

The Father: The Pillar of the Family

The First Sermon

All praise belongs to God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful, who made the father the middle gate of Paradise. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah alone, without partner, and I bear witness that our master and Prophet Muḥammad is the servant of Allah and His Messenger. O Allah, send prayers, peace, and blessings upon him, upon his family, his companions, and all who follow his guidance thereafter.

To proceed: I counsel you, servants of Allah and myself, to have taqwā of Allah. Exalted is He who says: **وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا**

“And fear Allah, through whom you ask one another, and honor the ties of kinship. Surely Allah is ever Watchful over you.” (Qur’ān ٤:١)

O believers: Our sermon today is about a great man, possessing a merciful heart and a noble station. He is the spring that never runs dry, the river of giving that continually overflows. He is the father. Allah Most High swore by him when He said: **وَوَالِدٍ وَمَا وَلَدٌ**

“And by the father and what he fathered.” (Qur’ān ٩٠:٣)

And there is no wonder in this, for the father is the pillar of the family and its foundation, its fortress and support, its provider and bearer of responsibility. He surrounds his family with his heart and cares for them with his very soul. Have you seen the concern of Ya‘qūb (peace be upon him) for his son, and the sorrow he felt at his absence, when he said to his sons:

إِنِّي لَيَحْزُنُنِي أَنْ تَذْهَبُوا بِهِ

“Indeed, it grieves me that you should take him away.” (Qur’ān ١٢:١٣)

And did you not see how his condition changed when he lost him?

وَابْيَضَّتْ عَيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْحُزْنِ فَهُوَ كَظِيمٌ

“And his eyes turned white from grief, while he suppressed his sorrow.” (Qur’ān ١٢:٨٤)

Such is the father: he loves without asking anything in return, he gives without seeking payment. He struggles throughout the day, then leaves his worries at the doorstep so he may enter smiling before his children, all while his greatest concern is to see happiness upon their faces. He hopes for them a life nobler than the one he lived and an education better than the one he received. That is the father.

He spends the prime of his life raising and educating his children, spending his cherished wealth for their elevation. He suffers silently, carrying his burdens alone without complaining to his family — out of mercy for them and to protect their hearts. **وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ**

“And Allah knows well what lies within the hearts.” (Qur’ān ٣:١٥٤)

How many nights has he remained awake while they slept? How many situations did he endure patiently for their sake while they never realized? Ask the orphan about his state without his father: how much tenderness he lost, how much care and concern, how much support and assistance. How deeply the absence of the father leaves within the heart a void that nothing can replace. How astonishing then is the son who does not appreciate the blessing of his father’s presence: raising his voice against him, frowning in his face, avoiding him, and mocking his opinion. Does he not know that Allah coupled kindness to parents with worship of Him?

وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا

“Your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him, and that you show

excellence to your parents.” (Qur’ān ١٧:٢٣)

Has he not heard the words of the Prophet ﷺ: رِضَا الرَّبِّ فِي رِضَا الْوَالِدِ، وَسَخَطُ الرَّبِّ فِي سَخَطِ الْوَالِدِ

“The pleasure of the Lord lies in the pleasure of the father, and the anger of the Lord lies in the anger of the father.” (Reported by al-Tirmidhī)

So fear Allah regarding your fathers. The father’s heart is delicate even if he appears stern. His feelings are sensitive even if he remains silent. He suffers from the disobedience of his child more than he suffers from bodily illness. His chest tightens from a harsh glance or a hard tone that the son considers insignificant while, to the father, it is immense. So what will become of the undutiful child on the Day of Resurrection?

