

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

خطبة الجمعة

Friday Sermon

*Light on the Tongue, Heavy on the
Scale*

DELIVERED AT

Masjid Adam



ŞİFAH

SCHOOL OF ISLAMIC
FOUNDATIONS &
ADVOCACY FOR HUMANITY

Light on the Tongue, Heavy on the Scale

The First Khutbah

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ، وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ
أَعْمَالِنَا، مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ، وَمَنْ يَضِلَّ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا
اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ. أَمَّا بَعْدُ: فَإِنَّ أَصْدَقَ
الْحَدِيثِ كِتَابُ اللَّهِ، وَخَيْرُ الْهَدْيِ هَدْيُ مُحَمَّدٍ ﷺ، وَشَرُّ الْأُمُورِ مُحْدَثَاتُهَا، وَكُلُّ مُحْدَثَةٍ
بِدْعَةٌ، وَكُلُّ بِدْعَةٍ ضَلَالَةٌ، وَكُلُّ ضَلَالَةٍ فِي النَّارِ.

All praise belongs to Allah. We praise Him, we seek His help, and we seek His forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allah from the evil within ourselves and from our sinful deeds. Whomever Allah guides, none can lead astray, and whomever He leaves astray, none can guide. I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah alone, having no partner, and I bear witness that Muḥammad is His servant and His Messenger. To proceed: the truest speech is the Book of Allah, the best guidance is the guidance of Muḥammad ﷺ, the worst of affairs are the newly invented matters, every innovation is misguidance, and every misguidance is in the Fire.

نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ، أَمَّا بَعْدُ: فَأَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ، بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ
الرَّحِيمِ.

رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي * وَيَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي * وَاحْلُلْ عُقْدَةً مِنْ لِسَانِي * يَفْقَهُوا
قَوْلِي *

We praise Him, and we send blessings upon His noble Messenger. To proceed: I seek refuge with Allah from Satan, the accursed; in the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. My Lord, expand for me my breast, and ease for me my task, and untie the knot from my tongue, that they may understand my speech.

Sūrah Ṭā Hā (20:25 to 28)

Dear brothers and sisters, **assalāmu ‘alaykum wa raḥmatullāhi wa barakātuh.**

A Test of Quality, Not Quantity

Allah, the Most High, opened a Sūrah of His Book by telling us exactly why He created the two great events that frame every human life, our death and our living. He said:

الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا ۚ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْغَفُورُ *

He who created death and life to test you as to which of you is best in deed. And He is the Almighty, the Most Forgiving.

Sūrah al-Mulk (67:2)

Notice the words with care, brothers and sisters. Allah said, that He may test which of you is best in deeds, aḥsanu ‘amalā, and He did not say which of you does the most deeds, aktharu ‘amalā. It was never a contest of quantity. It was always a question of quality. And on the Day when our deeds are weighed, it is not in the end the bulk of our actions that saves us but the mercy of Allah, as He looks into the sincerity with which we acted and the acceptance we sought from Him. Yet one of the ways a servant shows his sincerity is precisely this, that he seizes the simple gifts of worship Allah scatters along his path, the light words that carry him toward salvation. Can a person truly claim sincerity if he will not even reach for the easiest things his Lord has sent to raise him on the Day when every soul is begging for Paradise?

The Scale that Will Be Set Up

For Allah has told us that the scales will be set, and that no soul will be wronged by the smallest measure on that Day.

وَنَضَعُ الْمَوَازِينَ الْقِسْطَ لِيَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ فَلَا تُظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْئًا ۖ وَإِنْ كَانَ مِثْقَالُ حَبَّةٍ مِنْ خَرْدَلٍ أَتَيْنَا بِهَا وَكَفَى بِنَا حَاسِبِينَ *

And We place the scales of justice for the Day of Resurrection, so no soul will be treated unjustly at all. And even if there be the weight of a mustard seed, We will bring it forth. And sufficient are We as accountant.

Sūrah al-Anbiyā’ (21:47)

Salmān, may Allah be pleased with him, described this balance as so vast that if the heavens and the earth and all that lies between them were placed in one of its pans, they would be contained, and it would still weigh with perfect precision. When the angels behold this awesome sight, they ask their Lord whom He will weigh upon it, and He answers that He will weigh whomever He wills of His

creation. And the angels, who have never disobeyed a command and have nothing to fear of the reckoning, still lower themselves and say that they did not worship Allah as He deserves to be worshipped, for they know their Lord, and they know He is owed far more than any worship a scale could hold. The great scholars among the early Muslims tried to picture this meezan for us. Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī described it in words the believers have carried down the centuries.

