

قُتِلَ أَصْحَابُ الْأَخْدُودُ. الَّتَّارِ ذَاتُ الْوَقْدُ. إِذْ هُمْ عَلَيْهَا قُعُودُ. وَهُمْ عَلَىٰ مَا
 يَفْعَلُونَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ شَهُودُ.
 وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
 إِنَّ النَّاسَ إِذَا رَأَوْا ظَالِمًا فَلَمْ يَأْخُذُوا عَلَىٰ يَدِيهِ أَوْ شَكَّ أَنْ يَعْمَمُ اللَّهُ
 بِعِقَابٍ مِّنْهُ.

GAZA: HUMANITY'S TRIAL OF HONOR

Honorable Muslims!

In the Holy Qur'an, our guide to life, there are numerous stories filled with wisdom and lessons. One of these is the story of Ashab al-Ukhdud (the People of the Ditch). In the noble verses I recited at the beginning of my khutbah, this tyrannical group is described to us as follows: **“Condemned are the makers of the ditch—the fire ‘pit’, filled with fuel—when they sat around it, watching what they had ‘ordered to be’ done to the believers, who they resented for no reason other than belief in Allah—the Almighty, the Praiseworthy—the One’ to Whom belongs the kingdom of the heavens and earth. And Allah is a Witness over all things. Those who persecute the believing men and women and then do not repent will certainly suffer the punishment of Hell and the torment of burning.”¹**

Dear Believers!

The Ashab al-Ukhdud of today are the Zionist oppressors. These bloodthirsty criminals, driven by madness, are carrying out the most ruthless massacre in human history in Gaza, sparing neither women, children, nor the elderly. They defy the entire world by leaving our brothers and sisters to die, deprived of even a morsel of bread or a drop of water. They are forcing them either to surrender or to abandon their homeland. However, it must never be forgotten: even if the oppressors devise their plots, Allah is the One Who utterly destroys their plans. Though the occupiers may draw maps, the ultimate decree belongs solely to Allah.

Esteemed Muslims!

From the past to the present, believers have often been subjected to oppression. Many prophets and their followers were besieged and tortured by tyrants. Today, in Gaza, a handful of believers are standing firm with faith, patience, and honor against the Zionist oppressors and all the evil forces that support them. Indeed, the noble verse is perfectly clear: **“How many times has a small force vanquished a mighty army by the Will of Allah! And Allah is ‘always’ with the steadfast.”²** Indeed, history bears witness that the Qabils have lost while the Habils have prevailed. The Nimrods have been defeated, while the Ibrahims have triumphed. The Pharaohs have fallen, while the Musas have been victorious. Abu Jahls and Abu Lahabs have perished, while the Prophet Muhammad Mustafa (saw) and his ummah have prevailed. Today, our brothers and sisters in Gaza will also prevail, and the oppressors along with their supporters will surely be defeated, inshallah. As stated in the verse, **إِنَّ بَطْشَ رَبِّكَ لَشَدِيدٌ** “Indeed, the ‘crushing’ grip of your

Lord is severe,”³ these criminals, just like the people of ’Ad, Thamud, Lut, and other destroyed nations, will be utterly annihilated. The curse of Allah, the angels, humanity, and all living and non-living creatures is upon them. The promise of our Lord is true: **قُلْ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا سَعْلَدُونَ وَمُخْسَرُونَ إِلَى جَهَنَّمَ وَرِفِيقُهُمْ الْمَهَادُ**

“O Prophet!” Tell the disbelievers, ‘Soon you will be overpowered and driven to Hell— what an evil place to rest!”⁴

Dear Believers!

Today, Gaza is not only a place of trial for Muslims but for all of humanity. Gaza is humanity's trial of honor. Therefore, regardless of religion, race, or color, it is the responsibility of everyone to stand against this oppression and to strive to make our world a land of peace and justice. Otherwise, no one on earth will be safe. In the hadith I recited at the beginning of my khutbah, the Messenger of Allah (saw) said: **“When the people see the wrongdoer, and they do not stop him (from doing wrong), then it is soon that Allah shall envelop you in a punishment from Him.”⁵**

Honorable Muslims!

Our noble nation has, throughout history, regarded it as an honor to stand against the oppressor and alongside the oppressed; wherever there has been suffering or tears, it has extended its compassion and aid there—alhamdulillah. Today as well, our nation, united as one in extraordinary solidarity, is mobilizing all its resources to heal the wounds of the oppressed across the world, especially in Gaza. In a world where oppression and injustice have reached their peak, it is incumbent upon us to take as our guiding principle the verse in which Allah the Almighty says: **وَاعِدُوا لَهُمْ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ قُوَّةٍ** **“Prepare against them what you ‘believers’ can of ‘military’ power.”⁶** Accordingly, it is our duty to become stronger in every field—knowledge, science, and technology, both materially and spiritually. It is to stand firmly united, to embrace unity, and to avoid all forms of division and discord. It is to persist without weariness or fatigue, and, guided by our Lord’s command, **لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِنْ رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ** **“Do not lose hope in Allah’s mercy”⁷** to increase our support and prayers for our brothers and sisters. However, prayer and aid alone are not sufficient; boycotting the products that sustain the oppressor’s economy is also a requirement of our faith and our humanity. For our choices in commerce are not merely economic decisions; they are moral and conscientious stances. Let us not forget: through the efforts of honorable and conscientious people across the world, the oppressors will surely be brought to ruin, and the believers will undoubtedly be victorious.

Dear Believers!

We are experiencing one of the driest summer seasons in recent years. Please— let us not light fires in forested areas; let us not discard trash, glass bottles, or similar items into forests or along roadsides. A single moment of negligence can destroy thousands of acres of forest and take the lives of countless living beings. As we fight these fires, our heroes are being martyred. On this occasion, I pray Allah the Almighty to bestow His mercy upon our brothers who, just two days ago, attained the station of martyrdom while striving tirelessly to extinguish the forest fires. I pray for a swift recovery for the injured and patience and strength for their loved ones and our noble nation. May our Almighty Lord protect our homeland, our people, and the ummah of Muhammad from every calamity and affliction.

¹ Buruj, 85/4-10.

² Baqarah, 2/249.

³ Buruj, 85/12.

⁴ Ali ‘Imran, 3/12.

⁵ Tirmidhi, Tafsir al-Qur'an, 5.

⁶ Anfal, 8/60.

⁷ Zumar, 39/53.

