



# Khutbah Talking Points: Juneteenth — Freedom, Faith, and the Black American Muslim Experience

## Opening Theme

- All praise belongs to Allah, the One who created humanity with dignity and honored the children of Adam.
- Juneteenth reminds us that freedom delayed is freedom denied, but it also reminds us that Allah calls us to something deeper than legal emancipation: spiritual liberation and moral responsibility.
- As Muslims, we celebrate every step toward justice while recognizing that ultimate freedom is found in servitude to Allah alone.

## 1. Juneteenth Is a Reminder That Truth Can Be Delayed but Not Defeated

- On June 19, 1865, enslaved people in Galveston, Texas finally learned they had been legally freed more than two years earlier.
- The delay teaches us that declarations alone do not transform reality; truth must be carried, proclaimed, and implemented.
- Likewise, guidance from Allah exists, but people must receive it, embrace it, and live by it.

**Reflection:** How many people today live spiritually enslaved, unaware of the freedom Allah has already offered through faith and submission?

## 2. Islam Is a Religion of Liberation

- The Qur'an consistently commands believers to stand with the oppressed and against injustice.
- Allah says in Surah An-Nisa (4:75):

...وَمَا لَكُمْ ۚ تَقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ وَالنِّسَاءِ وَالْوِلْدَانِ

“And what is [the matter] with you that you fight not in the cause of Allah and for the oppressed among men, women, and children...” (Qur'an 4:75)

- Justice is not optional in Islam; it is an act of worship.

## 3. Black Muslim History Is American Muslim History

- Long before modern immigration, many enslaved Africans brought to these shores were Muslims.
- They preserved fragments of their faith despite unimaginable hardship.
- Remembering Juneteenth is also remembering their resilience, scholarship, patience, and trust in Allah.

## **4. Freedom Has an Outer and an Inner Dimension**

- Physical chains can be removed while spiritual chains remain.
- Islam calls believers to free themselves from:
  - arrogance,
  - hatred,
  - greed,
  - tribalism,
  - despair,
- attachment to anything besides Allah.
  
- The greatest liberation is becoming a servant of Allah rather than a servant of ego or worldly desires.

## **5. Gratitude Requires Responsibility**

- We honor those who struggled before us not merely by remembering them but by continuing righteous work.
- Gratitude should inspire service:
  - strengthening families,
  - educating youth,
  - building institutions,
  - feeding the needy,
  - protecting the vulnerable,
  - standing for justice with wisdom and mercy.

## **6. The African American Muslim Legacy**

- The Black American Muslim experience uniquely intertwines African heritage, Islamic faith, and the struggle for justice.
- Our community has preserved Islam, built institutions, nurtured leaders, and helped establish a vibrant Muslim presence in America.
- This legacy carries with it both honor and responsibility.

## **7. The Greatest Freedom Is Found in Allah**

- Juneteenth invites us to ask:
  - What still enslaves my heart?
  - What habits keep me from excellence?
  
  - What fears prevent me from trusting Allah completely?
  
- Every believer is on a journey from bondage to liberation:
  - from heedlessness to remembrance,
  - from oppression to justice,
  - from ego to sincerity,

- from dependence on creation to reliance upon the Creator.

## **Closing Message**

Juneteenth is not only a commemoration of emancipation from physical bondage. For Muslims, it is an opportunity to reflect on Allah's call to justice, dignity, remembrance, and transformation.

May Allah make us people who free ourselves from sin, free others from oppression, stand firmly for justice, honor the sacrifices of those who came before us, and seek true liberation through obedience to Him.  
Ameen.