



Contemplation of the
QUR'ĀN

&

ITS EFFECT REGARDING

Purification of the Soul

BY SHAYKH MUḤAMMAD BĀZMŪL

REVISED SECOND EDITION

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Transliteration Table

Consonants

| | | | | | | | |
|---|----|---|----|---|----|---|---|
| ء | ا | د | d | ض | ḍ | ك | k |
| ب | b | ذ | dh | ط | ṭ | ل | l |
| ت | t | ر | r | ظ | ẓ | م | m |
| ث | th | ز | z | ع | ‘ | ن | n |
| ج | j | س | s | غ | gh | ه | h |
| ح | ḥ | ش | sh | ف | f | و | w |
| خ | kh | ص | ṣ | ق | q | ي | y |

Vowels

| | | | | | | |
|------------|-----|-------|------|----|-----|---|
| Short | اَ | a | اِ | i | اُ | u |
| Long | آ | ā | إِي | ī | أُو | ū |
| Diphthongs | أَي | ay/ai | أَوْ | aw | | |

Glyphs

ﷺ *Ṣallāllāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* (May Allāh's praise & salutations be upon him)

ﷺ *‘Alayhis-Salām* (Peace be upon him)

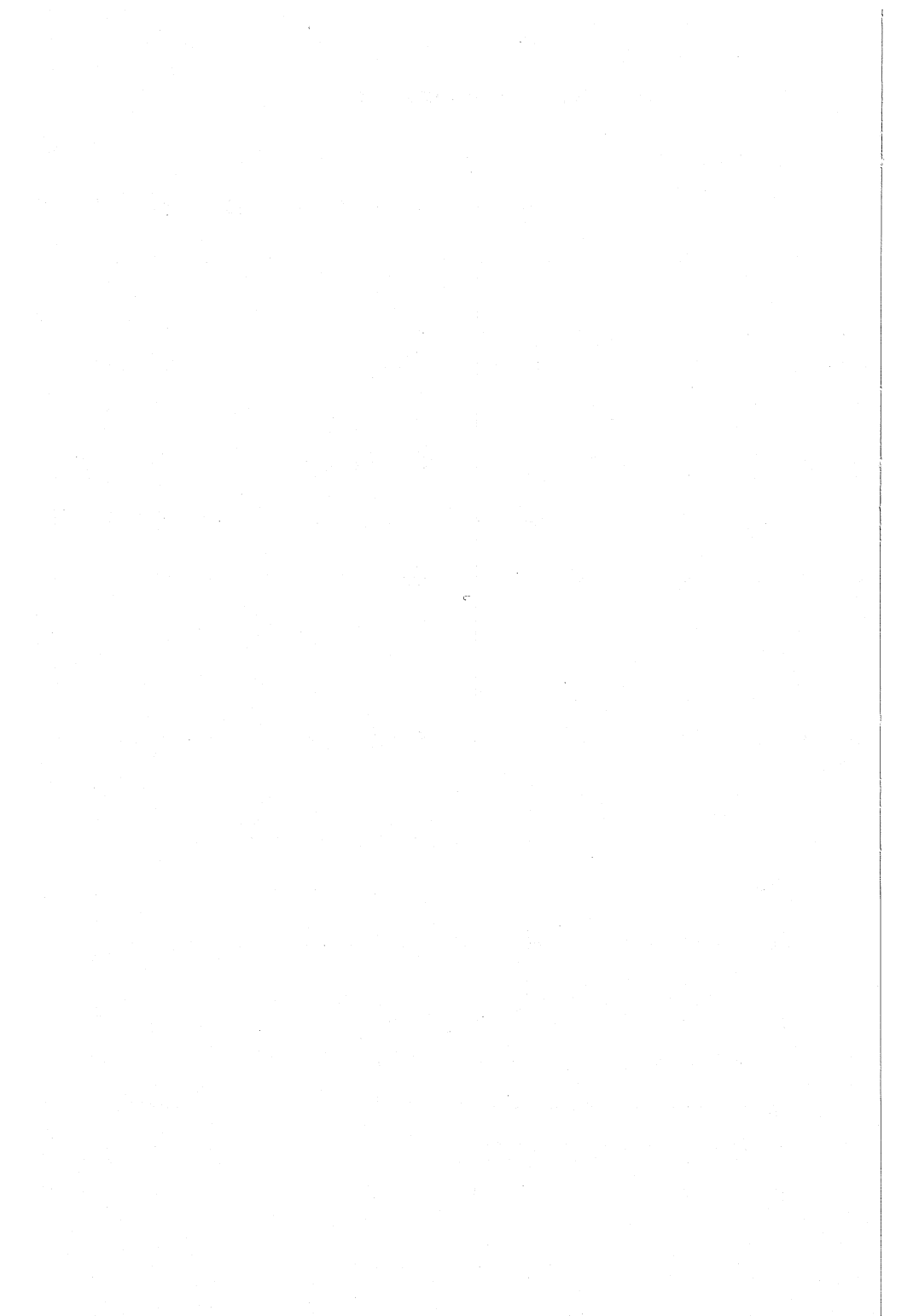
ﷻ *Raḍiyallāhu ‘anhu* (May Allāh be pleased with him)

ﷻ *Raḥimabullāh* (May Allāh have mercy on him)

ﷻ *Subḥānahu wa-ta‘Ālā* (Glorious and Exalted is He)

ﷻ *Tabāraka wa-ta‘Ālā* (Blessed and Exalted is He)

ﷻ *‘Azza wa Jall* (The Mighty and Majestic)



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INTRODUCTION

All praise is due to Allāh, Lord of creation. May blessings and peace be upon the most noble of the prophets and messengers—our noble Muḥammad—and upon all his family and Companions.

As for what comes next:

This [which is between your hands, o reader, was originally] a lecture entitled: “Contemplation of the Qur’ān and Its Effect Regarding the Purification of the Soul.” I presented a summarized form of it to brothers in Algeria on Saturday night, 14/3/1429, via telelink.

It is apparent from this title that the lecture revolves around three topics:

- 1) Contemplation of the Noble Qur’ān
- 2) Purification of the Soul
- 3) The Benefits of Purifying the Soul for the Slave

Under each topic, there are elements relevant to them.

I ask Allāh, with all the praise that is due to Him—there is none worthy of worship except Him, the Most Kind, the Most Beneficent, Creator of the heavens and earth, Possessor of Dignity and Nobility—to accept my actions sincerely for His noble Face and to bless me with acceptance in this life and the Hereafter; verily, He is All-Hearing, the One Who answers the prayers.

May Allāh bestow blessings and peace upon Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions.

TOPIC 1

CONTEMPLATION OF THE NOBLE QUR'ĀN

This topic consists of the following components:

- 1) The meaning of *at-tadabbur* (contemplation).
- 2) The command for contemplation.
- 3) The pillars of contemplation.
- 4) The objectives of the Qur'ān and contemplating them.
- 5) Methods of contemplation.

The clarification of these components follows.

.....

THE MEANING OF AT-TADABBUR (CONTEMPLATION)

At-tadabbur (التَدَبُّرُ) linguistically derives from the Arabic word *ad-dubur* (الدُّبُرُ) which means “the end of something,” [as in] *dubr ad-dābah*, i.e., the end of the riding beast. *Tadbīr* and

tadabbur of an affair is the consideration of the consequences of the affair, i.e., to consider what the end result will lead to. *At-tadabbur* means thinking on it, i.e., the attainment of two pieces of information to acquire a third. Therefore, *at-tadabbur* means thinking and understanding.

At-tadabbur and *al-i'tibār* (consideration) means a lesson or example; consideration of the past. *Al-i'tibār* means contemplation (*at-tadabbur*) and discernment.

Therefore, *al-i'tibār* is the condition and psychological framework with which the knowledge of something observed leads to the knowledge of something unobserved.

And in conventional language: *At-tadabbur* is a term meaning the consideration of the consequences of things, and it is similar in meaning to the term *at-tafakkur* (التَّفَكُّرُ), i.e., thinking, although thinking is the behavior of the heart when considering a proof and *tadabbur* is the behavior of the heart with the consideration of final consequences.¹

In the Islamic legislation: *At-tadabbur* is considering, understanding, and thinking about the consequences to which the affairs mentioned in the Noble Qur'ān lead, and the benefits from that in regard to the servant's *īmān* and the appearance of its effects on the limbs.²

This is the meaning derived from following the meanings of *at-tadabbur* found in the Islamic legislation.

¹ *Lisān al-'Arab*: the article (ت، ب، ج); *Al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ*; *Tāj al-'Arūs*.

² *At-Tarīfāt* by al-Jurjānī (p. 76).

.....
THE COMMAND TO CONTEMPLATE

The command to contemplate comes in a lot of verses in the Great Qur'an; from amongst them are:

The saying of Allāh ﷻ:

﴿ أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ ۚ وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا ﴾

Do they not then consider the Qur'an carefully? Had it been from other than Allāh, they would surely have found therein many contradictions.

[Sūrah an-Nisā' 4:82]

Likewise, His ﷻ saying:

﴿ أَفَلَمْ يَدَّبَّرُوا الْقَوْلَ أَمْ جَاءَهُمْ مَا لَمْ يَأْتِ آبَاءَهُمُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴾

Have they not pondered over the word (of Allāh, i.e., what is sent down to the Prophet), or has there come to them what had not come to their fathers of old?

[Sūrah al-Mu'minūn 23:68]

And His ﷻ saying:

﴿ أَفَلَمْ يَدَّبَّرُوا الْقَوْلَ أَمْ جَاءَهُمْ مَا لَمْ يَأْتِ آبَاءَهُمُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴾

(This is) a book (the Qur'an) which We have sent down to you, full of blessings that they may ponder over its verses, and that men of

understanding may remember.

[Sūrah Ṣād 38:29]

And the saying of the Most High:

﴿ أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ أَمْ عَلَى قُلُوبٍ أَقْفَالُهَا ﴾

Do they not then think deeply about the Qur'ān, or are their hearts locked up (from understanding it)?

[Sūrah Muḥammad 47:24]

Muḥammad bin al-Ḥusayn al-Ājurri said: “Do you not, may Allāh have mercy upon you, see how your Noble Master encourages His creation to contemplate His words? And the one who contemplates His words knows the Lord, the All-Mighty, the Venerable, he knows the greatness of His authority and power, he knows the greatness of His favor upon the believers, and he knows what is obligatory upon him of worship, so he commits himself to the obligations, he is wary of that which His Noble Master has warned him about, and he seeks what He impels him with. And whoever has this characteristic when he recites the Qur'ān and listens to others reading it, then it becomes a healing for him; he is wealthy without wealth, he has strength without a tribe, he is affable with that to which others are averse.

“When he begins to recite a chapter of the Qur'ān, his concern is: ‘When can I act upon the admonition that I am reading?’ His intention is not: ‘When will I complete this chapter,’ but rather his intent is only: ‘When will I comprehend the address from Allāh? When will I submit? When will I ponder?’ Because his recitation of the Qur'ān is worship, and worship is not done heedlessly; and Allāh is the Granter of Success.”³

³ *Akhlāq Ḥamlah al-Qur'ān* by al-Ājurri (pp. 4-5)

Take note here that the objective of contemplation is not just a thought process or mere recitation without the effect becoming apparent in the heart by an increase of faith and what results from that of righteous actions from the limbs.

On the authority of Mujāhid regarding the saying of Allāh ﷻ:

﴿يَتْلُونَهُ حَقَّ تِلَاوَتِهِ﴾

...recite it as it should be recited.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:121]

He commented: "They act upon it as it should be acted upon."⁴

Due to that, verses have come in the Qur'ān indicating of [this quality], as in the saying of Allāh, the Most High:

﴿لَقَدْ مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ بَعَثَ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا
مِّنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ
الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِن كَانُوا مِن قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ
مُّبِينٍ﴾

Indeed, Allāh conferred a great favor on the believers when He sent among them a messenger from among themselves, reciting unto them His verses (the Qur'ān), and purifying them (from sins by them following him), and instructing them in the Book (the Qur'ān) and *al-hikmah* (wisdom and the Sunnah of the Prophet), while before that they had been in manifest error.

[Sūrah Āli 'Imrān 3:164]

Likewise, the saying of the Most High:

⁴ *Akhlāq Ḥamlah al-Qur'ān* by al-Ājurri (p. 5)

﴿ إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ
وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُهُ زَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ
يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ﴾

The believers are only those who, when Allāh is mentioned, feel a fear in their hearts, and when His verses (this Qur'ān) are recited unto them, they (i.e., the verses) increase their faith; and they put their trust in their Lord (alone).

[Sūrah al-Anfāl 8:2]

Likewise, the saying of the Most High:

﴿ وَإِذَا مَا أَنْزَلْنَا سُورَةً فَمِنْهُمْ مَّن يَقُولُ أَيُّكُمْ زَادَتْهُ
هَذِهِ إِيمَانًا ۚ فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فزَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَهُمْ
يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ ﴾

And whenever there comes down a *sūrah*, some of them (hypocrites) say, “Which of you has had his faith increased by it?” As for those who believe, it has increased their faith, and they rejoice.

[Sūrah at-Tawbah 9:124]

And the saying of Allāh, the Most High:

﴿ اللَّهُ نَزَّلَ أَحْسَنَ الْحَدِيثِ كِتَابًا مُّتَشَابِهًا مَّثَانِي
تَقْشَعِرُّ مِنْهُ جُلُودُ الَّذِينَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ ثُمَّ تَلِينُ
جُلُودُهُمْ وَقُلُوبُهُمْ إِلَىٰ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ ۚ ذَلِكَ هُدَىٰ اللَّهُ
يَهْدِي بِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۚ وَمَنْ يُضِلِلِ اللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ
هَادٍ ﴾

Allāh has sent down the best statement, a book (this Qur'ān), its parts resembling each other in goodness and truth, oft-repeated. The skins of those who fear their Lord shiver from it (when they recite it or hear it). Then their skin and their hearts soften to the remembrance of Allāh. That is the guidance of Allāh. He guides therewith whom He pleases, and whomever Allāh sends astray, for him there is no guide.

[Sūrah az-Zumar 39:23]

That is why I said regarding the Islamic legislative definition of *at-tadabbur*: "...and the benefits from that in regard to the servant's faith and the appearance of its effects on the limbs."

Reports have come from the early generations dispraising those who read the Qur'ān while not seeking to understand it, not knowing what it contains, and not acting upon it.

Al-Qurṭubī mentioned in his *tafsīr*⁵, on the authority of Abū Bakr al-Anbārī by way of his chain of narration on the authority of Ziyād bin Mikhrāq, who said: "‘Abdullāh bin Mas’ūd رضي الله عنه said, ‘Verily, the memorization of the words of the Qur'ān was hard for us, but acting on it was easy; and verily, for those who came after us, the memorization of the Qur'ān was easy but acting on it was difficult.’"

And by his chain of narration on the authority of Ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنه. "The best of the Companions of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ at the beginning of this *ummah* did not memorize anything but a *sūrah* or two from the Qur'ān, but they were blessed with acting on it. As for the last of this *ummah*, even the child and the blind person read the Qur'ān, but they are not blessed with acting on it."

