

The Fiqh of Delivering a Khutbah

Summary

This document covers the importance of the jumu'ah, fiqh of jumu'ah and khutbahs, and the structure of the khutbah. Examples are given of du'as and Quranic verses to use, and suggested khutbah formats.

Introduction

To begin, two terms need clarifying: khateeb and imam. The khateeb is the one who delivers the khutbah, whilst the imam is the one who leads the prayer. Usually, they are the same person, however this does not need to be the case. This will be elaborated upon later.

Fiqh of jumu'ah

Below are six important issues related to jumu'ah which the khateeb needs to know about.

Time of jumu'ah prayer: The majority opinion is that jumu'ah prayer must be within the time range of dhuhur prayer.

Location of jumu'ah: The scholars differ on whether you can use a multi-faith prayer room for jumu'ah. The most common opinion is that it is disliked due to the presence of idols/statues (for this same reason some say it is prohibited). However, The Muslim World League Fatwa Council has stated that it is allowed as long as the khateeb/imam/congregation avoid facing idols/statues etc. Otherwise, jumu'ah can be performed in any place, which meets both the requirements of purity and not facing any statues or religious imagery, including parks, homes, and sports halls.

Attendees: The jumu'ah prayer is compulsory on all men unless they have a valid excuse, such as ill health (this includes those who have serious health conditions during a pandemic) or they are travelling away from the place they are resident in (there is difference of opinion about how far they need to be away from their place of residence to be considered a traveller).

Women and children may also attend jumu'ah. Similarly they may attend Eid salah and other congregational prayers, although it is not compulsory for them.

'Believers! When the call to the prayer is on Friday, hurry towards remembering God...'
(Surah Al Jumu'ah, 62:9)

Jasser Auda's commentary of the above Quranic verse is that men are not specified, therefore '*believers*' refers to both women and men.

Also, in the seerah, it is related that women used to pray in rows behind the men in the mosque, without a barrier in between (narrated by Al-Sha'bi).

The proximity of women is again highlighted by this narration:

'We entered upon Fatimah bint Qays, and she said, "The call to prayer was performed, and then I was among those going towards the Prophet's mosque. I was in the front row of the women, which was just behind the last row of the men, when I heard the Prophet (pbuh) saying from the minbar: "The cousins of Al-Dary sailed the sea..."'

(Muslim)

Moreover, it is also reported that the Prophet used to shorten the salah if he heard a baby crying. Normally, babies would have been with their mothers at this time, therefore this shows that there were women present at the congregational prayers. Moreover, if the imam makes a mistake in the salah then it is narrated in hadith that men should say "Subhanallah" and women should clap.

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It is also narrated that Atikah bint Zayd, whose husband was Umar Ibn Al Khattab, used to pray fajr and isha in the mosque. When some people attending the mosque questioned her on why she did this when she knew this made Umar unhappy (due to his jealousy) her response was:

“Then why does not he prohibit me from doing this?”. They answered, “What prevents him is the statement of God’s Messenger (pbuh): Do not prevent women from going to God’s mosques.”

(Bukhari, Al Muwatta’, Ahmad etc.)

The minimum number of people in the congregation: The scholars have different opinions on the number of people required for jumu’ah prayer. There are fifteen different opinions mentioned by Ibn Hajar in his book Fath al-Bari. These range from three (not including the imam) (Abu Hanifa), twelve men (Malik) to forty men (Shafi’i and Ahmad). However, Ash-Shaukani (cited by Sabiq) wrote that only two people are required for jumu’ah salah, as it a type of congregational prayer and the Prophet said that two or more people make up a congregation.

Stepping over the seated believers: Although there are hadith which forbid individual members of the congregation stepping over seated ones, the majority of the scholars say it is allowed for the khateeb/imam to do if it is not possible to arrive at the minbar in any other way.

