

The Farewell Sermon: The Prophet's ﷺ Final Message to Humanity

Introduction

All praise is due to Allah. We praise Him, we seek His help and forgiveness, and we seek refuge in Allah from the evil within ourselves and from the consequences of our deeds. Whomsoever Allah guides, none can misguide, and whomsoever He leaves astray, none can guide. I bear witness that there is no god except Allah alone without partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger.

Among the greatest blessings Allah has given this Ummah is that He perfected this religion through His beloved Messenger ﷺ and preserved for humanity a complete code of life. One of the greatest manifestations of this perfection was the Farewell Sermon delivered during Hajj in the 10th year of Hijrah. This sermon was not merely an address to the companions present in the plains of Arafah, rather it was a universal message for all humanity until the Day of Judgment.

Dear respected brothers and sisters!

Hajj is one of the five pillars of Islam. Allah ﷻ says:

وَلِلّٰهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حِجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنِ اسْتَطَاعَ اِلَيْهِ سَبِيْلًا ۚ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَنِيٌّ عَنِ الْعَالَمِيْنَ

“Pilgrimage to the House is a duty owed to Allah by all who can undertake it. And whoever refuses, then indeed Allah is independent of all the worlds.” (Surah Aal-e-Imran: 97)

Every act of worship in Islam cultivates a particular spiritual quality in a believer.

Salah develops discipline and a connection with Allah.

Fasting develops patience and self-control.

Zakah develops generosity and compassion.

But Hajj is a unique form of worship that combines all forms of devotion. It demands sacrifice, patience, humility, obedience, financial spending, physical struggle,

remembrance of Allah, unity, and complete submission. Hajj trains a believer to surrender entirely before Allah.

Historical Background of the Farewell Hajj

In the year 632 CE, corresponding to the 10th year of Hijrah, nearly twenty-three years of Prophethood were about to be completed. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ had conveyed the divine message with complete sincerity. Islam had spread throughout Arabia, and the Prophet ﷺ sensed that his mission in this world was nearing completion.

Therefore, he desired to gather the Muslims together one final time during Hajj and leave behind essential guidance for humanity. Announcements were made among the tribes, inviting people to join this blessed pilgrimage. The Prophet ﷺ departed from Madinah on the 26th of Dhul-Qa'dah, reached Makkah on the 4th of Dhul-Hijjah, stayed in Mina on the 8th, and on the 9th of Dhul-Hijjah, he stood in the plains of Arafah and delivered one of the most important speeches in human history, known as Khutbatul Wada', the Farewell Sermon.

1. Equality of Humanity

One of the greatest revolutionary teachings of the Farewell Sermon was the establishment of universal human equality. The Prophet ﷺ stood before more than one hundred thousand companions in the plains of Arafah and demolished the foundations of racism, tribal superiority, nationalism, caste systems, and ethnic arrogance that had poisoned human societies for centuries.

He declared:

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ! إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَقُولُ: يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَى وَجَعَلْنَكُمْ سُعُوبًا وَ قَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ

“O, people! Allah says: ‘We created you from a male and a female and made you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another. Indeed, the most honored among you in the sight of Allah is the one with the most taqwa.’”

Then the Prophet ﷺ explained this principle in the clearest possible words:

فَلَيْسَ لِعَرَبٍ عَلَى عَجَمٍ فَضْلٌ، وَلَا لِعَجَمٍ عَلَى عَرَبٍ، وَلَا لِأَسْوَدَ عَلَى أَبْيَضَ، وَلَا لِأَبْيَضَ عَلَى أَسْوَدَ فَضْلٌ إِلَّا بِالتَّقْوَى

“No Arab has superiority over a non-Arab, nor a non-Arab over an Arab; neither a white over a black nor a black over a white, except through taqwa.”

Before Islam, people considered lineage, tribe, color, language, and wealth as standards of greatness. The strong oppressed the weak, tribes looked down upon other tribes, and

racism was deeply rooted in society. Islam came to remove these artificial barriers and reminded humanity that every human being is the creation of Allah. We all descend from one father, Adam عليه السلام, and one mother, Hawwa عليها السلام.

The only standard of honor in the sight of Allah is taqwa, righteousness, sincerity, obedience, and good character. A poor believer may be more honorable before Allah than a wealthy leader. A person from a small nation may be greater in sight of Allah than someone from a powerful race or family. Islam shifted the criterion of superiority from race and wealth to faith and character.

This teaching was not merely theoretical. The Prophet ﷺ practically established this equality within society. Bilal (RA), a former African slave, was honored as the mu'adhdhin of Islam. Salman Farsi (RA) from Persia, Suhaib (RA) from Rome, and many companions from different backgrounds were treated with equal dignity and respect. The Prophet ﷺ built a brotherhood where people of different races and cultures stood shoulder to shoulder in prayer without distinction.

