

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَإِذْ تَأَذَّنَ رَبُّكُمْ لَئِن شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ وَلَئِن كَفَرْتُمْ

إِنَّ عَذَابِي لَشَدِيدٌ.

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

اللَّهُمَّ أَعِنِّي عَلَى ذِكْرِكَ وَشُكْرِكَ وَحُسْنِ عِبَادَتِكَ.

### PRAISE BE TO YOU, O AL-SHAKUR!

#### Honorable Muslims!

Let us all contemplate, in this blessed Friday hour, about some of the countless blessings Allah the Almighty has bestowed upon us:

Our Almighty Lord (swt) has placed everything in the skies and on earth, night and day, the sun and moon, and all the stars, at our disposal. He (swt) has sent down the winds heralding the rain, and nourished numerous plants, fields, and gardens out of the lifeless soil to which He (swt) has given life through the rain. He (swt) has put seas and oceans under human's order, and offered springs of lifeline to quench our thirst. He (swt) has made animals, which provide many benefits in human's livelihood, bow down to human.

He (swt) has set our home and family as a place of peace and rest. He (swt) has endowed human with reason to discern between good and evil, a heart to feel, and sensory organs to perceive His (swt) blessings. He (swt) has guided humanity out of darkness and into light via religions that guided to the right and truth, through holy books that provided real direction, and by messengers of compassion who exemplified good morals and virtue.

#### Dear Believers!

What is demanded of humans is gratitude to the Lord, Who has showered an infinite number of blessings. Indeed, it is stated in our divine book, the Holy Qur'an, as follows: **“So remember Me; I will remember you. And be grateful to Me and do not deny Me.”**<sup>1</sup>

Gratitude, which is the most important sign of our servitude to Allah (swt), entails perception and reflection about the provider of the blessings before the blessings themselves. It is demanded of us to recognize Allah's (swt) favors and bounties for us and to demonstrate our contentment with what He (swt) has provided. It is required of us

that we recognize the importance and value of blessings and do not grow deaf or blind to them.

#### Dear Muslims!

Gratitude is not only about uttering words of thanks and praise. Gratitude is about faith and submission at the heart, contemplation and drawing lessons in the mind, and worship and obedience through the body organs. Yes, when uttered, “Alhamdulillah” is an expression of gratitude. It is also an act of thankfulness to recognize that all blessings are due to Allah (swt) and to demonstrate satisfaction with even the smallest of them. Every good deed that we commit sincerely is an act of gratitude. Our ritual prayers, which serve as a reminder of Allah (swt) and a show of sincerity, are acts of gratitude. Our fasts, which function as a shield against evil and sin, are an expression of gratitude. Our hajj, which equips us with the love of tawhid and the awareness of being an ummah, is an act of gratitude. Our zakat, sadaqah, and qurbani, which are the demonstrations of our loyalty to our Almighty Lord (swt), are expressions of gratitude. Perfecting our faith, worship, and submission through good morals is an act of gratitude.

#### Dear Believers!

Our Lord Almighty is al-Shakur, Who abundantly rewards His servants for their good deeds. Then, let us seek Allah the Almighty's consent and love through our gratitude. Let us add barakah to our lives through gratitude. Let us wholeheartedly pay attention to the Divine commandment, **“Then you will surely be asked that Day about pleasure.”**<sup>2</sup> Let us strive to be a thankful servant before the Day of Reckoning arrives. Let us time and time again contemplate about the verse, **“And [remember] when your Lord proclaimed, ‘If you are grateful, I will surely increase you [in favor]; but if you deny, indeed, My punishment is severe.’”**<sup>3</sup> Let us not forget that what suits us is gratitude and that gratitude multiplies the blessings. Let us seek refuge in Allah (swt) against ungratefulness, thanklessness, and discontentment. Let us keep uttering the following du'a taught to us by our Prophet (saw): **“O Allah! Help me remember You, to be grateful to You, and to worship You in an excellent manner.”**<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Baqarah, 2/152.

<sup>2</sup> Takathur, 102/8.

<sup>3</sup> Ibrahim, 14/7.

<sup>4</sup> Abu Dawud, Witir, 26; Nasa'i, Sahw, 60.