



[24/07/1435 – A – Khayyāt]

٢٤-٧-١٤٣٥-أ-خطب

Free Time between Negligence and Gratitude

Khutbah Topic

His Eminence Sheikh Usamah Ibn Abdullah Khayyāt –may Allah protect him– delivered this Friday khutbah titled “**Free Time between Negligence and Gratitude**” in which he talked about Allah’s profuse blessings bestowed upon mankind. The greatest among such blessings in our modern time is the blessing of free time. The Sheikh pointed out to the necessity of exploiting one’s free time in performing pious acts and deeds to keep oneself in close communion with Allah. He also warned against neglecting one’s free time and reminded his audience of the need of showing gratitude to Allah Almighty for such a favour.

Part One

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Universe, and a blissful ending be reserved for the pious! I thank Him (May He be extolled) and I bear witness that there is no deity worth worshipping save Allah alone, with no associate. He is the True Sovereign and the Unmistakable Truth! I also bear witness that our Prophet and Master Muhammad is the Servant of Allah and His Messenger, the divine mercy revealed to the whole universe. O Allah! Send Your *Salat* and Peace upon Your Servant and Messenger Muhammad and his virtuous family! O Allah! Be pleased with all his Companions, the *tabi’in* (the contemporaries of the Companions of the Prophet [May Allah’s *Salat* and Peace be upon him] after his death) and with all those who follow them in righteousness until the Day of Judgement!

Now then,

O servants of Allah! Adhere to *taqwa* (fear of disobeying Allah), and make yourselves ready with the best of provisions for the Day of the Encounter. Do not yield to the temptations of base life in the herein, and never let the chief deceiver and arrogant Satan deceive you about Allah.¹

¹ This statement is drawn from the following Qur’ānic Verse: «... **let not then this (worldly) present life deceive you, nor let the chief deceiver (Satan) deceive you about Allāh.**» [Luqmān: 33]



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O servants of Allah!

Indeed, life is replete with momentous events which overwhelm some people to the point that they become so engulfed in them that they do not feel obliged to show gratefulness to the source of all bounty. Therefore, they fail to show profuse gratitude to Allah for His manifest favours, abundant bounties, and innumerable graces:

﴿And if you would count the graces of Allâh, never could you be able to count them. Truly! Allâh is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.﴾ [Al-Nahl: 18]

Such devastating incidents also tend to distract those people from their duties towards their fellow Muslim brothers and sisters and their fellow citizens. For instance, they forget to perform good deeds to benefit other people, show gratitude, contribute to eradicating misery, take part in chasing away the nightmarish afflictions befalling those longing for any form of support and commiserate with the distressed; such commiseration which depicts sympathy, brotherhood, and true loyalty in its most beautiful manifestations.

It is worth pointing out that the incidents overwhelming the very existence of certain people and distract from performing their duties do not have the same psychological impact on them. Poverty, illness, fatal disasters, and grave tragedies as those seen in blood-spattering conflicts and devastating turmoil exemplify the unpredictable incidents which might befall people unawares and consequently distract their attention from their duties, prevent them from accomplishing any positive mission, dissipate their time, and lead them to experience the futility of life.

Furthermore, if there is a category of people whose life is submerged in routine incidents distracting them from the performance of their duties towards their Lord (Allah), towards themselves and their own community, there is equally another category of people – perhaps the majority– who are immune from such afflictions. On the contrary, they enjoy sound sleep, sound health, unfailing fortune, total bliss, life comfort, tranquil mind, safety from afflictions, and leisure time unspoiled by strenuous worries about increasing their earnings to face family expenditures, and uncorrupted by sudden negative changes in life conditions.

This category of people should be fully aware of these blessings and graces bestowed upon them by Allah and must accordingly show gratitude to the source of such endowments. They can express gratitude through optimal use of the time during which they enjoy sound health, free time, absence of obstacles and discomfort. Otherwise, they would be the ultimate losers who expect afflictions to befall them at any time, and would probably be the people meant in the *hadith* of the Prophet of Guidance (May Allah's *Salat* and Peace be upon him) when he drew the *Ummah's* attention to two irremediable misfortunes and irreparable errors by saying, "***There are two blessings in which many people incur loss: sound health and***



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leisure time." [Reported by Imam Bukhari in his *Sahîh*, as narrated by Ibn Abbās (May Allah be pleased with him and his father)]

Gubn (in Arabic) means lack of something or too little of it; no one will keep it in mind unless he is naive or has illusions; for man's nature always motivates him to gain benefits in every field and pursue his strife in competition without idleness.