Today, humanity still suffers from racism, nationalism, caste discrimination, xenophobia, and hatred based on color and ethnicity. Even many Muslims have unfortunately fallen into divisions of race, language, tribe, and social status. The message of the Farewell Sermon reminds us that Islam does not judge people by the color of their skin, but by the purity of their hearts and the righteousness of their actions.

2. Sanctity of Life, Wealth, and Honor

Among the most powerful teachings of the Farewell Sermon was the declaration of the sanctity of human life, wealth, and honor. In a gathering of more than one hundred thousand people, the Prophet ﷺ established a principle that remains the foundation of justice, peace, and civilization. He said:

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ! إِنَّ دِمَاءَكُمْ وَأَمْوَالَكُمْ وَأَعْرَاضَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ حَرَامٌ كَحُرْمَةِ يَوْمِكُمْ هَذَا، فِي شَهْرِكُمْ هَذَا، فِي بَلَدِكُمْ هَذَا

“O, people! Your blood, your wealth, and your honor are sacred, just as this day, this month, and this city are sacred.”

Notice how the Prophet ﷺ compared the sanctity of human beings to the sanctity of the Day of Arafah, the sacred month of Dhul-Hijjah, and the holy city of Makkah. Just as violating the sanctity of these sacred things was unimaginable to the Arabs, similarly, violating the life, property, and dignity of another human being is a grave sin in the sight of Allah. Islam came to protect humanity from oppression, revenge, bloodshed, exploitation, and humiliation.

The Prophet ﷺ did not limit sanctity only to life. He also included wealth and honor. This means Islam prohibits stealing, fraud, cheating, corruption, bribery, usurping the rights of others, and every form of financial injustice. Likewise, honor and dignity are sacred. Therefore, backbiting, slander, false accusations, public humiliation, character assassination, abuse on social media, and spreading rumors are serious sins in Islam. Today, many people avoid physical violence but destroy others through their tongues and online behavior. Islam teaches that harming someone's dignity can be as dangerous as harming their body.

Then the Prophet ﷺ reminded the Ummah about accountability before Allah:

وَأَنْتُمْ سَتَلْقَوْنَ رَبَّكُمْ فَيَسْأَلُكُمْ عَنْ أَعْمَالِكُمْ

“You will soon meet your Lord, and He will question you regarding your deeds.”

This warning teaches us that no tyranny escapes the court of Allah. Every drop of innocent blood, every stolen dollar, every insult, every broken trust, and every injustice will be questioned on the Day of Judgment. In a world filled with violence, dishonesty, abuse, and hatred, the message of the Farewell Sermon calls humanity back to justice, mercy, responsibility, and respect for human dignity.

3. Right of Property and Trust

The Prophet ﷺ emphasized that a healthy society cannot survive without honesty, trust, and integrity. Therefore, during the Farewell Sermon, he declared:

فَمَنْ كَانَتْ عِنْدَهُ أَمَانَةٌ فَلْيُؤَدِّهَا إِلَىٰ مَنْ أُتِّمَتْهُ عَلَيْهَا

“Whoever has been entrusted with something must return it to its rightful owner.”

Islam places tremendous importance on fulfilling trusts and protecting the rights of others. An *amanah* is not limited to money or property alone. It includes responsibilities, positions, promises, contracts, business dealings, confidential matters, family obligations, and even the duties we owe to Allah and society. A believer is recognized by truthfulness and trustworthiness. The Prophet ﷺ himself was known even before Prophethood as “*As-Sadiq Al-Ameen*,” the truthful and trustworthy.

Today, many problems in families, businesses, and communities arise because trust has weakened. People cheat in trade, break promises, misuse positions, delay payments, betray confidence, and violate the rights of others. Islam teaches that the strength of a society depends upon honesty and integrity, while the collapse of trust leads to corruption, injustice, and social destruction.

4. Brotherhood and Social Responsibility

Among the greatest foundations laid by the Prophet ﷺ in the Farewell Sermon was the establishment of Muslim brotherhood and collective social responsibility. He declared:

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ! كُلُّ مُسْلِمٍ أَخُو الْمُسْلِمِ، وَإِنَّ الْمُسْلِمِينَ إِخْوَةٌ

“O, people! Every Muslim is the brother of another Muslim. All Muslims are brothers.”

Islam does not view Muslims as isolated individuals connected only through rituals of worship. Rather, Islam builds a spiritual family united by faith, compassion, mercy, and mutual care. Brotherhood in Islam is not merely a slogan or emotional statement. It carries responsibilities. A Muslim must feel the pain of another Muslim, help him in difficulty, protect his dignity, pray for him, forgive his mistakes, visit him in sickness, support him in hardship, and wish for him what he wishes for himself. The Prophet ﷺ described the believers as one body: when one part suffers, the entire body feels pain and restlessness.

Unfortunately, one of the greatest weaknesses of the Ummah today is division and disunity. Hearts have become divided because of jealousy, sectarianism, racism, political hatred, personal ego, and worldly competition. Families are breaking apart, communities are fragmented, and Muslims often attack one another through their words, social media, and behavior.

