and trials. And the reward for steadfastness in them is paradise as vast as the heavens and the earth. Paradise is surrounded by the disliked just as Hell is surrounded by the desires. The best of creation, the messengers and prophets, peace be upon them, were the most severely tested. The trials they faced are unbearable for others. As Allah Almighty says in the Quran

أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَأْتِكُمْ مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ مَسَّتْهُمُ الْبَأْسَاءُ
وَالضَّرَاءُ وَزُلْزَلُوا حَتَّى يَقُولَ الرَّسُولُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ مَتَى نَصْرُ اللَّهِ أَلَا إِنَّ نَصْرَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ-

البقرة 214

Surah Al-Baqarah (2) 214: **Or do you think that you will enter Paradise while such [trial] has not yet come to you as came to those who passed on before you? They were touched by poverty and hardship and were shaken until [even their] messenger and those who believed with him said, "When is the help of Allāh?" Unquestionably, the help of Allāh is near.**

When the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was asked which of the people is tried the most severely, he replied:

الأنبياءُ ثمَّ الأمثلُ فالأمثلُ فَيُبْتَلَى الرَّجُلُ عَلَى حَسَبِ دِينِهِ فَإِنْ كَانَ دِينُهُ صُلْبًا اشْتَدَّ بَلَاؤُهُ
وَإِنْ كَانَ فِي دِينِهِ رِقَّةٌ ابْتُلِيَ عَلَى حَسَبِ دِينِهِ فَمَا يَبْرَحُ الْبَلَاءُ بِالْعَبْدِ حَتَّى يَتْرُكَهُ يَمْشِي عَلَى
الْأَرْضِ مَا عَلَيْهِ خَطِيئَةٌ

The Prophets, then those nearest to them, then those nearest to them. A man is tried according to his religion; if he is firm in his faith, then his trials are more severe, and if he is frail in his faith, then he is tried according to the strength of his faith. The servant shall continue to be tried until he is left walking upon the earth without any sins. [Jami` at-Tirmidhi 2398, Grade: Hasan]

In the month of Shawwal in the fifth year of the Hijra, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and his noble companions, may Allah be pleased with them, faced a severe trial. The Arabs besieged them in one united front. And multitudes of polytheists gathered against them. And they

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encountered the treachery of the tribe of Banu an-Nadir and the abandonment of the hypocrites, in an incident called the Battle of the Ahzab (confederates). And clear verses were revealed, describing its severity and hardship, that will be recited until the end of time.

Quraysh sought revenge for their defeat in Badr, and were encouraged by a group from Banu an-Nadir, who were bitter about being expelled from Medina to Khaybar for breaking their treaty with the Muslims. A group from Banu an-Nadir went to Mecca to encourage the polytheists to attack Medina. Then a delegation went to the Ghtfaan tribe, one of the largest tribes of Central Arabia at the time, and enticed them to ally with the polytheists for half the produce of Khaybar. Many tribes, including Ashja', Bani Sulaim, Bani Murrah, Bani Kinaanah, and the people of Tuhaamah, joined this large assembly, referred to by Allah as Al Ahzab (the Confederates), aiming for Medina. When the Prophet ﷺ learned of their approach, he consulted his companions. Salman the Persian, may Allah be pleased with him, suggested digging a trench to prevent the polytheists from reaching Medina, which the Muslims did.

Along with the fear of their enemy, and the onslaught of the polytheists, they were faced with severe starvation and painful hunger as they dug the trench. As this happened during winter, it was cold. And the cold of winter can only be alleviated by food, but there was no food. Digging is hard and exhausting, and a hungry person cannot do it. They were beset by a lack of means, intense hunger, and fear of the enemy. Anas, may Allah be pleased with him, said, in describing the food that came to them while they were digging the trench:

يُوتُونَ بِمِلءِ كَفَى مِنَ الشَّعِيرِ فَيُصْنَعُ لَهُمْ بِإِهَالَةٍ سَنِيخَةٌ تُوَضَعُ بَيْنَ يَدَيْ الْقَوْمِ، وَالْقَوْمُ جِيَاعٌ،
وَهِيَ بَشِيعَةٌ فِي الْحَلْقِ وَلَهَا رِيحٌ مُنْتِنَةٌ

They were brought a handful of barley which was cooked in stale, rancid fat, that was placed before the hungry people. And it had an unpleasant taste and was difficult to swallow and had a foul odor. [Bukhari 4100]

