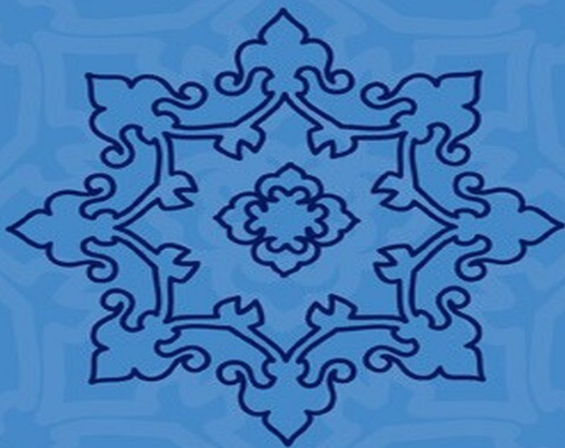


DAR AS-SUNNAH CLASSIC COLLECTION

# GARDENS OF PURIFICATION

Paths to Asceticism, Purifying the Self  
Conditioning the Heart, Symptoms and Remedies  
Beauty of Patience, Pardoning and Avoidance



SHAYKHUL-ISLĀM  
IBN TAYMIYYAH

رسمه (النهار)

دار السنة

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

بِسْمِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

الرَّهَقَاءُ وَالْوَالِدَاتُ وَالْحَبَائِلُ

تأليف

شيخ الإسلام ابن تيمية

Shaykhu'l-Islām

Aḥmad ibn 'Abdu'l-Ḥalīm ibn Taymiyyah

---

# GARDENS of PURIFICATION

being a translation of his  
*'Min Rasā'il Shaykhu'l-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah  
al-Zuhd wa'l-Wara' wa'l-'Ibādah'*

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*“Thus whoever Allāh wills to guide, He expands his chest to Islām. And whoever He wills to misguide, He makes his chest narrow, tight.”*

[QUR'ĀN (6):125]

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Shaykhu'l-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah



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## FOREWORD

In the name of Allāh, the most Beneficent, the most Merciful - All praise belongs to Allāh, the Lord of the worlds. May the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon His final Prophet Muḥammad, his companions and all those who follow his guidance until the Last Day.

In today's turbo-charged world, in which the pace of life is accelerating at a dizzying pace, very little time is spent reflecting upon the real purpose of man's existence. Instead, the main goals of life are the fulfilment of carnal desires and the accumulation of material goods of no real substance for a trifling period of time, at the expense of following Divine guidance. The overwhelming prevalence of greed and vice is what destroyed the nations before and is an ominous sign that the Last Hour is drawing near.

Despite living longer, people spend less and less time attending to their spiritual needs, choosing instead to focus their attention on the myriad distractions made possible by fast-evolving technology. Beguiled by the false allure of this *dunya* the souls become diseased and ultimately die. The dead soul is heedless of its real purpose and oblivious of the inevitable meeting with its Maker; our great King Allāh, the Most High. It is not unreasonable to say that most of those alive today have dead hearts and souls.

For this reason reviving a dead heart requires much care and attention, for it is like the earth that has to be tilled and toiled over and cultivated in order to yield a good healthy harvest. If the ground remains uncultivated for too long, it becomes hard and desolate, unable to yield any crop. Similarly a corrupted soul cannot be remedied except by responding to Allāh, and its feeling of desolation cannot be removed except by being in solitude with Him.

Those who wish to lead a wholesome and fulfilling lives in the pleasure of Allāh, the Most High, are in the minority. Unfortunately for them,

most of the spiritual leaders they look to for guidance falsely lay claim to being the true flag bears of the religion. These leaders call to other than the way of the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) and lead vast numbers of people astray.

Thus it is incumbent for the seekers of Allāh's Pleasure to follow the correct path, lest their efforts are rendered worthless. This book will *Insha'Allāh* aid the noble reader to awaken one's soul to its true purpose and follow the straight path of our beloved Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ), the best man to walk this earth, the finest of all examples and the most beloved to Allāh - whose spirituality, character, morals and ethics are unquestionable.

This work by the great reformer and Shaikh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah is of great importance. It covers many timely topics regarding spirituality, worship and cognisance of Allāh at all times. And so the text is reflecting deeply upon a firm understanding of the Noble Qur'ān and Sunnah without appealing to any mysticism or mystical orders. The author - may Allāh have mercy upon him - goes to great lengths to explain the questions posed to him on this subject matters. It presents profound points on self-purification outlining to the readers what they can appreciate and apply within their daily lives.

The life of our beloved Prophet (ﷺ) and his conduct is what we should emulate in letter and spirit. For surety there is no success in any spiritual path that deviates away from the path of *Al-Muṣṭafā* (the Chosen One). His path is the only path to salvation, his example and Sunnah is far superior to any supposed saint or pious one who has innovated his own mystical order.

I ask Allāh, the Most High, that He accepts this humble effort from us and rewards all those who have laboured hard so that this work may see the light of day, *Amin ya Rabb*.

Abū Muḥammad Tasaddaq  
5<sup>th</sup> Rajab 1437 AH | 12<sup>th</sup> April 2016

## IBN TAYMIYYAH

May Allāh have mercy upon him

**H**E IS AḤMAD bin ‘Abdu-l-Ḥalīm bin ‘Abdu-s-Salām bin ‘Abdullāh bin Abū Qāsim ibn Taymiyyah al-Ḥarrānī Taqī ad-Dīn Abū al-‘Abbās bin Shihāb ad-Dīn. He was born in Ḥarrān, an old city within the Arabian Peninsula between Syria<sup>1</sup> and Iraq, on the tenth or the twelfth of the month *Rabi‘u-l-Awwal* in the year 661H. He and his family were later forced to flee to Damascus due to the occupation by the Tartars.

