

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

خطبة الجمعة

Friday Sermon

*Paradise Beneath Her Feet: The
Rank of the Mother in Islam*

DELIVERED AT

Masjid Adam



ŞİFAH

SCHOOL OF ISLAMIC
FOUNDATIONS &
ADVOCACY FOR HUMANITY

Paradise Beneath Her Feet: The Rank of the Mother in Islam

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 Right That Comes Right After the Right of Allah

There is, in the life of almost every one of us, a single human being whose love arrived before we could ask for it, whose service began before we could thank her, and whose sacrifice was given without any expectation of return. She carried us when we were nothing, fed us from her own body, woke through the nights we cried, and worried over us in a way we will not fully understand until we hold our own children, if we ever do. Brothers and sisters, this morning we speak about the mother, and about the rank that Allah, in His wisdom, gave her in this religion, a rank so high that He placed her right alongside the mention of Himself. For it is among the signs of how Allah weighs gratitude that, again and again in His Book, when He commands us to worship Him, in the very same breath He commands us to be good to the one who gave us our earthly life.

وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا ۚ إِنَّمَا يَبْلُغَنَّ عِنْدَكَ الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا
أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا أُفٍّ وَلَا تَنْهَرْهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا * وَاخْفِضْ لَهُمَا
جَنَاحَ الذُّلِّ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ وَقُلْ رَبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيَانِي صَغِيرًا *

And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him, and that you be excellent to your parents. If one of them or both of them reach old age with you, do not say to them so much as a word of impatience, nor scold them, but speak to them a noble word. And lower to them the wing of humility out of mercy, and say: My Lord, have mercy upon them as they raised me when I was small.

Sūrah al-Isrā' (17:23 to 24)

Read how Allah arranged this command, brothers and sisters, for the order is not by chance. He decreed His own worship, and immediately, with no other duty placed between, He decreed excellence to parents. The scholars of tafsīr noted that Allah joined the greatest right, His own, to the right of the parents, so that a person would understand that after the worship of his Lord there is no obligation upon him heavier than the kindness he owes the two who raised him. And then Allah paints a scene that touches every heart: the moment when the parent who once carried us has grown old and frail, and now leans upon us as we once leaned upon them.

Not Even a Word of Impatience

Consider how fine the line is that Allah drew. He did not begin by forbidding us to strike our parents or to curse them, for those are crimes the conscience already recoils from. He began with the smallest possible sound of irritation, the word uff, a sigh, a click of the tongue, the faint exhalation of impatience we make when someone asks us the same question for the third time or needs help at an

inconvenient hour. Allah forbade even that. Al-Qurṭubī, may Allah have mercy on him, observed that if there were anything smaller than *uff* by which a child could show disrespect to his parents, Allah would have forbidden that too, for the point is to close every single door of harm, down to the quietest sigh. And note when this command grows heaviest: in old age, when the parent has become difficult, repetitive, perhaps incontinent, perhaps unable to recognise us, asking the same thing again and again. That is precisely the hour Allah singled out, because that is the hour the lower self grows impatient, and that is the hour the test of our gratitude truly begins.

Ibn Kathīr, may Allah have mercy on him, drew from this verse a tender point that we should carry home. He noted that Allah ties the command to the moment the parents reach old age beside us, *‘indaka*, in our own care and our own home, because it is then that they most need us and least are able to repay us, just as they once cared for us when we could give them nothing in return. The whole of childhood, the parent pours out and the child only takes; the verse describes the season when the account is meant to be repaid, when the parent has become the weak and dependent one. To meet that season with generosity is the proof of a grateful soul, and to meet it with impatience is to fail at the very hour the test was set.

Then Allah commanded something deeper still than restraint. He told us not merely to avoid harshness, but to lower for them the wing of humility out of mercy. Picture a bird folding its wing down low over its young to shelter and embrace them; that is the posture Allah asks us to take toward our aging parents, a posture of gentleness, of stooping down, of tenderness without a trace of arrogance. And He closed the verse with a supplication He placed upon our tongues, my Lord, have mercy upon them as they raised me when I was small. Reflect upon the justice and the beauty of this prayer. They raised us when we were small, weak, and utterly dependent, cleaning what we soiled, feeding what we could not feed ourselves, forgiving cries that pierced their sleep, and so we ask Allah to show them the same mercy now that the wheel has turned and they have grown small and weak again.