So, if there are some people who persist in not seizing such opportunities and continue to live their carefree days of inactivity, relinquishing thus their major source of gaining reward, they could only be feeble-minded fellows who cannot perceive where their interest lies.

There is yet another group of people whose feeble-mindedness and set of misconceptions lead them to totally dissipate the gains they have acquired and the advantages they have been endowed with. They can neither draw any benefit from such privileges, nor can they perform any action to perpetuate their enjoyment thereof. They are unable to take pleasure in cheerful life while preserving the above-mentioned benefits endowed by Allah.

Servants of Allah! There is no greater gain, better blessing, or higher profit than the enjoyment of sound health, just like an encompassing and hard-wearing costume which is neither unstitched nor ripped apart. This is why it would stand to reason, for anyone upon whom Allah has bestowed the blessing of sound health (just like an encompassing outfit) to take care of it. The ways of attending to such a divine gift are numerous but converge towards the same ultimate purpose. It namely consists in showing gratitude to the source of blessing through obedience to Him, making maximum effort to use it properly, taking advantage of youth through taking good initiatives, restraining one's caprices and impermissible desires, and abstaining from volatile behaviour. All the foregoing acts embody the idea of gratitude due to be expressed to Allah in order to seek a prolonged enjoyment of blessings and a sustained delight in sound health:

﴿And (remember) when your Lord proclaimed: "If you give thanks (by accepting Faith and worshipping none but Allâh), I will give you more (of My Blessings), but if you are thankless (i.e. disbelievers), verily! My Punishment is indeed severe."﴾ [Ibrahim: 7]

Quite certainly, and just like any other mortal entity predestined to extinction, the blessing of health is liable to frailty and enervation due to constant exposure to affliction, degeneration, and malady. Therefore, all those who fail to perceive this ultimate truth and persist in squandering the prime of life and sound health will only reap irreparable and grievous loss. Indeed, by getting totally engulfed in the distracting pleasures of life, immersed in its forbidden desires and aspirations, oblivious of the moment of abrupt transition in life conditions, negligent of the instant of relapse into degenerative old age –when one experiences physical feebleness and succumbs to some irreparable physiological deterioration bordering senility– one is simply engaged in a process of self-destruction. He has never got



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himself ready for hard times when, owing to degenerating physiological conditions and generalised physical frailty, he literally loses the capacity even to perform his religious observances.

There is still another group of people who share the same risk of loss with the previous one. They share the common denominator of feeble-mindedness and oblique or devious thinking. In fact, Allah bestowed on these people the blessing of free time. More concretely, their time is free from all types of unnecessary worries that might spoil their lives, bearing in mind that only a few people can enjoy this blessing and consequently experience total happiness in a problem-free ambience.

This is mainly because enjoying the blessing of free time is conditional upon having enough personal income, optimal safety, and property. As to sufficiency in terms of personal income, it represents the main guarantee for not having one's free time eaten out by strenuous labouring for earning a living. Concerning safety, it includes the believer's securing his earnings against external danger and also procuring an amount of money for a rainy day. Safety equally involves the inviolability of one's bodily integrity so as to avoid being preoccupied by potential afflictions or disasters befalling and destabilising peaceful people.

Thus, once a person enjoys safety regarding his source of personal income, his property, and his physical wellbeing, he will have fully benefited from the blessing of free time. Accordingly, he will be invited to give the necessary importance to such a blessing by trying hard to take maximum advantage of it in order to enjoy its fruit in his current as well as future life.