He came from a family of scholars, his father and grandfather were both scholars as were three of his brothers: ‘Abdu-r-Raḥmān, ‘Abdullāh and his half-brother, Muḥammad.

During his early studies of Islām, he never ceased to amaze his teachers at the strength of his memory, keen intelligence and depth of understanding. It is said that he was first allowed to give legal verdicts at the age of nineteen and he began teaching at *Dār al-Ḥadīth as-Sukriyyah* at the age of twenty-two.

He became famous for his knowledge of ḥadīth, indeed he was a

---

<sup>1</sup> Ar. *Shām*, in those days represented the areas of Syria, Jordan and Palestine.

*Ḥāfiẓ* (Ḥadīth Master), and for his knowledge of the Qur'ān and its related sciences, he impressed all with his circles on *tafsīr*. He also attained expertise in *Usūl al-Fiqh* and *Fiqh*, knowledge of the differences of opinions present amongst the scholars, writing, mathematics, history, astronomy and medicine. Many of the scholars of his time testified that he had attained the rank of *Mujtahid*.

He always showed a great concern for the affairs and welfare of the Muslims and this manifested itself greatly in his efforts during the *Jihād* against the Tartars, Christians and *Rawāfiḍah* wherein his displays of bravery, courage and inspiring talks were one of the most important factors in the Muslims victory against their enemies. These efforts won the praise and admiration of many scholars and indeed the ensuing generations of Muslims to this very day.

Aside from the physical *Jihād*, ibn Taymiyyah launched an intellectual struggle against the various deviant sects and heretical ideas of his day. He refuted the *Shī'a*, the People of Theological Rhetoric (*Ahl al-Kalām*)—such as the *Jahmiyyah*, *Mu'tazilah* and many of *Ashā'irah*, the philosophers who promoted the school of the early Greeks (*falāsifa*), the majority of *Ṣūfī* sects and paths and the adherents of other religions. His criticisms were not based on a lack of understanding, rather he first gained an in-depth knowledge of each of these schools and as such his critique of them was systematic, acute and valid. For example it is said that his refutation of Greek philosophy was one of the most devastating attacks ever leveled against them. His refutation of Christianity was outstanding and his rebuttal of the *Shī'a* completely demolished their beliefs and innovations from root to branch.<sup>2</sup>

Needless to say, these refutations, and his very direct methods of

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<sup>2</sup> When this is understood, the critique levelled against him by some that 'his learning exceeded his intellect' can safely be relegated to the trash bin.

refuting, made him many enemies and as a result his life was full of trials and persecutions. His enemies were careful to look for anything by which they could attack him and they eventually found what they were looking for in his works of belief entitled *'Aqīdah al-Wāsiṭiyyah* and *'Aqīdah al-Ḥamawīyyah*. Due to their total misunderstanding of what he wrote, they accused him of anthropomorphism and had him imprisoned on more than one occasion. Ibn Kathīr mentions that some scholars sat with Ibn Taymiyyah to debate with him concerning his *'Aqīdah al-Wāsiṭiyyah* and the debate ending with their agreeing with him in what he had written.<sup>3</sup> Similarly Ibn Kathīr mentions that some scholars debated with him concerning *'Aqīdah al-Ḥamawīyyah* and his replies to their accusations could not be rebutted.<sup>4</sup> Ibn Taymiyyah was again imprisoned because of a legal ruling he gave concerning divorce, and yet again he was later imprisoned for a legal verdict he issued prohibiting making journeys for the purpose of visiting graves. It was during this imprisonment that he passed away.

With regards his personality and worship, he exerted a huge and lasting influence on all who met him and he was known for his worship and glorification of the Islāmic laws, both inwardly and outwardly. His complete reliance upon Allāh can be best summed up in what his student, Ibn al-Qayyim, relates from him when he was told that his enemies had plotted to kill him or imprison him,

If they kill me it will be martyrdom for me. If they expel me, it will be migration for me; if they expel me to Cyprus, I will call its people to Allāh so that they answer me. If they imprison me, it will be a place of worship for

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<sup>3</sup> Ibn Kathīr, *Bidāyah wa an-Nihāyah* [Vol. 14, under the heading *'Aqd Majālis ath-Thalātha*].

<sup>4</sup> Ibn Kathīr [14/5].

me.<sup>5</sup>

Ibn al-Qayyim himself said,

Allāh knows, I have never seen anyone who had a better life than his. Despite the difficulties and all that expunges comfort and luxury, nay, things completely opposite to them; despite imprisonment, intimidation and oppression, ibn Taymiyyah had a purer life than anyone could. He was the most generous, the strongest of heart and the most joyful of souls, with the radiance of bliss in his face. When we were seized with fear and our thoughts turned negative, and the earth grew narrow for us, we would go to him. No sooner did we look at him and hear his words, all these feelings would leave us to be replaced by relief, strength, certainty and tranquillity.<sup>6</sup>

Al-Bazzār said,

I was of those who knew well his habits, he would not talk to anyone unnecessarily after the prayer of Fajr and would remain performing the *dhikr* of Allāh in a low voice which perhaps could just be heard by one sitting next to him; and frequently would he direct his gaze to the sky. This he would do until the Sun had risen high and the time in which it is prohibited to pray was over.<sup>7</sup>

He also said,

I have not seen him mention any of the pleasures and

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<sup>5</sup> *Nāhiyah min Ḥayāb Shaykh al-Islām* [p. 30].