⁵ *Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī* 1/40

And ‘Abdullāh bin ‘Umar رضي الله عنه said: “Indeed, we lived a long time, and *īmān* came to us before the Qur’ān; then the *sūrah* was revealed to Muḥammad صلى الله عليه وسلم so we learned from it the *ḥalāl* and the *ḥarām*, its orders and its restrictions, and the points that should be paused on (for contemplation). Then I saw men who were given the Qur’ān before *īmān*, so they read from the opening of the Book to its completion without knowing its orders, restrictions, and what they should pause on in it. They scatter it like the scattering of old, dry dates (i.e., they rush their reading of the Qur’ān without contemplation).”⁶

.....

THE PILLARS OF CONTEMPLATION

From what has preceded, it is clear that contemplation (*at-tadabbur*) must have pillars, and they are:

1) Thinking about and understanding what Allāh mentioned in His Book, considering the consequences of the affairs that Allāh mentioned, and considering and acting on the admonition by way of that, so that knowledge of the ruling of the observed can be reached from that which is unobserved, so we may attain, by way of that, *īmān* in the heart and belief, knowledge, and magnification of Allāh’s command.

2) Attainment of the effects of *īmān* on the limbs. Without that effect, optimal contemplation of the Qur’ān will never happen. The objective is not merely to read the Noble Qur’ān; though there is a lot of good in that, it is not the optimal contemplation that is sought from the Muslim.

This is shown in the Prophetic narration that comes from the Messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم which is reported by al-Bukhārī and Muslim in their authentic collections on the authority of Abū

⁶ *Al-Mustadrak ‘alāṣ-Ṣaḥīḥayn* (1/99); *Sunan al-Bayhaqī al-Kubrā* (3/120).

Mūsā al-Ash'arī رحمته الله, in which the Prophet ﷺ said:

مثل المؤمن الذي يقرأ القرآن كمثل الأترجة، ريحها طيب وطعمها طيب. ومثل المؤمن الذي لا يقرأ القرآن كمثل التمرة، لا ريح لها وطعمها حلو. ومثل المنافق الذي يقرأ القرآن مثل الريحانة، ريحها طيب وطعمها مر. ومثل المنافق الذي لا يقرأ القرآن كمثل الحنظلة، ليس لها ريح وطعمها مر.

The example of a believer who recites the Qur'ān is like that of a citron: it has a pleasant smell and a sweet taste. The example of a believer who does not recite the Qur'ān is like that of a date: it has no smell, though its taste is sweet. The example of a hypocrite who recites the Qur'ān is like that of a sweet-smelling flower: it has fragrance but tastes bitter. The example of a hypocrite who does not read the Qur'ān is like a wild gourd: it has a bitter taste and no smell.

Abul-Faḍl ar-Rāzī also reported this in his book *Fadā'il al-Qur'ān* (p. 16) [with the addition]: “The example of a believer who recites the Qur'ān and acts on it is like that of a citron: it has a pleasant smell and a sweet taste.” So [with him there is the additional wording] “and acts on it,” and it is contained in the meaning of the *ḥadīth*.

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī reported in *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, on the authority of al-Qāsim, that 'Abdullāh said: “The example of the one who recites the Qur'ān and does not act on it is like that of a sweet-smelling flower: it has a pleasant smell but no flavor. And the example of the one who acts on the Qur'ān but doesn't recite it is like that of a date: its taste is sweet, though it has no smell. The example of the one who learns the Qur'ān and teaches it is like that of the citron: its taste is sweet and its smell is pleasant. And the example of the one who doesn't read the Qur'ān and does not act on it is like that of the wild gourd:

it has a bad taste and a bad smell.”

.....

THE OBJECTIVES OF THE QUR'ĀN & CONTEMPLATING THEM

Contemplation of the Noble Qur'ān includes consideration of the Quranic objectives, as it is a book of guidance and wonder. It contains the happiness of mankind in this life and the next.

The Great Qur'ān revolves around three foundational issues. They are:

1) Confirmation of *at-tawhīd* (Islamic monotheism) and the affairs of creed.

2) Confirmation of the rulings of the Islamic legislation: the *ḥalāl* and *ḥarām*, the commands, and prohibitions.

3) Mentioning the stories of the prophets and previous nations, and news of the disbelievers and idolaters and their treatment of the Messenger of the Lord of creation.

The Muslim understands these large objectives in his reading of the Great Qur'ān; he benefits from that which is in it through consideration, thought, and acceptance of the admonition. This is a secret that seals many of the verses through the benefits derived from the demand for thought, guidance, lesson, admonition, and returning to what is correct.

So from that—in regard to that which pertains to the rulings and clarification of the *ḥalāl* and *ḥarām*—is:

The saying of the Most High:

﴿ أَجَلٌ لَّكُمْ لَيْلَةٌ الصَّيَامِ الرَّفَثِ إِلَىٰ نِسَائِكُمْ ۗ ﴾

هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَهُنَّ ۗ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ
 كُنْتُمْ تَخْتَانُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَعَفَا عَنْكُمْ ۗ
 فَالآنَ بَاشِرُوهُنَّ وَابْتَغُوا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ ۗ وَكُلُوا
 وَاشْرَبُوا حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكُمُ الْخَيْطُ الْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ الْخَيْطِ
 الْأَسْوَدِ مِنَ الْفَجْرِ ۗ ثُمَّ أَتَمُوا الصِّيَامَ إِلَىٰ اللَّيْلِ ۗ
 وَلَا تُبَاشِرُوهُنَّ وَأَنْتُمْ عَاكِفُونَ فِي الْمَسَاجِدِ ۗ تِلْكَ
 حُدُودُ اللَّهِ ۗ فَلَا تَقْرُبُوهَا ۗ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ
 لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ ﴿

It is made lawful for you to have sexual relations with your wives on the night of the fast. They are *libās* (a cover) for you and you are the same for them. Allāh knows that you used to deceive yourselves, so He turned to you (accepted your repentance) and forgave you. So now have sexual relations with them and seek that which Allāh has ordained for you (offspring), and eat and drink until the white thread (light) of dawn appears to you distinct from the black thread (darkness of night), then complete your fast till the nightfall. And do not have sexual relations with them (your wives) while you are in *i'tikāf* in the mosques. These are the limits (set) by Allāh, so approach them not. Thus does Allāh make clear His verses to mankind that they may become *al-muttaqūn* (the pious).

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:187]

And the saying of the Most High:

﴿ وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكَاتِ حَتَّىٰ يُؤْمِنَ ۗ وَلَا مَآءَ ۗ﴾

مُؤْمِنَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ مُّشْرِكَةٍ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَتْكُمْ ۗ وَلَا تُنكِحُوا
 الْمُشْرِكِينَ حَتَّىٰ يُؤْمِنُوا ۚ وَلَعَبْدٌ مُّؤْمِنٌ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ
 مُّشْرِكٍ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَكُمْ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى النَّارِ ۗ
 وَاللَّهُ يَدْعُو إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ وَالْمَغْفِرَةِ بِإِذْنِهِ ۗ وَيُبَيِّنُ آيَاتِهِ
 لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿

And do not marry *al-mushrikāt* (idolatresses) till they believe. And indeed, a slave woman who believes is better than a (free) *mushrikah*, even though she pleases you. And give not (your daughters) in marriage to *al-mushrikūn* till they believe (in Allāh alone), and verily, a believing slave is better than a (free) *mushrik* (idolater), even though he pleases you. Those (*al-mushrikūn*) invite you to the Fire, but Allāh invites (you) to Paradise and forgiveness by His leave, and makes His *āyāt* (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) clear to mankind that they may remember.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:221]

And the saying of the Most High:

﴿ يَا بَنِي آدَمَ قَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ لِبَاسًا يُؤَارِي سَوَاتِكُمْ
 وَرِيشًا ۗ وَلِبَاسُ التَّقْوَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ مِنْ آيَاتِ
 اللَّهِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿

O children of Ādam, We have bestowed clothing upon you to cover yourselves and as an adornment, and the clothing of righteousness is better. Such are among the signs of Allāh, that they may remember.

[Sūrah al-A'rāf 7:26]

And regarding the affairs of creed and that which pertains to that:

The saying of the Most High:

﴿ قُلْ هُوَ الْقَادِرُ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَبْعَثَ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابًا مِّن فَوْقِكُمْ أَوْ مِن تَحْتِ أَرْجُلِكُمْ أَوْ يَلْبَسَكُمْ شِيعًا وَيُذِيقَ بَعْضَكُم بَأْسَ بَعْضٍ ۗ انظُرْ كَيْفَ نُصَرِّفُ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَفْقَهُونَ ۙ ﴾

Say: He has power to send torment on you from above or from under your feet, or to cover you with confusion in party strife and make you taste the violence of one another. See how We explain the verses, so that they may understand.

[Sūrah al-An'ām 6:65]

And regarding the stories of the (early nations):

The saying of the Most High:

﴿ وَلَقَدْ أَخَذْنَا آلَ فِرْعَوْنَ بِالسِّنِينَ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَذَّكَّرُونَ ۙ ﴾

And indeed, We punished the people of Fir'awn (Pharaoh) with years of drought and shortness of fruits (crops, etc.) so that they might remember (take heed).

[Sūrah al-A'rāf 7:130]

And the saying of the Most High:

﴿ وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَرَفَعْنَاهُ بِهَا وَلَكِنَّهُ أَخْلَدَ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ ۙ ﴾

وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ ۚ فَمَثَلُهُ كَمَثَلِ الْكَلْبِ إِنْ تَحِمِلَ عَلَيْهِ
يَلْهَثُ أَوْ تَتْرُكُهُ يَلْهَثُ ۚ ذَلِكَ مَثَلُ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ
كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا ۚ فَاقْصُصِ الْقَصَصَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿

And had We willed, We would surely have elevated him therewith, but he clung to the earth and followed his own vain desire. So his description is the description of a dog: if you drive him away, he lolls his tongue out, or if you leave him alone, he (still) lolls his tongue out. Such is the description of the people who reject Our signs and verses. So relate the stories, perhaps they may reflect.

[Sūrah al-A'rāf 7:176]

And regarding those at the time of the invitation:

﴿ فَأَمَّا تَتَّبِعَنِ فِي الْحَرْبِ فَشَرِّدْ بِهِم مِّنْ خَلْفِهِمْ
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَذَّكَّرُونَ ﴾

So if you gain mastery over them in war, punish them severely in order to disperse those who are behind them, so they may learn a lesson.

[Sūrah al-Anfāl 8:57]

And the Most High said:

﴿ وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ مِن بَعْدِ مَا أَهْلَكْنَا
الْقُرُونَ الْأُولَىٰ بِصَآئِرٍ لِلنَّاسِ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لَّعَلَّهُمْ
يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴾

And indeed We gave Mūsā, after We had destroyed the generations of old, the scripture (Torah) as an enlightenment for mankind, and

a guidance and a mercy, so they might remember (or receive admonition).

[Sūrah al-Qaṣaṣ 28:43]

And He said:

﴿ وَمَا كُنْتَ بِجَانِبِ الطُّورِ إِذْ نَادَيْنَا وَلَكِنْ رَحْمَةً
مِّن رَّبِّكَ لِتُنذِرَ قَوْمًا مَّا أَتَاهُمْ مِّن نَّذِيرٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴾

And you (Muḥammad) were not at the side of the Tūr (Mount) when We did call (it is said that Allāh called the followers of Muḥammad and they answered His call, or that Allāh called Mūsā), but (you are sent) as a mercy from your Lord, to give warning to a people to whom no warner had come before you, so that they may remember or receive admonition.

[Sūrah al-Qaṣaṣ 28:46]

And it is generalized in all of the Qur'ān, so He said:

﴿ وَأَنْذِرْ بِهِ الَّذِينَ يَخَافُونَ أَنْ يُحْشَرُوا إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ
لَيْسَ لَهُمْ مِّن دُونِهِ وَلِيٌّ وَلَا شَفِيعٌ لَّعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ ﴾

And warn therewith (the Qur'ān) those who fear that they will be gathered before their Lord, when there will be neither a protector nor an intercessor for them besides Him, so that they may fear Allāh and keep their duty to Him (by abstaining from committing sins and by doing all kinds of good deeds which He has ordained).

[Sūrah al-An'ām 6:51]

And the Most High said:

﴿ وَمَا عَلَى الَّذِينَ يَتَّقُونَ مِنْ حِسَابِهِمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ
وَلَكِنْ ذِكْرًا لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ ﴾

Those who fear Allāh, keep their duty to Him, and avoid evil are not responsible for them (the disbelievers) in any case, but (their duty) is to remind them, that they may become pious.

[Sūrah al-An'ām 6:69]

And the Most High said:

﴿ وَكَذَلِكَ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا وَصَرَّفْنَا فِيهِ مِنَ الْوَعِيدِ
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ أَوْ يُحْدِثُ لَهُمْ ذِكْرًا ﴾

And thus We have sent it down as a Qur'ān in Arabic, and have explained therein in detail the warnings, so that they may fear Allāh, or that it may cause them to take a lesson from it.

[Sūrah Tā-Hā 20:113]

And the Most High said:

﴿ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا غَيْرَ ذِي عِوَجٍ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ ﴾

An Arabic Qur'ān, without any crookedness (therein) so that they may avoid all evil (which Allāh has ordered them to avoid, and to fear Him and keep their duty to Him).

[Sūrah az-Zumar 39:28]

And the Most High said:

﴿ فَإِنَّمَا يَسَّرْنَاهُ بِلِسَانِكَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴾

Certainly, We have made this (Qur'ān) easy on your tongue, so that they may remember.

[Sūrah ad-Dukhān 44:58]

Take note that many of the Qur'ān's objectives come mixed together. So a story might come containing the clarification of a creedal issue while also indicating a ruling from the Islamic legislation. This can be seen in that which the scholars of Islamic jurisprudence relate, which the scholars of *uṣūl al-fiqh* call "legislation from before us," so it is a legislation for us as long as nothing came in our legislation (i.e., the Islamic legislation) that opposes it, due to the generality of the saying of the Most High (about all of the prophets):

﴿أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ فَبِهِدَاهُمْ أَقْتَدِهِ ۗ قُلْ لَا
أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا ۗ إِن هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِلْعَالَمِينَ﴾

They are those whom Allāh had guided. So follow their guidance. Say: "No reward I ask of you for this (the Qur'ān). It is only a reminder for the 'ālamīn (mankind and jinn)."

[Sūrah al-An'ām 6:90]

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METHODS OF CONTEMPLATION

Contemplation has important methods which are easy for the Muslim. From them are:

- **The 1st Method: Reading the Great Qur'ān, Studying It, & Understanding Its Meanings**

The meaning of "understanding" here is not the same as the understanding of the scholars that perform *ijtihād* (the process of deriving Islamic rulings), and it is not the same as the term of the people of knowledge. The understanding that will realize the meaning of the verse is simply from the view of its general indications.⁷

⁷ I bring here the speech of ash-Shanqīṭī from his *tafsīr, Adwā al-Bayān*, in his

Aṣ-Ṣan'ānī, the author of *Subul as-Salām*, said: “Verily, whoever

explanation of verse 24 of Sūrah Muḥammad:

﴿ أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ أَمْ عَلَى قُلُوبٍ أَقْفَالُهَا ﴾

Do they not then think deeply about the Qur'ān, or are their hearts locked up (from understanding it)?