The Weight She Carried for You

Although Allah commands kindness to both parents, He singled out the mother for a special mention, because she bore a hardship the father never bore. When Allah commanded gratitude to parents in the chapter of *Luqmān*, He paused to describe what the mother endured, as if to explain why her right is the weightier of the two.

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ وَهْنًا عَلَى وَهْنٍ وَفِصَالُهُ فِي عَامَيْنِ أَنِ اشْكُرْ لِي
وَلِوَالِدَيْكَ إِلَيَّ الْمَصِيرُ *

And We have enjoined upon man concerning his parents: his mother carried him, weakness upon weakness, and his weaning is in two years. Be grateful to Me and to your parents. To Me is the final destination.

Sūrah Luqmān (31:14)

Weakness upon weakness, wahnān ‘alā wahn. Allah chose words that carry the exhaustion of those long months: the heaviness, the sickness, the sleeplessness, the body giving of itself until it is depleted, and then the years of nursing and waking and carrying that follow. And look at what Allah placed immediately after this description: be grateful to Me and to your parents. He joined gratitude to Himself with gratitude to them in a single command, just as He joined His worship to kindness toward them. The scholars said that this is among the strongest indications of the rank of parents, that Allah would mention thankfulness to them in the same breath as thankfulness to Him. And He described the mother’s ordeal again, even more vividly, in another chapter.

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ إِحْسَانًا حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ كُرْهًا وَوَضَعَتْهُ كُرْهًا وَحَمَلُهُ وَفِصَالُهُ
ثَلَاثُونَ شَهْرًا *

And We have enjoined upon man, to his parents, good treatment. His mother carried him with hardship and gave birth to him with hardship, and his bearing and weaning are thirty months.

Sūrah al-Aḥqāf (46:15)

She carried you with hardship, and she delivered you with a hardship that the human language struggles to capture, a pain that brings a soul to the very edge. And then, having survived it, she did not turn away from the source of that pain; she pulled it close to her chest and loved it more than her own life. This is why, when Allah commands kindness to parents, the heart turns first to her. The father has rights that are immense and not to be neglected, but the mother carried a weight he never carried, and so her share of our gratitude is greater.

Your Mother, Then Your Mother, Then Your Mother

If anyone doubts that the mother holds a place above the father in the matter of companionship and service, the Prophet ﷺ settled it forever in a conversation preserved word for word. A man came seeking to know who, among all people, had the greatest claim upon his kindness.

his Companions of the most destructive sins a person can commit, he named the betrayal of parents beside the worship of others alongside Allah.

أَلَا أُبَيِّنُكُمْ بِأَكْبَرِ الْكِبَائِرِ؟ الْإِشْرَاقُ بِاللَّهِ، وَعُقُوقُ الْوَالِدَيْنِ.

Shall I not inform you of the greatest of the major sins? Associating partners with Allah, and disobedience to parents.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** Bukhārī 2654, Muslim 87 **Authenticity:** Muttafaqun ‘Alayh

Reflect upon the company in which the Prophet ﷺ placed disobedience to parents. He set it directly beside shirk, the one sin Allah has said He will not forgive if a person dies upon it. This does not mean the two are equal in weight, but it tells us how seriously Allah and His Messenger ﷺ regard the wronging of a parent. The one who raises his voice at his mother, who treats her as a burden, who is too busy for her calls, who shames her or makes her feel unwanted in her old age, is not playing with a small matter. He is at the edge of one of the greatest sins, and he is closing upon himself a door to the pleasure of his Lord.

Serving Her is a Jihad

So great is the reward in serving the mother that the Prophet ﷺ equated it with the highest of deeds. A man came to him burning with the desire to go out and strive in the path of Allah, to fight and perhaps to be martyred, and the Prophet ﷺ redirected him to a jihad closer to home and dearer to Allah.

أَحْيَىٰ وَالِدَاكَ؟ قَالَ: نَعَمْ. قَالَ: فَفِيهِمَا جَاهِدْ.