<sup>6</sup> Ibn al-Qayyim, *Al-Wābil as-Ṣayyib* [p. 69].

<sup>7</sup> al-Bazzār, *al-ʿĀlām al-ʿAlīyah* [p. 40]

attractions of this world, he did not delve into worldly conversations and he never asked for any of its livelihood. Instead he directed his attentions and conversations to seeking the Hereafter and what could get him closer to Allāh.<sup>8</sup>

Once, the ruler Muḥammad bin Qalāwūn accused him of wanting to wrench kingship from him due to his large following to which he replied,

I would do that! By Allāh, your kingship and the kingship of Moghul is not even worth two meagre coins in my eyes!<sup>9</sup>

### His Teachers<sup>10</sup>

He studied under a great number of scholars and he himself mentioned a number of them as related by adh-Dhahabī directly from him.<sup>11</sup> This particular chronicle of teachers includes forty-one male scholars and four female scholars. The total number of scholars whom he took knowledge from exceeds two hundred.<sup>12</sup>

The following is a selection of some of his teachers:

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<sup>8</sup> al-Bazzār [p.52].

<sup>9</sup> al-Bazzār [p. 74].

<sup>10</sup> Refer to: *Majmūʿ Fatāwā Shaykh al-Islām* [18/76-121]; *Dhayl ibn Rajab* [2/387]; Ibn Kathīr [14/136-137]; adh-Dhahabī, *Tadbkirah al-Ḥuffāẓ* [3/1496]; Ibn Ḥajr al-ʿAsqalānī, *ad-Durar al-Kāminah fi Aʿyān al-Miʾah ath-Thāminah* [1/154].

<sup>11</sup> *Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā* [18/76-121].

<sup>12</sup> *Al-ʿUqūd ad-Durriyyah* [p. 3]; *al-Kawākib ad-Durriyyah* [p. 52].

- Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad ibn ‘Abdu-l-Dā’im al-Maqdasī
- Abū Naṣr ‘Abdu-l-‘Azīz ibn ‘Abdu-l-Mun‘im
- Abū Muḥammad Ismā‘īl ibn Ibrāhīm at-Tanūkhī
- Al-Manjā ibn ‘Uthmān at-Tanūkhī ad-Dimashqī
- Abu al-‘Abbās al-Mu‘ammil ibn Muḥammad al-Bālisī
- Abū ‘Abdullāh Muḥammad ibn Abū Bakr ibn Sulaymān al-Āmirī
- Abū al-Faraj ‘Abdur-Raḥmān ibn Sulaymān al-Baghdādī
- Sharaf ad-Dīn al-Maqdasī, Aḥmad ibn Aḥmad ash-Shāfi‘ī
- Muḥammad ibn ‘Abdu-l-Qawī al-Maqdasī
- Taqī ad-Dīn al-Wāsiṭī, Ibrāhīm ibn ‘Alī al-Ṣāliḥī al-Ḥanbalī
- His paternal aunt, Sitt ad-Dār bint ‘Abdu-s-Salām ibn Taymiyyah

## His Students

He had many students and those who were affected by him are many, some of his students were:

- Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, Muḥammad ibn Abū Bakr.
- Adh-Dhahabī, Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad.
- Al-Mizzī, Yūsuf ibn ‘Abdur-Raḥmān.
- Ibn Kathīr, Ismā‘īl ibn ‘Umar.
- Ibn ‘Abdu-l-Hādī, Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad.
- Al-Bazzār, ‘Umar ibn ‘Alī.
- Ibn Qāḍī al-Jabal, Aḥmad ibn Ḥusain.
- Ibn Faḍlillāh al-Amrī, Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyā.
- Muḥammad ibn al-Manj, ibn ‘Uthmān at-Tanūkhī.
- Yūsuf ibn ‘Abdu-l-Maḥmūd ibn ‘Abdu-s-Salām al-Battī.
- Ibn al-Wardī, Zayn ad-Dīn ‘Umar.
- ‘Umar al-Ḥarrānī, Zayn ad-Dīn Abū Ḥafs.
- Ibn Mufliḥ, Shams ad-Dīn Abū ‘Abdullāh.



## The Praise of the Scholars for him

Many scholars praised ibn Taymiyyah, not only for his scholarly achievements but also for his active participation in *Jihād* and the affairs relating to public welfare, his abundant concern for others and his worship. Below is a selection of some of these statements:

1. Al-Hāfiẓ al-Dhahabī said,

It was amazing when he mentioned an issue over which there was a difference of opinion and when he gave evidence and decided the strongest opinion—he could perform *ijtihād* due to his fulfilling its conditions. I have not seen one who was quicker than he at recalling a verse which pertained to the issue that he derived from it, nor a man who was stronger in recalling texts and referring them to their sources. The *Sunnah* was in front of his eyes and upon the tip of his tongue with eloquent phrases and an open eye.

He was a sign from the signs of Allāh in *tafsīr* and expounding upon it. With regards to the foundation of the religion and knowledge of the differing opinions [on an issue], he was unequalled—this alongside his generosity, courage and lack of attention to the joys of the soul.

Quite possibly his legal rulings in the various sciences reached three hundred volumes, indeed more and he was always saying the truth for the sake of Allāh, not caring for the blame that came to him.

Whosoever associates with him and knows him well accuses me of falling short with regards to him. Whosoever opposes him and differs with him accuses me of exaggeration, and I have been wronged by both parties—his

companions and his opponents.