The balance on the Day of Resurrection has a tongue and two pans, and it weighs the deeds of the servants with a justice that wrongs no one. On that Day some people will come with their good and their evil in exact balance, and these are the ones Allah sets aside, waiting upon His mercy, because they needed just one more good deed to tip the scale.

Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī

So consider, brothers and sisters, what a single light word could mean for a person whose scale hangs even. What are these weighty words and simple deeds we can lay into that pan? Let us begin with the remembrance of Allah.

Words that Fill the Scale

The Prophet ﷺ taught us in a famous hadith that purity is half of faith, and then he turned to the words of the tongue and showed how heavy they fall upon the balance.

الطُّهُورُ شَطْرُ الْإِيمَانِ، وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ تَمْلَأُ الْمِيزَانَ، وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ تَمْلَأُنِ مَا بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ
وَالْأَرْضِ.

Purity is half of faith. Al-ḥamdu lillāh fills the scale, and subḥāna-llāhi wa-l-ḥamdu lillāh fill what is between the heavens and the earth.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** Muslim 223 **Authenticity:** Ṣaḥīḥ

Look at what the Prophet ﷺ is placing in our hands. Tasbīḥ, which is to declare Allah free of every flaw, and taḥmīd, which is to praise Him and thank Him. The tasbīḥ affirms Allah's perfection, a fitting thing to carry on a Day when you fear most of all your own imperfections. And the taḥmīd praises Him for blessings you know you never thanked Him enough for, so that on that Day they come rushing to your aid. And when you join the two together, you reach the words the Prophet ﷺ called beloved to the Most Merciful, light on the tongue, heavy on the scale.

كَلِمَتَانِ خَفِيفَتَانِ عَلَى اللِّسَانِ، ثَقِيلَتَانِ فِي الْمِيزَانِ، حَبِيبَتَانِ إِلَى الرَّحْمَنِ: سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ
وَبِحَمْدِهِ، سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ.

Two phrases are light upon the tongue, heavy upon the scale, and beloved to the Most Merciful: subḥāna-llāhi wa bi-ḥamdih, subḥāna-llāhi-l-‘aẓīm. How perfect is Allah and praised is He, how perfect is Allah, the Almighty.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** Bukhārī 6406, Muslim 2694 **Authenticity:** Muttafaqun ‘Alayh

And the Prophet ﷺ told us what a hundred of these words a day will do to the record of our sins, even if those sins were as countless as the foam upon the sea.

مَنْ قَالَ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ فِي يَوْمٍ مِائَةَ مَرَّةٍ، حُطَّتْ خَطَايَاهُ وَإِنْ كَانَتْ مِثْلَ زَبَدِ الْبَحْرِ.

Whoever says subḥāna-llāhi wa bi-ḥamdih a hundred times in a day, his sins are wiped away even if they were like the foam of the sea.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** Bukhārī 6405, Muslim 2691 **Authenticity:** Muttafaqun ‘Alayh

And beyond the wiping of sins, the Prophet ﷺ told us that for every utterance of subḥāna-llāhi wa bi-ḥamdih a tree is planted for the servant in Paradise. So ask yourself, brothers and sisters, how many trees in Paradise have we failed to plant, how many oceans of sin could we have washed away, simply by repeating these phrases as we walk and drive and work through our day? Abū Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, would make tasbiḥ twelve thousand times each day. Imagine how his scale must stand. These words asked nothing of his wealth or his hours, and yet they are among the heaviest things a believer can bring.

The Prophet's Gift of the Heaviest Words

And our Prophet ﷺ, who knew the worth of these words better than any of us, was always teaching his Companions to trade a little breath for a great weight on the scale. One morning he left the house of his wife Juwayriyah, may Allah be pleased with her, just after the dawn prayer while she sat in her place of worship making remembrance. He returned to her near midday and found her still seated where he had left her. He asked whether she had remained in that state since he departed, and when she said yes, he gave her four phrases and told her that if they were weighed against the whole long morning of her remembrance, they would outweigh it.

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ عَدَدَ خَلْقِهِ، وَرِضَا نَفْسِهِ، وَزِنَةَ عَرْشِهِ، وَمِدَادَ كَلِمَاتِهِ.