[Sūrah Muḥammad 47:24]

In summary of the first of the issues that was mentioned under the explanation of this verse, due to its relationship with this important matter.

He ﷺ said:

His saying: “*Do they not...*” is for reproach, and the letter *fā* (ف) in the verse is connected to a removed sentence (according to the more correct of the two opinions), which is: “Do they oppose the Book of Allāh, so they don't think deeply about the Qur'ān,” just as he indicated in the summary with his saying: “A removed sentence followed, obviously clarified here...”

And the saying of the Most High: “*or are their hearts locked up?*”; the word “or” here takes the meaning of “rather.” So Allāh, the Most High, reproaches them for their opposition to contemplating the Qur'ān through the reproaching article *hamzah* (إ), and He clarified that their hearts are locked so they do not open up for goodness nor for understanding the Qur'ān.

And what this noble verse contains of admonition and reproach for those who turn away from the Book of Allāh also comes explained in many [other] verses, like the saying of the Most High:

﴿ أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ ۚ وَلَوْ كَانُوا مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا

فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا ﴾

Do they not then consider the Qur'ān carefully? Had it been from other than Allāh, they would surely have found therein many contradictions.

[Sūrah an-Nisā' 4:82]

And the saying of the Most High:

﴿ أَفَلَمْ يَدَّبَّرُوا الْقَوْلَ أَمْ جَاءَهُمْ مَا لَمْ يَأْتِ آبَاءَهُمُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴾

Have they not pondered over the word (of Allāh), or has there come to them what had not come to their fathers of old?

[Sūrah al-Mu'minūn 23:68]

And the saying of the Most High:

﴿ كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبَارَكٌ لِيَدَّبَّرُوا آيَاتِهِ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ أُولُو

hears the saying of the Most High:

﴿الْأَبَابِ﴾

(This is) a book (the Qur'an) which We have sent down to you, full of blessings that they may ponder over its verses and that men of understanding may remember.

[Sūrah Sād 38:29]

And He, the Venerable, the Most High, dispraised the one who turns away from the Great Qur'an in many verses, like the saying of the Most High:

﴿وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ ذُكِّرَ بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِ فَأَعْرَضَ عَنْهَا﴾

And who does more wrong than he who is reminded of the verses of his Lord, but turns away from them?

[Sūrah al-Kahf 18:57]

And the saying of the Most High:

﴿وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ ذُكِّرَ بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِ ثُمَّ أَعْرَضَ عَنْهَا إِنَّا مِنَ الْمُجْرِمِينَ مُنتَقِمُونَ﴾

And who does more wrong than he who is reminded of the verses of his Lord, then he turns aside therefrom? Verily, We shall exact retribution upon the *mujrimūn* (criminals, sinners, disbelievers, etc.).

[Sūrah as-Sajdah 32:22]

It is known that anyone who does not busy himself with contemplation of the Great Qur'an—i.e., reading it, understanding it, appreciating its meanings, and acting on it—then he is in opposition to the Qur'an and is not one who contemplates it, and he is therefore deserving of the disapproval and scolding mentioned in the verses, as Allāh gave him understanding so that he may be able to contemplate the Qur'an. Indeed, the Prophet ﷺ complained to Allāh about those of his people who abandoned the Qur'an, as He, the Most High, said:

﴿وَقَالَ الرَّسُولُ يَا رَبِّ إِنَّ قَوْمِي اتَّخَذُوا هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ

مَهْجُورًا﴾

And the Messenger will say, "O my Lord! Verily, my people deserted this Qur'an (neither listened to it, nor acted on its laws and orders)."

[Sūrah al-Furqān 25:30]

These aforementioned verses show that contemplating the Qur'an, understanding it, studying it, and acting on it are affairs necessary for the Muslims.

Indeed, the Prophet ﷺ clarified that those who busy themselves with this are the best of people, as is authentically reported from him in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* from the *ḥadīth* of 'Uthmān bin 'Affān ؓ. He ﷺ said:

خَيْرُكُمْ مَنْ تَعَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ وَعَلَّمَهُ .

The best of you is the one who learns the Qur'ān and teaches it.

[Collected by al-Bukhārī]

Allāh, the Most High, said:

﴿ وَلَكِنْ كُونُوا رَبَّائِيِّنَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تُعَلِّمُونَ الْكِتَابَ وَبِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَدْرُسُونَ ﴾

On the contrary: "Be you pious, learned men because of what you have taught of the Book, and because of what you have studied from it."

[Sūrah Āli 'Imrān 3:79]

The turning away of many people from considering the Qur'ān, and understanding and acting on it and the Sunnah affirmed by it, and the firm, clear attribution for it, is from the worst, most atrocious evils, even if those who do this think that they are upon guidance. It is not hidden from the person of reason that the opinion of preventing (the people from) acting with the Book of Allāh and the Sunnah of His Messenger ﷺ, due to being sufficed with the recorded (schools of thought in *fiqh*), and the lack of need to learn them, due to the existence of the schools of thought of the (four) Imāms (i.e., Ḥanafīyyah, Mālīkiyyah, Shāfi'iyyah, and Ḥanbalīyyah), is from the greatest of falsehoods, and it opposes the Book of Allāh, the Sunnah of His Messenger, and the consensus of the scholars. It opposes the sayings of the (four) Imāms. Therefore, the perpetrators of that are in opposition to Allāh, His Messenger, all of the Companions of His Messenger, and the Imāms.

Question: Know that some of the later scholars of *uṣūl al-fiqh* said that contemplating this Great Qur'ān, understanding it, and acting on it is only allowed for the *mujtahid* (a scholar with the ability to derive rulings from the proofs), and it is not for the one who hasn't reached the level of complete *ijtihād* (the process of deriving a ruling) with its conditions; they have derived this [opinion], for which many have no connection to a proof from the Book, the Sunnah, consensus (*ijmā'*), apparent analogy (*qiyās jalīlī*), or narrations from the Ṣaḥābah. This is an opinion with no connection to a proof from the legislation whatsoever; rather, the truth in which there is no doubt is that for every Muslim who has the ability to learn, understand, and grasp the meanings of the Book and the Sunnah, it is obligatory to learn them and then to act on what he knows from them. As for

acting on them without knowledge of what to act on, then this is prohibited, according to the consensus. As for what is known with correct knowledge, resulting from correct learning, then this should be acted on even if it is just one verse or one *ḥadīth*. It is known that this dispraise and reproach of the one who does not contemplate the Qur'ān is general for all of mankind.

What clarifies this is that the first people addressed by the Qur'ān, those for whom the verses were revealed, were the hypocrites and disbelievers, and not one of them possessed all the conditions of *ijtihād*, which the scholars of *uṣūl al-fiqh* agreed upon; in fact, they did not possess any of them whatsoever. Therefore, if it was not allowed for other than the *mujtahid* to benefit from acting on the Qur'ān and seeking guidance from the guidance of the Qur'ān, by the rectification of the scholar of *uṣūl al-fiqh*, then Allāh would not have scolded the disbelievers or reproached them for not seeking His guidance and the proof would not have been established against them until they attained the conditions of *ijtihād* as determined by the later scholars of *uṣūl*, as you can see.

And it's known that it is established in *uṣūl* that the situation of the reason for the revelation is indisputably included. Therefore, the inclusion of the disbelievers and the hypocrites in the verse that was mentioned is indisputable, and if it was not correct to benefit from Allāh's guidance except for the *mujtahid*, Allāh would not have rebuked the disbelievers for their lack of contemplation of the Book of Allāh and their lack of acting on it. Indeed, the reality undoubtedly differs from that, and it is not hidden that the conditions of *ijtihād* do not apply except in the areas of *ijtihād*, and it is not permissible for anyone to perform *ijtihād* on the stipulated affairs in the authentic texts of the Book and the Sunnah, even if they meet all of the conditions; rather, there is nothing for them but following them. Due to that, the statement of the author of *Murāqī as-Sa'ūd* following on from al-Qirāfi from his saying: "Whoever is not a *mujtahid*, then action from him on the meaning of a text is from that which is restricted," is completely incorrect due to its contradiction of many verses and prophetic traditions, without any connection to proof.

And from what is known is that it is not correct to make general texts of the Book and Sunnah specific without a proof that is obligatory to return to. It is also known that the general texts of the Book and the Sunnah of his Messenger are too many to count, like his ﷺ saying: "I have left amongst you that which, if you hold onto it, you will not be misguided: the Book of Allāh and my Sunnah," and his ﷺ saying: "Obligatory upon you is my Sunnah..."; the *ahādīth*, and similar to that, which cannot be counted. Making all of those texts specific to the *mujtahid* and completely prohibiting benefitting from the guidance of the Book and the Sunnah for other than [the *mujtahid*] requires a proof from the Book of Allāh or the Sunnah of His Messenger. It is not correct to make those texts specific based

on the opinions of modern groups that have agreed amongst themselves that they are from the blind followers. It is known that the pure blind-follower cannot be considered as being from the people of knowledge or from the inheritors of the prophets. The author of *Murāqī as-Sa'ūd* said in *An-Nasr al-Banūd* regarding his explanation of the aforementioned text:

“Meaning that the non-*mujtahid* is restricted, i.e., prevented from acting on the meaning of a text from the Book or Sunnah even if its chain of narration is authentic, due to the possibility of obstacles to (acting on) it through an abrogation, restriction, or specification and other such obstacles, which a non-*mujtahid* would not understand. But it does not excuse him from Allāh (i.e., His reproach) unless he blindly follows a *mujtahid*. As stated by al-Qirāfi.”

And this is the purpose of his wording, and with it you know that there is no supporting evidence for him or al-Qirāfi, whom he followed regarding the restriction of all the Muslims other than the *mujtahid* from acting on the Book of Allāh and the Sunnah of His Messenger due to the unrestricted possibility of obstacles which may oppose the texts of the Book and the Sunnah, such as an abrogation, restriction, or specification, etc.

This is rejected from two viewpoints:

1) The basis is that the text is free from abrogation until the existence of an abrogating text is confirmed; the general text remains clear in its generality until the existence of a specifying text is confirmed; and the unrestricted text remains clear in its absoluteness until the existence of a restricting text is confirmed. Therefore, it is obligatory that a text is acted on until an abrogation is affirmed by a proof from the *shari'ah*, and a text must be acted on by its most likely meaning, whether that is unrestricted, general, or other than that, until a proof diverts to the less likely meaning of the text. As is known in its area.

The first to claim that it is not permissible to act on a general text before searching for a text that makes it specific and not finding one, and similar to that, was Abul-'Abbās bin Surayj, and a number of later groups followed him in that to the extent that some recounted *ijmā'* (consensus) on that, although there is no foundation for that. Ibn al-Qāsim al-'Ibādī explained this with the verses that clarify those scholars mistakes, in his speech on *Sharḥ al-Maḥal* regarding the statement of Ibn as-Subkī in *Jamū' al-Jawāmi'*. The general text was acted on during the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ before looking for a specifying text, and likewise after his death, in opposition to (the claim of) Ibn Surayj.

In any situation, it is not allowed to leave the apparent meanings of the texts—whether they are general or unrestricted—unless it is for a proof to which it is obligatory to return, which specifies or restricts (the apparent meaning), and not simply due to the mere possibility of that, as is known in its area. Many of the

modern scholars claim that it is obligatory to leave acting on (the Qur'ān) until a specifying or restricting verse, for example, is searched for, but this is in opposition to the reality (of the texts).

2) If the non-*mujtahid* learns some verses of the Qur'ān or some *aḥādīth* of the Prophet ﷺ to act on, he learns that the verse is general or unrestricted and he learns its specifying or restricting text with it if it is specific or restricted, and he learns its abrogation if it is abrogated. It is very easy to learn that by asking the people of knowledge who know about it, and revising the books of *tafsīr* and *aḥādīth* that have been prepared for that. The Ṣaḥābah were in the foremost period, and one of them would learn a verse and then act on it, and they would learn a *ḥadīth* and act on it, and they were not prevented from acting on that until they reached the level of unrestricted *ijtihād*. And maybe a person might act on what he knows, and then he is taught what he did not know, like what the saying of the Most High indicates:

﴿ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۖ وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ اللَّهُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴾

So be afraid of Allāh; and Allāh teaches you. And Allāh is the All-Knower of each and every thing.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:282]

And the saying of the Most High:

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن تَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ فُرْقَانًا ﴾

O you who believe, if you obey and fear Allāh, He will grant you a *furqān*.

[Sūrah al-Anfāl 8:29]

Based on the opinion that the *furqān* is the beneficial knowledge that differentiates between truth and falsehood.

And the saying of the Most High:

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَآمِنُوا بِرَسُولِهِ يُؤْتِكُمْ كِفْلَيْنِ

مِنْ رَحْمَتِهِ وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ نُورًا تَمْشُونَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ﴾

O you who believe (in Mūsā and 'Isā), fear Allāh, and believe too in His Messenger (Muḥammad); He will give you a double portion of His mercy, and He will give you a light by which you shall walk.

[Sūrah al-Ḥadīd 57:28]

These verses show that Allāh teaches those who fear Him (i.e., have *taqwā*) what they do not know, due to that fear of Him, and that *taqwā* does not exceed the actions he performs, based on his knowledge of the command of Allāh upon him.

﴿ وَمَا تُقَدِّمُوا لِأَنفُسِكُمْ مِّنْ خَيْرٍ تَجِدُوهُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ هُوَ خَيْرًا وَأَعْظَمَ أَجْرًا ۖ وَاسْتَغْفِرُوا لِلَّهِ ۖ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴾

“And whatever good you send before you for yourselves, you will certainly find it with Allāh, better and greater in reward. And seek forgiveness from Allāh; verily, Allāh is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.’

[Sūrah al-Muzammil 73:20]

“...knows the meaning without knowing that “ما” is a conditional word, “تقدموا” is made to lose its last vowel or letter (i.e., it’s in the jussive tense) because it is its condition, and “تجدوه” is also made to lose its last letter because it is the conditional preface; and the likes of that are many...

“So if only I knew what it was that singled out the Book and the Sunnah to restrict the knowledge of their meanings and understanding of their compositions and phrasing until they became like those ‘restrained in the pavilions’ (i.e., the *hūr al-‘īn*) so that nothing is left for us but the repetition of its words and letters.”⁸

The Muslim attains this kind of understanding by reviewing the simple books of *tafsīr*, like *Tafsīr al-Baghawī*, *Tafsīr Ibn*

So *taqwā* is based on acting on some of what one knew, and then Allāh increases a person by that with knowledge of what he used to not know.

Therefore, the opinion that does not allow acting on what is known of the Book and the Sunnah until the level of unrestricted *ijtihād* is attained, is the exact way to prevent all of the Muslims from benefitting from the light of the Qur’ān until they attain some condition they think is missing, according to the belief of those who say that. And they claim similar to this for Allāh, His Book, and the Sunnah of His Messenger ﷺ, as you can see. [End of *ash-Shanqīṭī’s* speech]

⁸ *Irshād an-Nuqqād ilā Taysīr al-Ijtihād* (p. 36).