يَوْمَ تَجِدُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ مُحْضَرًا وَمَا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ سُوءٍ تَوَدُّ لَوْ أَنَّ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَهُ أَمَدًا بَعِيدًا

“The Day every soul will find before it whatever good it has done and whatever evil it has done, wishing there were a great distance between it and that evil.” (Qur’ān ٣:٣٠)

On that day he will be questioned about every glance and every word. He will be questioned about his dutifulness and his disobedience, his goodness and his wrongdoing. Therefore, O son: remain committed to honoring your father and serving him, continue obeying him, fulfill his needs, do not quarrel with your siblings and thereby grieve him, seek his counsel, kiss his head and his hand, honor him as he deserves. Learn from Fāṭimah (may Allah be pleased with her) the daughter of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, who:

إِذَا دَخَلَ عَلَيْهَا رَسُولٌ قَامَتْ إِلَيْهِ فَأَخَذَتْ بِيَدِهِ، فَقَبَّلَتْهُ وَأَجْلَسَتْهُ فِي مَجْلِسِهَا

“Whenever the Prophet ﷺ entered upon her, she would stand for him, take his hand, kiss him, and seat him in her place.” (Reported by Abū Dāwūd)

Dedicate some of your time to your father. Spend from your wealth upon him. Do not be like the one who withholds from his father wealth that the father himself was the source and cause of. For the Prophet ﷺ said: أَنْتَ وَمَالُكَ لِأَبِيكَ

“You and your wealth belong to your father.” (Reported by Ibn Mājah)

How could it be otherwise, when he spent upon you in your childhood and strove for your sake throughout his life? Now you have grown, learned, and worked — so what place does your father hold with you?

Have you shared his worries? Have you hastened to honor him? For indeed, he is a gift from Allah for your benefit and an open gate to Paradise. The Prophet ﷺ said:

الْوَالِدُ أَوْسَطُ أَبْوَابِ الْجَنَّةِ

“The father is the middle gate of Paradise.” (Reported by al-Tirmidhī)

Either you open that gate through dutifulness and become among the successful, or you close it through disobedience and become among those distanced from mercy. So fulfill his rights, appreciate his efforts, comfort his loneliness, and lower your voice in his presence. It has been said: لَا تَسْمِهِ بِاسْمِهِ، وَلَا تَمْشِ أَمَامَهُ، وَلَا تَجْلِسْ قَبْلَهُ

“Do not call him by his name, do not walk ahead of him, and do not sit before he sits.”

(Adab al-Mufrad)

So honor your fathers, show them your love and appreciation, and act upon the words of your Lord: **“O you who believe, obey Allah, obey the Messenger, and those in authority among you.”**

(Qur’ān ٤:٥٩). I say these words of mine, and I seek forgiveness from Allah for myself and for you, so seek His forgiveness.

The Second Sermon

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

To proceed: O dutiful son: Indeed, the grandfather holds the rank of the father, as many of the Companions — may Allah be pleased with them — said. And when a person's life becomes long, his hardships also become prolonged, his bones grow frail, and his strength weakens. He becomes more sensitive and more in need of a gentle hand, a kind word, tender speech, and refined conversation. Here the true character of righteous children becomes manifest: a son who sees in the old age of his father or grandfather an opportunity to serve him, comfort his loneliness, and hasten to fulfill his needs, acting upon the words of his Lord:

إِمَّا يَبْلُغَنَّ عِنْدَكَ الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا أُفٍّ وَلَا تَنْهَرُهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا

“If one or both of them reach old age in your care, do not say to them even ‘uff,’ nor rebuke them, but speak to them noble words.” (Qur’ān ١٧:٢٣)

So, O you whom Allah has honored with the life of your father or grandfather: treasure his presence before the earth enfolds him and you search for him only to find memories remaining. Seek his pleasure and request his supplication, for the Prophet ﷺ said:

ثَلَاثَ دَعَوَاتٍ مُسْتَجَابَاتٌ لَا شَكَّ فِيهِنَّ - وَمِنْهَا: دَعْوَةُ الْوَالِدِ

“Three supplications are unquestionably answered — among them: the supplication of the parent.” (Reported by Abū Dāwūd)

