



Translation of the Two Holy Mosques Khutbahs
A Joint Project



The General Presidency for the Affairs of
the Grand Holy Mosque and the Prophet's Holy Mosque

Al-Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University
College of Languages and Translation

المسجد الحرام

[24/02/1435– A – Al-Shuraim] أ- الشريم -1435-02-24

Optimism and Pessimism

Khutbah Topic

His eminence Sheikh Saud Al-Shuraim –May Allah protect him– delivered last Friday’s Khutbah titled “**Optimism and Pessimism**” in which he dealt with the importance of being optimistic and having good faith in Almighty Allah (*May He be extolled*) and explained how important and effective this is on the life of the Muslim. He also warned against despair, hopelessness and anguish and gave evidence as to the advantages of optimism and disadvantages of pessimism.

Part one

Praise be to Allah! We praise Him and seek His assistance and guidance. We ask for His forgiveness and repent to Him. We seek refuge in Allah from the evils of our own souls and sinful deeds. He whom Almighty Allah guides will have none to lead him astray. He whom Allah decrees that he should go astray will have none to guide him to righteousness. I bear witness that there is no other deity worth worshipping except Allah alone with no associate, and I bear witness that Muhammad is his Servant and Messenger.

﴿O you who believe! Fear Allâh (by doing all that He has ordered and by abstaining from all that He has forbidden) as He should be feared. [Obey Him, be thankful to Him, and remember Him always], and die not except in a state of Islâm (as Muslims) with complete submission to Allâh.﴾ [Āl Imrān: 102]

﴿O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who created you from a single person (Adam), and from him (Adam) He created his wife [Hawwa (Eve)], and from them both He created many men and women and fear Allâh through Whom you demand your mutual (rights), and (do not cut the relations of) the wombs (kinship) . Surely, Allâh is Ever an All-Watcher over you.﴾ [Al-Nisā: 1]



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﴿O you who believe! Keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him, and speak (always) the truth. He will direct you to do righteous good deeds and will forgive you your sins. And whosoever obeys Allâh and His Messenger (SAW) he has indeed achieved a great achievement (i.e. he will be saved from the Hell-fire and made to enter Paradise).﴾ [Al-Aḥzāb: 70-71]

Nowthen,

The best speech is the Book of Allah Almighty, and the best guidance is that of Muhammad (May Allah's Salat and Peace be upon him) and the worst of all things are innovations (fabricated rites in religion), and that every such innovation is misguidance.

Keep with the Muslim congregation, for Allah's hand is with the congregation. He who deserts Muslim ranks will do so in hell. ﴿And whoever contradicts and opposes the Messenger (Muhammad SAW) after the right path has been shown clearly to him, and follows other than the believers' way. We shall keep him in the path he has chosen, and burn him in Hell - what an evil destination.﴾ [Al-Nisā: 115]

O Muslims!

Amid the hustle and bustle of life, amid the doom and gloom, and man's obvious and concealed blemishes and heart-rending flaws, man cannot tolerate more fuel or more air that may fan the blaze, nor can he tolerate more water to make matters worse. Otherwise, he would be running the risk of withering away or facing a fatal destiny.

Life's conditions are irksome indeed where people are engaged in an incessant motion. People are bent on selling, manumitting or abusing their souls. This is the attitude of people vis-à-vis calamities and adversities that befall them or strike close to them except those on whom Allah Almighty have mercy albeit very few.

We see with our own eyes, and hear with our own ears whole-sale calamities and misfortunes befalling our brothers and sisters in faith, our neighbours or relatives, or befalling us before or after them –May Allah protect you and us from them– and we stare browbeaten not knowing what to do. We give in to despair, hopelessness and pessimism although this does nothing but aggravate our sorrow and multiply our plight as if we were travelling through high altitudes. It only makes our wound more painful.



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Suffering from all these calamities, we crave a ray of hope and trust in Allah. We feel that we are in a dire need for a sense of relief and deliverance especially in times of despair and trouble. A society that has not been scorched by the fire and devastation of war, internal or external, is a society blessed with security and safety. Therefore, it should cherish its peace and meditate the reasons of its intellectual, food and health security as well as its financial wellbeing. It should exert unrelenting efforts to fend off elements of anarchy, division and disunity before it is too late.