How perfect is Allah and praised is He, by the number of His creation, by His own pleasure, by the weight of His Throne, and by the ink of His words.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** Muslim 2726 **Authenticity:** Ṣaḥīḥ

Reflect on the mercy in this, brothers and sisters. The Prophet ﷺ did not tell her that her long sitting was wasted, but he showed her that the door of reward is wider than she imagined, that a few words spoken with presence of heart can weigh against hours. This is the generosity of our religion. It does not measure us only by the time we can spare, which is little, but by the quality and the love behind what we say, which has no ceiling. So we need never feel that our scale is beyond saving for lack of hours in the day. The words are short. The reward is without limit. We have only to move our tongues.

When the Poor Companions Feared They Were Left Behind

And these words were the consolation of those Companions who had nothing to give. The poor among the Muhājirūn once came to the Prophet ﷺ in distress and said that the people of wealth had run away with the highest ranks and the lasting bliss, for they prayed as the poor prayed and fasted as the poor fasted, but then they freed slaves and gave charity and spent from riches the poor did not possess. They feared they had been left behind in the race to Allah. The Prophet ﷺ did not send them away empty. He gave them words that would let the empty-handed catch the wealthy, a remembrance to say after every prayer.

تَسْبِيحُونَ وَتُحَمِّدُونَ وَتُكَبِّرُونَ خَلْفَ كُلِّ صَلَاةٍ ثَلَاثًا وَثَلَاثِينَ.

You glorify Allah, praise Him, and magnify Him after every prayer thirty-three times.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** Bukhārī 843, Muslim 595 **Authenticity:** Muttafaquun ‘Alayh

Look at the kindness of this, brothers and sisters. No one in this masjid is too poor, too busy, or too burdened to compete for the very highest of ranks, because the currency of this race is not gold but the remembrance of the tongue, and that is given freely to every one of us. The wealthy man may give a thousand in charity, but the man with nothing in his pocket can sit after his prayer and weigh down his scale with words that cost him not a single coin. So let no one ever say that his circumstances have shut him out of the reward. The door the Prophet ﷺ opened for the poor Companions is open for us at the end of every prayer we pray.

Alhamdulillah When It Is Hard to Say

Now I want us to sit with one phrase in particular, al-ḥamdu lillāh, and with how difficult, and how rewardable, it is to say it when it does not come easily. Al-ḥamdu lillāh when it hurts. Al-ḥamdu lillāh not in a moment of triumph but in a moment of trial. Not when the obvious blessing has just arrived and you are holding your newborn child for the first time, but the al-ḥamdu lillāh when Allah tests you and you must bury the very child you welcomed into the world. It is for that praise, said at the moment of loss rather than the moment of gain, that the Prophet ﷺ told us a house is built in Paradise.

إِذَا مَاتَ وَلَدُ الْعَبْدِ قَالَ اللَّهُ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ: قَبِضْتُمْ وَلَدَ عَبْدِي؟ فَيَقُولُونَ: نَعَمْ، فَيَقُولُ: مَاذَا قَالَ عَبْدِي؟ فَيَقُولُونَ: حَمْدَكَ وَاسْتَرْجَع، فَيَقُولُ اللَّهُ: ابْنُوا لِعَبْدِي بَيْتًا فِي الْجَنَّةِ وَاسْمُوهُ بَيْتَ الْحَمْدِ.

When the child of a servant dies, Allah says to His angels: have you taken the child of My servant? They say: yes. He says: what did My servant say? They say: he praised You and said innā lillāhi wa innā ilayhi rāji'ūn. So Allah says: build for My servant a house in Paradise and name it the House of Praise.

Source: Sunan at-Tirmidhī **Hadith No:** Tirmidhī 1021 **Authenticity:** Ḥasan

There are two phrases of remembrance, brothers and sisters, that are among the most frequent on our tongues and yet the most difficult to say at certain moments of our lives. The Prophet ﷺ told us that the best remembrance is lā ilāha illa-llāh, and the best supplication is al-ḥamdu lillāh.

أَفْضَلُ الذِّكْرِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَأَفْضَلُ الدُّعَاءِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ.

The best remembrance is lā ilāha illa-llāh, and the best supplication is al-ḥamdu lillāh.

Source: Sunan at-Tirmidhī **Hadith No:** Tirmidhī 3383 **Authenticity:** Ḥasan

And who embodied this praise more perfectly than our beloved Prophet ﷺ? When something pleased him he would say, all praise is for Allah by whose grace good things are completed; and when something distressed him he would say, all praise is for Allah in every state. His gratitude was not tied to his circumstances. If you had walked into the masjid and seen him in prostration, you would not have known whether something joyful or something painful had just struck him, because both drove him to the very same place: his face upon the ground, praising his Lord. Once, while he led the prayer, a man behind him said, upon rising from the bowing, words of plentiful and blessed praise, and the Prophet ﷺ told him what he had seen.