This toiling and hunger continued for several days, with them finding nothing to eat, to the extent that they tied stones to their bellies, as happened to the Prophet ﷺ. Jabir, may Allah be pleased with him, said:

إِنَّا يَوْمَ الْخُنْدَقِ نَحْفِرُ فَعَرَّضْتُ كُذْيَةً شَدِيدَةً، فَجَاءُوا النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالُوا هَذِهِ كُذْيَةٌ
عَرَّضْتُ فِي الْخُنْدَقِ، فَقَالَ "أَنَا نَازِلٌ". ثُمَّ قَامَ وَبَطْنُهُ مَعْصُوبٌ بِحَجَرٍ، وَلَبِثْنَا ثَلَاثَةَ أَيَّامٍ لَا نَذُوقُ ذَوْاقًا

...

On the day of the trench, we were digging and came across a large rock. We went to the Prophet ﷺ and said, 'This rock is blocking our work in the trench.' He said, 'I will come down.' Then he stood up, his belly was braced with a stone (to ease the pain of hunger). We stayed for three days without tasting anything. [Bukhari 4101]

The trials continued and their afflictions intensified. While they were in this difficult situation, a rumor spread among the people that the Banu Quraydha, within the city, had broken their treaty with the Prophet ﷺ and were planning to ally with the polytheists against the Muslims.

When the Prophet ﷺ confirmed this news, he said:

Allah is the Greatest, rejoice, O community of Muslims.

It is good tidings due to the severity of the trial, and optimism in the nearness of what Allah Almighty has promised despite the great distress and the dire situation.

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Such was the Prophet's ﷺ unwavering certainty in Allah Almighty, regardless of the extent of the hardship, the severity of the distress, and the intensity of the trial.

Added to these trials and tribulations that came successively upon the Muslims, hardship after hardship, one after the other, each new one making them forget the previous one, was the emergence of hypocrisy. And the betrayal of the hypocrites in the midst of the Muslim community. And attempting to demoralize the Muslims by spreading rumors and fear about the strength of the polytheists, and by openly withdrawing from the army. To the point that the spokesman for the hypocrites said, Muhammad promised us the treasures of Khosrow (Kisra) and Caesar, yet one of us cannot even go to relieve himself (out of fear). Another said, Our homes are exposed to the enemy, so give us permission to return home.

It was a great trial and severe distress, that could only be withstood by those strong in faith and certainty, along with fortification from Allah and His strengthening their hearts. Imagine the combination of fear and hunger on the weak human psyche, a fierce enemy besieging the city intent on annihilating the Muslims, outnumbering them by threefold, an internal enemy determined to break the pact and betray the Muslims, and the rejoicing hypocrites revealing their true colors. Who could stand firm in the face of such an immense trial and face these successive tests with steadfastness and certainty?

The Quran precisely and eloquently describes this great trial and the severe distress that befell the believers:

إِذْ جَاءُوكُم مِّن فَوْقِكُمْ وَمِنْ أَسْفَلَ مِنكُمْ وَإِذْ زَاغَتِ الْأَبْصَارُ وَبَلَغَتِ الْقُلُوبُ الْحَنَاجِرَ
وَتَظُنُّونَ بِاللَّهِ الظُّنُونَا هُنَالِكَ ابْتُلِيَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَزُلْزِلُوا زِلْزَالًا شَدِيدًا-الأحزاب 11

Al-Ahzab (33) 10-11: (10) [Remember] when they came at you from above you and from below you, and when eyes shifted [in fear], and hearts reached the throats, and you assumed about Allāh [various] assumptions. (11) There the believers were tested and shaken with a severe shaking.

Yes, eyes shifted in fear due to the severity of calamity and distress, and hearts went out of their places due to fear and fright. This is the natural fear of human beings, regardless of who they are.