He was white skinned with black hair and a black beard with a few grey hairs. His hair reached his earlobes and his eyes were eloquent tongues. He had broad shoulders and a loud, clear voice with a fast recitation. He was quick to anger but overcame it with patience and forbearance.

I have not seen his like for supplications [to Allāh], his seeking succour with Him and his abundant concern for others. However I do not believe him to be infallible, rather I differ with him on both fundamental and subsidiary matters, for he—despite his vast learning, extreme courage, fluid mind and regard for the sanctity of the religion—was a man from amongst men. He could be overcome with sharpness and anger in discussion, and attack his opponents [verbally] hence planting enmity in their souls towards him.

If only he were gentle to his opponents then there would have been a word of agreement over him—for indeed their great scholars bowed to his learning, acknowledged his ability, lack of mistakes and conceded that he was an ocean having no limits and a treasure having no equivalent...

He used to preserve the prayers and fasts, glorifying the laws outwardly and inwardly. He did not give legal rulings out of poor understanding for he was extremely intelligent, nor out of lack of knowledge for he was an overflowing ocean. Neither did he play with the religion but derived evidence from the Qurʾān, *Sunnah* and *Qiyās* (analogy), he proved [his stances] and argued following the footsteps of the *Imāms* who preceded him, so he has a reward if he erred and two rewards if he was correct.

He fell ill in the castle [wherein he was imprisoned] with a serious disease until he died on the night of Monday 20<sup>th</sup> *Dhū-l-Qa'dah*, and they prayed over him in the *Masjid* of Damascus. Afterwards many talked about the number that attended his funeral prayer, and the least number given was fifty thousand.<sup>13</sup>

2. Ibn Ḥajr al-‘Asqalānī said,

The *Shaykh* of our *Shaykhs*, *al-Hāfiẓ* Abū al-Yu‘marī [ibn Sayyid an-Nās] said in his biography of ibn Taymiyyah, ‘al-Mizzī encouraged me to express my opinion on *Shaykh al-Islām* Taqī ad-Dīn. I found him to be from those who had acquired a fortune of knowledge in the sciences that he had. He used to completely memorise and implement the *Sunan* and *Āthār* (narrations). Should he speak about *tafsīr*, he would carry its flag, and should he pass a legal ruling in *fiqh*, he knew its limits. Should he speak about a ḥadīth, he was the seat of its knowledge and fully cognisant of its narrations. Should he give a lecture on religions and sects, none was seen who was more comprehensive or meticulous than he. He surpassed his contemporaries in every science, you would not see one like him and his own eye did not see one like himself...’<sup>14</sup>

3. Ibn Ḥajr also said,

The acclaim of Taqī ad-Dīn is more renown than that of the Sun and titling him *Shaykh al-Islām* of his era remains until our time upon the virtuous tongues. It will continue tomorrow just as it was yesterday. No one refutes this but a person who is ignorant of his prestige or one who

<sup>13</sup> Ibn Ḥajr, [under the biography of ibn Taymiyyah].

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

turns away from justice...

...those of his stances that were rejected from him were not said by him due to mere whims and desires and neither did he obstinately and deliberately persist in them after the evidence was established against him. Here are his works overflowing with refutations of those who held to *tajsīm* (anthropomorphism), yet despite this he is a man who makes mistakes and is also correct. So that which he is correct in—and that is the majority—is to benefited from and Allāh's Mercy should be sought for him due to it, and that which he is incorrect in should not be blindly followed. Indeed he is excused for his mistakes because he is one of the *Imāms* of his time and it has been testified that he fulfilled the conditions of *ijtihād*...

From the astonishing qualities of this man was that he was the severest of people against the People of Innovation, the *Rawāfiḍah*, the *Hulūliyyah* and the *Ittiḥādiyyah*. His works on this are many and famous and his *fatāwā* on them cannot be counted, so how the eyes of these innovators must have found joy when they heard those who declared him to be a *kaḥfir*! And how delighted they must have been when they saw those who did not declare him to be a *kaḥfir* in turn being labeled *kaḥfir*! It is obligatory upon the one who has donned the robe of knowledge and possesses intelligence that he consider the words of a man based upon his well-known books or from the tongues of those who are trusted to accurately convey his words. Then he should isolate from all of this what is rejected and warn against it with the intention of giving sincere advice and to praise him for his excellent qualities and for what he was correct in, as is the way of the scholars.

If there were no virtues of *Shaykh* Taqī ad-Dīn except for

his famous student *Shaykh* Shams ad-Dīn ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, writer of many works, from which both his opponents and supporters benefited, then this would be a sufficient indication of his [ibn Taymiyyah's] great position. And how could it be otherwise when the Shāfi'i *Imāms* and others, not to speak of the Ḥanbalīs, of his time testified to his prominence in the [Islāmic] sciences...<sup>15</sup>

4. Ibn Kathīr said,

The least he would do when he heard something was to memorise it and then busy himself with learning it. He was intelligent and had much committed to memory, he became an *Imām* in *tafsīr* and everything linked to it and knowledgeable in *fiqh*. Indeed it was said that he was more knowledgeable of the *fiqh* of the *madhhabs* than the followers of those very same *madhhabs* in his time and other than his time. He was a scholar in *Usūl* and the branches of the religion, in grammar, the language and other textual and intellectual sciences.... no scholar of a science would speak to him except that he thought that that science was the specialty of ibn Taymiyyah. As for ḥadīth then he was the carrier of its flag, a *Ḥāfiẓ*, able to distinguish the weak from the strong, fully acquainted with the narrators...<sup>16</sup>

He also said,

He was, may Allāh have mercy upon him, from the greatest of scholars but also from those who err and are correct. However his errors with respect to his correct rulings were

<sup>15</sup> From Ibn Ḥajr's endorsement of *Radd al-Wāfi* contained at the end of the book.