And O you who have fallen short regarding the rights of your father or grandfather: let this day become the beginning of dutifulness and loyalty through a word that heals a broken heart, or a service that erases previous neglect. For dutifulness to parents is a debt returned and a righteous legacy that endures. Have you not seen how Ibrāhīm (peace and blessings be upon him) addressed his father with words filled with reverence, love, gentleness, and affection, saying: يَا أَبَتِ

“O my dear father...” (Qur’ān ١٩:٤٢)

So, Allah granted him a dutiful son who said: يَا أَبَتِ افْعَلْ مَا تُؤْمَرُ

“O my dear father, do as you are commanded.” (Qur’ān ٣٧:١٠٢)

And O you who have bid farewell to your father or grandfather into the mercy of Allah — may Allah reward you in your loss: Know that dutifulness toward him has not ended. Visit his grave, pray for him after the prayers, seek forgiveness for him in your moments of solitude, give charity on his behalf from good and pure wealth, mention his virtues, settle his debts, fulfill his will, maintain his ties of kinship, and honor his friends. For the Prophet ﷺ said:

إِنَّ أَبْرَأَ الْبِرِّ أَنْ يَصِلَ الرَّجُلُ أَهْلَ وَدِّ أَبِيهِ

“Among the greatest acts of dutifulness is that a man maintains relations with the loved ones of his father.” (Reported by Muslim)

Glad tidings, then, to the one who preserves the rights of his parents, both living and deceased, making dutifulness toward them his constant practice and established way, and planting this virtue among his children and grandchildren.

And may Allah send prayers, peace, and blessings upon our master and Prophet Muḥammad, the Seal of the Messengers, and upon his family, his pure wives — the Mothers of the Believers — and his noble and blessed companions. O Allah, be pleased with Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān, and ‘Alī, and with all the noble Companions. O Allah, forgive us for our shortcomings toward our fathers, and grant us dutifulness toward them both in their lives and after their deaths. O Allah,

forgive our fathers and have mercy upon them as they raised us when we were young, and reward them on our behalf with the best of rewards.

O Allah, whoever among us has a living father, bless him with health and well-being, and delight his eyes with the righteousness of his offspring. And whoever's father has passed away, widen his entrance into the grave, illuminate his resting place, and raise his rank among the rightly guided.

O Allah, make us a source of joy for them, and grant our children success in being dutiful toward us.

O Allah, these are the days of the first ten of Dhū al-Ḥijjah which have now arrived — the best days of this world — and righteous deeds performed in them are more beloved to You than deeds performed at any other time. So aid us during them in fasting, remembrance, and acts of obedience, and grant us success in righteousness and charity for ourselves and for our parents, O Lord of the heavens and the earth.

O Allah, protect the United Arab Emirates from every direction.

O Allah, we entrust to You its leadership, its people, and all who live upon its land. Protect our armed forces, support and guide them, strengthen and grant them victory. Reward our brave soldiers with the finest and greatest reward, strengthen their resolve, steady their aim, and grant them victory over Your enemies and theirs.

O Allah, deal with the aggressors who spread corruption throughout the earth and do not bring reform, who scheme against Your servants and violate the sanctity of the sacred month.

O Allah, protect Sheikh Muḥammad bin Zāyed, the President of the State, with Your protection. Be for him a helper, supporter, guide, and granter of success. Bless his life and deeds.

O Allah, grant success to him, his deputies, his brothers the rulers of the Emirates, and his trustworthy Crown Prince in all that You love and are pleased with.

O Allah, have mercy upon Sheikh Zāyed, Sheikh Rāshid, and the shaykhs of the Emirates who have passed into Your mercy. Enter them by Your grace into the vastness of Your gardens.

O Allah, encompass the martyrs of the nation with Your immense mercy and raise their ranks in Your Paradise.

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

Servants of Allah: Remember Allah, the Magnificent and Majestic, and He will remember you. Thank Him for His blessings and He will increase you. And establish the prayer.