Allah Almighty recounts the statements of the hypocrites intended to spread fear and weaken the believers, while strengthening the disbelievers:

وَإِذْ يَقُولُ الْمُنَافِقُونَ وَالَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ مَا وَعَدَنَا اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ إِلَّا غُرُورًا وَإِذْ قَالَتْ طَآئِفَةٌ مِنْهُمْ يَا أَهْلَ يَثْرِبَ لَا مُقَامَ لَكُمْ فَارْجِعُوا وَيَسْتَأْذِنُ فَرِيقٌ مِنْهُمُ النَّبِيَّ يَقُولُونَ إِنَّ بُيُوتَنَا عَوْرَةٌ وَمَا هِيَ بِعَوْرَةٍ إِنْ يُرِيدُونَ إِلَّا فِرَارًا-الأحزاب 13

Al-Ahzab (33) 12-13: (12) And [remember] when the hypocrites and those in whose hearts is disease said, "Allāh and His Messenger did not promise us except delusion," (13) And when a faction of them said, "O people of Yathrib, there is no stability for you [here], so return [home]." And a party of them asked permission of the Prophet, saying, "Indeed, our houses are exposed [i.e., unprotected]," while they were not exposed. They did not intend except to flee.

The hypocrites thought the Muslims would be annihilated, but the believers were certain what Allah Almighty promised them was true and that He Almighty would make them prevail, even if the polytheists disliked it.

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With the intensification of the trial, and the severity of distress, came relief from Allah Almighty. Discord and disagreement broke out and spread among the Confederates, and unity turned into disunity. Then the Confederates disbanded and dispersed.

أَقُولُ مَا تَسْمَعُونَ وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ لِي وَلَكُمْ مِنْ كُلِّ ذَنْبٍ فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ

I say what you have heard and I seek forgiveness from Allah for me and you from every sin. So seek forgiveness from Him, Verily He is Oft-Forgiving, the Most Merciful.

Second Khutbah

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ، وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ
وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

All praise is to Allah, and peace and blessings upon the Messenger of Allah, and I bear witness that there is no deity other than Allah and I bear witness that Mohammad is His slave and messenger.

Oh people:

The Battle of the Trench was a difficult trial and test, which the true believers passed, while the hypocrites failed. Quranic verses were sent down to expose the hypocrites and reveal their hidden flaws, and praise the believers for their patience and steadfastness, and for facing these trials with contentment and submission to Allah, Lord of the worlds.

It is noteworthy that the verse commanding following the Prophet ﷺ is interspersed within the verses that describe this battle and its details:

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا-

الأحزاب 21

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Al-Ahzab (33) 21: **There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allāh an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allāh and the Last Day and [who] remembers Allāh often.**

Ibn Kathir, may Allah have mercy on him, said, this noble verse is a great basis for following the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in his words, actions, and conditions. This is why, Allah Almighty commanded people to emulate the Prophet's ﷺ patience, perseverance, striving and waiting for relief from his Lord, Almighty and Majestic, on the Day of the Confederates.

In the next verse, Allah Almighty describes His believing servants who believe in Allah's promises and the good outcomes that they will attain in this world and the hereafter. Allah Almighty said:

وَلَمَّا رَأَى الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الْأَحْزَابَ قَالُوا هَذَا مَا وَعَدَنَا اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَصَدَقَ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَمَا زَادَهُمْ إِلَّا إِيمَانًا وَتَسْلِيمًا-الأحزاب 22

Al-Ahzab (33) 22: **And when the believers saw the companies, they said, "This is what Allāh and His Messenger had promised us, and Allāh and His Messenger spoke the truth." And it increased them only in faith and acceptance.**

Ibn Abbas, may Allah be pleased with them, and Qatada said they meant Allah's words in Surah Al-Baqarah:

أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَأْتِكُمْ مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ مَسَّتْهُمُ الْبَأْسَاءُ وَالضَّرَاءُ وَزُلْزِلُوا حَتَّى يَقُولَ الرَّسُولُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ مَتَى نَصْرُ اللَّهِ أَلَا إِنَّ نَصْرَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ-البقرة 214

Al-Baqarah (2) 214: **Or do you think that you will enter Paradise while such [trial] has not yet come to you as came to those who passed on**

before you? They were touched by poverty and hardship and were shaken until [even their] messenger and those who believed with him said, "When is the help of Allāh?" Unquestionably, the help of Allāh is near.

How much Muslims, in these times, need to study the life of the Prophet ﷺ and be certain that what they endure of harm, trials, disasters, calamities, or tests, was even more severe for the early Muslims. They remained patient and steadfast in their faith, and did not change or alter to please anyone, regardless of their power or their threats and intimidation. Allah Almighty granted them a good outcome in this world with victory and support, and was pleased with their actions so He pleased them, and was pleased with them.

