



[The Prophet Ibrahim: The Way of the Hanif](#)

O you who believe, be aware of Allah and speak in straightforward words. He will forgive your sins and repair your deeds. And whomsoever takes Allah and his Prophet as a guide has already achieved a mighty victory.

Allah Swt has said in the opening verses of Surah an-Nisā,

O mankind, show reverence toward your guardian Lord who created you from a single person; and created of like nature his mate, and from the two of them scattered like seeds, countless men and women. Be conscious of Allah through whom you demand your mutual rights and show reverence toward the wombs that bore you, for surely Allah watches over you.

My dear brothers and sisters, let's consider the story today of the Prophet Ibrahim (as) and his wife Hajar, and their son Ismail, peace and blessings be upon all of them. This amazing family left us a great legacy that is the foundation of the Hajj, and their story is relevant for all Muslims for all times. There is a particular resonance for us today, given my talk of last night, *inshā'a-Llāh*, about being present in the hearing and the auditory mirror. Nebi Ibrahim's (as) father was a very devout *mushrik* / idol worshiper as you know. Despite all of his son's efforts, the father adamantly refused to stop worshiping idols, just as Nūh's son refused to listen to his warnings. When he died, he was still in denial of Allah Swt. Nebi Ibrahim (as) was *khalila-Llāh*, the dearest friend of Allah. He was sort of the quintessential monotheist.

All the monotheistic religions claim him to be of their line. He was the father of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. And yet he couldn't save his own father. We have to accept that we have no real power to influence others, not even our own parents, to accept Islam, or our own children. Allah chooses to guide whom He pleases. But we can place before people the truth, and hope that we can create an environment where people are humble and grateful, and ask themselves: where does this humility and gratitude come from? Where do these miracles of life come from? Who is the Creator of it all, and how do I fit in this drama of creation? In Surah al-Kahf, Allah says,

Anyone who is guided by Allah, he (or she) is truly guided. And anyone who has been left behind or astray will find no one to guide him (or her).

Our duty is not only to share what the teachings of Allah Swt has given us through the Qur'an, but what we have experienced in the *ghaib*. We should know that we have an experience of the pre-eternity, and that we are not sharing stories. We are sharing, eventually, our own soul's memories. This I proved to you last night scientifically through MRIs. Our duty is to share what Allah teaches without pressure, coercion, clever tricks, lies or deceptions. Allah is not in need of any of his creatures. We need Allah Swt. The Prophet Ibrahim (as) destroyed the idols his people worshiped except for one. When they asked him who did it, he pointed to the remaining idol. They told him the idol couldn't have done it. He asked them, "How can you worship something that can neither create nor destroy, that can neither harm nor help?" It couldn't even defend itself from being destroyed. But such is the arrogance of misguided people that logic and wisdom is wasted on them. It sounds very political again, doesn't it?

Instead of using their God-given reason and logic, they resorted to violence. They tried to burn the Prophet Ibrahim (as). He, on the other hand, was completely calm and unafraid, relying on Allah, reposing his trust in Allah. Allah commanded the fire to be cool, and thus Ibrahim survived. (He did the firewalk). When he and his wife Hajar arrived at the desolate valley of Bakaa, she repeatedly asked him why they had come there. When he said nothing, she asked, "Is it Allah's wish?" He indicated that it was, and she immediately accepted this without any complaint. Both the husband and wife knew that no matter how dire the situation, they were always safe in the hands of Allah Swt. **"In His hand is all good. Allah has power over all things."**

Later, left alone, hungry and thirsty with an infant, she rushes from hilltop to hilltop in search of water, between Safa and Marwa. We commemorate this event during the Hajj. She ran in desperation and made the effort, and her effort and her pleading for help from Allah was rewarded. The water came in limitless abundance, still flowing today, like Allah's Mercy still pouring out to His devoted servants. The Archangel Jibreel caused the well of Zemzem to gush pure clean water, as it does today from below the feet of Ismail. For thousands of years, day in and day out, it has flowed, refreshing millions of people in the pilgrimage. We should think of Zemzem as Allah's Mercy, overflowing, waiting to quench our spiritual thirst.

Our spiritual thirst is a quest for understanding, meaning, and nearness to Allah; a quest to understand what this life is about and what it promises to us if we make our effort. When Allah Swt ordered Nebi Ibrahim (as) to sacrifice what he loved most, both he and Ismail knew what that meant, and neither father nor son had the slightest hesitation. They fully understood what "***samana wa atana***" means: "***we hear and we obey.***" No question, no lame excuses: you do it. There was, of course, we know, some affirmation of the son to the father, in case there was hesitation. At

the crucial moment, when the sharp-bladed knife touched the jugular vein, Allah Swt caused another miracle: a sheep appeared where Ismail patiently awaited his fate. His life was saved, and the Prophet Ibrahim's trial was finished. Allah wanted to show us, all the generations to come until the end of time, and all the souls that were before Allah in pre-eternity, what it means to love Allah Swt, what it means to obey His command, what it means to be humble, to be grateful, and to do what we are asked to do. Today we remember that willingness to make that ultimate sacrifice. Our *qurbani* is not just during the Eid al Adha; it's every day.

As the Holy Qur'an reminds us, it's not the meat that reaches Allah, it's the *taqwa*, the piety, the awe, the love, the fear, and the hope. How many of us will be ready to make this kind of sacrifice and be willing to devote our most beloved to Allah, our wealth, our families, our possessions that seem so important to us? Where does Allah fit into the scheme of priorities? Do we really love Allah Swt as we should? Is our greatest love reserved for Allah, or do we have more love for what He has created? Here is some food for thought. **"Surely my prayer, my sacrifice, my life and my death are for Allah, Lord of all the worlds. No partner has He. I am the first among the Muslims."** This declaration was one of Nebi Ibrahim's wonderful gifts to all of us. You should recite this prayer a lot. Seventeen times a day we re-dedicate our lives to Allah Swt. We reminded by our forgetful, infinitely distractable human nature where our true priorities lie.

Let's remember with gratitude the debt we owe to Ibrahim (as) and his family. We acknowledge this debt every time we pray. We ask Allah to send peace and blessings to Nebi Muhammed and his family, just as he sent peace and blessings on Nebi Ibrahim (as). *Asalaam aleikum*.

SECOND KHUTBAH

My dears, the Qur'an reminds us to follow Prophet Abraham, who ascribed no partners to Allah and is described as a *hanif*. What is the *hanif* way? It is to turn away from worshiping idols. It doesn't mean just the idols that are in the temples; it means money, power, fame, clothing, and all the rest of it. But we should look nice... don't I look nice today? I always try to look nice. It's not idol worship. It is to come before Allah respectfully, to come to the *masjid* in clean clothes and looking well, and smelling sweet, but not too much perfume because we are all allergic to different kinds of perfumes. To make no associations with Allah, to incline toward goodness, and be orthodox in the proper way (not to be heterodoxical), to be upright people – this is the way Nebi Ibrahim (as) and all those who worshiped Allah during the time of ignorance.

Let us remember during our day to day lives, not just special days. Remember the Prophet Ibrahim and what he lived for and died for, and his legacy that is still with us. Whose name of ours will be remembered 5,000 years later? Love Allah more than anyone or anything. Be willing to sacrifice anything in the name of Allah Swt for His cause. Strive your whole life to be good and upright, and when you can't and you have some difficulty, repent and strive again. Be loyal friends. Be loving husbands and wives. Be exemplary parents. Be loving sons and daughters and helpful neighbors, and good, law-abiding citizens. This is the way of the *hanif*. This is way of the family. *Asalaam aleikum*.