The Farewell Sermon reminds us that true strength lies in unity, mutual respect, and sincere concern for one another. When brotherhood becomes weak, society becomes weak. But when Muslims stand together with sincerity, mercy, and justice, they become a source of peace, strength, and guidance for humanity.

5. Accountability and Observance of Rights

The Prophet ﷺ reminded the people that success in the sight of Allah is not based upon family background, tribal status, wealth, or worldly influence. Addressing the Quraysh specifically, who were honored because of their lineage and closeness to the Prophet ﷺ, he warned:

يَا مَعْشَرَ قُرَيْشٍ! لَا تَجِيئُوا بِالْدُّنْيَا تَحْمِلُونَهَا عَلَى رِقَابِكُمْ، وَيَجِيئُ النَّاسُ بِالْآخِرَةِ، فَلَا أُغْنِي عَنْكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا

“O people of Quraysh! Do not come on the Day of Judgment carrying the burden of worldly attachments, while others come with the rewards of the Hereafter. I will not be able to help you before Allah.”

This was a powerful reminder that every individual will stand alone before Allah on the Day of Judgment. No person will be saved because of race, nationality, family name, or social

position. Even being from the tribe of the Prophet ﷺ would not benefit someone without faith and righteous deeds. Islam is a religion of responsibility and accountability. Every right we violate, every oppression we commit, every trust we break, and every duty we neglect will be questioned before Allah. Therefore, a believer must constantly examine his actions, fulfill the rights of Allah and the rights of people, and prepare for the Day when neither wealth nor status will benefit anyone except the one who comes before Allah with a pure heart and righteous deeds.

6. Women's Rights

Among the most remarkable teachings of the Farewell Sermon was the emphasis the Prophet ﷺ placed on the dignity, protection, and rights of women. At a time when women in many societies were treated unjustly, deprived of inheritance, denied respect, and often considered inferior, Islam came as a revolution of mercy and justice. During his final sermon, the Prophet ﷺ instructed the Ummah:

اسْتَوْضُوا بِالنِّسَاءِ خَيْرًا

“Treat women kindly.”

Then he further clarified the balance of responsibilities within family life by saying:

إِنَّ لَكُمْ مِنْ نِسَائِكُمْ حَقًّا وَلِنِسَائِكُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ حَقًّا

“You have rights over your women, and your women have rights over you.”

Islam does not view marriage as a relationship of domination and control, but as a relationship built upon mercy, compassion, trust, and mutual respect. Allah ﷻ describes spouses in the Qur'an as garments for one another, protecting, comforting, and supporting each other. The Prophet ﷺ repeatedly advised men to deal gently with women, to honor them, provide for them, protect their dignity, and fulfill their emotional and financial rights. He himself was the greatest example of kindness toward wives and family members. The best among people, according to the Prophet ﷺ, are those who are best to their families.

Unfortunately, many families today suffer because Islamic teachings regarding women are ignored. Harsh behavior, emotional abuse, neglect of responsibilities, injustice, and lack of respect destroy peace within homes. Likewise, Islam also teaches balance and responsibility for both husband and wife so that family life remains stable and harmonious. The Farewell Sermon reminds us that strong families create strong communities, and healthy homes are built upon justice, patience, communication, forgiveness, and the fear of Allah. When the rights of women are protected according to Islamic teachings, families become places of peace, mercy, and spiritual growth.

7. Conveying the Message and Completion of the Mission

Toward the end of the sermon, the Prophet ﷺ said:

أَلَا فَلْيُبَلِّغِ الشَّاهِدُ الْغَائِبَ

“Let those who are present convey this message to those who are absent.”

Then he asked the companions:

وَأَنْتُمْ تُسْأَلُونَ عَيِّي، فَمَاذَا أَنْتُمْ قَائِلُونَ؟

“You will be asked about me, so what will you say?”

They replied:

نَشْهَدُ أَنَّكَ قَدْ أَدَّيْتَ الْأَمَانَةَ، وَبَلَّغْتَ الرِّسَالَةَ، وَنَصَحْتَ

“We testify that you fulfilled the trust, conveyed the message, and sincerely advised the Ummah.”

Then the Prophet ﷺ raised his blessed finger toward the sky and said three times:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اشْهَدْ، اَللّٰهُمَّ اشْهَدْ، اَللّٰهُمَّ اشْهَدْ

“O Allah, bear witness. O Allah, bear witness. O Allah, bear witness.”

Conclusion:

Dear respected brothers and sisters! The Farewell Sermon was not merely a speech delivered fourteen centuries ago. It was a universal declaration of human rights, justice, morality, equality, and accountability before Allah. The problems humanity faces today, racism, oppression, family breakdown, dishonesty, violence, hatred, and injustice, all have solutions within the teachings of this sermon.

The Prophet ﷺ was departing from this world, but before leaving, he gave the Ummah principles that would guide humanity until the Day of Judgment. He reminded us that faith is not limited to rituals alone. True Islam is reflected in how we treat people, fulfill trusts, honor women, protect human dignity, and live responsibly before Allah.