<sup>16</sup> Ibn Kathīr, [14/118-119].

like a drop in a huge ocean and they are forgiven him as is authentically reported by Bukhārī,

*When a ruler makes a ruling, and he is correct then he has two rewards, and if he has erred then he has one reward.*

5. *Al-Ḥāfiẓ* al-Mizzī said,

I have not seen the likes of him and his own eye had not seen the likes of himself. I have not seen one who was more knowledgeable than he of the Book and the Sunnah of His Messenger, nor one who followed them more closely.<sup>17</sup>

6. *Al-Ḥāfiẓ* ‘Abdur-Raḥmān ibn Rajab al-Ḥanbalī said,

He is the *Imām*, the legal Jurist, the *Mujtahid*, the Scholar of Ḥadīth, the *Ḥāfiẓ*, the Explainer of the Qur’ān, the Ascetic, Taqī ad-Dīn Abū al-‘Abbās *Shaykh al-Islām*, the most knowledgeable of the knowledgeable. It is not possible to exaggerate his renown when he is mentioned and his fame does not require us to write a lengthy tract on him. He, may Allāh have mercy upon him, was unique in his time with respect to understanding the Qur’ān and knowledge of the realities of faith....<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Bahjatul Baiṭār, *Ḥayāt Shaykh al-Islām ibn Taymiyyah* [p. 21].

<sup>18</sup> ibn Rajab, [2/387-392].

## His Sayings

Shaykh al-Islām was famous for stating profound statements, below is a selection of some of them.

- Every punishment from Him is pure justice and every blessing from Him is pure grace.<sup>19</sup>
- Whoever desires everlasting bliss, let him adhere firmly to the threshold of servitude<sup>20</sup>
- The Lord loves to be loved.<sup>21</sup>
- Guidance is not attained except with knowledge and correct direction is not attained except with patience.<sup>22</sup>
- In this world there is a paradise, whoever does not enter it will not enter the Paradise of the Hereafter.<sup>23</sup>
- The one who is [truly] imprisoned is the one whose heart is imprisoned from Allāh and the captivated one is the one whose desires have enslaved him.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> *Majmū' Fatāwā* [10/85]

<sup>20</sup> ibn al-Qayyim, *Madārij* [1/531]

<sup>21</sup> *Majmū' Fatāwā* [1/54]

<sup>22</sup> *Majmū' Fatāwā* [10/40]

<sup>23</sup> ibn al-Qayyim, *al-Wābil* [p. 69]

<sup>24</sup> Ibn al-Qayyim, *al-Wābil* [p. 69].

- This whole religion revolves around knowing the truth and acting by it, and action must be accompanied by patience.<sup>25</sup>
- Worship is founded upon the Legal Law and following it, not upon ones base desires and innovation.<sup>26</sup>
- If you do not taste the sweetness of an action in your heart, suspect it, for the Lord, Exalted is He, is the Appreciative.<sup>27</sup>
- The more the servant loves his Master, the less will he love other objects and they will decrease in number. The less the servant loves his Master, the more will he love other objects and they will increase in number.<sup>28</sup>
- Perpetually is the servant either the recipient of a blessing from Allāh, in which case he is need of gratitude; or he is the perpetrator of a sin, in which case he is in need of repentance; he is always moving from one blessing to another and is always in need of repentance.<sup>29</sup>
- Sins cause harm and repentance removes the cause.<sup>30</sup>
- Bearing witness to *tawhīd* opens the door of good and repent-

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<sup>25</sup> *Majmūʿ Fatāwā* [10/38]

<sup>26</sup> *Majmūʿ Fatāwā* [1/80]

<sup>27</sup> ibn al-Qayyim, *al-Madārij* [2/68]

<sup>28</sup> *Majmūʿ Fatāwā* [1/94]

<sup>29</sup> *Majmūʿ Fatāwā* [10/88]

<sup>30</sup> *Majmūʿ Fatāwā* [10/255]



ance from sins closes the door of evil.<sup>31</sup>

- The *Jihād* against the soul is the foundation for the *Jihād* against the disbelievers and hypocrites.<sup>32</sup>
- A man will never fear something besides Allāh unless it be due to a disease in his heart.<sup>33</sup>
- Trials and tribulation are like feeling the heat and cold, when one knows that they cannot be avoided, he will not feel anger at their onset, nor will he be distressed or disheartened.<sup>34</sup>
- The perfection of *tawḥīd* is found when there remains nothing in the heart except Allāh, the servant is left loving those He loves and what He loves, hating those He hates and what He hates, showing allegiance to those He has allegiance to, showing enmity to those He shows enmity towards, ordering what He orders and prohibiting what He prohibits.<sup>35</sup>
- In this world, man finds in the remembrance of Allāh, praising Him and worshipping Him, a delight that is incomparable to anything else.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> *Majmū' Fatāwā* [10/256]

<sup>32</sup> ibn al-Qayyim, *ar-Rawḍab* [p. 478]

<sup>33</sup> al-Bazzār [p. 74]

<sup>34</sup> ibn al-Qayyim, *al-Madārij* [3/289]

<sup>35</sup> ibn al-Qayyim, *al-Madārij* [3/485]

<sup>36</sup> *Minḥāj as-Sunnah* [5/389]

- The objective of asceticism is to leave all that harms the servants Hereafter and the objective of worship is to do all that will benefit his Hereafter.<sup>37</sup>
- Sins are like chains and locks preventing their perpetrator from roaming the vast garden of *tawhīd* and reaping the fruits of righteous actions.<sup>38</sup>
- What can my enemies do to me? I have in my breast both my heaven and my garden. If I travel they are with me, never leaving me. Imprisonment for me is a chance to be alone with my Lord. To be killed is martyrdom and to be exiled from my land is a spiritual journey.<sup>39</sup>

## His Death

Ibn Taymiyyah died while imprisoned on the twentieth of *Dhū-l-Qa'dah* of the year 728H, after ultimately being banned from reading or writing. He fell sick for the few days preceding his death.