Kathīr, Tafsīr Ibn as-Sa'dī, and others, and this is the opinion of the Salaf.

Aṭ-Ṭabarī رحمته الله mentioned, in the introduction of his *tafsīr*, the narrations which spoke of the propagation of knowledge of *tafsīr* of the Qur'ān and those of the Ṣaḥābah who used to explain the Qur'ān, and he narrated a number of these narrations. From them are:

On the authority of Ibn Mas'ūd: "If a man from amongst us learned ten verses, he would not proceed until he knew their meaning and had acted upon it."

On the authority of Abū 'Abdur-Raḥmān as-Sulamī: "Those who taught us the Qur'ān told us that they used to learn the Qur'ān from the Prophet ﷺ, so if they learned ten verses they would not move on until they had acted on what was in them of action, so we learned the Qur'ān and action together."⁹

On the authority of Masrūq: "Abdullāh said, 'By the one besides Whom there is none other worthy of worship, there wasn't a verse revealed in Allāh's Book except that I was the most knowledgeable of why it was revealed and where it was revealed. And if I knew the whereabouts of someone more knowledgeable of Allāh's Book than me, [in a place where] a ride could reach, I would go to him.'"

Abū Ja'far Muḥammad bin Jarīr aṭ-Ṭabarī (d. 310 AH) رحمته الله said:

And in Allāh's encouragement of His slaves to consider the admonitions and clarifications in the verses of the Qur'ān, He

⁹ The wording of this narration is Abul-Faḍl ar-Rāzī's, reported in his book *Faḍā'il al-Qur'ān* (p. 17): "Verily, we only took this Qur'ān from a people who told us that they used to learn ten verses and not continue to the next ten until they learned what they contained of action." He said: "So we learned knowledge and action together."

venerated His mention of His Prophet ﷺ by His saying:

﴿ كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبَارَكٌ لِيَدَّبَّرُوا آيَاتِهِ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ
أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ ﴾

(This is) a book (the Qur'ān) which We have sent down to you, full of blessings that they may ponder over its verses, and that men of understanding may remember.

[Sūrah Ṣād 38:29]

And the saying of the Most High:

﴿ وَلَقَدْ ضَرَبْنَا لِلنَّاسِ فِي هَذَا الْقُرْآنِ مِنْ كُلِّ مَثَلٍ
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا غَيْرَ ذِي عِوَجٍ لَعَلَّهُمْ
يَتَّقُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾ ﴾

And indeed, We have put forth for men, in this Qur'ān, every kind of similitude so that they may remember. An Arabic Qur'ān, without any crookedness (therein) so that they may avoid all evil which Allāh has ordered them to avoid, fear Him, and keep their duty to Him.

[Sūrah az-Zumar 39:27-28]

And other verses similar to that, in which Allāh commands His slaves and encourages them to consider the similitude(s) of the Qur'ān, and to take heed of the admonitions; admonitions which indicate the obligation of knowing the interpretation of its verses, the interpretation of which is not hidden from them. That is because it is pointless to say to someone who does not understand what is being said to him and does not comprehend its interpretation: "Contemplate while you have no understanding or knowledge of the saying, statement, or speech," unless the meaning of the command is to understand

and comprehend, and then to contemplate and consider it. But as for before that (i.e., before understanding the meaning of the verses), then it is impossible to command him to contemplate it while he is ignorant of its meaning, just as it would be pointless to say to some of the nations that have no comprehension or understanding of the Arabic language: “If you read some of the Arabic poetry that contains proverbs, admonitions, and wisdom, then contemplate the proverbs and remember the wisdom therein,” unless the meaning of the command was to understand and know Arabic first and then to contemplate the wisdoms of the poetry that was being highlighted.

But as for if they were ignorant of the speech and reasoning therein, then it would be pointless to order them with what the meanings lead to in the way of proverbs and lessons. In fact, ordering them to do that is the same as ordering cattle to do it, unless it is after (the attainment of) knowledge of the meanings of the reasoning and statements that it contains.

So likewise regarding the lessons, wisdom, and proverbs present in the verses of the Qur'ān, it cannot be said: “Contemplate them!” except to someone who knows the meanings of its statements and understands the Arabic language, and [it can only be said] if the meaning of the command (to someone ignorant of these things) is to learn the meanings of the speech of the Arabs, then after that they may contemplate them and take heed of their wisdom and various lessons.

So given that—and given that Allāh, may His praise be venerated, commanded His slaves to contemplate the Qur'ān and encouraged them to consider its proverbs—then it is known that He would never command those who are ignorant of what His verses show, since it is not allowed to order them with that unless they know what the verses indicate. Therefore, it is true that they knew the interpretation of the verses and

had knowledge of their reality and what they amounted to, so long as that knowledge was not knowledge hidden from them by being from the knowledge that Allāh has kept from us in his knowledge of those verses and not allowed us—as His creation—access to, which is knowledge of the unseen, as we have previously described.

And since this is correct, it invalidates the opinion of those who deny the scholars' explanations of Allāh's Book and His revelation, that of which the interpretation has not been kept from His creation.¹⁰

[End of at-Ṭabari's speech]

• **The 2nd Method: Acting on What the Qur'ān Contains**

Ā'ishah was asked about Allāh's saying:

﴿وَأَنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ﴾

And verily, you (O Muḥammad) are on an exalted standard of character.

[Sūrah al-Qalam 68:4]

“What was the character of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ?” She said, “His character was the Qur'ān.”¹¹

On the authority of Ḥudhayfah رضي الله عنه, he said: “O group of reciters! Follow the Straight Path, for then you have taken a great lead; but if you divert right or left, then you will go far astray.”¹²

It was reported on the authority of 'Alī bin Abī Ṭālib رضي الله عنه that he said: “O carriers of the Qur'ān” (or “O carriers of knowledge”),

¹⁰ *Tafsīr at-Ṭabari* 1/80-83

¹¹ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 746

¹² *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* 7282, “The Book of Holding Fast, Chapter: Following the example of the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allāh.”

“act on it, as the scholar is the one who acts on what he knows and his knowledge corresponds to his actions. There will be a people who carry knowledge but it doesn't pass their throats, their actions do not correspond to their knowledge, and their actions in private differ from their actions in public. They sit in circles of knowledge and show off amongst one another, to the point that they become angry with their companion if he sits with someone else and leaves them. Those are the ones whose actions in those sittings won't raise up to Allāh, the Most High.”¹³

It was reported on the authority of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī: “This Qur'an was read by slaves and children without having knowledge of its interpretation nor did they contemplate it; they only followed it. That does not happen by simply remembering its words and ignoring its meaning. And some of them will even say, ‘I've read the Qur'an and didn't leave out a single letter.’ But, by Allāh, he has left it all out, every letter of it, because the Qur'an is not seen in support of him, in terms of his manners and his actions. This is clear to the extent that some of them even say, ‘I read this chapter of the Qur'an in just one breath.’ Truly, these people are not reciters, scholars, wise, or devout; they are people not acting on what they read. When were reciters ever like this? May Allāh learn their like among men.”¹⁴

It was mentioned on the authority of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī that he said: “The people were commanded to act on the Qur'an, then they took its recitation as action.”¹⁵

¹³ *At-Tibyān fi Ādāb Ḥamlah al-Qur'an* (p. 20).

¹⁴ *Sunan Sa'īd bin Manṣūr* (2/420); *Branches of Faith* by al-Bayhaqī (2/541); *Az-Zuhd* by Ibn al-Mubārak (1/276).

¹⁵ *Tafsīr as-Sam'ānī* (4/119); *Madārij as-Sālikin* (1/451); *Talbīs Iblīs* (p. 109).

• **The 3rd Method: Teaching the Qur'ān & Calling to It**

It comes in a *ḥadīth*: “The best of you is the one who learns the Qur'ān and teaches it.”¹⁶

And on the authority of ‘Abdullāh bin ‘Umar: “Obligatory upon you is the Qur'ān, so learn it and teach it to your children, for verily you will be asked about it and your recompense will in accordance with it; and its admonition is sufficient for whoever understands.”¹⁷

• **The 4th Method: Performing the Night Prayer with the Qur'ān**

That is because it is the best time for the heart's acceptance, as He, the Most High, said:

﴿ إِنَّ نَاشِئَةَ اللَّيْلِ هِيَ أَشَدُّ وَطْئًا وَأَقْوَمُ قِيلاً ﴾

Verily, the rising by night (for the *tabajjud* prayer) is the most potent and good for governing (the soul), and most suitable for (understanding) the word (of Allāh).

[*Sūrah al-Muzammil* 73:6]

The one performing the prayer is speaking to his Lord during his reading and his prayer. It is reported on the authority of al-Bayāḍī رحمته that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ went out amongst the people while they were praying, and they were raising their voices one over the other in their recitation (of the Qur'ān), so he said, “Indeed, the praying person is speaking to his Lord ﷻ, so reflect on what you are saying to Him and do not raise your voices over one another with the Qur'ān.”¹⁸

¹⁶ Collected by al-Bukhārī.

¹⁷ *Mushkil al-Āthār* by at-Ṭahāwī (1/171)

¹⁸ *Musnad al-Imām Ahmad* 4/344, and Ahmad Shākir declared it authentic.

It is reported on the authority of 'Abdullāh bin Mubārak: "I asked Sufyān ath-Thawrī, 'When a man stands to pray, what intention should he make?' He said, 'He intends that he is speaking to his Lord.'"¹⁹

And Qatādah said: "I haven't eaten leeks (due to their strong smell) since I started reading the Qur'ān."²⁰

• The 5th Method: Making the Heart Present When Reading the Qur'ān

This is because it is a guide from Allāh to you: His commands, His prohibitions, His calls, and His verses are Allāh's messages to you!

Ibn Mas'ūd said: "Whoever wants knowledge, then he must learn the Qur'ān, as there is information in it of the first people and the last."²¹

¹⁹ *Tāzīm Qadr aṣ-Ṣalāh* (p. 1-92).

²⁰ *Fadā'il al-Qur'ān wa Ma'ālimuh* by Abū 'Ubayd (p. 55); see *Ad-Dar al-Manthūr* (1/278).

²¹ Reported by my brother Aḥmad (Bāzmūl) in *Ghāyāh al-Bayān*; he said:

"It is authentic by itself; Sa'īd bin Manṣūr reported it in *As-Sunan* (1/7, #1), and from his route al-Bayhaqī [reported] in *Branches of Faith* (2/332, #1960) [that] Ḥudayj bin Mu'āwiyah told us on the authority of Abū Is'hāq, on the authority of Murrah, on the authority of Ibn Mas'ūd, on his authority with it.

"And it is reported by Musadad in *Al-Musnad* (13/17, #3100—al-Mutālib), by 'Abdullāh bin Aḥmad in his *Zawā'id 'alaz-Zuhd* (158), by aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr* (9/136, #8666), and by Ibn Ḥazm in *Al-Iḥkām* (8/488) from the route reported on the authority of Shu'bah, on the authority of Abū Is'hāq, on the authority of Murrah, on the authority of 'Abdullāh, who said: 'Whoever wants knowledge, then let him study the Qur'ān, as there is knowledge in it of the first and the last people.'

"And it is reported by Abū 'Ubayd in *Fadā'il al-Qur'ān* (p. 96), by Ibn Abī Shaybah in *Al-Muṣannaf* (6/127, #30009), by 'Abdullāh bin Mubārak in *Az-Zuhd* (p. 280, #814), and by al-Faryābī from his route in *Fadā'il al-Qur'ān* (p. 181, #78); and it is reported by an-Nuḥās in *Al-Qaṭa' wal-Itmāf* (1/9) and by

Al-Ḥasan bin 'Alī رضي الله عنه said: “Verily, those who came before you saw the Qur'ān as messages from their Lord, so they contemplated it by night and studied it by day.”²²

Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī said²³: “The reciters of the Qur'ān are of three types:

1) “The first type consider it a commodity by which they eat.

2) “The second type establish its words but neglect its limits (the laws set by Allāh) and act arrogantly with it in front of the people of their city, and with it they seek to gain from the leaders. This type is common among the carriers of the Qur'ān; may Allāh not increase them.

3) “The third type rely on the treatment of the Qur'ān and apply it to the ailments of their hearts, they establish their *mihṛāb's* with it, they perfume their robes with it, and they feel fear and wear sadness. Those are the ones for whom Allāh sends the rainfall, and He grants them victory over their enemies. By Allāh, those from this type of the carriers of the Qur'ān are mightier than red sulfur.”

at-Ṭabarānī in *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr* (9/130, #8664) from routes on the authority of Abū Is'hāq. Its chain of narration is authentic in itself and the narration of Shu'bah on the authority of Abū Is'hāq before his confusion. Al-Haythamī said in *Majma' az-Zawā'id* (7/165): ‘At-Ṭabarānī reported it by different chains of narration and narrators; in one of them, the narrators are all valid.’

“The meaning of ‘search (the Qur'ān)’ is: pick at it and think about its meanings, explanations, and readings, and the investigations of the people of knowledge regarding its explanations and meanings. See: *An-Nihāyah* by Ibn Athīr (1/229) and *Lisān al-Arab* by Ibn Manẓūr (4/110).”

²² *At-Tibyān* by an-Nawawī (p. 28)

²³ *Faḍā'il al-Qur'ān wa Ma'ālimuh* by Abū 'Ubayd (p. 138, ash-Shāmilah), *Akhḫāq Ḥamlah al-Qur'ān* (p. 65, ash-Shāmilah), *Mukhtaṣar Qiyām al-Layl* by Muḥammad bin Naṣr (p. 24, ash-Shāmilah), and *Branches of Faith* by al-Bayhaqī (6/145, ash-Shāmilah).

TOPIC 2

PURIFICATION OF THE SOUL

This topic contains the following points:

- 1) Clarification of the meaning of “purification of the soul.”
- 2) The importance of purification of the soul.
- 3) The conditions of the soul in regard to its purification.
- 4) How purification of the soul is attained.

.....

A CLARIFICATION OF THE MEANING OF “PURIFICATION OF THE SOUL”

Az-zakāh in the Arabic language refers to growth and increase in goodness, and the completeness of something. (For example) you say: *zakā ash-shay'* (زكا الشيء) if a thing grew.

In the Islamic legislation, it means the purification of the self from repulsive characteristics. The most important of those is the purification of the self from *shirk* (i.e., associating partners

with Allāh in worship), *bid'ah* (newly introduced matters in the religion), and sins. As for the *zakāh* of wealth, it was only given this name due to it purifying (the wealth) from *ḥarām*, and because it is a cause for (the wealth) to increase, for it to be blessed, for its benefit to be abundant, and as a means for a person to be successful in spending it in the obedience of Allāh.¹

Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah رحمته الله said:

Allāh, the Most High, said:

﴿ خُذْ مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ صَدَقَةً تُطَهِّرُهُمْ وَتُزَكِّيهِمْ بِهَا ﴾

Take *sadaqah* (alms) from their wealth in order to cleanse them and purify them with it.

[*Sūrah at-Tawbah* 9:103]

So (Allāh) joined between the two affairs—*aṭ-ṭahārah* (cleansing) and *az-zakāh* (purification)—due to their inseparability, as the impurity of lewdness and disobedience in the heart is the same as the unhealthy substances of the body, or weeds in agriculture, or impurities in gold, silver, copper, and steel.

