

Surah al-Baqarah First Sermon (Khutbah One)

All praise is due to Allah, the One who revealed the Qur'an with the most eloquent expression and the clearest proof. We bear witness that there is nothing worthy of worship except Allah, and we bear witness that our master Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. O Allah, send Your prayers, peace, and blessings upon him, upon his family, his companions, and all who follow his guidance in the best of ways till the Last Day.

As for what follows: I enjoin upon you, O servants of Allah, and upon myself, the consciousness (taqwa) of Allah your Lord. For taqwa is the ultimate aim of your fasting and the light of your hearts. Let us listen to the words of our Creator:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن
قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

“O you who believe, fasting has been prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may attain taqwa.” (Qur'an ٢: ١٨٣)

O you who fast: we congratulate you on reaching the month of Ramadan, and we ask Allah Most High to accept from us and from you the fasting, the night prayer, and the recitation of the Qur'an. That mighty Book—about which we reflect today in our sermon through one of its greatest surahs—is Surah al-Baqarah. Concerning it, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

إِنَّ أَخَذَهَا بَرَكَةً، وَتَرَكَهَا حَسْرَةً

“Taking it (reciting and acting upon it) is a blessing, and abandoning it is a cause of regret.” (Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim)

It is the longest of the surahs in wording and among the most profound in impact. It gathers within it clear proofs that establish the pillars of faith, uphold the obligations of Islam, and lay down

the foundations of religious rites and rulings. It regulates social relationships, governs financial transactions, and strengthens moral values.

Within it is Āyat al-Kursī (٢:٢٥٥), the greatest verse ever sent down from the heavens. Within it is the longest verse concerning debt and fulfillment of obligations (٢:٢٨٢). And at its conclusion are two verses that are a treasure of supplication; regarding them the Prophet ﷺ said: **لَنْ تَقْرَأَ بِحَرْفٍ مِنْهُمَا إِلَّا أُعْطِيْتَهُ**

“You will not recite a single letter from them except that you will be given it.” (Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim)

It opens by pointing to the lofty rank of the Noble Qur’an. Allah, Glorified be He, says: **ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ**

“That is the Book” (Qur’an ٢:٢)

— An expression indicating elevation, magnification, honor, and reverence. It is a Book: **لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ**

“In which there is no doubt, a guidance for the God-conscious.” (Qur’an ٢:٢)

It calls upon mankind to obey their Lord and worship their Creator: **يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ**

“O mankind, worship your Lord who created you and those before you, that you may attain taqwa.” (Qur’an ٢:٢١)

It forbids them from misusing their capabilities and harming others: **لَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ**

“Do not spread corruption upon the earth.” (Qur’an ٢:١١)

Surah al-Baqarah informs us that the first honor bestowed upon humanity was through knowledge. Through knowledge civilizations are built and ranks are elevated. When Adam, peace be upon him, informed the noble angels of the names of things, our

Lord commanded them: **اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ**

“Prostrate to Adam.” (Qur’an ٢:٣٤)

—Honoring him and magnifying what Allah had placed in his heart of knowledge.

The noble surah also teaches us that persistence in error is a greater error. Adam, peace be upon him, erred but sought forgiveness, so his repentance was accepted and his mention was raised. As for Iblīs, he:

أَبَىٰ وَاسْتَكْبَرَ

“Refused and was arrogant.” (Qur’an ٢:٣٤)

Thus he incurred the wrath of his Lord and the greater punishment. A person stands between a repentance that saves him and an arrogance that destroys him. Surah al-Baqarah also clarifies:

لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ

“There is no compulsion in religion; truth has become clear from error.” (Qur’an ٢:٢٥٦)

There is no faith through coercion, but through insight and choice. It is a religion of tolerance and ease—without hardship or severity. Reflect upon His saying in this noble surah:

يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ

“Allah intends for you ease and does not intend for you hardship.” (Qur’an ٢:١٨٥)

Its obligations are mercy and its commands are wisdom:

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا

“Allah does not burden a soul beyond its capacity.” (Qur’an ٢:٢٨٦)

This is what our Prophet ﷺ confirmed when he said:

إِنَّ الدِّينَ يَسْرٌ، وَلَنْ يُشَادَّ الدِّينَ أَحَدٌ إِلَّا غَلَبَهُ

“Indeed, the religion is ease, and no one makes the religion

difficult except that it overwhelms him.” (Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī) Whoever becomes excessively rigid narrows the paths upon himself and rarely reaches the goal. Allah Most High says: **“O you who believe, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you.”** (Qur’an ٤:٥٩). I say these words of mine and I seek forgiveness from Allah for me and for you, so seek His forgiveness.