His funeral was attended by a huge congregation despite the many lies and slanders being spread about him by certain innovators of his time. Al-Bazzār says,

Once the people had heard of his death, not a single person in Damascus who was able to attend the prayer and wanted to remained except that he appeared and was present for it. As a result, the markets in Damascus were closed and all transactions of livelihood were stopped...

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<sup>37</sup> *Majmū' Fatāwā* [14/458]

<sup>38</sup> *Majmū' Fatāwā* [14/49]

<sup>39</sup> ibn al-Qayyim, *Wābil* [p. 69]

Governors, heads, scholars, jurists all came out. They say that none of the majority of the people failed to turn up—according to my knowledge—except three individuals; they were well known for their enmity for ibn Taymiyyah and thus, hid away from the people out of fear for their lives.<sup>40</sup>

Ibn Kathīr said,

There were so many people in front of his funeral, behind it, to its right and to its left. None but Allāh could enumerate them, and then someone shouted, ‘this is how the funerals of the *Imāms* of the *Sunnah* are to be!’ At that the people started to cry... when the call to prayer for *Zuhr* was proclaimed they prayed after it straight away against the usual norm. Once they finished prayer, the deputy *khaṭīb* came out—as the main *khaṭīb* was absent and in Egypt—and he led the prayer over ibn Taymiyyah... then the people poured out from everywhere and all the doors of the *Masjid*... and they assembled at *al-Khayl* market.<sup>41</sup>

## His Works

Ibn Taymiyyah was a prolific writer and authored many works spanning a broad range of topics. The sum of his writings were thought to consist of hundreds of volumes and even though a large number of them have been lost, many are still available and in print. A number of his works have also been translated and below is a list

<sup>40</sup> al-Bazzār [pp. 82-83].

<sup>41</sup> Ibn Kathīr, [14/138].

<sup>42</sup> None of the lists detailed below are meant to be exhaustive.

of these works followed by some of his works in Arabic.<sup>42</sup>

The books of, or about, Ibn Taymiyyah available in the English language:

1. *Ibn Taymiyyah on Public and Private Law in Islam or Public Policy in Islamic Jurisprudence* [tr. Omar A. Farrukh, Khayats, 1966]
2. *A Seventh Century Sunni Creed: The Aqida al-Wastiya of ibn Taymiya* [tr. Merlin Swartz, the Hague: Mouton, 1973]
3. *Public Duties in Islam* [tr. Muhtar Holland, The Islamic Foundation, 1402/1982]
4. *Ibn Taymiyyah's Essay on the Jinn* [tr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips, 1409/1989]
5. *The Concise Legacy* [tr. Farhat Abbaas, Jam'iyah Ihyaa Minhaaj as-Sunnah, 1415/1994]
6. *Introduction to the Principles of Tafseer* [tr. Muhammad Abdul Haqq Ansari, al-Hidaayah, 1414/1993]
7. *The Friends of Allāh and the Friends of Shaytān* [trans. Abu Rumaysah, Dar as-Sunnah, 1421-1433/2000-2012].
8. *Ibn Taymiyyah Against the Greek Logicians* [tr. Wal B. Hallaq, Oxford University Press, 1993]
9. *A Textbook on Orthodox Sunni Creed, the Creed of al-Wāsitiyyah —being a translation of al-'Aqīdah al-Wāsitiyyah* [trans. Abu Rumaysah, Dār as-Sunnah, 1430/2009].
10. *Fundamentals of Enjoining Good & Forbidding Evil* [tr. Abu Khalil & Muhammad al-Jibali, al-Qur'an & Sunnah Society of North America, 1997]
11. *Mukhabatar Iqtidaa as-Siraat al-Mustaqeem* [Dar-us-Salam Publications, 1416/1996]
12. *The Book of Eemaan* [compiled from the works of ibn Taymiyyah by Dr. Muhammad Nasim Yasim, al-Firdous Ltd., 1997]
13. *Diseases of the Hearts and their Cures* [tr. Abu Rumaysah, Dar as-Sunnah, 1418-1433/1998-2012]