So just as when the unhealthy substances are removed from the body, the natural strength is released and the body becomes relaxed and works without any disability or reluctance, likewise when the heart is vacated of sins by way of repentance, then its confusion is removed, the heart and its desire for good becomes strong, and it is no longer troubled by its attraction to immorality and unhealthy matters. It becomes purified, prosperous, strong, and firm. It sits on its throne and its orders are carried out by its subjects (the limbs), so they hear and they obey. There is no way to its *zakāh* (purification) until after its

¹ From Ibn Kathīr's commentary in his *tafsīr* at the beginning of the explanation of *Sūrah Fuṣṣilat*.

cleansing, just as He, the Most High, said:

﴿ قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ أَزْكَىٰ لَهُمْ ۖ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ ﴾

Tell the believing men to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things), and to protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts, etc.). That is purer for them. Verily, Allāh is all-aware of what they do.

[Sūrah an-Nūr 24:30]

So He made the purity come after the lowering of the gaze and protection of the private parts.

The intent is that the purification of the heart is dependent on its cleansing, just as purification of the body is dependent on the removal of its unhealthy, corrupting substances.

And Allāh, the Most High, said:

﴿ وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ مَا زَكَايَا مِنْكُمْ مِّنْ أَحَدٍ أَبَدًا وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يُزَكِّي مَن يَشَاءُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴾

And had it not been for the grace of Allāh and His mercy on you, not one of you would ever have been pure from sins. But Allāh purifies whom He wills, and Allāh is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

[Sūrah an-Nūr 24:21]

He, the Most Glorified, mentioned this after the prohibition of fornicating, the slandering of a chaste person, and marrying

a fornicator, so it shows that purification is through keeping away from these things.

And likewise regarding the statement of the Most High about seeking permission to enter from the family of the house:

﴿ وَإِنْ قِيلَ لَكُمْ ارجِعُوا فَارجِعُوا ۗ هُوَ اَزْكٰى لَكُمْ ۗ
وَاللّٰهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ عَلِيمٌ ﴾

...and if you are asked to go back, go back, for it is purer for you, and Allāh is all-knower of what you do.

[Sūrah an-Nūr 24:28]

If they are told to leave so as not to see the residents in a state that the homeowner would not like them to see, then that would be purer for them, just as lowering the gaze is purer for the one who does it.

And Allāh, the Most High, said:

﴿ قَدْ اَفْلَحَ مَنْ تَزَكٰى ۗ وَذَكَرَ اسْمَ رَبِّهِ فَصَلٰى ۗ ﴾

Indeed, whosoever purifies himself shall achieve success, and who remembers (glorifies) the name of his Lord and prays.

[Sūrah al-A'lā 87:14-15]

And He, the Most High, said about Mūsā ﷺ regarding his address of Fir'awn:

﴿ فَقُلْ هَلْ لَّكَ اِلٰى اَنْ تَزَكٰى ﴾

(And say): “Would you purify yourself (from the sin of disbelief by becoming a believer)?”

[Sūrah an-Nāzi'āt 79:18]

And He, the Most High, said:

﴿وَوَيْلٌ لِّلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٦﴾ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ﴾

And woe to the *mushrikūn* (idolaters, people of *shirk*, etc), those who give not the *zakāh*...

[*Sūrah Fuṣṣilat* 41:6-7]

Most of the explainers of the Qur'ān from the Salaf and those who came after them said that it is *tawḥīd*—the testimony that there is none worthy of worship except Allāh—and *īmān* that purify the heart. *Tawḥīd* contains a negation and an affirmation: negation by the heart of the divinity of anything other than the One true God, and that is the cleansing of the heart; and affirmation of His, the Most Glorified's, divinity, and that is the purification. And this is the foundation for every purification and increase, as no purification—even if it is based on growth and increase—can occur without the removal of evil. Due to this fact, purification embodies both affairs together, so the basis of that which purifies the hearts and souls is *tawḥīd*. Purification is to make something pure, either in its physical self or in the belief and information about it, as it is said: “I rectified it and I ruined it” if it was made like that on the outside or in the beliefs and information.²

[*End of Ibn al-Qayyim's speech*]

The explanations that come from the Salaf regarding the saying of Allāh, the Most High:

﴿قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَن زَكَّاهَا ﴿٩﴾ وَقَدْ خَابَ مَن دَسَّاهَا ﴿١٠﴾﴾

Indeed, he succeeds who purifies himself. And indeed, he fails who corrupts himself.

[*Sūrah ash-Shams* 91:9-10]

² Ibn al-Qayyim's words in *Ighāthah al-Lahfān*.

Support this meaning.

Qatādah said: "Cleansing it from lowly, repulsive characteristics," and similar to this was reported by Mujāhid, 'Ikramah, and Sa'īd bin Jubayr.

And this is like the saying of Allāh, the Most High:

﴿ قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ تَزَكَّى ۖ وَذَكَرَ اسْمَ رَبِّهِ فَصَلَّى ۝۱۵ ﴾

Indeed, whosoever purifies himself shall achieve success, and who remembers (glorifies) the name of his Lord and prays.

[Sūrah al-A'lā 87:14-15]

As for His saying:

﴿ وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ دَسَّاهَا ۝ ﴾

And indeed, he fails who corrupts himself.

[Sūrah ash-Shams 91:10]

"Corrupts" (دَسَّاهَا), i.e., "دسس", means to make [himself] hidden and lowly by his betrayal of guidance until he commits disobedience and leaves the obedience of Allāh ﷻ.

What is intended is that the meaning of self-purification is cleansing [oneself] from the defilements of *shirk* and disbelief, and the transgressions of disobedience and sin.

And indeed He, the Most High, said:

﴿ الَّذِينَ يَجْتَنِبُونَ كَبَائِرَ الْإِثْمِ وَالْفَوَاحِشَ إِلَّا اللَّمَمَ ۗ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ وَاسِعُ الْمَغْفِرَةِ ۗ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِكُمْ إِذْ أَنْشَأَكُمْ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ وَإِذْ أَنْتُمْ أَجِنَّةٌ فِي بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ ۗ فَلَا تُزَكُّوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ ۗ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنِ اتَّقَى ۝ ﴾

Those who avoid great sins and *al-fawahish* (illegal sexual intercourse, etc.) except the small faults—verily, your Lord is of vast forgiveness. He knows you well when He created you from the earth (Ādam), and when you were fetuses in your mothers' wombs. So ascribe not purity to yourselves. He knows best him who fears (Allāh).

[Sūrah an-Najm 53:32]

His saying: “So ascribe not purity to yourselves. He knows best him who fears (Allāh)” [means] do not ascribe purity to yourselves and say: “We are pure, righteous, and pious.” Due to this, He said: “He knows best him who fears (Allāh).”

And this is like His saying:

﴿أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ يُزَكُّونَ أَنفُسَهُمْ ۗ بَلِ اللَّهُ يُزَكِّي
مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا﴾

Have you not seen those who claim purity for themselves? Nay—but Allāh sanctifies whom He pleases, and they will not be dealt with injustice even equal to the extent of a *fatil* (a thread in the long slit of a date-stone).

[Sūrah an-Nisā' 4:49]

.....

THE IMPORTANCE OF PURIFICATION OF THE SOUL

The following points show the importance of purity of the hearts and purification of the souls:

1) Allāh made it an objective behind the sending of the Messenger ﷺ. Indeed He, the Most High, said (as He

informed us of the supplication of Ibrāhīm):

﴿ رَبَّنَا وَابْعَثْ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِّنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِكَ
وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ ۗ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ
الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴾

Our Lord! Send amongst them a messenger of their own (and indeed Allāh answered their invocation by sending Muḥammad), who shall recite unto them Your verses and instruct them in the Book (the Qur'ān) and the *ḥikmah* (knowledge of the Islamic laws and jurisprudence, wisdom, prophethood, etc.), and purify them. Verily! You are the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:129]

And Allāh, the Most High, said:

﴿ كَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا فِيكُمْ رَسُولًا مِّنْكُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِنَا
وَيُزَكِّيكُمْ وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُعَلِّمُكُم مَّا
لَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴾

Similarly (to complete My blessings on you), We have sent among you a Messenger of your own, reciting to you Our verses (the Qur'ān) and purifying you, and teaching you the Book and the *ḥikmah* and teaching you that which you did not to know.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:151]

And He, the Most High, said:

﴿ لَقَدْ مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ بَعَثَ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا

مَنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ
الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ

﴿ مُبِينٍ ﴾

Indeed, Allāh conferred a great favor on the believers when He sent among them a Messenger from among themselves, reciting unto them His verses, purifying them, and instructing them in the Book and the *hikmah* while before that they had been in manifest error.

[Sūrah Āli 'Imrān 3:164]

And He, the Most High, said:

﴿ هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُو
عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ
وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ ﴾

He it is Who sent among the unlettered ones a Messenger from among themselves, reciting to them His verses, purifying them (from the filth of disbelief and polytheism), and teaching them the Book and the *hikmah*. And verily, they had been before in manifest error.

[Sūrah al-Jumu'ah 62:2]

And he ﷺ said in a *hadīth* on the authority of Abū Hurayrah, who said that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

إِنَّمَا بُعِثْتُ لِأَتَمِّمَ صَالِحَ الْأَخْلَاقِ.

Verily, I was only sent to perfect the righteous characteristics.³

³ Reported by Aḥmad.

And with the wording:

إِنَّمَا بَعِثْتُ لَأَتَمِّمَ صَالِحِي الْأَخْلَاقِ .

Verily, I was only sent to perfect those of righteous characteristics.⁴

And with the wording:

إِنَّمَا بَعِثْتُ لَأَتَمِّمَ مَكَارِمَ الْأَخْلَاقِ .

Verily, I was only sent to perfect the noble characteristics.⁵

2) Allāh described those who don't follow the messengers and who disobey His, the Most Glorified's, commands as being forbidden from this purification on the Day of Standing:

﴿ يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ مَالٌ وَلَا بَنُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾ إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَى اللَّهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ ﴿٨٩﴾ ﴾

The Day whereon neither wealth nor sons will avail, except he who brings to Allāh a clean heart.

[Sūrah ash-Shu'arā' 26:88-89]

And He, the Most High, said:

﴿ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَيَشْتَرُونَ بِهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا ۖ أُولَٰئِكَ مَا يَأْكُلُونَ فِي بُطُونِهِمْ إِلَّا النَّارَ وَلَا يُكَلِّمُهُمُ اللَّهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَلَا يُزَكِّيهِمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴾

Verily, those who conceal what Allāh has sent

⁴ Reported by al-Bukhārī in *Al-Adab al-Mufrad* and by al-Bayhaqī in *Branches of Faith*.

⁵ Reported by al-Bayhaqī in *As-Sunan al-Kubrā*, and in *Musnad ash-Shihāb*.

down of the Book and purchase a small gain therewith (of worldly things), they eat into their bellies nothing but fire. Allāh will not speak to them on the Day of Resurrection nor purify them, and theirs will be a painful torment.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:174]

3) Allāh made purification of the heart and soul from among the wisdoms of the Islamic legislation, like in the saying of the Most High:

﴿ وَإِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَبَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَلَا تَعْضُلُوهُنَّ أَنْ يَنْكِحْنَ أَزْوَاجَهُنَّ إِذَا تَرَاضُوا بَيْنَهُم بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ يُوعَظُ بِهِ مَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ
الْآخِرِ ۗ ذَٰلِكُمْ أَزْكَىٰ لَكُمْ وَأَطْهَرُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ
لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ۗ ﴾

And when you have divorced women and they have fulfilled the term of their prescribed period, do not prevent them from marrying their (former) husbands, if they mutually agree on reasonable basis. This (instruction) is an admonition for he among you who believes in Allāh and the Last Day. That is more virtuous and purer for you. Allāh knows and you know not.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:232]

Likewise, the saying of the Most High:

﴿ خُذْ مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ صَدَقَةً تُطَهِّرُهُمْ وَتُزَكِّيهِمْ بِهَا
وَصَلِّ عَلَيْهِمْ ۗ إِنَّ صَلَاتَكَ سَكَنٌ لَهُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ

﴿ عَلِيمٌ ﴾

Take *sadaqah* (alms) from their wealth in order to cleanse them and purify them with it, and invoke Allāh for them. Verily, your invocations are a source of security for them, and Allāh is All-Hearer, All-Knower.

[Sūrah at-Tawbah 9:103]

And the saying of the Most High:

﴿ قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ أَزْكَىٰ لَهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ ﴾

Tell the believing men to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things) and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts, etc.). That is purer for them. Verily, Allāh is All-Aware of what they do.

[Sūrah an-Nūr 24:30]

4) Purification of the heart is a defense from the schemes and plans of the Shayṭān. He, the Most High, said:

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوبَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ ۚ وَمَنْ يَتَّبِعْ خُطُوبَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ فَإِنَّهُ يَأْمُرُ بِالْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ ۚ وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ مَا زَكَا مِنْكُمْ مِّنْ أَحَدٍ أَبَدًا وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يُزَكِّي مَن يَشَاءُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴾

O you who believe! Follow not the footsteps of the Shayṭān. And whosoever follows

the footsteps of the Shayṭān, then verily, he commands *al-fahshā'* (i.e., committing indecency, fornication, etc.), and *al-munkar* (i.e., doing evil and wicked deeds). And had it not been for the grace of Allāh and His mercy on you, not one of you would ever have been pure from sins. But Allāh purifies whom He wills, and Allāh is All-Hearer, All-Knower.

[Sūrah an-Nūr 24:21]

5) Purification of the soul is life for the heart and safety from trials and desires.

It comes in a *ḥadīth* on the authority of Ḥudhayfah—as reported by Muslim in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*—that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

تُعْرَضُ الْفِتْنُ عَلَى الْقُلُوبِ عَرَضَ الْحَصِيرِ عُوْدًا عُوْدًا، فَأَيُّ قَلْبٍ أُشْرِبَهَا نُكَيْتَتْ فِيهِ نُكْتَةٌ سَوْدَاءٌ، وَأَيُّ قَلْبٍ أَنْكَرَهَا نُكَيْتَتْ فِيهِ نُكْتَةٌ بِيضَاءٌ، حَتَّى يَصِيرَ الْقَلْبُ أبيضَ مِثْلَ الصَّفَا، لَا تَضُرُّهُ فِتْنَةٌ مَا دَامَتْ السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ، وَالْآخِرُ أَسْوَدَ مُرْبَدًّا كَالْكُوزِ مُجَحَّجًا، لَا يَعْرِفُ مَعْرُوفًا، وَلَا يُنْكِرُ مُنْكَرًا، إِلَّا مَا أُشْرِبَ مِنْ هَوَاهُ.

Temptations will be presented to men's hearts as a reed mat is woven stick by stick, and any heart that imbibes them will be stained by a black mark, but any heart that rejects them will have a white mark put on it. The result is that there will be two types of hearts: one white like a white stone, which will not be harmed by any temptation as long as the heavens and the earth endure; and the other black and dust-colored like a vessel which has been upset, not recognizing what is good or rejecting what is abominable, except that which it imbibes of its desires.⁶

⁶ Collected by Muslim.

