

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

خطبة الجمعة

Friday Sermon

*The Importance of Time: The
Capital of the Believer*

DELIVERED AT

Masjid Adam



ŞİFAH

SCHOOL OF ISLAMIC
FOUNDATIONS &
ADVOCACY FOR HUMANITY

The Importance of Time: The Capital of the Believer

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 * وَيسِّرْ 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.**

The One Thing That Never Returns

There is a treasure that every one of us possesses, that is spent whether we use it or waste it, and that, once gone, can never be recovered by any wealth, any power, or any regret. It is not gold, and it is not health, though both are precious. It is time. Brothers and sisters, the breath you have just taken will never return to you. The hour that has passed since you left your home has left your account forever. We speak of saving money and saving energy, but no one has ever saved a single minute, because time cannot be stored. It can only be spent, and the question that will follow us into the grave is not how much time we were given, for that was decided long ago, but how we spent the time we had.

So serious is the matter of time that Allah, the Most High, swears by it. Among the things by which the Creator of the heavens takes an oath is time itself, and when Allah swears by a thing, He is drawing our attention to a truth we are in danger of missing. He said:

وَالْعَصْرِ * إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ * إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَّصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ
وَتَوَّصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ *

By time. Indeed, mankind is in loss, except those who believe and do righteous deeds and advise one another to truth and advise one another to patience.

Sūrah al-‘Aṣr (103:1 to 3)

Consider what Allah is teaching us in these few short verses. He swears by time, and then He declares that the whole of mankind is in a state of loss, every human being draining away the capital of his life with every passing second, except for four kinds of people: those who believe, those who act righteously, those who call one another to truth, and those who counsel one another to patience. The passing of time is a loss for everyone, like a block of ice melting in the heat, and the only ones who profit from it are those who convert their fleeting hours into faith and good deeds before they melt away. Imām al-Shāfi‘ī, may Allah have mercy on him, was so struck by this surah that he said something the scholars have repeated ever since.

If Allah had revealed no proof to His creation except this surah, it would have been sufficient for them.

Imām al-Shāfi‘ī, may Allah have mercy on him, on Sūrah al-‘Aṣr

Why did he say this? Because this short surah contains the entire formula for a life that is not wasted. Time is passing, you are in loss, and the only escape is faith, righteous action, and helping others toward both. Every one of us is sitting in this masjid spending our portion of time right now. The question is whether we are among the people of profit or the people of loss.

The Two Blessings People Are Deceived About

The Prophet ﷺ warned us that time is a blessing we are especially prone to squander, and he paired it with another blessing we take for granted until it is gone. He named the two gifts that most people fail to value until the moment they lose them.

نِعْمَتَانِ مَغْبُونٌ فِيهِمَا كَثِيرٌ مِنَ النَّاسِ: الصِّحَّةُ وَالْفَرَاغُ.

There are two blessings in which many people are deceived and cheated: health and free time.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, from Ibn ‘Abbās **Hadith No:** Bukhārī 6412 **Authenticity:** Ṣaḥīḥ

The word the Prophet ﷺ used, maghbūn, is the word for a person who is cheated in a transaction, who sells something precious for far less than its worth and only realises his loss when it is too late. Ibn Ḥajar, may Allah have mercy on him, explains in his commentary that a man enjoys health and free time, and then either sickness or busyness comes upon him, and he looks back and grieves over the empty hours he could have filled with good. How many of us, brothers and sisters, when we are young and strong and our schedules are open, fill our days with nothing of lasting value, only to wish in our old age and our illness that we could have those years back? The healthy man who has free time is a wealthy man who does not know he is wealthy. Most people will only discover the worth of their health when they are lying ill, and the worth of their free time when they are buried under burdens, and by then the blessing has already slipped through their fingers.