As there are more obligations than time to carry them out, the Messenger of Allah (May Allah's *Salat* and Peace be upon him) instructed us to seize those opportunities that could turn out to be quite beneficial once we choose to take them. In this context, he once said to a man advising him: ***“Take benefit of five before five: Your youth before your old age, your health before your sickness, your wealth before your poverty, your free time before you are preoccupied, and your life before your death.”*** [Reported, with an authentic chain of narration, by Al-Hākim in his *Mustadrak*²]

This *hadith* –O servants of Allah– bears reference to the fact that the favour of free time, just like health or any other favour, is prone to demise and serious wrongdoing unless it is exploited in a way that yields great benefit, widespread prosperity, good effect and positive outcome. This includes, first and foremost, acts of piety and worship and utilizing one's free time in what would benefit people in the Herein and the Hereafter.

² *Al-Mustadrak* is a five volume *hadith* collection (containing 9045 *hadiths*) compiled by Abu Abdullah Al-Hakim Nishapuri. The book's full title is *Al-Mustadrak alaa al-Sahihain* (المستدرک علی الصحیحین); He claimed that all the *hadiths* contained therein were authentic according to the conditions of either *Sahih Al-Bukhari* or *Sahih Muslim* or both.



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May Allah benefit you and me with His Book's guidance, the *Sunnah* of His Prophet (May Allah's *Salat* and Peace be upon him)! This being said, I ask Allah, the Almighty, the Exalted to forgive my sins, yours and those of all Muslims; He is truly Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful!



Part Two

Praise be to Allah, the Defender of the righteous! I praise Him, the Almighty, and I bear witness that there is no deity but Allah Alone, with no associate and that He is the Cherisher of the believers. I also bear witness that our Master and Prophet, Muhammad, is His servant and Messenger, the leader of all the Messengers and the seal of all the Prophets. O Allah, send Your *Salat* (Graces, Honours, Mercy) and Peace upon Your Servant and Messenger, Muhammad, his immaculate family and kind Companions, the *tabi'īn* (the contemporaries of the Companions of the Prophet [May Allah's *Salat* and Peace be upon him] after his death), and all those who follow them in righteousness till Judgement Day.

Now then, O servants of Allah!

In contrast to such practice, that is utilizing one's free time and making use of it, some people take a different stand as they choose to adopt the notion of "time killing" in this regard. This amounts to filling their time with frivolous deeds and what they believe to be innocent amusement that would bring upon them no burden or sin. In effect, some of them might spend much of their time playing a game they wish to win so that they can feel the sense of grandeur as though they have conquered a country or somehow carried the day. They might also stay up all night undertaking trivial and disgraceful deeds or saying unbecoming words.

More often than not, precious time, whether by day or night, is thus wasted, particularly those early morning times which are made to be the brightest and the most blessed times as gratification for the Prophet (May Allah's *Salat* and Peace be upon him) in response to his supplication: "***O Allah, bless my people in their early mornings.***"

Such infringement could spill over into dereliction of obligation by sleeping through early morning (*fajr*) prayer. Hence the burden becomes twofold and the situation much more serious: it is the burden of wasting precious time coupled with that of mindlessly and lazily failing to fulfill the prayer obligation. What an infraction! What a loss!

Therefore, fear Allah –O servants of Allah– and bear in mind that time constitutes the days of man's life and that it is the most precious of all that is worthy of his attention and care. Every single moment along with every single breath is to be counted and calculated. Man is held accountable for every single deed no matter how petty. As narrated in the *hadith* that is reported by Al-Tirmidhi in his *Al-Jami*³ and authenticated by Abu Barzah Al-Aslami⁴

³ *Jami` al-Tirmidhi*: It contains 3,956 *hadiths*, and has been divided into fifty chapters. It is also classified as a *Sunan*, which implies that the book has been divided according to legal chapters, such as Purification, Prayer, Poor-due and Fasting.

⁴ One of the Prophet's Companions



–may Allah be pleased with him– who reported the Messenger of Allah (May Allah’s *Salat* and Peace be upon him) to have said: ***"No man will be able to move his feet on the Day of Resurrection before he is asked about his life, how he consumed it, his knowledge, what he did with it, his wealth, how he earned it and how he disposed of it, and about his body how he wore it out."***

Al-Bayhaqi –may Allah bless his soul– narrated a *hadith* related by Mu’ādh Ibn Jabal –may Allah be pleased with him– that the Prophet (May Allah’s *Salat* and Peace be upon him) said: ***"The feet of the son of Adam shall not move from before his Lord on the Day of Judgement until he is asked about five things: his life and what he did with it, his youth and what he dedicated it for, his wealth and how he earned and spent it, and his knowledge and what he did with it."***

Therefore –O servants of Allah– it is only rational to think of one’s lifetime as an opportunity not to be missed and to use one’s free time as a savings account of good deeds for the Resurrection Day. Otherwise, wasting one’s lifetime would be manifest loss and deep regret, when regret is of no avail.