.....
 THE CONDITIONS OF THE SOUL REGARD-
 ING ITS PURIFICATION

Many people say that the son of Ādam (the human being) has three souls:

- 1) A peaceful soul
- 2) A self-reproaching soul
- 3) A reprehensible soul

And there are those that consider these to be the main ones and there are those that consider others to be more predominant. They put forward as a proof for their argument the saying of the Most High:

﴿ يَا أَيَّتُهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ ﴾

O (you) the one in (complete) rest and satisfaction!

[Sūrah al-Fajr 89:27]

And the saying of the Most High:

﴿ وَلَا أَقْسِمُ بِالنَّفْسِ اللَّوَّامَةِ ﴾

And I swear by the self-reproaching person...

[Sūrah al-Qiyāmah 75:2]

And the saying of the Most High:

﴿ إِنَّ النَّفْسَ لَأَمَّارَةٌ بِالسُّوءِ ﴾

Verily, the soul is inclined to evil.

[Sūrah Yūsuf 12:53]

In fact, it is only one soul, but it has different characteristics,

so it is called different names depending on its characteristic.

The soul is called “content” in regard to its contentment with its Lord in worshipping Him, loving Him, giving Him His authority, trusting in Him, being happy with Him, and submitting to Him, as the traits of loving Him, fearing Him, and having hope in Him cut off the possibility of loving other than Him and fearing and hoping in other than Him. Therefore, by his love for Allāh, he dispenses with the need to love others; with his remembrance of Him, he dispenses with the need to make remembrance of others; and with his yearning for Him and to meet Him, he dispenses with yearning for others.

So contentment with Allāh, the Glorified, is a reality that returns from Him, the Glorified, to the heart of His slave. It unites [his heart] upon Him and returns his erratic heart to Him, until it is as if he is sitting between Allāh’s two Hands; he hears by Him, he sees by Him, he moves by Him, and he draws his strength from Him. So this contentment penetrates his soul, his heart, his joints, and his inner and outer strength, and it draws his soul to Allāh. His skin, heart, and joints become pliable to Allāh’s service and draw closer to Him.

There is no way to attain true contentment except by Allāh and His remembrance, which is His speech that He sent down to His Messenger (i.e., the Qur’ān), as He, the Most High, said:

﴿ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ ﴾

Those who believe and whose hearts find rest in the remembrance of Allāh. Verily, in the remembrance of Allāh do hearts find rest.

[Sūrah ar-Ra’d 13:28]

So the contentment, calmness, and stability of the heart

brought about by the removal of worry, bother, and confusion, cannot ever come from anything except Allāh, the Most High, and His total remembrance. As for contentment in other than Him, then that is self-delusion, and trust in other than Him is weakness.

Allāh ﷻ decreed an indisputable decree that whoever seeks contentment in other than Him will be afflicted by worry, bother, and confusion from it, whatever it may be. In fact, [this is the case] even if he seeks contentment in his own knowledge, situation, and work; he gives it and then takes it away.

For the souls that seek contentment from other than Allāh, He makes the objects of their contentment the sources of their tribulations, to teach His slaves and His allies that those who are connected to other than Him are cut off from Him, and those who seek contentment from other than Him are blocked and prevented from His benefits and objectives.

The reality of the contentment with which the soul becomes content is that it is content in regard to knowledge of the names and attributes of Allāh and the descriptions of His completeness that He informed us of Himself, and what His messengers informed us of Him. So we meet Him with acceptance, submission, compliance, a broadening of the chest for Him, and joy of the heart from Him.

Seeking contentment from the names and attributes of the Lord is of two types:

- 1) Contentment from having faith in them, affirming them, and believing in them.
- 2) Contentment with what they necessitate and obligate regarding the effects of servitude.

For example: Contentment with predestination, affirming

it, and having faith in that results in contentment from the aspects of predestination that the slave is not expected to anticipate or defend from nor does he have the power to do so. So he submits to it and is pleased with it; he isn't indignant, nor does he complain, and it doesn't shake his faith. So he doesn't despair over what he has lost and he doesn't gloat over that which he receives, because the calamity was written before it reached him and before he was created, as He, the Most High, said:

﴿ مَا أَصَابَ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ نَبْرَأَهَا ۚ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ ﴿٢٢﴾ لَكِنَّا لَا تَسَوُّوا عَلَيَّ مَا فَاتَكُمْ وَلَا تَفْرَحُوا بِمَا آتَاكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ ﴿٢٣﴾ ﴾

No calamity befalls on the earth or in yourselves but it is inscribed in the Preserved Tablet (the Book of Divine Decrees) before We bring it into existence. Verily, that is easy for Allāh. So that you may not be sad over matters that you fail to get, nor rejoice because of that which has been given to you. And Allāh likes not prideful boasters.

[Sūrah al-Ḥadīd 57:22-23]

He, the Most High, said:

﴿ مَا أَصَابَ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ۗ وَمَنْ يُؤْمِنْ بِاللَّهِ يَهْدِ قَلْبَهُ ۚ وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴾

No calamity befalls but by the leave of Allāh, and whosoever believes in Allāh, He guides his heart; and Allāh is the All-Knower of every-

thing.[*Sūrah at-Taghābun 64:11*]

A number of the Salaf said that this is the one who is a servant afflicted by a calamity and he knows that it is from Allāh, so he is pleased and he submits to it.

This is contentment with the rulings and obligations of Allāh's attributes and their effects on the one who has knowledge of them, and its effects are considerably more than the contentment based on no knowledge or belief in them; and likewise [contentment] with the rest of Allāh's attributes, their effects, and the things related to them, such as hearing, sight, pleasure, anger, and love. So this is the contentment from *īmān*.

As for the contentment of *iḥsān*, then it is contentment acquired from obedience, sincerity, and compliance to Allāh's commands, so he doesn't give preference to wants, desires, or tradition over His command. Therefore, doubts that contradict His revelation and desires that oppose His command never settle or take hold.

At this point, there is an extraordinary secret that should be pointed out and paid attention to, and attention and success is in the hands of the one who, by His Hand, is the crux of success: And it is that Allāh, the Glorified, made a purpose for every part of a person. If it does not attain that purpose, then it will be in a state of worry, confusion, and perturbation due to the loss of its purpose. For example, the eye's purpose is vision; the ear's purpose is hearing; the tongue's purpose is speech. If the body part's facilities—which are its purpose—are absent, then pain and deficiency occur according to the extent of the loss of that faculty.

And Allāh made the heart's purpose its bliss, happiness, delight, and jubilation in knowledge of Him, the Glorified, His will

and His love; and in returning to Him, drawing close to Him, longing to meet him, and being happy with Him.

If that is absent from the heart, it becomes a worse torment and confusion than an eye losing light and sight or a tongue losing the ability of speech and taste, and there is no way for him to find contentment in any way, even if he attains what he attains of the *dunyā*, its causes and its sciences, unless Allāh becomes his only love, his only deity, the only thing he worships, and the utmost of his objectives, and that Allāh becomes the only one he seeks aid from to achieve that. Therefore, the reality of the affair is that there is no contentment without the realization of:

﴿إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ﴾

**You (alone) we worship, and You (alone) we
ask for help (for each and every thing).**

[*Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* 1:5]

The sayings of the explainers of the Qur'ān regarding the contented person return to that point.

Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه said: "The contented person [is] the believer."

Qatādah said: "He is the believer whose soul is content with Allāh's promise."

Al-Ḥasan said: "The believer in what Allāh has said."

Al-Mujāhid said: "The soul that has certainty that Allāh is his Lord, which submits to His order (the *qadr*) that He does to him."

And Maṣṣūr reported on his authority: "The soul that has certainty that Allāh is his Lord and is awestruck by His commands and obedience to Him."

And Ibn Abī Nujayḥ said on his authority: “The contented soul [is] the one that is humble to Allāh.” And he also said: “It is the soul that is certain of the meeting with Allāh.”

So the speech of the Salaf regarding the one who is content revolves around two principles: contentment of knowledge and faith, and contentment of will and action.

The self-reproaching soul is of two types:

1) Reproach of the blameworthy; and that is the ignorant, oppressive soul that Allāh and His angels criticize.

2) Reproach of the innocent; and that is the soul that continues to reproach itself for its shortcomings in obedience to Allāh while it struggles and works hard. So this soul is not blameworthy.

The most noble souls are those that reproach themselves regarding obedience to Allāh. He tolerates the reproach of the critics for Allāh’s pleasure, so he doesn’t pay attention to the critics’ reproach. So this soul has freed itself from Allāh’s reproach. But the one who is pleased by his own actions and does not reprimand himself and does not tolerate the critics’ scolding, then that is the soul that Allāh censures.

The reprehensible soul [is] the blameworthy soul; it is the soul that commands with every type of evil, as this is from its nature unless Allāh accepts the soul, makes it firm, and helps it. So no one can leave the evil of one’s own soul except by the acceptance of Allāh, as He, the Most High, said recounting the story of the wife of al-‘Azīz (the minister of Egypt):

﴿ وَمَا أُبْرِيْ نَفْسِيْ ۚ اِنَّ النَّفْسَ لَآمَارَةٌۭ بِالسُّوْءِ ۗ اِلَّا مَا رَحِمَ رَبِّيْ ۚ اِنَّ رَبِّيْ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴾

“And I free not myself (from the blame). Verily, the soul is inclined to evil, except when my Lord bestows His Mercy (upon whom He wills). Verily, my Lord is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”

[*Sūrah Yūsuf* 12:53]

And He, the Most High, said:

﴿وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ مَا زَكَايَ مِنْكُمْ
مِّنْ أَحَدٍ أَبَدًا وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يُزَكِّي مَن يَشَاءُ﴾

And had it not been for the grace of Allāh and His mercy on you, not one of you would ever have been pure from sins.

[*Sūrah an-Nūr* 24:21]

And He, the Most High, said to the noblest of His creation and the most beloved of them to Him:

﴿وَلَوْلَا أَن تَبَيَّنَّاكَ لَقَدْ كِدْتَ تَرْكَنُ إِلَيْهِمْ شَيْئًا
قَلِيلًا﴾

And had We not made you stand firm, you would nearly have inclined to them a little.

[*Sūrah al-Isrā'* 17:74]⁷

.....
HOW PURIFICATION OF THE SOUL IS
ATTAINED

Purification of the soul is attained through knowledge of Allāh and knowledge of His commands and prohibitions, and leading the soul to obedience to Allāh, knowledge of Him,

⁷ Ibn al-Qayyim's words in *Ighāthah al-Lahfān*.

That is the command of Allāh, which He has sent down to you; and whosoever fears Allāh and keeps his duty to Him, He will remit his sins from him and will enlarge his reward.

[Sūrah at-Ṭalāq 65:5]

TOPIC 3

THE BENEFITS OF PURIFYING THE SOUL

The slave, if he purifies his soul with obedience to his Lord, will attain happiness in this life and the Hereafter.

The following are among the benefits of purifying the soul with the obedience to the Lord.

.....

ATTAINING THE PLEASURE OF ALLĀH IN THE DUNYĀ & HEREAFTER

﴿ إِنَّهُ مَن يَأْتِ رَبَّهُ مُجْرِمًا فَإِنَّ لَهُ جَهَنَّمَ لَا يَمُوتُ فِيهَا وَلَا يَحْيَىٰ ﴿٧٦﴾ وَمَن يَأْتِهِ مُؤْمِنًا قَدْ عَمِلَ الصَّالِحَاتِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمُ الدَّرَجَاتُ الْعُلَىٰ ﴿٧٥﴾ جَنَّاتٍ عَدْنٍ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَذَٰلِكَ جَزَاءُ مَن تَزَكَّىٰ ﴿٧٦﴾ ﴾

Verily, whoever comes to his Lord as a criminal, then surely, for him is Hell; therein he will

neither die nor live. But whoever comes to Him (Allāh) as a believer, and has done righteous good deeds, for such are the high ranks (in the Hereafter), 'Adn Paradise (everlasting gardens) under which rivers flow, wherein they will abide forever; such is the reward of those who purify themselves.

[Sūrah Tā-Hā 20:74-76]

.....
ATTAINING SUCCESS, SAFETY FROM SINS, &
SAFETY FROM SHORTCOMINGS

He, the Most High, said:

﴿ قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا ﴾

Indeed, he succeeds who purifies himself.

[Sūrah ash-Shams 91:9]

In other words, the one who purifies his soul, develops it, and enlightens it with righteousness by way of everything that is sought and with success by way of everything that is loved.

.....
THE LIFE OF THE HEART

Allāh, the Most High, said:

﴿ أَلَمْ يَأْنِ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنْ تَخْشَعَ قُلُوبُهُمْ لِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَمَا نَزَلَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ وَلَا يَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلُ فَطَالَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْأَمَدُ فَقَسَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَكَثِيرٌ مِنْهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ ﴿١٦﴾ اَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُحْيِي

الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا ۚ قَدْ بَيَّنَّا لَكُمُ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

Has not the time come for the hearts of those who believe to be affected by Allāh's reminder (the Qur'ān) and that which has been revealed of the truth, lest they become like those who received the scripture (i.e., Jews and Christians), and the term was prolonged for them and so their hearts were hardened? And many of them were *fāsiqūn* (rebellious, disobedient to Allāh). Know that Allāh gives life to the earth after its death! Indeed, We have made clear the verses to you, if you but understand.

[Sūrah al-Ḥadīd 57:16-17]

So Allāh gives life to the hearts by purifying them with obedience, just as He gives life to the earth with rain. And the soul is purified by answering the Messenger ﷺ with obedience to him in what he commanded and by desisting from what he forbade and warned from:

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اسْتَجِيبُوا لِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ إِذَا
دَعَاكُمْ لِمَا يُحْيِيكُمْ ۗ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَحُولُ بَيْنَ
الْمَرْءِ وَقَلْبِهِ وَأَنَّهُ إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ﴾

O you who believe, answer Allāh (by obeying Him) and (His) Messenger when he calls you to that which will give you life; and know that Allāh comes between a person and his heart (i.e., He prevents an evil person from deciding anything). And verily to Him you shall (all) be gathered.

[Sūrah al-Anfāl 8:24]

.....
A GOOD LIFE

Allāh, the Most High, said:

﴿يُوعَدَ اللَّهُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي
مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَمَسَاكِنَ طَيِّبَةً فِي
جَنَّاتِ عَدْنٍ ۚ وَرِضْوَانٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ ۚ ذَلِكَ هُوَ
الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ﴾

Allāh has promised the believing men and women gardens under which rivers flow, to dwell therein forever, and beautiful mansions in gardens of 'Adn (Eden Paradise). But the greatest bliss is the good pleasure of Allāh.

That is the supreme success.

[Sūrah at-Tawbah 9:72]

And He, the Most High, said:

﴿مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ
فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيَاةً طَيِّبَةً ۖ وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ مَا
كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ﴾

Whoever works righteousness, whether male or female, while he (or she) is a true believer (of Islamic monotheism)—verily, to him We will give a good life (in this world with respect, contentment, and lawful provision), and We shall pay them certainly a reward in proportion to the best of what they used to do (i.e., Paradise in the Hereafter).

