

IlmHive

Khutbahs

Eid al-Adhā Khutbah

Sacrifice and Desires

خطبة عيد الأضحى: القران والشهوات

Delivery script. For reading aloud at the mimbar.

Eid al-Adha Khutbah

Sacrifice and Desires

--- As-salamu alaykum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh...

--- My dear brothers and sisters...

--- and my dear children...

--- Eid Mubarak to all of you...

--- Today is the day of Eid al-Adha...

--- the day of qurbani...

--- the day when, all around the world, Muslims raise the knife to an animal in the name of Allah...

--- But ask yourself, brothers and sisters...

--- when the sheep is slaughtered...

--- when the blood runs and the meat is cut...

--- does anything of that meat... does anything of that blood... actually go up to Allah?

--- Allah himself answers, in Surah al-Hajj, verse 37:

لَنْ يَنَالَ اللَّهُ لُحُومَهَا وَلَا دِمَائُهَا وَلَكِنَّ يَنَالُهُ التَّقْوَىٰ مِنْكُمْ

Neither their meat nor their blood reaches Allah... but it is the taqwa from you that reaches Him.

--- Not the meat...

--- not the blood...

--- but the taqwa... from you.

--- And what is taqwa, my dear brothers and sisters?

---- taqwa is the careful watching of ourselves in front of Allah...

---- it is the inner shield we place between us and the fire...

---- it is the worry of the heart that says: Allah is watching me right now.

--- Ibn Abbas (rad.) tells us that the people of jahiliyya, before Islam,

---- used to smear the walls of the Kaaba with the blood of their sacrifices...

---- they thought the blood itself made them close to God.

--- And the Muslims wanted to do the same...

--- so Allah sent down this verse to teach them: no... the blood does not go up to Me... the meat does not go up to Me...

---- what goes up to Me is what is inside your heart when you do it.

--- The word qurbani itself, my dear children, comes from the Arabic root q-r-b...

---- and q-r-b means: to come near.

--- Qurbani means: a thing offered up so that I can come near to Allah.

--- It is not about the animal...

--- it is about the nearness.

--- Now my dear brothers and sisters...

--- where does this whole practice of qurbani come from?

--- It comes from our father, the friend of Allah, Ibrahim (alayhi salam).

--- Ibrahim (alayhi salam) had spent his whole life asking Allah for a son...

--- a son to carry his message...

--- a son to be a comfort to his eyes in his old age...

--- and Allah finally gave him Ismail (alayhi salam).

--- Imagine that, my dear children...

--- you wait for something for years and years...

--- and finally Allah gives it to you...

--- your most beloved thing in the whole world.

--- And then... in a dream... Allah says to Ibrahim: slaughter him.

--- Listen to what Allah tells us, in Surah al-Saffat, verses 102 to 107:

فَلَمَّا بَلَغَ مَعَهُ السَّعْيَ قَالَ يَبْنِي إِنِّي أَرَىٰ فِي الْمَنَامِ أَنِّي أَذْبَحُكَ فَانظُرْ مَاذَا تَرَىٰ

When the boy reached the age of striving with him, he said: My dear son, I see in the dream that I am to sacrifice you... so look: what do you see?

قَالَ يَا أَبَتِ افْعَلْ مَا تُؤْمَرُ صَلِّ سَتَجِدُنِي إِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ مِنَ الصَّابِرِينَ

He said: My father, do as you are commanded. You will find me, if Allah wills, among the patient.

فَلَمَّا أَسْلَمَا وَتَلَّهُ لِلْجَبِينِ

Then when they had both submitted, and he had laid him down upon his temple...

وَنَادَيْنَاهُ أَن يَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ، قَدْ صَدَّقْتَ الرُّءْيَا إِنَّا كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ

We called out to him: O Ibrahim, you have already fulfilled the dream. Thus do We reward the doers of good.

