

Srebrenica Genocide Khutbah Talking Points

Theme: Sanctity of life, Healing, Resiliency

Other potential themes: Dangers of nationalism, Betrayal of trust/reliance on Allah alone and not His Creation (Srebrenica genocide occurring in UN declared safe zones/Ceasefires of Gaza being violated in front the entire world + deprivation of aid), “History repeats itself”

Purpose:

- Highlight and reflect on the Srebrenica genocide in its own right, as it is often overlooked part of history.
- How the events that are occurring in Gaza mirror Srebrenica, whether it be the actions carried out against innocent people or the events that led to such barbaric acts of violence

[*Sample Khutbah Below*](#)

Key themes and objectives:

1. Avoiding Statistical Fatigue – The loss of life at the hand of oppressors is something that we as Muslims should never grow accustomed to as our religion exemplifies how much one life is truly worth. Muslims should make an active effort to soften their hearts by humanizing victims, understanding that there were lives behind the statistics.
2. Silence in the face of oppression – The documentation of Srebrenica was not nearly as extensive as Gaza, yet the images that came out were equally as haunting. Despite this, the leaders of Muslim nations laid dormant, as they do once again.
3. Understanding that our strength and victory come solely from our belief in Allah SWT – Whether it's what we see in modern times with failed promises to deliver aid safely in Gaza, or the declaration of Srebrenica as a safe zone, ultimately, no amount of guarantees from worldly organizations can overshadow the promise of Allah SWT, and how we as Muslims need to shift our dependence on these organizations to sole reliance on Allah SWT.

4. Remember yesterday, act today - Munira Subašić, President of the Mothers of Srebrenica, said to “learn from the past... for the future.” It is encouraged upon the Muslims to learn about the history of our Ummah as a means to understand the world and the atrocities that plague our Ummah today. Events from Srebrenica, a small town in the heart of Europe, are not far removed from what is happening today in Gaza and the vilification of our Muslim brothers and sisters all over the world.

Quranic References:

Surah Al-Anbiya (21:92)

إِنَّ هَذِهِ أُمَّتُكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَأَنَا رَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُونِ

“[Messengers], this community of yours is one single community and I am your Lord, so serve Me.”

Surah Ibrahim (14:42)

وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ اللَّهَ غَافِلًا عَمَّا يَعْمَلُ الظَّالِمُونَ إِنَّمَا يُؤَخِّرُهُمْ لِيَوْمٍ تَشْخَصُ فِيهِ الْأَبْصَارُ

“Do not think [Prophet] that God is unaware of what the oppressors do: He only gives them respite until a Day when their eyes will stare in terror.”

Surah At-Tawbah (9:51)

قُلْ لَنْ يُصِيبَنَا إِلَّا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَنَا هُوَ مَوْلَانَا وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ

“Say, ‘Only what God has decreed will happen to us. He is our Master: let the believers put their trust in God.’”

Surah Al-Anfal (8:10)

وَمَا جَعَلَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بُشْرَىٰ وَلِتَطْمَئِنَّ بِهِ قُلُوبُكُمْ وَمَا النَّصْرُ إِلَّا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

“God made this a message of hope to reassure your hearts: help comes only from God, He is mighty and wise.”

Surah Ali’-Imran (3:139)

وَلَا تَهِنُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَنْتُمْ الْأَعْلَوْنَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ

“Do not lose heart or despair- if you are true believers you have the upper hand”

Surah Ali'-Imran (3:103)

وَأَعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا ۚ وَادْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ فُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَىٰ شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِّنَ النَّارِ فَأَنْقَذَكُم مِّنْهَا ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ ءَايَاتِهِ ۚ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ

“Hold fast to God’s rope all together; do not split into factions. Remember God’s favour to you: you were enemies and then He brought your hearts together and you became brothers by His grace; you were about to fall into a pit of Fire and He saved you from it- in this way God makes His revelations clear to you so that you may be rightly guided.”

Hadith References:

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ " تَرَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فِي تَرَاحُمِهِمْ وَتَوَادُّهِمْ وَتَعَاطُفِهِمْ كَمَثَلِ الْجَسَدِ إِذَا اشْتَكَى عُضْوًا تَدَاعَى لَهُ سَائِرُ جَسَدِهِ بِالسَّهْرِ وَالْحُمَى ".

Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said, "You see the believers as regards their being merciful among themselves and showing love among themselves and being kind, resembling one body, so that, if any part of the body is not well then the whole body shares the sleeplessness (insomnia) and fever with it." [Sahih Bukhari]

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ " أَنْصُرْ أَخَاكَ ظَالِمًا أَوْ مَظْلُومًا ". قَالُوا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ هَذَا نَنْصُرُهُ مَظْلُومًا، فَكَيْفَ نَنْصُرُهُ ظَالِمًا قَالَ " تَأْخُذُ فَوْقَ يَدَيْهِ

Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said, "Help your brother, whether he is an oppressor or he is an oppressed one. People asked, "O Allah's Messenger (ﷺ)! It is all right to help him if he is oppressed, but how should we help him if he is an oppressor?" The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "By preventing him from oppressing others." [Sahih Bukhari]

النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: «لَزَوَالِ الدُّنْيَا أَهْوَنُ عَلَى اللَّهِ مِنْ قَتْلِ رَجُلٍ مُسْلِمٍ». رَوَاهُ التِّرْمِذِيُّ وَالنَّسَائِيُّ وَوَقَّهَ بَعْضُهُمْ وَهُوَ الْأَصَحُّ 'Abdallah b. 'Amr reported the Prophet as saying, "The passing away of the world would mean less to God than the murder of a Muslim man." [Sunan Al-Tidmidhi]

" الْمُسْلِمُ أَخُو الْمُسْلِمِ، لَا يَظْلِمُهُ وَلَا يُسْلَمُهُ، وَمَنْ كَانَ فِي حَاجَةِ أَخِيهِ كَانَ اللَّهُ فِي حَاجَتِهِ، وَمَنْ فَرَّجَ عَنْ مُسْلِمٍ كُرْبَةً فَرَّجَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ كُرْبَةً مِنْ كُرْبَاتٍ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، وَمَنْ سَتَرَ مُسْلِمًا سَتَرَهُ اللَّهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ".

Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said, "A Muslim is a brother of another Muslim, so he should not oppress him, nor should he hand him over to an oppressor. Whoever fulfilled the needs of his

brother, Allah will fulfill his needs; whoever brought his (Muslim) brother out of a discomfort, Allah will bring him out of the discomforts of the Day of Resurrection, and whoever screened a Muslim, Allah will screen him on the Day of Resurrection. " [Sahih Bukhari]

Historical context:

The genocidal atrocities that took place in not only Srebrenica, but across the entire Bosnia and Herzegovina, was a meticulous, intentional slaughtering of innocent people. When the death of Josip Broz Tito, the founder of Yugoslavia, occurred in 1980, so too did the forced unity between the 6 republics that made up Yugoslavia: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia. Slobodan Milosevic rose to power in Serbia, wherein he preached for a Greater Serbia that sought to unify all Serbs, even ones that lived in the diaspora. As a result, the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina voted almost unanimously to have independence. Bosnian Serbs rejected the idea wholeheartedly, and in response, Serb forces from within Bosnia and the remnants of the former Yugoslav army launched a brutal war against the newly independent, majority-Muslim nation.

With mass killings of innocent Bosniaks occurring all over the republic, the U.N designated Srebrenica as a safe zone, and sent around 600 of Dutchbat (Dutch Peacekeepers) to maintain and protect the peace and sanctity of a now severely overpopulated Srebrenica. On March 8th, 1995, Radovan Karadzic, the political leader of the Bosnian Serb demographic, as well as the supreme commander of its armed forces, issued Directive 7 which stated:

“By planned and well thought out combat operations, create an unbearable situation of total insecurity with no hope of further survival or life for inhabitants of Srebrenica.”

As an immediate result of this, in July of 1995, General Ratko Mladic launched his offensive to capture the town of Srebrenica. Bosniak civilian soldiers were not able to protect the town because Dutch peacekeepers had taken their weapons prior to this and were working with Bosnian Serbs. On July 11th, General Mladic took the town, stating:

“Here we are, on July 11th 1995, in Serb Srebrenica. On the eve of another great Serb holiday, we gift this town to the Serb people. Finally, after our rebellion against the “Dahije” the time has come to take revenge on the Turks in this region.”