رَبَّنَا وَلَكَ الْحَمْدُ حَمْدًا كَثِيرًا طَيِّبًا مُبَارَكًا فِيهِ.

Our Lord, to You belongs all praise, praise abundant, pure, and blessed. The Prophet ﷺ said he saw more than thirty angels racing one another to be the first to record those words.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī **Hadith No:** Bukhārī 799 **Authenticity:** Ṣaḥīḥ

So why is the praise at the moment of trial the most precious of all? Because when Allah gives you an obvious blessing, your al-ḥamdu lillāh is thanking Him for something you can plainly see. But when Allah tests you and you still say al-ḥamdu lillāh in every state, you are praising Him for an unseen blessing hidden behind the trial, from a place of trust in His wisdom rather than His visible generosity. The first kind of praise trains you for the second, exactly as your lā ilāha illa-llāh in your days of health and ease is preparing your tongue to say it at the most consequential moment of your life.

Every Word of Surrender Is a Word of Praise

And here, brothers and sisters, is a beautiful truth that ties our whole faith together. When you look closely, you find that the great phrases a believer reaches for are all, at their root, words of praise. When you say ḥasbuna-llāhu wa ni'ma-l-wakīl, Allah is sufficient for us and the best of guardians, you are praising His care. When you say innā lillāhi wa innā ilayhi rāji'ūn at the moment of loss, you are admitting that you belong to Him and return to Him, and in that admission is praise. Each of these is a confession of our own smallness before Him, an acknowledgement that we cannot fully understand, cannot fully thank, cannot fully act as His favours deserve. Allah knows and we do not, and to say so is to praise His knowledge. Allah controls and we do not, and to say so is to praise His power. So every honest word of surrender we speak is, beneath the surface, a word of ḥamd.

And the best al-ḥamdu lillāh of all is the one offered with a smile upon the face and a heart that beats with praise, for our Prophet ﷺ never sat in self-pity. When we read his life and pass through his seasons of grief, the loss of his children, the rejection at Ṭā'if, the years of hardship, we feel sorrow on his behalf, yet he himself did not feel sorry for himself. He met each season with praise. Let that be our share of his way, brothers and sisters: not to drown in pity over what we have lost, but to lift the tongue with al-ḥamdu lillāh for all that Allah has given us to be grateful for, which is more than we could ever count.

Lā ilāha illa-llāh at the Final Breath

For there is a moment, brothers and sisters, when the most frequent word on a believer's tongue becomes the hardest word in his whole vocabulary to utter, and that is the moment of leaving this world. Allah promised that He gives firmness to the believers with a firm word, in this life and in the next.

يُثَبِّتُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِالْقَوْلِ الثَّابِتِ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ وَيُضِلُّ اللَّهُ الظَّالِمِينَ
وَيَفْعَلُ اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ *

Allah keeps firm those who believe, with the firm word, in the life of this world and in the Hereafter. And Allah leaves the wrongdoers to stray, and Allah does what He wills.

Sūrah Ibrāhīm (14:27)

That firm word is *lā ilāha illa-llāh*, and the Prophet ﷺ taught us to prompt our dying ones with it.

لَقِّنُوا مَوْتَاكُمْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ.

*Prompt your dying ones to say *lā ilāha illa-llāh*.*

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** Muslim 916 **Authenticity:** Ṣaḥīḥ

How often the tongue is tied and the eyes are closing before a person can bring out that word. The one who will say it with ease at the end is the one whose heart was built upon it across a lifetime, for the first question in the grave will be: who is your Lord? No number of mourners standing over your grave will answer it for you. Only a deep foundation of *lā ilāha illa-llāh*, laid down through years of remembrance, will let the heart hold firm when the angel comes. So keep your tongue moist with it, brothers and sisters. Do not let a moment pass without *lā ilāha illa-llāh*, and ask Allah that it be the last of your words.