[Sūrah an-Nahl 16:97]

SALVATION FROM A PAINFUL PUNISHMENT

He, the Most High, said:

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا هَلْ أَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَىٰ تِجَارَةٍ
تُنَجِّيكُمْ مِنْ عَذَابِ أَلِيمٍ ﴿١٠﴾ تُوْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ
وَتُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنْفُسِكُمْ ۗ
ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١١﴾ يَغْفِرُ لَكُمْ
ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَيُدْخِلْكُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا
الْأَنْهَارُ وَمَسَاكِنَ طَيِّبَةً فِي جَنَّاتٍ عَدْنٍ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ الْفَوْزُ
الْعَظِيمُ ﴿١٢﴾ وَأُخْرَىٰ تُحِبُّونَهَا ۖ نَصْرٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَفَتْحٌ
قَرِيبٌ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٣﴾ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا
أَنْصَارَ اللَّهِ كَمَا قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ لِّلْحَوَارِيِّينَ
مَنْ أَنْصَارِي إِلَى اللَّهِ ۗ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ نَحْنُ أَنْصَارُ
اللَّهِ ۗ فَأَمَّتْ طَائِفَةٌ مِّنْ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ وَكَفَرَتْ
طَائِفَةٌ ۗ فَأَيَّدْنَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا عَلَىٰ عَدُوِّهِمْ فَأَصْبَحُوا
ظَاهِرِينَ ﴿١٤﴾ ﴾

O you who believe, shall I guide you to a commerce that will save you from a painful torment? That you believe in Allāh and His Messenger, and that you strive hard and fight in the cause of Allāh with your wealth and your lives, that will be better for you, if you but know! And also (He will give you) another (blessing) which you love: help from Allāh (against your enemies) and a near victory. And give glad tidings to the believers. O you who

believe, be you helpers (in the cause) of Allāh as 'Īsā, son of Maryam, said to al-Ḥawāriyyūn (the Disciples): "Who are my helpers (in the cause) of Allāh?" Al-Ḥawāriyyūn said, "We are Allāh's helpers." Then a group of the Children of Israel believed and a group disbelieved. So We gave power to those who believed against their enemies, and they became the uppermost.

[Sūrah aṣ-Ṣaff 61:10-14]

So he won't come on the Day of Standing carrying a heavy burden.

He, the Most High, said:

﴿ كَذَلِكَ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ مَا قَدْ سَبَقَ ۚ وَقَدْ آتَيْنَاكَ مِنْ لَدُنَّا ذِكْرًا ﴿١١﴾ مَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَنْهُ فَإِنَّهُ يَحْمِلُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وِزْرًا ﴿١٢﴾ خَالِدِينَ فِيهِ ۗ وَسَاءَ لَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ حِمْلًا ﴿١٣﴾ ﴾

Thus, We relate to you some information of what happened before. And indeed, We have given you from Us a reminder (the Qur'ān). Whoever turns away from it, verily, they will bear a heavy burden (of sins) on the Day of Resurrection. They will abide in that (state in the Hellfire), and evil indeed will that load be for them on the Day of Resurrection.

[Sūrah Ṭā-Hā 20:99-101]

.....
 ESCAPE FROM A LIFE OF HARDSHIP IN THE
 DUNYĀ & THE HEREAFTER

Allāh, the Most High, said:

﴿ وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَن ذِكْرِي فَإِنَّ لَهُ مَعِيشَةً ضَنْكًا
 وَنَحْشُرُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ أَعْمَى ﴿١٢٤﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ لِمَ
 حَشَرْتَنِي أَعْمَى وَقَدْ كُنْتُ بَصِيرًا ﴿١٢٥﴾ قَالَ كَذَلِكَ
 أَتَتْكَ آيَاتُنَا فَنَسَيْتَهَا ۖ وَكَذَلِكَ الْيَوْمَ تُنْسَى ﴿١٢٦﴾ ﴾

But whosoever turns away from my reminder (i.e., neither believes in this Qur'ān nor acts on its orders, etc.), verily, for him is a life of hardship, and We shall raise him up blind on the Day of Resurrection. He will say, “O my Lord! Why have you raised me up blind, while I had sight (before)?” (Allāh) will say, “Like this, Our *āyāt* (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) came unto you, but you disregarded them; so this day, you will be neglected (in the Hellfire, away from Allāh's mercy).”

[*Sūrah Tā-Hā* 20:124-126]

Ash-Shanqīṭī said: “It is known that anyone who doesn't busy himself with contemplation of the Great Qur'ān—i.e., reading it, understanding it, appreciating its meanings, and acting on it—is in opposition to the Qur'ān and is not [among those who] contemplate it. Therefore, if Allāh gave him understanding with which he is able to ponder the Qur'ān [but he does not], then he is deserving of the disapproval and scolding mentioned in the verses. Indeed, the Prophet ﷺ complained to Allāh about those of his people who abandoned the Qur'ān, as

He, the Most High, said:

﴿ وَقَالَ الرَّسُولُ يَا رَبِّ إِنَّ قَوْمِي اتَّخَذُوا هَذَا
الْقُرْآنَ مَهْجُورًا ﴾

“And the Messenger will say, “O my Lord! Verily, my people deserted this Qur'an (neither listened to it, nor acted on its laws and orders).””

[Sūrah al-Furqān 25:30]

.....
STRENGTHENING THE DELIVERER & CALLER
TO GOOD THAT IS WITH HIM

It comes in the *ḥadīth* reported on the authority of ‘Aṭā’ bin as-Sā’ib, on the authority of Murrah, on the authority of ‘Abdullāh, who said:

إِنَّ لِلشَّيْطَانِ لَمَّةً بَابِنِ آدَمَ وَلِلْمَلِكِ لَمَّةً فَأَمَّا لَمَّةُ الشَّيْطَانِ فإِيعَادُ
بِالشَّرِّ وَتَكْذِيبُ بِالْحَقِّ وَأَمَّا لَمَّةُ الْمَلِكِ فإِيعَادُ بِالْخَيْرِ وَتَصْدِيقُ
بِالْحَقِّ فَمَنْ وَجَدَ ذَلِكَ فَلْيَعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ مِنَ اللَّهِ فَلْيَحْمَدِ اللَّهَ وَمَنْ وَجَدَ
الْأُخْرَى فَلْيَتَعَوَّذْ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ ثُمَّ قَرَأَ الشَّيْطَانُ يُعِدُّكُمْ الْفُقْرَ
وَيَأْمُرُكُمْ بِالْفَحْشَاءِ وَاللَّهُ يُعِدُّكُمْ مَغْفِرَةً مِنْهُ وَفَضْلًا .

The Messenger of Allāh said: “The Shayṭān has an effect on the son of Ādam, and the angel also has an effect. As for the effect of the Shayṭān, it is by his threatening with evil and rejecting the truth. As for the effect of the angel, it is by his promise of good and believing in the truth. Whoever finds the latter, let him know that it is coming from Allāh and let him praise Allāh for it. Whoever finds the former, let him seek refuge with Allāh from the Shayṭān.” Then he read: “The Shayṭān threatens you with poverty and orders you to commit *fahshā’* (evil

deeds, illegal sexual intercourse, sins etc).”¹

.....
 BECOMING ONE OF THE MUTTAQĪN &
 OBTAINING WHAT IS REPORTED REGARD-
 ING THEIR VIRTUES

He, the Most High, said:

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن تَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ يَجْعَل لَكُمْ
 فُرْقَانًا وَيُكَفِّرْ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ ذُو
 الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴾

**O you who believe, if you obey and fear Allāh,
 He will grant you a criterion (to judge between
 right and wrong) and will expiate for you your
 sins, and forgive you, and Allāh is the Owner
 of the Great Bounty.**

[Sūrah al-Anfāl 8:29]

And He, the Most High, said:

﴿ إِنَّهُ مَنْ يَتَّقِ وَيَصْبِرْ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ
 الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴾

**Verily, he who fears Allāh with obedience to
 Him, and is patient, then surely, Allāh makes
 not the reward of the *muhsinūn* (good doers)
 to be lost.**

[Sūrah Yūsuf 12:90]

And He, the Most High, said:

¹ Graded authentic by al-Albānī in *Ṣaḥīḥ at-Tirmidhī*.

﴿ وَمَنْ يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ مَخْرَجًا ﴾

And whosoever fears Allāh and keeps his duty to Him, He will make a way for him to get out (from every difficulty).

[Sūrah at-Ṭalāq 65:2]

And He, the Most High, said:

﴿ وَمَنْ يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِ يُسْرًا ﴾

And whosoever fears Allāh and keeps his duty to Him, He will make his matter easy for him.

[Sūrah at-Ṭalāq 65:4]

And He, the Most High, said:

﴿ وَمَنْ يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَكْفُرْ عَنْهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِ وَيُعْظِمْ لَهُ أَجْرًا ﴾

And whosoever fears Allāh and keeps his duty to Him, He will remit his sins from him, and will enlarge his reward.

[Sūrah at-Ṭalāq 65:5]

.....
OBTAINING THE GUIDANCE OF THE GREAT QUR'ĀN

He ﷺ said:

﴿ إِنَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَهْدِي لِلَّتِي هِيَ أَقْوَمُ وَيُبَشِّرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ الَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ الصَّالِحَاتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ أَجْرًا كَبِيرًا ﴾

Verily, this Qur'ān guides to that which is most just and right and gives glad tidings to

**the believers who work deeds of righteousness,
that they shall have a great reward (Paradise).**

[Sūrah al-Isrā' 17:9]

.....
SAFETY FROM INNOVATION & MISGUIDANCE

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ described a people who read the Qur'ān but it does not go beyond their throats, so they do not contemplate it and it does not affect them. This shows that whoever reads the Qur'ān and contemplates it will attain the protection from following their path.

It is reported on the authority of Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī ؓ that he said:

سمعت النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول يخرج في هذه الأمة
ولم يقل منها قوم تحقرون صلاتكم مع صلاتهم يقرءون القرآن
لا يجاوز حلوقهم أو حناجرهم يمرقون من الدين مروق السهم من
الرمية فينظر الرامي إلى سهمه إلى نصله إلى رصافه فيتمارى في
الفوقة هل علق بها من الدم شيء.

I heard the Prophet ﷺ saying: "Some people will emerge in this nation (and he did not say, 'from this nation') whose prayer will make you think little of your prayers in comparison to theirs. They will recite the Qur'ān, but it will not go beyond their throats. They will pass through the *dīn* as an arrow passes through game. The archer looks at his arrow, arrowhead, and its fastening and is unsure about its notch, and whether there is any blood on it."²

² Reported by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

CONCLUSION

Let us conclude with an example of contemplation of a verse from the Noble Qur'ān and seek clarification from that which it contains of meanings, lessons, and manners, with which the souls are purified and the effects of the contemplation become apparent. The example is an example of contemplation of the verses of the Noble Qur'ān mentioned by Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah. He mentioned, in his book *The Provision of the One Who Migrates to His Lord*, obedience to Allāh, the Glorified, and keeping away from His prohibitions, and the method of doing that.

Ibn al-Qayyim said:

The peak of the affair and its pillar is only the continual thought and contemplation of Allāh's signs and verses, since they take possession of the thoughts and busy the heart. So if the meanings of the Qur'ān come to take the place of the thoughts of his heart and sit on its throne, and they become his behavior and the leader that is obedient to the Qur'ān's command, then at that point his course will become upright, the path will become clear, you will see him become calm, and

he will compete with the wind (i.e., he will become generous and noble):

﴿ وَتَرَى الْجِبَالَ تَحْسَبُهَا جَامِدَةً وَهِيَ تَمُرُّ مَرَّ السَّحَابِ ۗ صُنِعَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَدَىٰ أَتَقَنَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ ۗ إِنَّهُ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴾

And you will see the mountains and think them solid, but they shall pass away as the passing away of the clouds. The work of Allāh, Who perfected all things; verily, He is Well-Acquainted with what you do.

[Sūrah an-Naml 27:88]

If you said: Indeed, you have indicated a great situation, so unlock its door for me and remove its veil: how do we contemplate the Qur'ān, understand it, and discover its wonders and treasures? We already have the explanations of the Qur'ān, is there any clarification other than what these mention?

I say: I will give you an example to emulate and to follow for this objective.

Allāh, the Most High, said:

﴿ هَلْ أَتَاكَ حَدِيثُ ضَيْفِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ الْمُكْرَمِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾ إِذْ دَخَلُوا عَلَيْهِ فَقَالُوا سَلَامًا ۗ قَالَ سَلَامٌ قَوْمٌ مُنْكَرُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾ فَرَاغَ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِ فَجَاءَ بِعِجْلٍ سَمِينٍ ﴿٤٨﴾ فَقَرَّبَهُ إِلَيْهِمْ قَالَ أَلَا تَأْكُلُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾ فَأَوْجَسَ مِنْهُمْ خِيفَةً ۗ قَالُوا لَا تَحَفْ ۗ وَبَشَّرُوهُ بِغُلَامٍ عَلِيمٍ ﴿٥٠﴾ فَأَقْبَلَتْ امْرَأَتُهُ فِي صَرَّةٍ فَصَكَّتْ وَجْهَهَا وَقَالَتْ عَجُوزٌ عَقِيمٌ ﴿٥١﴾ قَالُوا كَذَلِكَ قَالَ رَبُّكَ ۗ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْحَكِيمُ ۗ﴾



Has the story reached you, of the honored guests (three angels—Jibrīl and two others) of Ibrāhīm? When they came to him and said, “*Salām* (peace be upon you)!” He answered, “*Salām*,” and said, “A people unknown to me.” Then he turned to his household and brought out a large (roasted) calf. And he placed it before them, (saying), “Will you not eat?” Then he conceived a fear of them (when they did not eat). They said, “Fear not.” And they gave him glad tidings of an intelligent son, having knowledge (about Allāh and His religion). Then his wife came forward with a loud voice; she smote her face and said, “A barren old woman!” They said, “So says your Lord. Verily, He is the All-Wise, the All-Knower.”

[*Sūrah adh-Dhāriyāt* 51:24-30]

So [this is] my promise to you: If you read this verse and happened upon its meaning and contemplated it, then you would have found that the angels came to Ibrāhīm in the guise of guests, eating, drinking, and giving glad tidings of an intelligent son, and that his wife was shocked by that, so the angels told her that Allāh had said it. And your contemplation of the verse didn't go beyond that.

Listen now to some of the secrets of this verse:

- Look at how many praises for Ibrāhīm they contain.
- And how they encompassed the honoring of the guest and their rights.
- And what they contain of refutations of the philoso-

phers and the Mu'tazilah (those who deny the names and attributes of Allāh) from the people of falsehood.

- And how it contains great prophetic knowledge.
- And how it contains all the attributes of completeness that return to knowledge and wisdom.
- And how it indicates in the nicest way the proof for the possibility of the place of return (i.e., in the Hereafter) and then clarifies it and speaks clearly of its occurrence.
- And how it contains news of the Lord's justness and His retaliation on the disbelieving nations.
- And it contains a mention of Islām and *īmān* and the difference between them.
- And it contains the existence of the signs of the Lord that show His oneness, and the truth of His messengers and the Hereafter.
- And it shows that all of that is of no benefit unless a person has in their heart fear of the punishment in the Hereafter, and those are the ones who believe in it.
- And as for the one who doesn't fear the Hereafter and doesn't believe in it, then he will never benefit from those signs and verses.