Prevention is better than cure, and a stitch in time saves nine. We have to make hay while the sun shines.

Having good faith in Allah is the best remedy of misfortunes, and adversities; it is most effective in the present as well as in the future. It is innate hopefulness that makes you have good faith in Allah and be guided by your Prophet (May Allah's Salat and Peace be upon him) who always adhered to optimism and hated pessimism because it spelled out thinking ill of Allah for no good reason.

If one is struck with hardship, he will be duly rewarded by Allah (To Whom belongs Might and Majesty) Who elevates ranks, forgives sins, sends relief and assigns happy endings to painful experiences. Every cloud has a silver lining and it is darkest before dawn.

«So verily, with the hardship, there is relief, Verily, with the hardship, there is relief (i.e. there is one hardship with two reliefs, so one hardship cannot overcome two reliefs).» [Al-Sharh: 5-6]

The key to transiting from hardship to relief lies in optimism and having good faith in Allah. Optimism allows even the blind to see light. Conversely, pessimism makes one see nothing but darkness even though one has perfect eyesight.

He who meditates on the biography of our Prophet (May Allah's Salat and Peace be upon him) will find it full of hope and optimism even during confrontation with his sworn enemy. When a man of Quraish named Suhail Ibn 'Amr came to the Prophet (May Allah's Salat and Peace be upon him) during the Hudaibiya peace treaty, the Prophet told him, "**Sahula amrukum** (Your matter has become easy)!"¹

The Prophet (May Allah's Salat and Peace be upon him) used to be so keen on optimism for it engenders a special connection between man and his creator that is associated with having good faith in Allah to the extent he (May Allah's Salat and Peace be upon him) used to encourage people to choose good names that inspire

¹ Here the Prophet (May Allah's Salat and Peace be upon him) uses the homophonous similarity between the Arabic verb *sahula* (became easy) and the man's name (Suhail) to express pessimism.



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optimism and to shun names that inspire pessimism. When a man named “Hazn”² (the grandfather of Sa’id Bin Al-Musayab) came to the Prophet (May Allah’s Salat and Peace be upon him), the Prophet (May Allah’s Salat and Peace be upon him) asked him about his name. “My name is Hazn,” the man replied. “No! **Your name is Sahl**,”³ the Prophet said. “I am not changing a name that my father gave me!” the man replied. Al-Musayab said, “Unhappiness never left us ever since!” [Narrated by Bukhari]

The Prophet’s optimism was not confined to the world of reality; it was also there in the world of his dreams. (Imam) Muslim narrated in his *Sahih* that the Prophet (May Allah’s Salat and Peace be upon him) said, “**I saw us in my dream as if we were at ‘Uqba Ibn Rafi’s, and that we had some of Ibn Talib’s dates. I interpret that dream as we are going to achieve glory in the herein and a good reward in the hereafter, and that our religion will prevail.**”

What great role optimism had played in the life of our great Prophet and **May Allah’s Salat and Peace be upon him**! He did not like his *Ummah* to lose hope or entertain pessimism. After all he was sent as mercy to the worlds so that he might bring people closer to Allah, lift their spirits and make them have good faith in Allah even when man is supplicating his Lord.

In his *hadith*, the Prophet (May Allah’s Salat and Peace be upon him) reminds us of optimism; he says, “**Supplicate Allah Almighty and be certain that He will answer your prayer.**” [Narrated by Al-Termidhi]

(The Sheikh recites two lines of poetry):

*I do supplicate Allah until I feel as if I could see,
Through my good faith in Him, what he ordained in reply.*

The Prophet (May Allah’s Salat and Peace be upon him) teaches his *Ummah* to be sure that relief will come despite the dark moments, the painful circumstances, and the agonizing misfortunes. Relief is embedded in optimism and high hopes in Allah. The Prophet (May Allah’s Salat and Peace be upon him), whenever he led his Companions in a rain-invoking *salat*, he used to wear his gown in reverse hoping that Allah would reverse their condition from distress and want to prosperity, and from barrenness to rain and fertility.