14. *Ibn Taymiyyah's Letters from Prison* [tr. Abu Ammar, Message of Islam, 1419/1998]
15. *The Waasitah Between Allaah & The Creation* [tr. Abu Iyaad Amjad Rafiq, Invitation to Islaam, 1998]
16. *Al-Ubudiyyah* [tr. Nasir ud-Deen Khattaab, ]; also translated as *Ibn Taymiyyah's Essay on Servitude* [tr. Abu Safwan Fareed ibn Haibatan, al-Hidaayah, 1420/1999]
17. *Kitab al-Iman: Book of Faith* [tr. Salman Hasan al-Ani, Iman Publishing House, 1999]
18. *Ibn Taimiya's Struggle Against Popular Religion: with an annotated translation of his Kitab Iqtida as-Sirat al-Mustaqim Mukhalafat Ashab al-Jahim* [Muhammad Umar Memon, the Hague: Mouton, 1976]
19. *Ibn Taymiyyah and his Projects of Reform* [Serajul Haque, Islamic Foundation of Bangladesh, 1982]
20. *Ibn Taymiyyah's Ethics* [Victor E. Makari, Scholars Press, 1983]
21. *A Muslim Theologian's Response to Christianity: Ibn Taymiyyah's al-Jawab as-Sahih* [ed. Thomas F. Michel, Caravan Books, 1985]
22. *Economic Concepts of Ibn Taymiyyah* [Abdul Azim Islahi, The Islamic Foundation, 1408/1988]
23. *The Political Thought of ibn Taymiyyah* [prof. Qamaruddin Khan, Adam Publishers & Distributers, 1992]
24. *Ibn Taymiyyah & The Islamization of Knowledge* [Taha Jabir al-Alwani, IIIT, 1994]
25. *The Relief from Distress—An explanation to the du'ā of Yūnus* [trans. Abu Rumaysah, Daar us-Sunnah, 1425/2005].

The available Arabic works of ibn Taymiyyah are many, from amongst them:

1. *Majmū' Fatāwā ibn Taymiyyah* [compiled by 'Abdur-Raḥmān ibn Qāsim and his son, Muḥammad in thirty-seven volumes] containing many monographs and treatise that he wrote.

2. *Fatāwā al-Kubrā*, in five volumes
3. *Fatāwā al-Miṣriyyah*
4. *Al-Jawāb as-Ṣaḥīḥ li man Baddala Dīn al-Masīḥ*, in six volumes
5. *Minhāj as-Sunnah an-Nabawīyyah*, in six volumes
6. *Darr Ta'āruḍ al-'Aql wa-n-Naql*, in twelve volumes
7. *As-Ṣārim al-Maslūl 'alā Shātim ar-Rasūl*, in three volumes
8. *Naqd at-Ta'sīs*
9. *Iqtidā as-Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaqīm li Mukhālafah Aṣḥāb al-Jahīm*, in two volumes
10. *Al-Istiqāmah*
11. *Naqd Marātib al-Ijmā'*
12. *ar-Radd 'alā al-Mantiqīyyīn*
13. *ar-Radd 'alā al-Akhnā'i*
14. *ar-Radd 'alā al-Bakrī*
15. *an-Nubunwāt*
16. *Qā'idah 'Adhīmah fī-l-Farq bayn 'Ibādah Ahl al-Islām wa-l-Īmān wa 'Ibādah Ahl ash-Shirk wa-n-Nifāq*
17. *Al-Qawā'id an-Nūrāniyyah al-Fiqhiyyah*
18. *Tafsīr ibn Taymiyyah*, compiled by 'Abdu-r-Raḥmān 'Umayrī, in seven volumes.

## CHAPTER ONE

# The Straight Path of Asceticism, Worship and Piety

### [1.1: The Importance of Adhering to the Sunnah]

**T**HE RIGHT COURSE OF ASCETICISM (*zuḥd*), worship (*'ibāda*) and piety (*wara'*) is to abstain from the unlawful acts (*muharamāt*) and desires (*shahawāt*) and to be moderate (*iqtisadāt*) in worship. It is [to know that] adherence to the Sunnah preserves [its adherents] from the evil of the [desirous vile] self (*sharr al-nafs*) and Shayṭān without the need for embarking upon the paths of innovators. This is because those who follow the paths of innovation cannot escape falling into the holes of sins and cannot but be chained with its shackles, even if their error is due to following an [alternative] interpretation, because it is inevitable for them to follow desires (*hawā*). It is for this reason; innovators are called the people of desires (*aṣḥāb al-ahwā'*). Indeed, the path of the Sunnah is paved with knowledge (*'ilm*), justice (*'adl*), and guidance (*hudā*), whereas the path of innovation (*bid'ah*) is paved with ignorance (*jahl*), oppression (*ẓulm*), and pursuit of speculation (*ẓann*) and all that which the [desirous vile] self is apt to desire.

## [1.2 The Meaning of Misguidance (*ḍalāl*), Deviation (*ghayy*) and Right Guidance (*rushd*)]

Allāh, the Most High, said:

مَا ضَلَّ صَاحِبُكُمْ وَمَا غَوَىٰ

“Your companion [Muḥammad] has not strayed (*ḍalla*), nor has he deviated (*ghawā*).”

[*al-Najm* (53): 2]

Indeed, the Messenger did not go astray (*ḍalla*) or deviate (*ghawā*). The attribute of misguidance (*ḍalāl*) is coupled with deviation (*ghayy*) because every deviated (*ghāwī*) is going astray (*ḍāl*). Further to the point, right guidance (*rushd*) is used to mean the opposite of deviation (*ghayy*) while guidance (*hudā*) is the opposite of misguidance (*ḍalāl*). The meaning of ‘*Hudā*’ is to avoid the path of the immoral (*fujjār*) and people of innovation (*ahl al-bid‘ah*), which the righteous predecessors (*salaf*) used to prohibit—that is to say, immorality and innovation.

Allāh, the Exalted, said:

فَخَلَفَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ

خَلْفٌ أَضَاعُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَاتَّبَعُوا الشَّهْوَاتِ فَسُوفَ يَلْقَوْنَ غِيًّا

“So they were followed by successors who neglected the prayer and followed desires. Thus they will be thrown into *ghayyan*.”