Listen now to some of the details of these statements:

Allāh, the Most High, said (the meaning of which is): *"Has the story reached you, of the honored guests of Ibrāhīm?"*

He, the Glorified, started the story with the question form, but it is not actually intended as a question. Due to this, some people said that the meaning of "has" in the likes of this topic

is actually “indeed,” which is used for emphasis. The use of the question form in speech such as this has a unique secret and a wonderful meaning. When the speaker wants to inform the listener of an amazing affair to which he should pay attention and make his mind aware, then he starts the speech with a question to make him listen and pay attention to the information; so sometimes he begins with “Is it not...?” and sometimes with “Do you...?” So he says: “Do you know about so-and- so” as a reminder, as an admonition to scare, to make the listener aware of the magnitude of the information, or in agreement to him.

So the saying of the Most High:

﴿ هَلْ أَتَاكَ حَدِيثُ مُوسَى ﴾

Has there come to you the story of Mūsā?

[Sūrah an-Nāzi'āt 79:15]

And:

﴿ وَهَلْ أَتَاكَ نَبَأُ الْخَصْمِ ﴾

And has the news of the litigants reached you?

[Sūrah Šād 38:21]

And:

﴿ هَلْ أَتَاكَ حَدِيثُ ضَيْفِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ الْمُكْرَمِينَ ﴾

Has the story reached you, of the honored guests of Ibrāhīm?

[Sūrah adh-Dhāriyāt 51:24]

[These] show a magnification of these stories and a signal to the reader to contemplate and understand what they contain. In them there is also a signal that what is to come is from the

knowledge of prophethood and therefore from the knowledge of the *ghayb* (the unseen) that neither you nor your people know, so did there come to you [anything] from other than Our information, messages, and learning, or did nothing come to you besides that which came from Us?

Look at the manifestation of the speech from using the question form and consider the magnitude of the effect from all its sources that bear witness to the fact that it is eloquence of the highest order.

And the saying of the Most High “...*the honored guests of Ibrāhīm?*” This contains a praise for Ibrāhīm, as there are two opinions concerning the word “honored”:

1) That it was Ibrāhīm honoring them (i.e., the angels), and in that is a praise for Ibrāhīm for his honoring of the guest.

2) That they were honored by Allāh, like the saying of the Most High:

﴿ بَلْ عِبَادٌ مُّكْرَمُونَ ﴾

They are but honored slaves.

[*Sūrah al-Anbiyā'* 21:26]

And this also contains a praise and aggrandizement for His Khalīl (close friend; i.e., Ibrāhīm), since He (Allāh) made His honored angels his guests; so in both meanings, there is a praise for Ibrāhīm.

The saying of the Most High: “*and they said, ‘Salām.’ And He answered, ‘Salām’*” contains another praise for Ibrāhīm, since his reply of “*Salām*” was better than what they greeted him with, as they greeted him with an accusative word¹, which

¹ **Translator’s Note:** A *manṣūb* word, with the suffix *an* at the end of *salām*; i.e., *salāman*.

indicates a verbal sentence² and the meaning of the sentence is: “We greet you with peace.” Ibrāhīm’s greeting was with a nominative word³, which indicates a nominal sentence⁴, and the meaning of it is: “A constant, firm, or stable, peace be upon you.”

And there is no doubt that a nominal sentence indicates stability and continuance, while a verbal sentence indicates renewal and occurrence; therefore, Ibrāhīm’s greeting was more complete and better.

Then he (Ibrāhīm) said: “*A people unknown to me.*” In this, there is an example of good speech towards guests and (it also shows that Ibrāhīm) was avoiding (being quick to) blame.

This can be seen from two angles:

1) The subject was removed, i.e., “*You are* a people unknown to me,” so he refrains from dispraising them and did not confront them with this address, due to its aggressiveness. The Prophet ﷺ never directly addressed somebody with what they disliked; instead, he would say: “What is the problem with people that do such-and-such and say such-and-such?”

2) The person feeling the uncertainty has been removed, and he is the one who mistrusts them, like we find in another part (of the Qur’ān): “*he felt some mistrust of them,*” and there’s no doubt that, “*A people unknown to me*” is nicer than saying: “I don’t trust you.”

² **Translator’s Note:** A verbal sentence in Arabic grammar is a sentence that starts with a verb and usually consists of a verb, the one who does the verb, and an object.

³ **Translator’s Note:** Meaning, it ends with the suffix *un* at the end of *salām*; i.e., *salāmun*.

⁴ **Translator’s Note:** A sentence that starts with a noun and consists of a predicate and an object.

And His saying: “*Then he turned to his household, and brought out a roasted calf. And he placed it before them, (saying), ‘Will you not eat?’*” This contains aspects of praise, the etiquettes of hosting, and the honoring of the guest.

For example: His saying, “*Then he turned to his household.*” *Ar-rawghān* (the Arabic word used in the verse translated here as “turned to”) means going quickly and out of sight, and it consists of rushing to honor the guest, and the secrecy contains an avoidance of embarrassing the guest and exposing their shyness. This is very different than the one who is sluggish and unwelcoming to his guest, and then displays the food in plain sight and opens the package and weighs what he removes from it, and consumes the pot in front of them, and similar to that from the things that cause embarrassment and shyness. The use of the word *rāgha* (the verb used in the verse) negates these two affairs.

And in His saying “*to his household,*” there is another praise due to the notice it contains that the provisions for honoring the guest were present and ready in his household, and he did not need to borrow anything from his neighbors or go to other households since the provisions for the guest were present with him.

And His saying “*and brought out a fat (roasted) calf*” contains three types of praise:

- 1) He served the guests himself, as he never sent for it; rather, he brought it himself.
- 2) He brought the whole animal, not just part of it, so that they could choose from the best of its meat as they wished.
- 3) It was fat, not lean. And this is one of the best types of wealth: a young, meaty calf, in order for them to be amazed by

it. And from his generosity is the ease in which he slaughtered it for them and brought it to them.

And His saying: *“And placed it before them”*; this contains another praise and etiquette, as he presented the food to them by saying: *“Will you not eat?”* and this is a permitting form of presentation by way of good manners. This differs from someone saying: *“Put your hands in the food,”* or *“Eat,”* or *“Proceed,”* or similar to that.

And His saying: *“Then he conceived a fear of them.”* When he saw that they were not eating his food, he felt a creeping feeling of fear that they had evil intentions, because if a guest eats from the host’s food, they become comfortable and sociable with him.

When they knew that (he was scared): *“They said, ‘Fear not.’ And they gave him glad tidings of an intelligent son.”* This son was Is’hāq, not Ismā’il. His wife was shocked by that and she said: *“A barren old woman!”*; [meaning] *“the likes of me can’t have children, so how could I have a son?!”*

As for Ismā’il, then he is from the slave-girl Hājar, and he was his firstborn and his first son. He, the Glorified, clarified this in Surah Hūd, in the saying of the Most High:

﴿ فَبَشِّرْنَاهَا بِإِسْحَاقَ وَمِنَ وَّرَاءِ إِسْحَاقَ يَعْقُوبَ ﴾

**But We gave her glad tidings of Is’hāq, and
after him, of Ya’qūb.**

[Sūrah Hūd 11:71]

And the saying of the Most High: *“Then his wife came forward with a loud voice; she smote her face and said, ‘A barren old woman!’”* In this is a clarification of the weakness of a woman’s intellect and her lack of reticence, since she quickly began to

wail and strike her face when she heard the news.

And His saying: "*A barren old woman!*" In this is an example of good etiquette for when a woman addresses a man—the succinctness of her speech to that which addressed the need, as she removed the (subject); she didn't say, "I am a barren old woman!" And she only mentioned what would show the reason for her infertility, and nothing else. In Surah Hūd, she mentioned the reason that prevented Ibrāhīm and herself (from having children), and she clearly shows her surprise.

And the saying of the Most High: "*They said, 'So says your Lord.'*" This contains an affirmation of the attribute of speech for Him (Allāh). And His saying: "*Verily, He is the All-Wise, the All-Knower.*" This contains an affirmation of the attributes of wisdom and knowledge, which are the sources for the creation and the command. So all of His, the Glorified's, creation comes from His knowledge and wisdom, and likewise His command and His revealed legislation (the *shari'ah*) come from His knowledge and wisdom.

Knowledge and wisdom contain all of the perfect attributes. Knowledge contains life and the accompaniments of its perfection of sustainment, power, permanence, hearing, sight, and the rest of the attributes that accompany perfect knowledge.

Wisdom contains perfect will, fairness, mercy, beneficence, generosity, righteousness, and the placement of things in their rightful place in the best way, and it contains the sending and affirmation of rewards and recompense.

All of this knowledge is from His name al-Ḥakīm (the Most Wise), as is the way of the Qur'ān in showing that these great objectives are by the attribute of wisdom, rebutting those who claim that He created the creation frivolously, vainly, and fruitlessly. Therefore, the attribute of His wisdom includes the

shari'ah, predestination, reward, and recompense. Due to this, the more correct of the two opinions is that the place of return is known through reasoning; and that it is reported in detail leads the intellect to the affirmation of the Hearing.

Whoever contemplates the Qur'an will find that it shows this, and that He, the Glorified, made rational examples that show the possibility of the place of return in one instance and its occurrence in another instance. So He mentions the ability that shows the possibility of the place of return and the proofs of the wisdom that necessitates its occurrence.

Whoever contemplates the proofs for the place of return in the Qur'an will find it without need of anything else, by the grace of Allāh; they are sufficient, satisfactory, and lead quickly to the goal that consists of rebutting the conflicting doubts of many of the people.

By the assistance of Allāh's acceptance, I wrote on this subject—during a long journey—of what I saw from the proofs that the Qur'an guides to from unhappiness and guidance, the speed of justice, good clarification, and drawing attention to the areas of doubt and answering those doubts with that which will calm the heart and increase certainty, which is not the case in regard to the other proofs which are the opposite of that; but this is not the place to discuss that in detail.

The intent is that the creation and the command come from the knowledge and wisdom of the Lord; and this story singled out these two names (the All-Wise, the All-Knower) due to the wonder and amazement they bring to the souls from the blessing of two parents who would normally be infertile, with a child, and the mystery of the knowledge that brought about this fertility; and the fact that this wisdom resulted in the passing of this birth in an unconventional way. Therefore, He mentions in the verse the name of knowledge and wisdom

that encompasses His, the Glorified's, knowledge of that which brings about the creation, and its purpose; and encompasses His wisdom pertaining to placing everything in its correct place without any violation of the dictates of wisdom.

Then He ﷻ mentioned the story of the angels who were sent to destroy the people of Lūṭ, and the sending of the marked stones upon them. This contains an attestation to the truth of the messengers and the destruction of those who disbelieved in them, and an indication of the place of return and the rewards and recompense for the occurrence of it visibly in this world. This is one of the strongest proofs that show the truth of His messengers due to the authenticity of what they reported from their Lord.

Then He, the Most High, said:

﴿ فَأَخْرَجْنَا مَن كَانَ فِيهَا مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٣٥﴾ فَمَا
وَجَدْنَا فِيهَا غَيْرَ بَيْتٍ مِّنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾ ﴾

**So We brought out from therein the believers.
But We found not there any household of the
Muslims except one.**

[Sūrah adh-Dhāriyāt 51:35-36]

So He differentiated between Islām and *imān* here, and this is the hidden meaning that is indicated by the text: the “bringing out” here is a phrase concerning the survivors, so it is the bringing out of the survivors from the punishment. And there is no doubt that this is specific to those believers (*mu'minīn*) who followed the messengers outwardly and inwardly.

And the saying of the Most High: “*But We found not there any household of the Muslims except one.*” This is because those amongst the ones that were brought out were classified by the name of Islam, and Lūṭ's wife was also from this household

and she was Muslim in that which is apparent, so she was in the house of those present but not amongst the survivors. And indeed, Allāh informed us about her betrayal, which was that she directed her people to Ibrāhīm's guests and her heart was with them. Since this was not an obscene betrayal, she was still considered from the household of the Muslim's, but she was not from the saved believers.

Whoever places the meanings of the Qur'ān and its words in their place, then its hidden wonders and wisdom that impress the intellects become clear, and he knows that it is revelation from the All-Wise, the Most Praiseworthy.

Through this, the answer to the famous question is derived: Islam is more general than *īmān*, so how can the more general be excluded from the more specific, when the principle of exclusion demands the opposite?

It is clear that the Muslims are the ones excluded from that to which the verb "found" applies, and the believers are not excluded from it; rather, they are the ones that were brought out and saved.

And the saying of the Most High:

﴿وَتَرَكْنَا فِيهَا آيَةً لِّلَّذِينَ يَخَافُونَ الْعَذَابَ الْأَلِيمَ﴾

**And We have left there a sign for those who
fear the painful torment.**

[Sūrah adh-Dhāriyāt 51:37]

This is a proof that Allāh, the Glorified's, signs and miracles that occurred in this world and their lasting remnants are a proof for Him and the honesty of His messengers, but only those who believe in the place of return and fear Allāh, the Most High's, punishment will benefit from them. Just like Allāh, the Most High, said in another place:

﴿ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّمَن خَافَ عَذَابَ الْآخِرَةِ ﴾

**Indeed, in that (there) is a sure lesson for those
who fear the torment of the Hereafter.**

[*Sūrah Hūd* 11:103]

And Allāh, the Most High, said:

﴿ سَيَذَكَّرُ مَن يَخْشَى ﴾

**The reminder will be received by he who fears
(Allāh).**

[*Sūrah al-A'lā* 87:10]

So verily, the one who doesn't believe in the Hereafter will say: "Those people (the nation destroyed by Allāh) were only afflicted by time just as others were afflicted by time, and time always contains misery and happiness."

As for those who believe in the Hereafter and fear it, then they are the ones that benefit from the verses, signs, and admonitions.

The intent of this was only to illustrate and manifest the disparity in people's understanding regarding knowledge of the Qur'ān, the extraction of its hidden secrets, and the effects of its treasures, and one should consider other than this as well. And virtue is by Allāh's Hand; He gives it to whom He wills.⁵

[*End of Ibn al-Qayyim's speech*]

This is what was made easy for me regarding this topic: I assembled the book and wrote it, asking Allāh to bless me with

⁵ *Ar-Risālah at-Tabūkiyyah (The Provision of the One Migrating to his Lord)* by Muḥammad bin Abī Bakr bin Ayyūb az-Zarī, Abū 'Abdillāh bin al-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (d. 759 AH); distributor: Maktabah al-Madani, Jeddah; checked by Muḥammad Jamil Ghāzī (p. 63-72).

Conclusion

acceptance in this life and the next, and to guide me and make me a guide for others.

O Allāh, send prayers upon Muḥammad and the family of Muḥammad, and bless Muḥammad and bless the family of Muḥammad, just as you sent prayers and blessings upon Ibrāhīm and the family of Ibrāhīm. Verily, you are praiseworthy and glorious.