The sunnah prayers for the khateeb/imam: Imam Al-Nawawi stated that the khateeb should not pray two raka’ah on entering the mosque/prayer hall, due to the necessity of giving the khutbah. It is recommended that the imam prays two rak’ahs after jumu’ah in his own home and not the masjid (mosque) as this was the sunnah of the Prophet (pbuh).

Aim of the Khutbah

The purpose of the khutbah is to strengthen the iman of the congregation, by developing their spirituality to become closer to God. Ibn al-Qayyim states that the purposes of the khutbah are to praise God, declare His oneness and that Muhammad is His Messenger, to remind the congregation of the Hereafter, to enjoin the good and forbid the evil, and to address current issues. For example, when the Prophet saw indications of extreme poverty in some of his companions, he would encourage the congregation to give charity.

Fiqh of the Khutbah

Language of the Khutbah: There are three opinions on this issue:

- The khutbah should be completely in Arabic as it is a form of dhikr and is also part of the jumu’ah prayer, which must be said in Arabic.
- The khutbah can be delivered in a language other than Arabic - this is Abu Hanifah’s opinion. This is because the khutbah is a means of explaining the beliefs of Islam (and address contemporary issues), so it needs to be in the language that the congregation understands. Therefore, the khutbah can be said in English.
- The five rukn (pillars) of the khutbah should be in Arabic and the rest of the khutbah can be in another language such as English. These rukn are:
 1. Start by praising God.
 2. Recite at least one Quranic ayah.
 3. Send peace upon the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).
 4. Encourage the congregation to have taqwa (be conscious of God).
 5. Make du’a for Muslims.

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Nb. *The opinion that there are five rukns of the khutbah is followed by the Shafi'is and Hanbalis. Hanifis and Malikis believe that there is only one rukn for the khutbah; that it is a form of dhikr and that there should be an intention for it.*

Minimum requirements for the khutbah:

- The timing of the khutbah should be during the allowed time range for jumu'ah.
- The khutbah should be before the jumu'ah salah (prayer).
- There needs to be the required number of people present (for jumu'ah) to hear the khutbah.
- It should be performed in a sufficiently loud voice so that the congregation can hear it clearly (though this does not mean one needs to shout, especially as we now tend to use microphones).
- The khateeb should be male.

Conditions on which scholars differ:

- The khateeb should stand whilst delivering the khutbah.
- The khateeb should sit down between the two khutbahs.
- The khateeb should be in a state of wudu (during the khutbah).
- The second khutbah should occur straight after the first khutbah.
- The salah should be straight after the second khutbah.
- The khateeb should make the intention in the khutbah.

Length of the khutbah: It is preferred to keep the khutbah short and concise and lengthen the prayer.

'Lengthening the salah and shortening the khutbah is a sign of the understanding of one's religion. So, lengthen the salah and shorten the khutbah.' (Muslim and Ahmad).

As-Sayyid Sabiq explained this hadith by saying that a good understanding of Islam is shown by explaining it concisely.

Additional speech during the khutbah: The khateeb can mention something outside the topic of the khutbah. For instance, asking for help with a problem with the microphone, or announcing that a car is blocking the drive of a neighbour of the mosque.

Recommended surahs to be recited in the salah: The sunnah in the jumu'ah prayer is for the imam to recite Surah Al Jumu'ah or Surah Al A'laa in the first rak'ah and Surah Al Ghaashiyah or Surah Al Munaafiqoon (63) in the second rak'ah. However, the imam should consider the needs of the congregation as they may have little time, having to go back to lectures or their workplace, and therefore the imam can then recite shorter surahs.

The du'a of the khateeb on the minbar: The majority opinion of the scholars is that the khateeb should not raise their hands whilst making du'a during the khutbah, as several of the companions of the Prophet condemned this (though it is allowed in du'as asking for rain).

The khateeb and imam do not need to be the same person: In a mosque or another place of jumu'ah there could be one person appointed as the khateeb (who is a good speaker) and another as the imam (who has beautiful recitation and has memorised a lot of the Quran).