If this was their behaviour during times of drought, so what about if victory and empowerment were withheld, and their pride and honour were taken away from them?!

The prominent Muslim scholar (The Sheikh of Islam) Ibn Taymiyah, may Allah have mercy on his soul, mentioned that when Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) decided to march out to fight the *Khawarij* (a separatist group of Muslims) a fortune teller came to him and said: *O Commander of the Faithful! Do not travel because the moon is in the Scorpion (horoscope), for if you travel when the moon is in the Scorpion, i. e. the Scorpion Horoscope, your followers will be defeated.*

²Hazn is an Arabic word for sorrow.

³Sahl is an Arabic word for cheerful.



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*Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, said: "rather we travel putting our trust in Allah, relying on Him, and proving you are a liar." So Ali travelled and Allah blessed that travel, for he killed the majority of the *Khawarij*. That made him (May Allah be pleased with him) feel ecstatic. It is, indeed, hope, optimism, and trust in Allah which he (Ali) learnt from his beloved and example (Muhammad) (May Allah's Salat and Peace be upon him).*

O son of Adam! You are free to choose from what befalls you in your life, between despair and hope, pessimism and optimism. However, you shall find your hope and optimism with Allah, and your despair and pessimism with Satan, *﴿in order that he may cause grief to the believers. But he cannot harm them in the least, except as Allah permits﴾*[Al-Mujādilah: 10]. In the Qudsi Hadith⁴, Allah Almighty says: *"I am to my slave as he thinks of Me."*[Narrated by Bukhari and Muslim]

Thus –O son of Adam– there are two roads and two doors! So think about which road or door you choose! *﴿Every person is a pledge for what he has earned (38) Except those on the Right, (i. e. the pious true believers of Islamic Monotheism).﴾*[Al-Muddaththir: 38-39]

May Allah bless you and me by the Glorious *Qur'ān* and make its verses and wise sayings beneficial to you and me! This is what I have said. If it is correct, it is so thanks to Allah, but if it is wrong, it is my own fault and Satan's. I ask Allah to forgive my sins, yours, and those of all the Muslims, so ask Him for forgiveness, for He is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful!

Part Two

⁴A hadith that is inspired by Allah but phrased by the Prophet (May Allah's Salat and Peace be upon him)



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Praise be to Allah for His blessings, and thanks are due to Him for His guidance and bounty.

Now then,

Observe *taqwa*, O servants of Allah, and you should know that a person might be taken aback upon seeing the demise of the people of trials and calamities as individuals and groups; how they became low and fell from grace for they never sought any eminence or prestige nor contemplated hope. Rather, the forces of despair, hopelessness, and degradation prevailed over their hearts; thus they took upon themselves to shun all hope and optimism in their lives.

Had all those realized that Allah is the sole Sovereign, that all things are in His possession, that He protects (all), while there is no protector against Him, (i.e. if Allah saves anyone, none can punish or harm him, and if Allah punishes or harms anyone, none can save him), and that what He wills will be and what He wills not will not be. Had they known this, then despair would not have controlled them nor hopelessness driven some of them to sorrow, anxiety, and melancholy, and then consequently to suicide, may Allah protect you and me against that.

Optimism –O servants of Allah– implies patience, contentment, victory, honour, and hope. However, despair and pessimism imply discontent, defeat, disgrace, and anxiety. Optimism does not necessarily mean accomplishment of (desired) things. However, it is the best cure of pessimism and despair. In an atmosphere of optimism body and mind are healthy and the servant will be closer to Allah (*May He be extolled*) and His Messenger (*May Allah's Salat and Peace be upon him*) since they have ordered us to be optimistic. On the other hand, in an atmosphere of pessimism, a servant will be far from Allah (*May He be extolled*) and His Messenger (*May Allah's Salat and Peace be upon him*) because they have warned us against being pessimistic.

Optimism –O servants of Allah– is the first step in the process of work, while pessimism is the first step towards laziness, sitting around, and yielding to one's desires. Optimism –O servants of Allah– is like applying (suitable) ointment on a wound, while pessimism is like putting salt on a wound. Optimism –O servants of Allah– is trust in Allah and a belief in His Fate, while pessimism is mistrust in Allah and a suspicion in His Fate. Optimism is life and Pessimism is death.