Ask Allah to send His *Salat* (Graces, Honours and Mercy) and Peace on the Seal of the Messengers, for you were commanded to do so in Allah’s Book (the Qur’ān) thus:

﴿Allâh sends His Salât (Graces, Honours, Blessings, Mercy) on the Prophet (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم), and also His angels (ask Allâh to bless and forgive him). O you who believe! Send your Salât[1] on (ask Allâh to bless) him (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم), and (you should) greet (salute) him with the Islâmic way of greeting (salutation i.e. As-Salâmu ‘Alaikum.﴾ [Al-Ahzāb: 56]

O Allah! Send Your *Salat* (Graces, Honours and Mercy) and Peace on Your Servant and Messenger, Muhammad. O Allah! Be pleased with his Four Caliphs: Abu Bakr, Omar, Othman and Ali, with all his family, his Companions, the *tabi'in*, and those who follow them righteously until the Day of Resurrection! O Allah! We implore You to be pleased with us all, along with them, by Your Pardon, Generosity and Bounty, O You, the Most Generous and Bounteous 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! And protect the unity of Your Religion! Destroy the enemies of Your religion and all despots and corrupters! Unite the hearts of Muslims and unify them, guide their leaders and unite their word on the Truth, O You, Lord of *al-'ālamîn* (the Worlds)!



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O Allah! Grant victory to Your religion, Your Book, the *Sunnah* of Your Prophet Muhammad (May Allah's *Salat* and Peace be upon him) and Your believing, *mujahideen* and truthful servants!

O Allah! Grant us security in our homelands, make good our leaders and those responsible for our affairs, support with truth our Imam and leader, provide him with a righteous retinue and guide him to do whatever you love and accept! O You, the All-Hearing of our prayers! O Allah! Guide him, his Crown Prince and his brothers to do what is good for Islam, for the country and for the people! O You to Whom people shall return on the Day of Resurrection!

O Allah! Protect us against Your enemies and ours in any way that pleases You! O Allah! Protect us against Your enemies and ours in any way that pleases You! O Allah! Protect us against Your enemies and ours in any way that pleases You! O Allah! We leave Your enemies and ours to You (to deal with them) and seek refuge in You from their evils! We leave Your enemies and ours to You and seek refuge in You from their evils!

O Allah! Grant our souls piety and purify them; You are the best Who Purifies them! You are their owner and Lord.

O Allah! Make good all our last deeds (just before we die)! Save us from the disgrace of this Worldly life and the punishment of the Hereafter!

O Allah! Make better our religion which is our bond, and make better our *Dunya* (life in this world) which is the source of our living, and make better our Hereafter to which we are returning, and make life an increase of everything that is good, and death a relief from every evil!

O Allah! Protect Muslims in all their homelands! O Allah! Protect Muslims in all their homelands! O Allah! Safeguard their blood! O Allah! Safeguard their blood, their honour and their material possessions and reconcile their differences! O Allah! Protect us and them against the evil of *Fitnahs* (temptations)! O Allah! Protect us and them against the evil of *Fitnahs*, those of them which are apparent and those which are concealed! O Allah! Protect Muslims in all their homelands, O Lord of *al-'ālamîn*!

O Allah! Cure those of us who are sick, have mercy on our dead, and help us fulfil our hopes in accordance with what you please!

﴿Our Lord! We have wronged ourselves. If You forgive us not, and bestow not upon us Your Mercy, we shall certainly be of the losers.﴾
[Al-A'rāf: 23]



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﴿... 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]

May Allah send His *Salat* (Graces, Honours, Mercy) and Peace on His Servant and Messenger, our Prophet, Muhammad, on his family and all of his Companions, and all praise be to Allah, the Lord of *al-'ālamîn*!