Therefore, the khateeb does not necessarily need to have memorised a lot of Quran. If there is someone in the audience with better recitation than the khateeb and has memorised more of the Quran than the khateeb can, then the khateeb can ask this other person to lead the salah, if they wish.

Also, the regular imam can ask a visiting khateeb to give the khutbah and then this khateeb can become the imam for the salah, or the regular imam can lead the salah. If the visiting khateeb has an illness or disability which prevents them from standing and leading the prayer, then another suitable person can lead the prayer and the visiting khateeb can sit down to deliver the khutbah. However, if the visiting khateeb or the regular khateeb is a scholar and there is no one more knowledgeable than them in the congregation, and they have an illness or disability that prevents them from standing, then they can still lead the prayer.

Another scenario is if the khateeb breaks their wudu during the khutbah. Being in a state of wudu is not an agreed upon requirement for delivering the khutbah but it is a requirement for the prayer (salah). In this case the khateeb could at the end of the khutbah go and make wudu and the congregation could wait for him, however this could result in hardship for the congregation. Therefore, it would be better if he asked someone else, who is suitable, to lead the salah whilst he goes to make wudu. Similarly, wudu is not a requirement for making the adhan.

Nb. If a person other than the khateeb leads the salah (prayer), then they need to have been present for the whole of the khutbah.

Format of the Khutbah 1

There are two ways of delivering a khutbah. Many people like to have a detailed format, which is given below. There is also a simpler format which will be outlined afterwards.

After the first adhan has been given, the khateeb should ascend the minbar; turn to face the congregation and say “Assalamu alaykum” and then sit down. Then the mu’addhin should loudly say the second adhan. If there is no minbar, the khateeb may stand at the front facing the congregation.

Next the khateeb should stand up and recite one of the following Quranic verses:

1.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ
(3:102)

Yā ayyuhā-alladhīna āmanu-ttaqūllāha haqqa tuqātihi wa lā tamūtunna illā wa antum-muslimūn.

‘O you who believe! Be mindful of God as is His due and make sure you devote yourselves to Him in your dying moment.’ (Quran, Surah Al Imran, 3:102)

2.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا

Yā ayyuhan-nāsu attaqū rabbakumu-lladhī khalaqakum-min nnafsin wāḥidatin wa khalaqa minhā zawjahā wa bath-tha minhumā rijālan kathīran wa nisā’an wa-ttaqu Allah alladhī tasā’alūna bihi wal-arḥāma inna Allaha kāna ‘alaykum raqībā.

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'People, remember your Lord who created you from a single soul and from it created its mate and from the pair of them spread countless men and women far and wide; be mindful of God, in whose name you make requests of each other. Be careful not to break family connections: God is always watching over you.' (Quran, Surah An-Nisa, 4:1)

3.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا - يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ
وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا
(33:70 - 71)

Yā ayyuhā-alladhīna āmanu-ttaqūllāha wa qūlū qawlan sadīdā – yuṣliḥ lakum wa yaghfir lakum dhunūbakum wa man yuṭī ' Allaha wa rasūlahu faqad fāza fawzan 'aḍhīmā.

'Believers, be mindful of God, speak in a straightforward manner for a good purpose, and He will put your deeds right for you and forgive you your sins. Whoever obeys God and His Messenger will truly achieve a great triumph.' (Quran, Surah Al-Ahzab, 33:70-1)

Next say:

أما بعد:

إِنَّ أَصْدَقَ الْحَدِيثِ كِتَابُ اللَّهِ وَأَحْسَنَ الْهَدْيِ هَدْيُ مُحَمَّدٍ وَشَرُّ الْأُمُورِ
مُحَدَّثَاتُهَا وَكُلُّ مُحَدَّثَةٍ بَدْعَةٌ وَكُلُّ بَدْعَةٍ ضَلَالَةٌ وَكُلُّ ضَلَالَةٍ فِي النَّارِ

Inna aṣḍaqa al-hadīthi kitābu-llahi wa aḥsanal-hadyi hadyu Muḥammadin, wa sharrun al-umūri muḥdathātuhā wa kullu muḥdathatin bid 'atun, wa kullu bid 'atin ḍalālatun wa kullu ḍalālatin fī-nnār.