Second Sermon (Khutbah Two)

All praise is due to Allah alone, and prayers and peace be upon the one after whom there is no prophet.

As for what follows: O you who fast: Indeed, Surah al-Baqarah has placed the family at the center of its care and concern. It established the foundations of its cohesion and stability. Families are built upon affection between spouses, and they flourish when each appreciates the other, honors his or her rights, and considers one another’s feelings.

Our Lord, Glorious and Exalted is He, says:

وَلَهُنَّ مِثْلُ الَّذِي عَلَيْنَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ

“And for them (wives) is similar to what is upon them according to what is right.” (Qur’an ٢:٢٢٨)

This is a scale of justice and a path of excellence. By it, homes find stability and families blossom. And if discord arises, fairness must rise above conflict; neither of them should deny the virtues or past goodness of the other—in response to His saying:

وَلَا تَسُوا الْفَضْلَ بَيْنَكُمْ

“And do not forget graciousness between you.” (Qur’an ٢:٢٣٧) Surah al-Baqarah also calls us to uphold trust and rights in all dealings. Allah Most High says:

فَلْيُؤَدِّ الَّذِي أُؤْتِمِنَ أَمَانَتَهُ وَلْيَتَّقِ اللَّهَ رَبَّهُ

“Let the one who is entrusted discharge his trust and let him

fear Allah, his Lord.” (Qur’an ٢:٢٨٣)

Few words—but immense counsel. Every right that another person has over you is a trust upon your neck. Your Lord warns you not to neglect fulfilling it or to be careless in preserving it.

Reflect upon this final exhortation from the Most Merciful, revealed in the last verse sent down of the Qur’an:

وَاتَّقُوا يَوْمًا تُرْجَعُونَ فِيهِ إِلَى اللَّهِ ثُمَّ تُوَفَّى كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ

“And fear a Day when you will be returned to Allah; then every soul will be fully compensated for what it earned, and they will not be wronged.” (Qur’an ٢:٢٨١)

These are glimpses from the meanings of Surah al-Baqarah. So read it with perceptive hearts, reflect upon it with thoughtful minds, act upon it, and continually repeat its comprehensive supplications:

رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ

“Our Lord, give us in this world good and in the Hereafter good, and protect us from the punishment of the Fire.” (Qur’an ٢:٢٠١)

رَبَّنَا لَا تَوَاخِذْنَا إِنْ نَسِينَا أَوْ أَخْطَأْنَا

“Our Lord, do not take us to task if we forget or make a mistake.” (Qur’an ٢:٢٨٦)

Indeed, your Lord has opened for you the windows of nearness and hope, and He has invited you to increase in supplication and remain at the door of the Most Generous Giver. He says, Glorified is He: **“And when My servants ask you concerning Me, indeed I am near. I respond to the call of the supplicant when he calls upon Me.” (Qur’an ٢:١٨٦)**

So turn to His door, seek refuge in His protection, and increase—night and day—in sending prayers and peace upon your Prophet:

O Allah, send Your prayers, peace, and blessings upon him, upon his family, and upon all his companions. O Allah, be pleased with Abu Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthman, and ‘Ali, and with the rest of the noble Companions.

O Allah, make us believers in You, devoted to You, reciters of the Qur’an, reflectors upon its surahs, triumphant in Ramadan, dutiful to our parents—have mercy upon them as they raised us when we were small, O Most Merciful of the merciful.

O Allah, protect the United Arab Emirates with Your protection, envelop it in the abundance of Your blessings, increase it from Your vast bounty, and perpetuate its prosperity and flourishing, O Lord of the worlds.

O Allah, protect Sheikh Muhammad bin Zayed, the President of the State, with Your protection; surround him with Your care; make his work in obedience to You; grant success to him, his deputies, his brothers—the rulers of the Emirates—and his trustworthy Crown Prince in what You love and are pleased with.

O Allah, have mercy upon Sheikh Zayed, Sheikh Rashid, and the rulers of the Emirates who have passed on to Your mercy; admit them by Your grace into the vastness of Your gardens; and envelop the martyrs of the nation in Your mercy and forgiveness.

O Allah, have mercy upon the Muslim men and Muslim women, the living among them and the deceased.

O Allah, send us beneficial rain and do not make us among those who despair. O Allah, grant us rain. O Allah, grant us rain. O Allah, grant us rain.

Servants of Allah: remember Allah, the Magnificent and Majestic—He will remember you. Be grateful to Him for His blessings—He will increase you. And establish the prayer.