And this is why the Prophet ﷺ taught us to treat both as a passing capital to be invested before it is withdrawn. He advised a man, and through him he advised all of us, to seize five things before five others overtake them: your youth before your old age, your health before your sickness, your wealth before your poverty, your free time before your preoccupation, and your life before your death. Look at how each pairing is a race against time. The youth will become old. The healthy will fall sick. The free will become busy. The living will die. The believer is the one who runs ahead of these changes and fills the good season before the hard season arrives.

The Crown Upon the Heads of the Healthy

Let us pause on the first of those two blessings, health, for it is paired with time for a reason: a person needs both strength and hours to do good, and the loss of either cripples the other. We rarely thank Allah for a day without pain. We notice our backs only when they ache, our eyes only when they dim, our hearts only when they falter. Yet the Prophet ﷺ taught that the one who wakes in safety, in good health, with his daily provision secured, has been given the whole world without knowing it.

مَنْ أَصْبَحَ مِنْكُمْ آمِنًا فِي سِرِّهِ، مُعَافًى فِي جَسَدِهِ، عِنْدَهُ قُوَّةٌ يَوْمَهُ، فَكَأَنَّمَا حِيزَتْ لَهُ
الدُّنْيَا.

Whoever among you wakes in the morning secure in his dwelling, healthy in his body, with the provision for his day, it is as though the whole world has been gathered for him.

Source: Jāmi‘ at-Tirmidhī, from ‘Ubaydullāh ibn Miḥṣan **Hadith No:** Tirmidhī 2346 **Authenticity:** Ḥasan

Brothers and sisters, by this measure, most of us in this masjid possess the entire world, and we walk around feeling poor. We are safe, we are healthy, and we have our food for the day, and the Prophet ﷺ tells us that is the equivalent of owning everything. The believer who realises this stops waiting for some future condition to begin serving Allah. He does not say, I will worship properly when my situation improves. He looks at the health and security he has this very morning and understands that this is the season of action, that the strong body he has today is a borrowed tool that will one day be returned, and that the wise servant uses it for his Lord while it still answers to him. Use your health before your sickness, the Prophet ﷺ told us, and there is no better time than the present hour.

We Will Be Questioned About Our Time

It is not enough to know that time is precious. We must know that we will be held accountable for it, in detail, before Allah. On the Day of Resurrection, no foot will move from its place until its owner has answered for how he spent the years that were entrusted to him. The Prophet ﷺ said:

لَا تَزُولُ قَدَمَا عَبْدٍ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ حَتَّى يُسْأَلَ عَنْ عُمُرِهِ فَيَمْلَأُهُ، وَعَنْ عِلْمِهِ فَيَمْلَأُهُ، وَعَنْ مَالِهِ مِنْ أَيْنَ اكْتَسَبَهُ وَفِيمَ أَنْفَقَهُ، وَعَنْ جِسْمِهِ فَيَمْلَأُهُ.

The two feet of a servant will not move on the Day of Resurrection until he is asked about his life and how he spent it, about his knowledge and what he did with it, about his wealth, how he earned it and where he spent it, and about his body and how he wore it out.

Source: Jāmi‘ at-Tirmidhī, from Ibn Mas‘ūd **Hadith No:** Tirmidhī 2417 **Authenticity:** Ḥasan Ṣaḥīḥ

Reflect on this, brothers and sisters. Notice that of the questions, two are directly about time. He will be asked about his life, the whole span of it, and how he caused it to pass away, and he will be asked about his youth specifically, singled out from the rest of his life, because the years of strength and energy carry a heavier responsibility. Allah gave you a stretch of years in which your body was strong, your mind was sharp, and your time was your own. What did you build with it? The young man who grows up in the worship of his Lord is so beloved to Allah that the Prophet ﷺ named him among the

seven whom Allah will shade on the Day when there is no shade but His. So this is a special call to our youth, who imagine that the time for seriousness lies somewhere far ahead: the days of your youth are the most valuable hours you will ever own, and they are passing right now, while you assume they will last.