He asked: Are your parents alive? The man said: Yes. He said: Then strive in serving them.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** Bukhārī 3004, Muslim 2549 **Authenticity:** Muttafaqun ‘Alayh

Consider what the Prophet ﷺ has done here. He took a man yearning for the battlefield, for the most celebrated act of sacrifice in our religion, and he told him that the service of his living parents was a striving worthy of that same yearning. In another narration, a Companion who wished to go out to fight was asked whether his mother was alive, and when he said yes, the Prophet ﷺ told him to stay close to her, for Paradise is at her feet. This is the origin of the truth we repeat so often, that Paradise lies beneath the feet of mothers. The expression is not a poetic exaggeration; it is a doorway. For so many of us, the shortest and surest road to Paradise is not across some distant frontier, but lies in the patient, daily, unglamorous service of the mother in the next room. And all of this flows from the command Allah placed beside His own worship, never to associate anything with Him, and to show excellence to parents.

وَأَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا^ط وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا *

And worship Allah and associate nothing with Him, and to parents do good.

Sūrah an-Nisā' (4:36)

Even the prophets, the highest of creation, took pride in their devotion to their mothers. When 'Īsā, upon him be peace, spoke from the cradle as an infant, among the very first things Allah caused him to declare about himself was his dutifulness to his mother, placing it among the marks of a blessed and humble servant rather than an arrogant or wretched one.

وَبَرًّا بِوَالِدَتِي وَلَمْ يَجْعَلْنِي جَبَّارًا شَقِيًّا *

And He has made me dutiful to my mother, and He has not made me arrogant or wretched.

Sūrah Maryam (19:32)

It is worth pausing to remember the world into which this honour came. Our Prophet ﷺ was sent to a people who, in their ignorance, would bury infant daughters alive in the sand, who saw in a girl only shame and burden. Into that darkness the religion of Allah came and raised the woman, and raised the mother highest of all, declaring Paradise to lie at her feet and her right to exceed even the father's. No movement and no philosophy ever elevated the mother as this revelation did, lifting her from a thing buried in shame to a station the angels honour. When we neglect our mothers today, we are not only failing them; we are turning our backs on one of the very mercies that distinguished the guidance our Prophet ﷺ brought from the cruelty it came to heal.

Her Supplication is a Treasure You Cannot Buy

Among the gifts a mother gives that no wealth could ever purchase is her supplication. The Prophet ﷺ taught that there are prayers Allah answers without any doubt, and he placed the prayer of the parent among them, alongside the prayer of the oppressed and the traveler.

ثَلَاثُ دَعَوَاتٍ مُسْتَجَابَاتٌ لَا شَكَّ فِيهِنَّ: دَعْوَةُ الْوَالِدِ، وَدَعْوَةُ الْمُسَافِرِ، وَدَعْوَةُ الْمَظْلُومِ.

Three supplications are answered, without doubt about them: the supplication of the parent, the supplication of the traveler, and the supplication of the one who has been wronged.

Source: Sunan at-Tirmidhī and Sunan Abī Dāwūd **Hadith No:** Tirmidhī 1905, Abū Dāwūd 1536

Authenticity: Ḥasan

Think of what this means, brothers and sisters. Your mother holds a key to the doors of the heavens. When she raises her hands and prays for you, that prayer ascends with a special acceptance, and

many a believer has been carried through life on the back of a mother's whispered du'ā that he never even knew she made. This cuts in both directions, and it should make us tremble. The same tongue that can call down the mercy of Allah upon a devoted child can, if it is wounded and embittered, pray against an ungrateful one, and that prayer too is answered. So the wise child does not merely avoid angering his mother out of fear of sin; he actively serves her so that her heart overflows and her tongue runs with prayers in his favour. There is no investment in this world with a surer return than the contented du'ā of a mother.

Honouring Her in the Life We Actually Live

It would be a failure of this gathering to praise the mother in the language of the past and never ask what her right demands of us this very afternoon. The ways we neglect our mothers today are quieter than the cruelties of old, but they are neglect all the same, and Allah sees them.

She Wants Your Presence, Not Your Gifts

Ours is an age that has learned to send rather than to come, to transfer money rather than to give time, to mark a day on the calendar with a gift and consider the debt paid. But a mother does not ache for your money; she aches for your presence. The cruelest poverty an aging mother can know is to have children who provide for every material need while starving her of their company, who answer her with a text when she longs for a face, who visit out of duty with their eyes on the screen the whole time. Brothers and sisters, when did you last sit with your mother with your phone put away entirely, and simply let her talk? When did you last call her not to ask for something, but only to hear her voice and let her hear that she is loved? The screen that has stolen so much of our attention has stolen, most quietly of all, the hours we owe to the ones who gave us everything.