These Light Words in a Heavy Age

Now bring this down into the life you will return to this afternoon, brothers and sisters. We live in an age that fills every empty second for us. The moment a queue forms, the moment the lift doors close, the moment we sit down to rest, the hand reaches for the phone, and the idle minutes that our forefathers filled with the remembrance of Allah are poured instead into endless scrolling, into the noise of strangers, into news that agitates the heart and comparisons that wound it. Ask yourself honestly: what fills my idle moments? When I am waiting, what runs across my tongue? Whoever trains himself to complain and to curse through the small frustrations of his day should not be surprised when, under the great pressures of life, his tongue knows no other language. But whoever fills those same gaps with *subḥāna-llāh* and *al-ḥamdu lillāh* is quietly stacking his scale, breath by breath, while he waits for a bus or stirs a pot or walks to his car.

And these words are a mercy in our hardships above all. When the test comes, when the diagnosis arrives, when the money is lost or the marriage strains or the child will not be guided, the believer has somewhere for his heart to run that is not bitterness and is not despair. He says *al-ḥamdu lillāh* in every state, and *innā lillāhi wa innā ilayhi rāji'ūn*, and he is praising Allah for a wisdom he cannot yet

see. Do not wait for the trial to learn this language. Build it now, in your ease, so that when the strike lands your heart already knows the way home. Replace one habit this week. Let the first reach of your hand in an idle moment be a word of remembrance before it is a screen, and watch what it does to your heart over a month.

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

I say this statement of mine, and I seek the forgiveness of Allah for myself and for you, so seek His forgiveness, for He is the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful.

Closing of the First Khutbah

The Second Khutbah

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ، وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى أَشْرَفِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَالْمُرْسَلِينَ، نَبِيِّنَا مُحَمَّدٍ
وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ. اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ، كَمَا صَلَّيْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ
وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ.

All praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the worlds, and may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon the noblest of the Prophets and Messengers, our Prophet Muḥammad, and upon his family and all his Companions. O Allah, send blessings upon Muḥammad and upon the family of Muḥammad as You sent blessings upon Ibrāhīm and upon the family of Ibrāhīm. Indeed, You are Praiseworthy and Glorious.

A Reminder Carried Home

Dear brothers and sisters, in the first khuṭbah we stood before the scales of the Day of Judgement and learned that they will weigh us by the quality of our deeds and not their number, and that Allah has given us words light enough to whisper all day long yet heavy enough to fill the space between the heavens and the earth. We saw that al-ḥamdu lillāh and subḥāna-llāh fill the balance, that praise in the hour of trial builds a house in Paradise, and that lā ilāha illa-llāh is the firm word we must lay down across a lifetime so it is ready upon our tongue at the end. The question now is whether these words will live in our days or remain a beautiful reminder we leave at the door.

And these are not abstract questions, brothers and sisters. Each of us should ask, before we leave this place, a few honest things. When did my tongue last move with subḥāna-llāh outside of a prayer? How many of my idle hours yesterday were given to remembrance, and how many to distraction? If my soul were taken tonight, what would be the last word it had grown used to saying? These questions are not meant to crush us but to wake us, for the one who weighs himself in this life will find his weighing in the next made light. So let us not pass over the answers in a hurry. Let each of us carry one of them home and let it change a single habit.

The Deeper Meaning of Praise

Let us understand what we are saying when we say al-ḥamdu lillāh, for the word ḥamd is from the mercy of Allah, a comprehensive word. The scholars explained that ḥamd gathers together both praise and gratitude, so that in a single word you are both praising Allah and thanking Him. And Allah, because He is who He is, does not need anyone's praise in order to be praiseworthy. He is mighty whether or not you acknowledge His might, and praised whether or not you praise Him. We even see this in His Book, for the first to praise Allah in the Qur'an is Allah Himself, since His speech

opens with His own praise in Sūrah al-Fātiḥah. Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr drew the two great words together for us.

Tasbiḥ is to declare Allah free of every flaw and deficiency, and taḥmīd is to praise Him for His perfection and His grace. Together these are the two remembrances that fill the scale on the Day of Resurrection and fill what lies between the heavens and the earth. Allah joined them when He said: so glorify Allah when you reach the evening and when you reach the morning, and to Him belongs all praise in the heavens and the earth.

Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr

فُسَبِّحَانَ اللَّهَ حِينَ تُمْسُونَ وَحِينَ تُصْبِحُونَ * وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ
وَعَشِيًّا وَحِينَ تُظْهِرُونَ *

So glorify Allah when you reach the evening and when you reach the morning. And to Him belongs all praise throughout the heavens and the earth, and at night and when you are at noon.