The Distraction That Devours a Lifetime

What is it that causes us to waste this precious capital? Allah names the culprit directly. It is the endless chase after more, the competition in worldly accumulation that swallows our attention and our years until, quite literally, the grave interrupts it. He said:

أَهَاكُمُ التَّكَاثُرُ * حَتَّىٰ زُرْتُمُ الْمَقَابِرَ *

Competition in worldly increase diverts you, until you visit the graves.

Sūrah at-Takāthur (102:1 to 2)

Look at the precision of the words. The pursuit of more, more wealth, more status, more possessions, more distraction, does not merely occupy us; it diverts us, it pulls our gaze away from the one thing that matters until the visit to the graveyard arrives, either as mourners or as the buried. A person can spend an entire lifetime busy, productive, always occupied, and arrive at death having never truly turned toward Allah, because busyness is not the same as benefit. The hours were full, but full of what? Brothers and sisters, the most dangerous waste of time is not the obvious idleness; it is the constant activity that produces nothing for the Hereafter, the life crowded with motion and empty of meaning. And on the Day we are raised, the whole of that long, busy life will suddenly seem to have lasted no longer than an afternoon. Allah tells us how the people will answer when they are asked how long they remained on earth.

قَالَ كَمْ لَبِثْتُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ عَدَدَ سِنِينَ * قَالُوا لَبِثْنَا يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ فَاسْأَلِ الْعَادِينَ *
قَالَ إِنْ لَبِثْتُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا * لَوْ أَنَّكُمْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ *

He will say, how long did you remain on earth in number of years? They will say, we remained a day or part of a day; ask those who keep count. He will say, you did not remain except a little, if only you had known.

Sūrah al-Mu'minūn (23:112 to 114)

Seventy years, eighty years, will feel in that moment like a single day or part of a day. The decades we thought were so long, the time we assumed would never run out, will shrink in the memory to almost nothing. If only you had known, Allah says. If we truly knew, today, how short this life is and how

quickly it will seem to have passed, not one of us would waste an hour of it. So let us learn the lesson now, while knowing it can still change us, rather than later, when it can only break our hearts.

The Regret of the One Who Wasted His Time

If we could hear the voices of those who have already crossed over, we would hear one sound rising above all others, the sound of regret over wasted time. Allah, in His mercy, lets us hear those voices now, while we can still act, so that we are not among them later, when action is no longer possible. He tells us of the people of the Fire crying out for a second chance that will not be granted.

وَهُمْ يَصْطَرِّخُونَ فِيهَا رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا نَعْمَلْ صَالِحًا غَيْرَ الَّذِي كُنَّا نَعْمَلُ ۖ أَوَلَمْ نَعْمَرْكُمْ مَا
يَتَذَكَّرُ فِيهِ مَنْ تَذَكَّرَ وَجَاءَكُمُ النَّذِيرُ فَذُوقُوا فَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ نَصِيرٍ *

And they will cry out therein, our Lord, take us out; we will do righteousness, other than what we used to do. But did We not grant you a life long enough for whoever would remember therein to remember? And the warner came to you. So taste, for the wrongdoers there is no helper.

Sūrah Faṭīr (35:37)

Listen to the answer they are given. Did We not give you a life long enough for anyone who wished to take heed to take heed? In other words, you had time. You were not cut off in childhood. You were given years, and weeks, and Fridays, and Ramadans, and warning after warning, and you let them all pass. The tragedy of the people of the Fire is not that they were denied opportunity, but that they wasted the opportunity they were given. And when a person stands at the brink of death, the same plea escapes his lips. Allah describes the dying man begging to be sent back for just a little more time, only to learn that the door has closed.

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَ أَحَدَهُمُ الْمَوْتُ قَالَ رَبِّ ارْجِعُونِ * لَعَلِّي أَعْمَلُ صَالِحًا فِيمَا تَرَكْتُ
كَلَّا إِنَّهَا كَلِمَةٌ هُوَ قَائِلُهَا وَمِنْ وَرَائِهِمْ بَرْزَخٌ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ *

Until, when death comes to one of them, he says, my Lord, send me back, that I might do righteousness in that which I left behind. No! It is only a word he is saying. And behind them is a barrier until the Day they are resurrected.