إِنَّ هَذَا لَهُوَ الْبَلَاءُ الْمَبِينُ، وَفَدَيْنَهُ بِذَبْحٍ عَظِيمٍ

Surely this was the manifest trial. And We ransomed him with a great sacrifice.

--- Please, please, please, my dear brothers and sisters... look at one little phrase in this story...

فَلَمَّا أَسْلَمَا

When they had both submitted...

--- Both of them...

--- the father AND the son.

--- Qatadah (rad.) explains: the son submitted himself to Allah... and the father submitted his son to Allah.

--- Did you notice, my dear brothers and sisters...

--- the knife never actually cut the boy?

--- Allah replaced him with a ram at the last moment.

--- The outward slaughter did not happen...

--- because the INWARD slaughter had already happened.

--- Ibrahim (alayhi salam) had already cut something inside himself...

--- he had cut the love of his son being placed above the love of Allah.

--- And THAT is the sacrifice that Allah accepted.

--- The ram was just the outside sign... of an inside cut that was already complete.

--- And Allah called it:

ذَبْحٌ عَظِيمٌ

A great sacrifice.

--- Imam al-Qurtubi (rah.) tells us: it was called great not because the ram was a big animal...

--- but because it was great in value... because Allah accepted it.

--- Now the question arises, my dear brothers and sisters...

--- Allah is not asking US to slaughter our children...

--- Allah is only asking us to slaughter a goat, a sheep, a cow...

--- an easy thing... a cheap thing... compared to what Ibrahim was asked.

--- So is that all? Just a sheep?

--- Is qurbani just about the meat in our freezer?

--- No, my dear brothers and sisters... no, no, no.

--- The animal at the gate of the masjid is only the OUTSIDE sign...

--- of an INSIDE qurbani that Allah wants from every single one of us... every single year.

--- And what is that inside qurbani?

--- Listen to Allah, in Surah al-Jathiya, verse 23:

أَفَرَأَيْتَ مَنِ اتَّخَذَ إِلَهَهُ هَوَاهُ

Have you not seen the one who has taken his own desire as his god?

--- Allah is asking us a question...

--- have you seen that person?

--- the person whose god is his own wanting...

--- whatever his nafs says, he does.

--- That word hawa, my dear brothers and sisters...

--- hawa means: the downward pull of the heart...

--- the inclination that wants what it wants, right now, no matter what Allah says.

--- And listen to this beautiful word-play from al-Sha'bi (rad.):

--- he said: it is called hawa because it makes its owner fall... yahwi... down into the fire.

--- Hawa... yahwi... to fall.

--- Our desires, when they rule us, drop us down.

--- And Ibn Abbas (rad.) tells us:

--- Allah has never mentioned hawa in the whole Qur'an... except to blame it.

--- Abu Umama (rad.) heard the Prophet ﷺ say:

مَا عُبِدَ تَحْتَ السَّمَاءِ إِلَهَ أَبْغَضُ إِلَى اللَّهِ مِنَ الْهَوَى

*No god has been worshipped under the sky that is more hated to Allah than hawa, than desire.
(al-Tabarani, al-Mu'jam al-Kabir; cited by al-Mundhiri, al-Tarhib wa-l-Tarhib)*

--- Do you see it now, my dear brothers and sisters?

--- The animal at the gate is the small qurbani.

--- The qurbani of the hawa... the qurbani of the desires inside us... THAT is the big one.

--- And our beloved Prophet ﷺ told us, in a beautiful hadith reported by Imam al-Tirmidhi:

المُجَاهِدُ مَنْ جَاهَدَ نَفْسَهُ

The true mujahid, the true fighter, is the one who struggles against his own self. (Sunan al-Tirmidhi 1621)

--- Imam al-Mubarakfuri (rah.) explains: the struggle against the self is the root of every struggle...

--- because until you can fight the enemy inside... you cannot fight any enemy outside.

--- My dear brothers and sisters...

--- Imam al-Ghazali (rah.), in his great book *Ihya Ulum al-Din*... "the reviving of the religious sciences"...