So whatever calamities, trials and afflictions that we face, whether major or minor, whether on an individual or community level, whether psychological or physical, whether in health or wealth, let us emulate our beloved Prophet ﷺ in remaining optimistic, and remaining steadfast upon our faith and having certainty in the good outcomes for the believers in this world and the next.

We ask Allah Almighty to make us among those who face trials with patience, optimism and steadfastness. Indeed Allah is All Hearing Answering.

هَذَا وَصَلُّوا وَسَلِّمُوا عَلَى نَبِيِّكُمْ كَمَا أَمَرَكُمْ بِذَلِكَ رَبُّكُمْ , فَقَالَ

I conclude with this and send prayers of blessings and peace upon your Prophet as your Lord commanded:

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

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Al Ahzaab (33) 56: Indeed, Allah confers blessing upon the Prophet, and His angels [ask Him to do so]. O you who have believed, ask [Allah to confer] blessing upon him and ask [Allah to grant him] peace.

اللَّهُمَّ اهْدِنَا فِيْمَنْ هَدَيْتَ وَعَافِنَا فِيْمَنْ عَافَيْتَ وَتَوَلَّنَا فِيْمَنْ تَوَلَّيْتَ وَبَارِكْ لَنَا فِيْمَا
أَعْطَيْتَ وَقِنَا شَرَّ مَا قَضَيْتَ إِنَّكَ تَقْضِي وَلَا يُقْضَى عَلَيْكَ وَإِنَّهُ لَا يَذِلُّ مَنْ وَالَيْتَ
تَبَارَكْتَ رَبَّنَا وَتَعَالَيْتَ

O Allah, guide us with those whom You have guided, grant us well-being among those You have granted well-being, be an ally to us along with those whom You are an ally to, and bless what You have bestowed upon us, and save us from the evil of what You have decreed. For verily You decree and none can decree over You. He whom You support can never be humiliated. Glory is to You, our Lord, You are Blessed and Exalted.

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّا نَسْأَلُكَ مِنَ الْخَيْرِ كُلِّهِ عَاجِلِهِ وَآجِلِهِ مَا عَلِمْنَا مِنْهُ وَمَا لَمْ نَعْلَمْ وَنَعُوذُ بِكَ
مِنَ الشَّرِّ كُلِّهِ عَاجِلِهِ وَآجِلِهِ مَا عَلِمْنَا مِنْهُ وَمَا لَمْ نَعْلَمْ اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّا نَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ خَيْرِ مَا
سَأَلَكَ عَبْدُكَ وَنَبِيُّكَ وَنَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا عَاذَ بِهِ عَبْدُكَ وَنَبِيُّكَ اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّا نَسْأَلُكَ
الْجَنَّةَ وَمَا قَرَّبَ إِلَيْهَا مِنْ قَوْلٍ أَوْ عَمَلٍ وَنَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ النَّارِ وَمَا قَرَّبَ إِلَيْهَا مِنْ قَوْلٍ أَوْ
عَمَلٍ وَنَسْأَلُكَ أَنْ تَجْعَلَ كُلَّ قَضَاءٍ قَضَيْتَهُ لَنَا خَيْرًا

O Allah, We ask You for all that is good, in this world and in the Hereafter, what we know and what we do not know. O Allah, we seek refuge with You from all evil, in this world and in the Hereafter, what we know and what we do not know. O Allah, we ask You for the good that Your servant and

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Prophet has asked You for, and we seek refuge with You from the evil from which Your servant and Prophet sought refuge. O Allah, we ask You for Paradise and for that which brings one closer to it, in word and deed, and we seek refuge in You from Hell and from that which brings one closer to it, in word and deed. And we ask You to make every decree that You decree concerning us good.

عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَى وَيَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ
وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ، يَعْظُمُ لِعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ

Servants of Allah. Indeed, Allah orders justice and good conduct and giving to relatives and forbids immorality and bad conduct and oppression. He admonishes you that perhaps you will be reminded.

أذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ الْعَظِيمَ يَذْكُرْكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا يَزِدْكُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرُوا يُغْفِرْ لَكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا يَجْعَلْ
لَكُمْ مِنْ أَمْرِكُمْ مَخْرَجًا ، وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ

Remember Allah, the Great - He will remember you. Thank Him for His favors - He will increase you therein. And seek forgiveness from Him - He will forgive you. And be conscious of Him - He will provide you a way out of difficult matters. And, establish the prayer.