(The Sheikh quotes two lines of poetry):

*Optimism is indeed light and happiness to youth,
Be happy with a path lit by your optimism.
Pessimism is but darkness and misery,
And whoever is affected by pessimism will perish.*

Ask Allah –may He have mercy on you– to send His *Salat* (Graces, Honours, Mercy) and Peace on the best of His creatures and the purest of mankind, Muhammad Ibn `AbdAllāh, who is



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given *al-hawdh* and is vested with intercession, for Allah sent His *Salat* (Graces, Honours, Mercy) and Peace on him and then ordered His angels, that are praising His sanctity, to do likewise and called out to you, O believers, to ask Him to send His *Salat* (Graces, Honours, Mercy) and Peace on him. Allah Almighty says: **﴿Allâh sends His Salât (Graces, Honours, Blessings, Mercy) on the Prophet (Muhammad, peace be upon him), and also His angels (ask Allâh to bless and forgive him). O you who believe! Send your Salât (ask Allâh to bless) on him (Muhammad peace be upon him), and (you should) greet (salute) him with the Islâmic way of greeting (salutation i.e. As-Salâmu 'Alaikum).﴾**[Al-Aḥzāb: 56]

O Allah! Send Your *Salat* (Graces, Honours, Mercy) and Peace on Your Servant and Messenger Muhammad who has the brightest face and the most glorious forehead, on his four Caliphs, Abu Bakr, Omar, Othman and Ali, on all the Companions of Your Prophet Muhammad (*May Allah's Salat and Peace be upon him*), and the *tabi'īn* and on those who righteously followed them till the Day of Judgment! O Allah! Be also pleased with us all, along with them, by Your Pardon and Generosity, O You, Most Merciful, Most Compassionate of all!

O Allah! Grant glory to Islam and Muslims! O Allah! Grant glory to Islam and Muslims! O Allah! Grant glory to Islam and Muslims! O Allah! Fail polytheism and polytheists (who associate partners with You)! O Allah! Grant victory to Your Religion, Your Holy Book, Your Prophet's *Sunnah* and Your true servants!

O Allah! Bring an end to the suffering of Muslims, by Your Mercy, O You, Most Merciful, Most Compassionate of all! Rescue those in distress, and help those indebted pay back their debts! Cure those of us and those of the Muslims who are ill, O You, Most Merciful, Most Compassionate!

O Allah! Be with our brothers and sisters who are oppressed in their religion everywhere! O Allah! Be with them and not against them! O Allah! Grant them victory over those who oppressed them, O You, the Living One, the Self-Subsisting, the Lord of Majesty and Bounty! O Allah! Fail their enemy and plague their lives and make them disastrous! O You the Ever-Living, the Hearer of supplications!

O Allah! Grant us security in our homelands! Make pious our leaders and those responsible for our affairs, and make our leadership from among those who are fearful of Allah, who observe *taqwā* (fear of Allah's punishment), and seek your satisfaction! O You, Lord of *al-'ālamīn* (the worlds)!



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O Allah! Guide our Imam (leader) to do and say whatever pleases You and whatever You accept! O You, the Ever-Living, the Eternal Guardian! O Allah! Make his retinue righteous, O You, the Lord of Majesty and Bounty!

O Allah! You are Allah; there is no deity worthy of worship except You! You are Self-Sufficient and we are poor! Send down rain upon us and do not make us despondent! O Allah! You are Allah; there is no deity worthy of worship except You! You are Self-Sufficient and we are poor! Send down rain upon us and do not make us despondent! O Allah! We implore You not to make our sins impede Your grace! O You, the Lord of Majesty and Bounty!

﴿... Our Lord! Give us in this world that which is good and in the Hereafter that which is good, and save us from the torment of the Fire!﴾[Al-Baqarah: 201]

Glorified be You, our Lord, the Lord of Honour and Power! You are free from what they attribute unto You! May Allah's *Salat*(Graces, Honours, Mercy) and Peace be upon the Messengers! And the last of our supplications is all praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds!