

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا إِمَّا
يَبُلُغْنَنَّ عِنْدَكَ الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا
أُفٌ وَلَا تَنْهَرُهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا.
وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
الْوَالِدُ أَوْسَطُ أَبْوَابِ الْجَنَّةِ...

FATHER: THE GATEWAY TO PARADISE

Dear Believers!

The family is one of the most precious blessings bestowed upon us by our Almighty Lord (swt). It is the most important institution, and it can never be replaced by anything else. It is the source of sacrifice, unconditional love, compassion and mercy. It is our family that gives us the greatest support without expecting anything in return. The family teaches us about life. It instills good morals in our hearts. It prepares us for the future.

Honorable Muslims!

One of the two fundamental pillars of the family is the mother, and the other is the father. Allah the Almighty (swt) states in the Holy Qur'an, **"Your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him. And honor your parents. If one or both of them reach old age in your care, never say to them even 'ugh,' nor yell at them. Rather, address them respectfully."**¹ In today's khutbah, let us remind ourselves of the importance of the father in the family, of his responsibilities, and of our duties to him, whom our Lord (swt) has commanded us to obey and to be kind to.

Dear Believers!

The father is the shield of the family. He is an unshakable mountain on which we lean. We feel secure by his presence in every area of our lives. The father is a guide who shows us what is right and what is true. He is a teacher who helps us to discern the good from the evil, and the right from the wrong. He is a compassionate hand that lift us up every time we fall.

Dear Muslims!

Being a father is not just about providing for the material needs of the family. It also means raising our children to be good individuals. Being a father is to struggle like Prophet Nuh for the eternal salvation of

our children who are the light of our eyes. He had invited his disbelieving son to the ship of salvation by saying, **"O my dear son! Come aboard with us and do not be with the disbelievers."**²

Being a father is to raise our children as good believers and to always wish good for them like the Prophet Ibrahim. He asked Allah (swt) for the good of his children, saying, رَبِّ اجْعَلْنِي مُقِيمَ الصَّلَاةِ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي **"My Lord! Make me and those believers of my descendants keep up prayer."**³

Being a father is to strive to guide our children to good and to prevent them from evil with expressions full of compassion like Luqman (as). He gave wisdom-laden advice to his son with the words, **"O my dear son! Establish prayer, encourage what is good and forbid what is evil."**⁴

Being a father is to be an example and guide to our children in every aspect of life, like the Prophet Muhammad (saw). The Messenger of Allah (saw) was exceptionally compassionate towards his family. Love and respect prevailed in his household. He would never stray from mercy, justice, kindness, and grace.

Dear Believers!

In one of his hadiths, our Prophet (saw) says, **"The father is the middle door of Paradise..."**⁵ So, let us not fail to honor our fathers, who, like our mothers, are our opportunity for paradise. Let us please our parents with our kind words, our smiling faces, and our good behavior. Let us not forget that the pleasure of our Lord (swt) depends on gaining the pleasure of our parents.

Dear Muslims!

As I conclude this Friday's khutbah, I would like to point out an important issue. On the occasion of 'Eid al-Adha, many of our brothers and sisters will be traveling. I would like to take this opportunity to ask all of you to obey the rules, to be patient and careful on the road, and to respect the rights and laws of each other. May our loved ones not be separated from us because of traffic accidents. May our hopes not be dashed. May the joy of the 'eid not turn to mourning.

May our Lord Almighty (swt) allow us all to reach the 'Eid al-Adha in health, well-being and joy.

¹ Isra, 17/23.

² Hud, 11/42.

³ Ibrahim, 14/40.

⁴ Luqman, 31/17.

⁵ Tirmidhi, Birr, 3.