Caring for Her When She Grows Difficult

Allah specified old age in His command for a reason. When a mother grows old, she may become forgetful, repetitive, demanding, even childlike, and this is the very test the verse foresaw. Our age offers an easy escape from this test: to place the aging parent out of sight, to treat her care as an inconvenience to be outsourced and forgotten. There is no sin in seeking help to care for a parent who needs more than we can give, but there is a great loss in surrendering the honour of serving her with our own hands, of being the one who is patient when she is difficult, who answers gently when she asks the same question a fourth time, who lowers the wing of humility precisely when it is hardest. The early Muslims competed for this honour. They understood that the difficult years of a parent's old age are not a burden Allah placed upon them by mistake, but a field of reward He opened for them on purpose.

The Mother Who Has Passed, and the Du'ā That Reaches Her

And for those whose mothers have already returned to Allah, the door of devotion has not closed; it has only changed its shape. The Prophet ﷺ taught that a child can still reach his deceased parent with good. A Companion came to him grieving that his mother had died suddenly, fearing she would have given in charity had she been able to speak, and he asked whether he might give on her behalf.

إِنَّ أُمِّي افْتَلَتَتْ نَفْسَهَا وَلَمْ تُوصِ، وَأَظُنُّهَا لَوْ تَكَلَّمَتْ تَصَدَّقَتْ، أَفَلَهَا أَجْرٌ إِنْ تَصَدَّقْتُ عَنْهَا؟
قَالَ: نَعَمْ.

Indeed, my mother died suddenly and left no instruction, and I think that had she been able to speak she would have given charity. Will she have a reward if I give charity on her behalf? He said: Yes.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** Bukhārī 1388, Muslim 1004 **Authenticity:** Muttafaqun ‘Alayh

So if your mother has passed, give in charity in her name, make du‘ā for her in the depths of the night, fulfil any promise she left unfulfilled, and keep ties with those she loved, for the Prophet ﷺ taught that maintaining the friendships of one's parents after they are gone is among the highest forms of dutifulness. The relationship with a righteous mother does not end at the grave; it becomes a quiet exchange of mercy, your prayers rising for her, and her du‘ā, made for you across all those years, still working in your favour. We have a striking example in the early generations: ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, once saw a man carrying his mother upon his back, performing the circuits of the Kaaba with her, and the man asked him whether he had now repaid her. Ibn ‘Umar answered that he had not repaid her even for one of the contractions of her labour.

You have not repaid her, not even for a single one of the breaths she took in pain while giving birth to you.

‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, to a man who had carried his mother in pilgrimage

A Moment of Honest Accounting

Before we close this first khuṭbah, let each of us turn the gaze inward and weigh how we have treated the one whose pleasure Allah tied to His own. If my mother is alive, when did I last bring her joy without being asked, and when did I last wound her with a sharp word or an impatient sigh that Allah forbade? Have I made her feel like a treasure in my home, or like a burden in the corner of my busy life? Do I answer her with the tenderness of a bird lowering its wing, or with the irritation of someone interrupted? And if she has passed, am I still reaching her with charity and prayer, or have I let her slip from my devotion as the months go by? These questions are not meant to drown us in guilt, for the door of making amends stands open to the living and the dead alike. They are the lantern of the grateful child, who knows that the shortest road to the pleasure of Allah may be lying at his mother's feet, waiting only for him to walk it.

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 saw that Allah placed kindness to parents directly beside His own worship, that He forbade us even the sigh of impatience toward them in their old age, and that He singled out the mother for the weakness upon weakness she bore for us. We heard the Prophet ﷺ name her three times before the father, tie her pleasure to the pleasure of Allah, and call the service of parents a jihad and a doorway to Paradise. The danger now is that we are moved by these words for an hour and then return home and treat her exactly as we did before. So let us turn this reminder into action before the sun sets today.

A Practical Plan of Devotion to Her

If your mother is alive, begin today, not tomorrow, for she may not be here tomorrow. Go to her, or call her if you cannot go, and let the first purpose be nothing but her happiness: not to ask for anything, only to bring her joy. Guard your tongue with her above all, for the verse forbade even the word of impatience, so let her never hear from you a sharp or weary tone. Serve her with your own hands where you can, before she asks and without being asked, for service offered freely is sweeter to a mother than service dragged out of a reluctant child. Spend on her generously and count it among the best of your charity, and give her the one thing she wants more than your money, which is your unhurried presence with the screen put away. And make a fixed habit of the supplication Allah Himself placed upon your tongue, *rabbī ṛḥamhū mā kā mā rabbayānī ṣaghīrā*, asking your Lord to show her the mercy she showed you when you were small.