--- gives us three beautiful pictures of what this inside qurbani actually looks like.

--- Three pictures... simple enough for a child to understand.

--- PICTURE NUMBER ONE: what is INSIDE you.

--- Imam al-Ghazali says: open up the human chest... and look at what lives in there. He says:

فَكَانَ الْمَجْمُوعَ فِي إِهَابِ الْإِنْسَانِ خِنْزِيرٌ وَكَلْبٌ وَشَيْطَانٌ وَحَكِيمٌ

It is as if gathered together inside the skin of every human being there is a pig, a dog, a devil, and a wise man. (Ihya Ulum al-Din, Kitab Sharh Ajaib al-Qalb, Ajaib al-Qalb)

--- Four creatures, my dear children. Listen carefully.

---- Inside you there is a PIG.

----- The pig is your greed... your appetite.

---- The pig is the one that says: eat that sweet, even though no one is looking and you said you were fasting.

---- The pig is the one that says: take that toy, even though it belongs to your brother.

---- The pig wants and wants and wants... and never stops.

---- Inside you there is a DOG.

---- The dog is your anger... your wanting to bite.

---- The dog is the one that says: raise your hand at your little sister when she annoyed you.

---- The dog is the one that says: shout at your mother, slam that door, hurt that person.

---- The dog barks and bites at the smallest thing.

---- Inside you there is a DEVIL.

---- The shaytan is the one who whispers to the pig and the dog...

---- he says to the pig: nobody is watching, eat it...

---- he says to the dog: they insulted you, bite them back...

---- he stirs them both up until the whole chest is on fire.

---- But also inside you there is a WISE MAN. A hakeem.

---- The wise man is your aql... your intellect... the part of you that knows what Allah wants.

---- The wise man hears the shaytan whispering and says: I see you... you are lying.

---- The wise man tells the pig: be quiet... Allah is watching.

---- The wise man tells the dog: sit down... we are not animals.

--- And here is the qurbani, my dear brothers and sisters... please, please listen...

---- today... before you raise the knife on the animal...

--- raise it on the pig in your chest.

--- Raise it on the dog in your chest.

--- Let the wise man take charge... and let the shaytan be silenced.

--- And remember, ‘Ali (rad. anhu) said:

إِنَّ لِلَّهِ تَعَالَى فِي أَرْضِهِ آيَةً وَهِيَ الْقُلُوبُ، فَأَحَبُّهَا إِلَيْهِ أَرْقَاهَا وَأَصْفَاهَا وَأَصْلَبُهَا

Allah has vessels on His earth, and they are the hearts. The most beloved of them to Him are the most tender, the most pure, and the most firm. (cited by al-Ghazali in Ihya Ulum al-Din, Kitab Sharh Ajaib al-Qalb)

--- Tender towards your brother... pure in your certainty about Allah... firm in your religion.

--- That is the heart Allah loves.

--- PICTURE NUMBER TWO: the wild horse you ride.

--- Imam al-Ghazali gives us a second picture...

--- imagine your nafs... imagine your lower self... as a horse.

وَالشَّهْوَةُ مِثْلَهَا مِثَالُ الْفَرَسِ الَّذِي يُرَكَبُ فِي طَلَبِ الصَّيْدِ، فَإِنَّهُ تَارَةٌ يَكُونُ
مَرُوضًا مُؤَدَّبًا، وَتَارَةٌ يَكُونُ جَمُوحًا

Desire is like the horse you ride when you go hunting. Sometimes it is trained and obedient... sometimes it is wild and bolting. (Ihya Ulum al-Din, Kitab Riyadat al-Nafs)

--- Now my dear brothers and sisters...

--- what does a smart rider do with a wild horse?

---- Does he kill the horse?

---- No... because then he cannot ride anywhere.

---- Does he let the horse run wherever it wants?

---- No... because then the horse will throw him into a ditch.

--- So what does he do?

--- He BREAKS IT IN.

--- He trains it... day after day... with the bit (the metal piece the rider puts in the horse's mouth) and the reins... until the horse listens.

--- Imam al-Ghazali says: people say, oh, you cannot change your nature...

---- but look... we take a wild falcon and we tame it.

---- We take a hungry dog and we teach it to wait for the command before it eats.

---- We take a wild horse and we teach it to walk where we tell it.

---- If their nature can be trained... how can ours not be?

--- And our Eid is NOT the day we kill the horse in our chest.

--- Our Eid is the day we recommit to BREAKING IT IN.

--- A wild horse will throw you...

--- but a broken horse will carry you all the way to Allah.

--- Al-Hasan al-Basri (rah.) said it in one beautiful sentence:

مَا الدَّابَّةُ الْجُمُوحُ بِأَحْوَجَ إِلَى الْجِجَامِ الشَّدِيدِ مِنْ نَفْسِكَ

The bolting horse is not more in need of a strong bit than your own self is. (cited by al-Ghazali in Ihya Ulum al-Din, Kitab Riyadat al-Nafs)

--- Please listen, brothers and sisters...

---- today... before you raise the knife on the animal...

---- ask yourself: where is the bit in the mouth of my nafs?

---- where are my reins?

---- do I have ANY control over what I want?

--- This week, choose ONE habit... just one... that has been throwing you off the horse...

---- the phone in your hand at 1am...

---- the snack after Isha that ruins your Fajr...

---- the gossip that flows out of your mouth...

---- and put a bit in its mouth... just for this week... for the sake of Allah.

--- PICTURE NUMBER THREE: the gate of the stomach.

--- And Imam al-Ghazali gives us a third picture, in his book *Kasr al-Shahwatayn*... "the breaking of the two desires."

--- He says:

أَعْظَمُ الْمُهْلِكَاتِ لِابْنِ آدَمَ شَهْوَةُ الْبَطْنِ

The greatest of the destroyers of the son of Adam is the desire of the belly. (Ihya Ulum al-Din, Kitab Kasr al-Shahwatayn)

--- The greatest, my dear brothers and sisters... the GREATEST destroyer...

--- is the desire of the stomach.

--- And Imam al-Ghazali proves it from the very beginning of our story...

--- when shaytan wanted to trip up Adam (alayhi salam) and Hawwa (alayha salam) in Jannah... where did he find his opening?

--- through the desire of the stomach... he whispered to them about the tree, made it look beautiful, and they ate from it.

--- The desire of the stomach was the gate. Shaytan walked through it.

--- Imam al-Ghazali calls the stomach: yanbu‘ al-shahawat... the wellspring of every desire.

--- And then he gives us a chain... a chain of seven links... listen carefully:

--- From the desire of the belly... comes the desire of the body.

--- From the desire of the body... comes the craving for money and status, because you need them to feed the first two.

--- From the craving for money... comes the rivalry with other people.

--- From rivalry... comes showing off and arrogance.

--- From arrogance... comes envy and hatred.

--- And from envy and hatred... comes injustice and corruption in the earth.

--- All of this, my dear brothers and sisters...

--- all the ugliness of the world...

--- Imam al-Ghazali traces back to ONE little gate.

--- The mouth.

--- The stomach.

--- Shut that gate... and you have weakened all seven things at once.

--- Open it wide... and they all walk in together.

--- ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab (rad. anhu) said:

إِيَّاكُمْ وَالْبِطْنَةَ، فَإِنَّهَا تَقْلُ فِي الْحَيَاةِ، تَنْ فِي الْمَمَاتِ

Beware of the full belly. It is a heaviness in life... and a stench in death. (cited by al-Ghazali in Ihya Ulum al-Din, Kitab Kasr al-Shahwatayn)

--- A heaviness in life, my dear brothers and sisters...

---- have you ever tried to pray Maghrib after a huge meal?