Sūrah al-Mu'minūn (23:99 to 100)

My Lord, send me back, so that I may do good in the time I left behind. But there is no sending back, brothers and sisters. The time we leave behind cannot be reclaimed. And so the wise believer treats every present moment as the very moment that the dying man wishes he could return to. You are living right now in the answer to that man's prayer. This hour, which you hold in your hands, is

exactly what he is begging to be given. Will you spend it the way he wishes he had, or the way he actually did? Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, may Allah have mercy on him, captured the fleeting nature of our lives in an unforgettable image.

O son of Adam, you are nothing but a number of days. Whenever a day passes, part of you has passed away.

Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, may Allah have mercy on him

Think on these words. Your life is not a vague, open expanse. It is a precise number of days, counted and known to Allah, and each day that ends is not merely a day spent but a piece of you that has died and will never return. The man who understands this looks at the setting of the sun differently from everyone around him. Where others see only the end of a day, he sees a portion of his own life being folded up and sealed, ready to be presented before Allah.

Live as a Traveller Passing Through

How, then, should the believer hold this world, knowing his time in it is so brief? The Prophet ﷺ gave us the perfect image, and he gave it directly to Ibn ‘Umar, taking hold of his shoulder to impress it upon him.

كُنْ فِي الدُّنْيَا كَأَنَّكَ غَرِيبٌ أَوْ عَابِرُ سَبِيلٍ.

Be in this world as though you were a stranger or a traveller passing along a road.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, from Ibn ‘Umar **Hadith No:** Bukhārī 6416 **Authenticity:** Ṣaḥīḥ

A traveller passing through a land does not build mansions there or sink his heart into it. He takes from it only what carries him to his destination, and he keeps his eyes fixed on the home he is journeying toward. This world is the road, not the home, brothers and sisters, and the believer who remembers this never confuses the journey with the destination. Ibn ‘Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, understood the urgency in his teacher's words, and he would add a counsel of his own that every one of us should write upon our hearts.

If you reach the evening, do not wait for the morning, and if you reach the morning, do not wait for the evening. Take from your health for your sickness, and from your life for your death.

‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar, may Allah be pleased with him

Do not wait. Do not assume the next morning will come, or the next evening. Take from your strength now, while you have it, and store it for the day you will have none. This is not gloom, brothers and sisters; it is the clearest wisdom there is. The one who lives each day as though it may be his last does not waste it, and yet he is also the one who is most at peace, because he has nothing left undone that

he is ashamed to meet his Lord with. I say these words of mine, and I seek the forgiveness of Allah for me and for you, so seek His forgiveness, for indeed He is the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful.

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 learned that time is the capital of the believer, the one possession that never returns once it is spent. We saw that Allah swears by time and warns that all of mankind is in loss except those who fill their hours with faith and good deeds, that health and free time are two blessings most people are cheated in, and that we will be questioned in detail about our lives and our youth. And we heard the cry of regret from those who wasted their time and begged in vain to be sent back. Now the question is the practical one: how do we keep ourselves from becoming the people of that regret? It begins with confronting the quiet thief that steals more time from believers than any other, the thief called procrastination.

The Danger of Saying I Will Do It Later

Shayṭān rarely tells a believer to abandon the good entirely, for he knows the believer would refuse. Instead he whispers a single, gentle word: later. Pray later. Repent later. Begin later. Give later. He lets you keep your good intention while he robs you of the action, until the time runs out. The Qur'an warns us of the exact moment this regret will strike, when the soul realises that all its delaying has cost it everything. Allah says that the soul will cry out:

أَنْ تَقُولَ نَفْسٌ يَا حَسْرَتَا عَلَىٰ مَا فَرَطْتُ فِي جَنْبِ اللَّهِ وَإِنْ كُنْتُ لَمِنَ السَّخِرِينَ *

Lest a soul should say, oh, how great is my regret over what I neglected concerning Allah, and I was indeed among the mockers.