To proceed:

Indeed, the most truthful speech is the book of God, and the best guidance is that of Muhammad. The worst actions are those that are newly invented, as every newly invented matter is an innovation, and every innovation is a misguidance, and every misguidance leads to the hellfire.

Then say:

إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ لِلَّهِ نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَ مِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ
أَعْمَالِنَا، مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ، وَ مَنْ يُضِلِّهِ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ. وَ أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا
اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَ أَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَ رَسُولُهُ

Inna-al ḥamda lillahi naḥmaduhu wa nastaʿīnuhu wa nastaghfiruhu, wa naʿuthu billahi min shurūri anfusinā wa min sayyiʿāti aʿmālīnā, man yahdihi Allahu falā muḍilla lahu, wa man yuḍlil falā ḥādiya lahu. Wa ash-hadu an lā ilāha illa-Allah waḥdahu lā sharīka lahu, wa ash-hadu anna Muḥammadan ʿabduhu wa rasūluhu.

Indeed, God deserves all praise. We praise Him, ask for His help and ask for His forgiveness. We ask for God's protection from the evil of our ourselves and the evil of our actions. Whoever God has guided then no one can misguide him and whoever God has lead astray then no one can guide him. I bear witness that there is no god worthy of worship except God alone and I bear witness that Muhammad is his slave and Messenger, may the peace and blessings of God be upon him, his family and the righteous. Amin.

Then give the first half of your speech.

Then say the closing du'a:

أَقُولُ قَوْلِي هَذَا، وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ لِي وَلَكُمْ وَلِسَائِرِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ، فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ،
إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ.

Aqūlu qawli hadhā, wa astaghfiru Allaha lī wa lakum wa lisā'iri-lmuslimīn, fastaghfirūhu, innahu huwa-alghafūrur raḥīm.

I ask God for forgiveness for myself and you, so ask for forgiveness, He is indeed the Most-Forgiving, Most-Merciful.

Then sit down on the minbar for a short while.

Then stand up and say the opening glorification:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ، وَ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ، وَ الصَّلَاةُ وَ السَّلَامُ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ، صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّمَ

Bismillah, walḥamdu lillah, was-ṣalātu was-salāmu ʿalā rasūlillah, ṣallā Allahu ʿalayhi wa sallam.

In the name of God, all praise be to Him, peace and blessings be upon the messenger of God.

Next deliver the second half of your speech.

Then say a du'a for the Muslims. For example, you could include a few of the following:

1.

رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ

Rabbanā ātinā fid-dunyā ḥasana, wa fil ākhirati ḥasana, wa qinā ʿadhāb annār.

'Our Lord! Give us good in this world good and in the Hereafter and save us from the torment of the Fire!' (Quran, Al Baqarah, 2:201).

2.

رَبَّنَا لَا تُزِغْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا وَهَبْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ

Rabbanā lā tuzigh qulūbanā ba'da idh hadaytanā wa hab min-lladunka raḥmatan innaka anta-lwahhāb.

'Our Lord! Let not our hearts deviate after You have guided us. And Grant us Your Mercy: You are the Ever Giving.' (Quran, Surah Al Imran, 3:8)

3.

عِبَادَتِكَ أَعِنَّا عَلَى ذِكْرِكَ وَ شُكْرِكَ وَ حُسْنِ اللَّهِم

Allahumma a'innā 'alā dhikrika wa shukrika wa ḥusni 'ibādatik.

'Oh God, help us to remember You, and thank You, and worship You with excellent manners.' (Abu Dawud)

4.

رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَا أَنْفُسَنَا وَإِنْ لَمْ تَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ

Rabbanā ḍḥalamnā anfusanā wa inna lam taghfir lanā wa tarḥamnā lanakūnanna min alkhāsirīn.

'Our Lord! We have wronged our souls. If You do not forgive us, and have mercy on us, we shall be lost.' (Quran, Surah Al A'raf, 7:23)

5.

رَبَّنَا آمَنَّا بِمَا أَنْزَلْتَ وَاتَّبَعْنَا الرَّسُولَ فَاكْتُبْنَا مَعَ الشَّاهِدِينَ

Rabbanā āmannā bimā anzalat wa-ttaba'nā ar-rasūla faktubnā m'a ash-shāhidīn.

'Our Lord! We believe in what You have sent down, and we follow the Messenger so write us down among those who bear witness.' (Quran, Surah Al Imran, 3:53)

Finally, give the concluding exhortation:

عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، ﴿ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ
عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ ، يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴾ . اذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ
الْعَظِيمَ يَذْكُرْكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوهُ يَزِدْكُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُ يُغْفِرْ لَكُمْ وَاتَّقُوهُ يُجْعَلَ
لَكُمْ مِنْ أَمْرِكُمْ مَخْرَجًا . وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ

Tbād Allahi, inn Allaha ya'muru bil 'adli wal ihsāni wa itā'ī dhī alqurbā wa yanhā 'ani-lfaḥshā' I wa-
lmunkari wa-lbaghī, ya 'idhukum la'allakum tadhakkarūna. Udhkurū Allah al 'aḍhīma yadhkurkum
wa-shkurūhu yazidkum wa-staghfirūhu yaghfir lakum wat-taqūhu yaj 'al lakum min amrikum
makhrajan. Wa aqimi aṣ-ṣalāta.

'O servants of God, "God commands justice, doing good, and generosity towards relatives and He forbids what is shameful, blameworthy and oppressive. He teaches you, so that you may take heed." (Quran, 16:90). Remember God who is the Most Great and He will remember you. Thank Him, He will give you more. Seek His forgiveness and He will forgive you. And be mindful of Him and He will provide for you a way out (from every difficulty). Stand for prayer.'

Descend the minbar, turn around so that your back is towards the congregation (to lead the prayer) as the mu'addhin gives the iqamah.

Before starting the salah it is advisable to remind the congregation to straighten the rows and fill any gaps between them. It is agreed upon that the members of the congregation should be shoulder to shoulder. However, there is difference of opinion on whether the feet of the members of the congregation should also touch (the Hanifis disagree with this).

Nb. Due to COVID, filling the gaps may not apply due to the necessity of social distancing.

Format of the Khutbah 2

The khutbah does not have to have such a detailed format. The following format can also be used.

After the first adhan has been given, the khateeb should ascend the minbar, face the congregation and audience and say “Assalamu alaykum”, sit down, and allow the mu’addhin to call the second adhan. If there is no minbar, you can just stand at the front facing the congregation.

- First praise God – this can be said in one’s own words.
- Recite any Quranic ayat (in Arabic).
- Send peace upon the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) – this can be said in one’s own words.
- Deliver the first sermon.

Then sit down on the minbar for a short while.

- Then stand up and praise God – this can be said in one’s own words.
- Next deliver the second half of your speech.
- Then say a du’a for the Muslims – this can be said in one’s own words.
- Then remind the congregation to have taqwa (be mindful of God).

Descend the minbar, turning your back to the congregation to lead the prayer as the mu’addhin gives the iqamah.

Remind the congregation to straighten the rows and fill any gaps between them.

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Other sources:

One day training course material for youth to prepare them to be khateeb by the Muslim Youth Foundation. This includes fiqh jumah/khutbah issues covered by Sheikh Salem al Shekhi (Didsbury Mosque). Also, the format of a khutbah is covered in another section.

Consultation with Sheikh Ahmed Saif on fiqh of jumu’ah and alternative khutbah format.