And if she has already returned to Allah, your devotion continues in another form: pray for her in every prayer and in the depths of the night, give charity in her name and make it flow continuously where you can, fulfil whatever promises she left behind, and keep alive the ties with those she loved.

The Prophet ﷺ taught that these acts reach the deceased and that maintaining a parent's friendships is among the noblest dutifulness. Whatever you do, let it be constant rather than occasional, for the Prophet ﷺ taught that the deeds dearest to Allah are the most lasting, even if they are small. A daily prayer for your mother, a weekly visit, a steady kindness, will weigh more than a single grand gesture that is never repeated.

أَحَبُّ الْأَعْمَالِ إِلَى اللَّهِ أَدْوَمُهَا وَإِنْ قَلَّ.

The most beloved of deeds to Allah are the most constant of them, even if they are few.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** Bukhārī 6464, Muslim 783 **Authenticity:** Muttafaqun 'Alayh

And let us learn from those whose service to their mothers raised them to the highest stations. The Prophet ﷺ told 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, may Allah be pleased with him, that there would come from Yemen a man named Uways al-Qarnī, unknown to the people of the earth but known to the heavens, and that if he were able to ask Uways to seek forgiveness for him, he should do so. And why was the supplication of this obscure man so readily answered by Allah? Because of his devotion to his mother, whom he served and obeyed. A man whom the great Companions sought out, so that he might pray for them, earned that rank through nothing the world could see, only the quiet, faithful service of his mother.

Between Hope and Fear

Let no one leave this place crushed by the memory of how he has fallen short with his mother, and let no one leave thinking his neglect is a light affair. Brothers and sisters, if you carry regret for years of impatience, for harsh words, for time you did not give, the door of return is wide open: go to her while she lives and make those years good with devotion, and if she has passed, reach her now with prayer and charity, for Allah accepts the turning of the repentant child. And if Allah has granted you closeness with your mother, do not grow complacent, for the years are short and the chance to serve her will not return once it is gone. Walk between the two wings of hope and fear: hope in a Lord who opens Paradise at a mother's feet to the one who serves her, and fear of a Day when the wronged parent may stand as a witness against the child who turned away.

The Promise to the Dutiful Child

Let us not forget where this devotion leads, for the one who tends his mother through her long old age is steadied by the promise that awaits him. The pleasure of Allah descends upon the child who pleases his mother, Paradise is laid open at her feet, and the righteous are joined to those they loved in the gardens of the Hereafter. The believers are taught not only to be dutiful, but to pray that their devotion be perfected and their families gathered, the prayer of the grateful child who has reached the age of understanding.

رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَىٰ وَالِدَيَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ

✽

My Lord, enable me to be grateful for Your favour which You have bestowed upon me and upon my parents, and to do righteousness of which You approve.

Sūrah al-Aḥqāf (46:15)

Every gentle word you give your mother, every hour of your presence, every prayer you raise for her, is a step toward the pleasure of Allah and toward the gardens where the dutiful are reunited with those who raised them. Do not measure these small acts as small. Measure where they are taking you, to a Paradise whose threshold, the Prophet ﷺ told us, lies at the feet of the mother in the next room.

Closing Du‘ā

Dear brothers and sisters, let us raise our hands and remember our mothers before Allah, the living among them and those who have returned to Him.

O Allah, forgive our mothers and our fathers, and have mercy upon them as they raised us when we were small. O Allah, for those of our mothers who are living, lengthen their lives in Your obedience, bless their days, heal their sickness, and make us a coolness to their eyes. O Allah, for those of our mothers who have passed, forgive them, raise their ranks in Paradise, make their graves gardens from the gardens of the Hereafter, and unite us with them in the highest Firdaws with the Prophet ﷺ. O Allah, make us among the dutiful, and do not make us among those who break the hearts of their parents. 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, and protect our families and our children 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, accept from us our prayers, our fasting, and our service to our parents, and overlook our shortcomings and our sins. O Allah, grant us beneficial knowledge, hearts that truly fear You, and sincere deeds for Your Face alone. O Allah, make our homes a place of mercy and tenderness, rectify our spouses and our children for us, and seal our lives with the best of deeds. 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 and kindness to kin, and the mother is the very first of the kin He commands us to honour.

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-Naḥl (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