Sūrah az-Zumar (39:56)

How great is my regret over what I neglected. This is the cry of the procrastinator, the one who always meant to change tomorrow until tomorrow ran out. And the danger is real even for sincere believers, not only for the heedless. Consider the story of Ka‘b ibn Mālik, may Allah be pleased with him, a true and faithful Companion who loved Allah and His Messenger. When the call came to march out to Tabūk in the burning heat, Ka‘b intended to prepare and go. But he delayed. He had the means, his mounts were ready, and each day he told himself he would prepare tomorrow and catch up with the army. He kept saying later, until the army was gone and he was left behind, not out of hypocrisy, but out of procrastination. When the Prophet ﷺ returned, Ka‘b refused to lie, and Allah tested him with fifty days of being shunned by the entire community, his greetings unanswered, the earth becoming narrow around him, until at last Allah revealed his forgiveness. His honesty saved him, but his delay nearly destroyed him, and his story is preserved in the most authentic books so that we would learn its lesson.

وَحَلَفَ كَعْبُ بْنُ مَالِكٍ ... حَتَّى إِذَا طَالَ عَلَيَّ ضَاقَتْ عَلَيَّ الْأَرْضُ بِمَا رَحُبَتْ.

And Ka‘b ibn Mālik was left behind ... until, when the matter dragged on for me, the earth became narrow for me despite its vastness.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, from the long hadith of Ka‘b ibn Mālik **Hadith No:** Bukhārī 4418

Authenticity: Ṣaḥīḥ

If a Companion of that rank could be brought to the edge of ruin by saying later, what of us, who say it a dozen times a day? The cure for procrastination is to seize the present moment, because the present is the only time we are ever guaranteed. The past is gone and the future is not promised, so the believer lives where his power actually lies, in the now.

A Plan to Invest Your Time

Brothers and sisters, let us turn this into a way of living, beginning with the prayer. The five daily prayers are the timekeepers of the believer's day, dividing it into measured portions and pulling us back to Allah at fixed hours. Guard them in their times, and your whole day acquires a rhythm and a discipline that overflows into everything else. The one who masters the clock of the prayer has already learned how to master his time.

Then take account of yourself each day before you sleep, in the way ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, may Allah be pleased with him, taught the believers to do, weighing the day that has passed before the day comes when all our deeds are weighed for us.

Call yourselves to account before you are called to account, and weigh your deeds before they are weighed for you.

‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, may Allah be pleased with him

Allah Himself commands this self-examination, that every soul should look at what it has prepared and sent ahead for the Day of meeting, for the believer who reviews his day is the believer who improves it. He said, O you who believe, fear Allah, and let every soul look to what it has sent forth for tomorrow. Five quiet minutes each night, asking what you did with the hours Allah gave you, will transform a wasted life into a measured one. Fill the empty spaces of your day, the commute, the waiting, the idle minutes, with the remembrance of Allah, with a portion of the Qur'an, with seeking knowledge of your religion, with a kind word or a quiet charity, for these are the moments most people throw away, and they add up across a lifetime to years.

And here we must be honest with ourselves about where our hours are actually going. A person who claims he has no time to read the Qur'an, no time to seek knowledge, no time to sit with his children or visit his relatives, will often find, if he looks at the record on his own phone, that he has given hours of that same day to endless scrolling, to videos that leave nothing behind, to a glowing screen that consumes the evening and returns nothing for it. We do not truly lack time, brothers and sisters. We have prioritised other things over the things that matter. The believer is not commanded to abandon every comfort, but he is commanded to be the master of his hours and not their servant, to use the tool without being used by it, and to ask of every hour, what will this be worth to me when it is recorded and shown to me before Allah?