The whole population of Srebrenica was pushed into the UN Compound in Potocari, the town over. When the Serbs came, they segregated the men and boys away from the women. Some of the men fled through the forest before their arrival as a means to escape; however, not all

survived that weeks-long trek through the forest. In the days that followed, more than 8,000 Bosniak men and boys were captured, systematically executed, and buried in mass graves across the region. Thousands of women, children, and the elderly were forcibly displaced. To this day, many Bosniak families are still searching for missing loved ones, while others have only recently located their remains in mass graves.

Sample Khutbah

First Khutbah

Alḥamdulillāh, we praise Allah, the One who gives life and takes it, the One in whose Hands is justice and retribution, mercy and healing. We bear witness that there is no god but Allah, and that Muḥammad ﷺ is His final Messenger.

Dear brothers and sisters,

On this day—July 11—we remember a dark chapter in our recent history: the Srebrenica genocide. In the summer of 1995, over 8,000 Bosnian Muslim men and boys were systematically executed in what the world would later acknowledge as Europe’s worst atrocity since the Holocaust. It was a massacre rooted in hatred and carried out in cold blood—under the watch of the international community.

As Muslims, we are not strangers to loss. But our religion teaches us that even in the face of horror, life is sacred and every human soul matters. Allah says in the Qur’an:

“Whoever kills a soul—unless for a soul or for corruption [done] in the land—it is as if he had slain all of mankind. And whoever saves one—it is as if he had saved all of mankind.” (Sūrat al-Mā’idah 5:32)

This verse was not revealed in a vacuum. It was revealed in a world already saturated with violence, tribalism, and power politics—yet Islam came to declare, unambiguously, that human life is inviolable. And when that sanctity is violated, it is not just a political failure—it is a moral catastrophe.

The Prophet ﷺ, after witnessing the death of his own companions and kin at the hands of oppressors, still taught mercy and accountability in equal measure. After the Battle of Badr, when prisoners of war were brought before him, the Prophet ﷺ ordered humane treatment—even for those who had once tried to kill him. “Feed them from what you eat, clothe

them as you clothe yourselves, and do not burden them with more than they can bear,” he said. This is the prophetic character we must hold onto, even as we grieve.

And we grieve not only Srebrenica today—but Gaza.

Just as the world was silent while thousands of Muslims were butchered in Bosnia, today the silence grows louder as bombs fall on children in Gaza, hospitals are besieged, and families are buried beneath rubble. But we are not helpless. We are not hopeless. Because the believer’s strength comes from something deeper than numbers or armies: it comes from Allah Himself.

Second Khutbah

Dear believers,

When we witness suffering—whether in Srebrenica’s past or Gaza’s present—it can be overwhelming. We may ask, Where is Allah? Why is this happening?

But let us remember: our test is not whether we see justice in this world—our test is whether we cling to Allah through the injustice.

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Wondrous is the affair of the believer. Verily, all of his affairs are good. If something pleasing happens, he is grateful, and that is good for him. And if something harmful happens, he is patient, and that is good for him.” (Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim)

We are not commanded to control history—we are commanded to remain upright in it. “O you who believe, be steadfast, be upright for Allah, bear patiently, and remain conscious of Allah so that you may succeed.” (Sūrat Āl ‘Imrān 3:200)

This ṣabr—this fortitude—is not weakness. It is what allowed the Prophet ﷺ to endure 13 years of torture in Makkah. It is what kept Bilāl alive under the scorching sun as he cried “Aḥad, Aḥad!” It is what inspired Bosnian mothers to bury their sons with dignity, and it is what keeps Gazan families holding fast even as the world turns its back.

But resilience alone is not enough. We are called to heal, to remember, and to act. Healing begins with naming injustice and refusing to normalize it. We are not neutral between the oppressor and the oppressed. The Prophet ﷺ said:



“Help your brother, whether he is the oppressor or the oppressed.” The companions asked, “O Messenger of Allah, we understand helping the oppressed. But how do we help the oppressor?” He replied, “By stopping him from oppressing.” (Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)

This is the prophetic principle: justice is a mercy to all, and silence is complicity.

So today, let us honor the memory of the martyrs of Srebrenica—not just with tears, but with truth. Let us remember the suffering of Gaza—not just with du‘ā’, but with advocacy. And let us recommit ourselves to a spiritual resilience rooted in tawakkul, in hope, in refusing to break—even when the world does.

May Allah have mercy on the victims of Srebrenica, the martyrs of Gaza, and all those who have suffered in silence. May He make us agents of justice, beacons of healing, and mountains of resilience.