Sūrah ar-Rūm (30:17 to 18)

A Practical Plan for the Tongue

So how do we make these words part of us? Begin with the prayer, brothers and sisters, and after every salah say subḥāna-llāh, al-ḥamdu lillāh, and Allāhu akbar, the remembrance the Prophet ﷺ taught for the end of each prayer. Set yourself a daily portion of a hundred of subḥāna-llāhi wa bi-ḥamdih, and weave the light words through your commute and your work and your waiting. Let al-ḥamdu lillāh be the first thing on your tongue the moment you wake, thanking Allah for returning your soul and your life. Say it over your food when you have eaten, and over your clothes when you have dressed, and when you sneeze, for these are blessings we receive every single day and rarely pause to thank Him for. And among all of this, hold fast to the four words the Prophet ﷺ said are the most beloved of speech to Allah.

أَحَبُّ الْكَلَامِ إِلَى اللَّهِ أَرْبَعٌ: سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ، وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ، وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ.

The most beloved of speech to Allah is four: subḥāna-llāh, al-ḥamdu lillāh, lā ilāha illa-llāh, and Allāhu akbar.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** Muslim 2137 **Authenticity:** Ṣaḥīḥ

And understand why the practice in ease matters so much. A person who curses and complains as a habit will not suddenly find the most important word of his life rising to his tongue under the crushing pressure of his final breath. You do not gather such things at the last moment. They are

gathered through a lifetime of making the tongue familiar with them. So train your heart now, in your days of health, so that when something strikes you, your heart and your tongue run to a familiar place.

Hamd, the Most Open of Supplications

And here is a beauty in al-ḥamdu lillāh that should change how we make du‘ā, brothers and sisters. The Prophet ﷺ called it the best supplication even though, when you say it, you are not asking Allah for anything at all. You are simply praising Him, and the praise itself is a du‘ā. A man once told the Prophet ﷺ that he praised his Lord and then let his supplication go wherever it went, and the Prophet ﷺ told him that his Lord loves praise. So when you raise your hands, open with al-ḥamdu lillāh, then mention His beautiful names, then His favours upon you, then ask Him for whatever you need. You cannot go wrong beginning with His praise. And it is the nature of Allah's excellence that the more you thank Him for what you already have, the more He gives, again and again, without end.

Between Hope and Fear

Let no one leave this place thinking that a heavy tongue alone is enough without a striving heart, and let no one leave thinking his sins are too many for these light words to lift. Brothers and sisters, the believer walks toward his Lord upon two wings, the fear that keeps him from heedlessness and the hope that keeps him from despair. If your record troubles you, remember the hundred words that wipe away sins like the foam of the sea, and reach for them. And if your worship pleases you, keep it sincere and hidden, and let the angels race to record a praise you offered for His Face alone.

Closing Du‘ā

Dear brothers and sisters, let us raise our hands to the One who loves to be praised and loves to be asked. O Allah, make us among the people of praise, who remember You in good times and in hard times, and make our tongues moist with Your remembrance until the last breath leaves us.

O Allah, weigh down our scales with the words You love, and let *lā ilāha illa-llāh* be the seal upon our lives. O Allah, forgive the believing men and the believing women, the living among them and those who have passed. O Allah, set right the affairs of this Ummah, unite the hearts of the Muslims upon truth, protect our families and our children, and keep our young ones firm upon faith in an age of trial. O Allah, relieve the distressed, heal the sick, settle the debts of the indebted, and grant safety and provision to our brothers and sisters who are oppressed and afraid in every land, for You are the All Powerful and they have none besides You.

O Allah, forgive us and our parents, and have mercy upon them as they raised us when we were small. O Allah, accept from us our prayers, our fasting, and our standing before You, and overlook our shortcomings and our sins. O Allah, make the Qur'an the spring of our hearts and the light of our chests, grant us beneficial knowledge and hearts that truly fear You, and let our deeds be sincere for Your Face alone. O Allah, seal our lives with the best of deeds, and let the last of our words in this

world be the testimony that there is no god but You. Our Lord, give us good in this world and good in the Hereafter, and protect us from the punishment of the Fire.

The Final Reminder

Remember the command of your Lord, with which Allah closes the affair, the command of justice and excellence.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ
يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ *

Indeed, Allah commands justice, excellence, and giving to relatives, and He forbids immorality, wrongdoing, and oppression. He admonishes you that you may take heed.

Sūrah an-Nahl (16:90)

So remember Allah, the Most Great, and He will remember you. Thank Him for His favours and He will increase you. And establish the prayer.

وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