Fill Your Hours With What Lasts

When a believer resolves to reclaim his time, he soon asks the practical question: with what shall I fill it? The answer is everything that will still be standing on the Day the deeds are weighed. Fill a portion of your hours with the remembrance of Allah, for the tongue moist with dhikr turns idle moments into treasure. Keep a daily appointment with the Qur'an, even a single page read with its meaning, and across a year that page becomes a relationship with the Book of Allah. Add to your obligatory prayers the voluntary ones, fast the days the Prophet ﷺ fasted, give a regular charity even if it is small, and seek knowledge of your religion, for the one who walks a path seeking knowledge has Allah ease for him a path to Paradise. Learn the language of the Qur'an so its meanings open to you, study the life of your Prophet ﷺ until you love him as he deserves to be loved, and tend to your health and your body, for it is a trust that will be asked about and a vehicle you need for worship. Every one of these is an hour converted from loss into profit.

And here is the secret that should make every believer eager rather than weary: time given to Allah is not subtracted from your life; it is multiplied within it. This is the meaning of barakah, blessing, by which Allah expands a small amount of time so that it accomplishes what a large amount could not. How often has a person who guarded his Fajr and began his day with the Qur'an found his whole day strangely fruitful, while another who slept past the prayer found the hours slipping uselessly through his fingers? The Prophet ﷺ supplicated for his Ummah to be blessed in the early part of the day, and the one who gives Allah the first and best of his hours finds Allah placing blessing in all the rest. Do not imagine, then, that the time you give to worship is time taken from your work and your life. It is the very thing that causes the rest of your time to flourish.

And do not despise the small and steady deed in favour of the grand gesture you cannot sustain. The Prophet ﷺ taught that the most beloved of deeds to Allah are the most constant, even if they are few, for a small act repeated every day across a lifetime outweighs a mountain of effort abandoned after a week. The believer builds his Hereafter the way a wall is built, one steady brick at a time, in the moments others throw away.

Between Hope and Fear

Let no one leave this place crushed by the weight of the years he feels he has wasted. Brothers and sisters, the most beautiful truth about time is that its value is not in how much of it has passed but in how we use what remains, and the door of return is open as long as there is breath in the body. A person may have squandered decades and then, in a single sincere turning to Allah, redeem what is left and meet his Lord upon the best of states, for the deeds are judged by their endings. Do not let regret over the past steal from you the one thing you still possess, which is the present. And let no one leave deceived into thinking there is plenty of time ahead, for none of us has been promised tomorrow. Walk the middle path between despair over what is gone and false security about what is to come, and Allah has promised the most beautiful reward to the one who governed his soul and his time for His sake.

وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ وَنَهَى النَّفْسَ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ * فَإِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَىٰ *

But as for he who feared the standing before his Lord and restrained the soul from base desire, then indeed Paradise will be his refuge.

Sūrah an-Nāzi‘āt (79:40 to 41)

Closing Du‘ā

Dear brothers and sisters, let us raise our hands to the One in whose hand are our lives and our hours.

O Allah, bless us in our time, and make our hours a means of nearness to You and not a witness against us. O Allah, do not let us be among those who are cheated in their health and their free time, and awaken us from our heedlessness before death awakens us. O Allah, help us to seize our youth before old age, our health before sickness, and our lives before death, and let the best of our days be the last of them and the best of our deeds be their endings. O Allah, set right the affairs of this Ummah, unite the hearts of the Muslims upon truth, and grant relief, healing, and victory to our oppressed brothers and sisters 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, and forgive our brothers and sisters who have passed on before us. O Allah, grant us beneficial knowledge, hearts that truly fear You, and time spent in Your obedience. O Allah, do not take our souls except while You are pleased with us, and let the final word upon our tongues 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, the command of justice and excellence with which Allah closes the affair.

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 before this hour too slips away from you, rise and establish the prayer.

وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