---- your body is heavy, your head is dull, your dhikr is dead.

--- And a stench in death... the body of the over-fed.

--- And on THIS day of Eid... the day we are about to eat the meat of our qurbani...

--- this is exactly the day we should remember that the gate is there.

--- Please, please, please, brothers and sisters...

---- today... before you raise the knife on the animal...

---- raise it on your plate.

---- Eat with the niyyah of strength for ibadah... not the niyyah of stuffing yourself.

---- Leave a third of your stomach for water... a third for air... as our Prophet ﷺ taught us.

--- And this week... fast ONE day for Allah...

---- just one extra day... Monday or Thursday...

---- and feel the gate of your stomach being trained.

--- Brothers and sisters... our Prophet ﷺ said:

إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ

Actions are only by intentions. (Sahih al-Bukhari 1; Sahih Muslim 1907)

--- Imam Ibn Rajab (rah.) tells us that Imam al-Bukhari placed this hadith at the very beginning of his Sahih...

--- as if to say: any action not done for the face of Allah is empty... no fruit in this world... no fruit in the next.

--- So when you bring your animal to the slaughter today...

--- bring with it your niyyah...

--- bring the pig of your appetite, ready to be silenced...

--- bring the dog of your anger, ready to be muzzled...

--- bring the wild horse of your nafs, ready to wear the bit...

--- bring the gate of your stomach, ready to be guarded.

--- THAT is the qurbani that Allah accepts.

--- My dear brothers and sisters...

--- we said at the beginning that the word qurbani comes from q-r-b... to come near.

--- So now we have to ask: if I do this inner qurbani... if I really slaughter the pig and the dog... what do I get?

--- What does Allah give me back?

--- Listen to Allah... in a beautiful hadith qudsi, reported by Abu Hurayra (rad.) in Sahih al-Bukhari:

، يَقُولُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: أَنَا عِنْدَ ظَنِّ عَبْدِي بِي، وَأَنَا مَعَهُ إِذَا ذَكَرَنِي

فَإِنْ ذَكَرَنِي فِي نَفْسِهِ ذَكَرْتَهُ فِي نَفْسِي، وَإِنْ ذَكَرَنِي فِي مَلَأٍ ذَكَرْتَهُ فِي مَلَأٍ خَيْرٍ

، مِنْهُمْ

وَإِنْ تَقَرَّبَ إِلَيَّ بِشِبْرِ تَقَرُّبٍ إِلَيْهِ ذِرَاعًا، وَإِنْ تَقَرَّبَ إِلَيَّ ذِرَاعًا تَقَرَّبْتُ إِلَيْهِ بَاعًا،
وَإِنْ أَتَانِي يَمْشِي أَتَيْتُهُ هَرْوَلَةً

Allah says: I am as My servant thinks of Me, and I am with him when he remembers Me. If he remembers Me within himself, I remember him within Myself. If he remembers Me in a gathering, I remember him in a gathering better than them. If he draws near to Me by a hand-span, I draw near to him by a forearm. If he draws near to Me by a forearm, I draw near to him by an arm-length. And if he comes to Me walking, I come to him hurrying. (Sahih al-Bukhari 7405; Sahih Muslim 2675)

--- Did you hear that, my dear brothers and sisters?

--- Did you really hear that?

--- You take ONE small step towards Allah... the width of your hand...

--- and Allah comes towards you the length of your arm.

--- You take ONE arm towards Allah...

--- and Allah comes towards you the full reach of His mercy.

--- You walk towards Allah...

--- and Allah runs towards you.

--- Al-Raghib al-Isfahani (rah.) explains what this nearness really means...

---- it is not a nearness of the body... it is a nearness of the spirit.

---- It is when the servant cleans out the inner pollutants... the ignorance, the recklessness, the anger...

---- and the heart starts to take on a small reflection of the divine qualities: a little wisdom, a little mercy, a little patience.

--- Brothers and sisters... do you see the exchange?

---- You give Allah a small cut of your hawa...

---- Allah gives you a huge expansion of qurb.

---- You silence one whisper of the pig...

---- Allah silences a whole forest of anxieties in your chest.

---- You leave one mouthful out of greed...

---- Allah opens up the appetite for Qur'an in your heart.

--- This is the deal of Eid al-Adha.

--- You give up the small... you receive the huge.

--- And Allah summed up the whole of a believer's life in one verse, Surah al-An'am, verse

162:

قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

Say: surely my prayer, my sacrifice, my living, and my dying are for Allah, the Lord of all the worlds.

--- Four things, brothers and sisters.

---- My prayer... for Allah.

---- My sacrifice... for Allah.

---- My life... for Allah.

---- My death... for Allah.

--- Imam al-Tabari (rah.) tells us: ALL of it is exclusively for Him. No partner. No share for anyone else.

--- And Imam Ibn 'Ashur (rah.) says: this verse is the lived meaning of Islam itself...

--- Islam means the surrender of the self to the One we have submitted to.

--- So today, my dear brothers and sisters...

--- as we leave this masjid...

--- let us not just take home meat in a plastic bag.

--- Let us take home one inner act for today... and one outer change for this week.

--- TODAY: when you stand to slaughter or when you eat the meat...

--- name ONE thing inside you that you are slaughtering with it.

--- One anger you will let go of... one grudge against a family member... one habit you know is haram.

--- THIS WEEK: pick ONE small fence...

--- one prayer you will never miss again...

--- one screen you will switch off after Isha...

--- one du'a you will make every day for your parents...

--- one rak'ah of tahajjud, even if it is only one.

--- Take a small step... and watch Allah run to you.

--- And Allah commands us to send blessings on the one He sent as mercy to the worlds:

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

Allah and His angels send blessings upon the Prophet. O you who believe, send blessings upon him and salute him abundantly.

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ، كَمَا صَلَّيْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، إِنَّكَ

حَمِيدٌ مُجِيدٌ

اللَّهُمَّ بَارِكْ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ، كَمَا بَارَكْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ،

إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مُجِيدٌ

--- O Allah... we beg You on this day...

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ، وَالْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ، الْأَحْيَاءِ مِنْهُمْ وَالْأَمْوَاتِ

O Allah, forgive the believing men and women, the Muslim men and women, those of them who are alive and those who have passed.

اللَّهُمَّ ارْحَمْ آبَاءَنَا وَأُمَّهَاتِنَا كَمَا رَبَّوْنَا صِبْغَارًا

O Allah, have mercy on our fathers and our mothers, just as they raised us when we were small.

اللَّهُمَّ تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا قُرْبَانَنَا، وَاجْعَلْنَا مِنَ الَّذِينَ يَنَالُكَ مِنْهُمْ التَّقْوَى

O Allah, accept from us our qurbani, and make us among those whose taqwa reaches You.

اللَّهُمَّ ادْبَحْ فِي قُلُوبِنَا أَهْوَاءَنَا، وَكَسِّرْ فِيهَا شَهَوَاتِنَا، وَاجْعَلْنَا مِمَّنْ يَمْلِكُ نَفْسَهُ

O Allah, slaughter inside our hearts our desires, break in them our appetites, and make us among those who control themselves.

اللَّهُمَّ انصُرْ إِخْوَانَنَا الْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ فِي كُلِّ مَكَانٍ، وَاَرْفَعْ عَنْهُمْ الظُّلْمَ وَالْبَلَاءَ،

وَأَشْفِ مَرَضَاهُمْ، وَاَرْحَمْ مَوْتَاهُمْ

O Allah, help our oppressed brothers and sisters in every place, lift from them oppression and trial, heal their sick, and have mercy on their dead.

رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ

Our Lord, give us good in this world and good in the next, and protect us from the punishment of the Fire.

أَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ

--- Stand for the Eid salah.