[*Maryam* (19): 59]

The a word ‘*ghayyan*’ is a verbal noun that means the opposite of right guidance (*rushd*), just as explained by in the *ayah* wherein the two words were used as opposed to each other:



وَأَن يَرَوْا كَلَاءَ آيَةٍ لَا يُؤْمِنُوا  
بِهَا وَإِن يَرَوْا سَبِيلَ الرُّشْدِ لَا يَتَّخِذُوهُ سَبِيلًا

“And if they see the path of right guidance (*rushd*), they do not take it; and if they see the path of deviation (*ghayy*), they take it as a path.”

[*al-A'raf* (7):146]

As for the term ‘*al-rushd*’ (right guidance), it refers to the deeds that benefit its doer while the term ‘*ghayy*’ (deviation) refers to all the deeds that harm its doer. It is for this reason, performing good deeds is considered right guidance (*rushd*), and performing acts of evil (*sharr*) is considered deviation (*ghayy*). This meaning is clear in the *ayah* wherein the Jinn used the two terms to mean the opposite of each other:

وَأَنَّا لَا  
نَدْرِي أَشْرَأُرِيدُ بِمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَمْ أَرَادَ بِهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ رَشْدًا ﴿٧٠﴾

“And indeed we do not know whether evil is intended for those who are on earth or their Lord intends right guidance for them.”

[*al-Jinn* (72):10]

and at the end of the *surah*, the word ‘*darran*’ (harm) was used as opposed to the word ‘*rashadan*’ (right guidance)—

قُلْ إِنِّي لَا أَمْلِكُ لَكُمْ ضَرًّا وَلَا رَشْدًا ﴿٧١﴾

“Say: ‘Indeed I have no control to harm (*darr*) you or over right guidance (*rushd*).’”

[*al-Jinn* (72): 21].

The word ‘*al-Rashid*’ was derived from the root word ‘*al-rushd*’ and it

means the one who can be entrusted to handle their wealth for they spend it only on what is beneficial. To elaborate further, Allāh, the Most High, mentioned in the Qur’ān that the *Shayṭān* said:

وَلَا أُغْوِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٣٩﴾ إِلَّا عِبَادَكَ مِنْهُمُ الْمُخَلَّصِينَ

“And truly I will cause all of them to stray except Your slaves among them, those who are sincere.”

[*al-Hijr* (15): 39-40],

which is to mean that he wants to command humans to do evil that brings forth harm to them and then they obey him, just as Allāh, the Most High, said:

وَمَا كَانُوا لِيَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ سُلْطَانٍ إِلَّا أَنْ دَعَوْتُكُمْ فَاسْتَجَبْتُمْ لِي

“And I did not have authority over you, except that I invited you, then you responded to me.”

[*Ibrāhīm* (14): 22],

and he said:

وَبُرُزَّتِ الْجَحِيمُ لِلْغَاوِينَ

“And the Hell-Fire appeared to those who strayed.”

[*al-Shu‘rā’* (26):91]

up to

فَكَبِكُوا فِيهَا هُمْ وَالْغَاوُونَ ﴿٩٤﴾ وَجُنُودُ إِبْلِيسَ أَجْمَعُونَ ﴿٩٥﴾

“Then they will be thrown against one another in it, them and those who strayed, and the armies of *Shayṭān* altogether.”

[*al-Shu‘rā’* (26): 94-95];

and

قَالَ الَّذِينَ حَقَّ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقَوْلُ رَبَّنَا هَؤُلَاءِ الَّذِينَ أَغْوَيْنَا  
أَغْوَيْنَهُمْ كَمَا غَوَيْنَا

“Those against whom the statement proves true will say:  
‘Our Lord, these are those who led us astray, and we led  
them astray just as they did to us’”

[*al-Qaṣaṣ* (28):63]

and

مَا ضَلَّ صَاحِبُكُمْ وَمَا غَوَىٰ

“Your companion [Muḥammad] has not strayed (*dalla*),  
nor has he deviated (*ghawā*).”

[*al-Najm* (53): 2]

Therefore when ‘*ghayy*’ is used as a noun for an act of evil that harms its doer, then the result of the act is called ‘*deviation*’ (*ghayyan*), just as the result of a good deed (*khayr*) is called ‘*right guidance*’ (*rushdan*). The result of wickedness (*sharr*) is called ‘*evil*’ (*sharran*), the result of a benefit (*khayr*) is called ‘*good*’ (*khayran*), the result of a good deed, ‘*virtues*’ (*hasanāt*), and the result of evil deeds, ‘*sins*’ (*sayyi’āt*).

Thus ‘*good deeds*’ (*hasanāt*) and ‘*sins*’ (*sayyi’āt*) in the Book of Allāh are intended to mean ‘*acts of good*’ (*khayr*) and ‘*acts of evil*’ (*sharr*), just as ‘*blessing*’ (*ni’ma*), ‘*calamities*’ (*masā’ib*) and ‘*recompense*’ (*jazā*) are a type of act. That said, whoever performs good and good deeds will obtain good and good deeds, and whoever performs evil and sins will obtain evil and sins. As such, whoever errs, will obtain sin. Abandonment of the prayer and following desires are errors that will make oneself subject to sins. Due to this, al-Zamakhsharī said: ‘Every evil according to the Arabs is a deviation (*ghayy*), and every good is right guidance.’

Al-Zajjāj said: ‘His recompense is punishment for sins, due to the *ayab*:

يَلْقَىٰ أَثَامًا ﴿٦٨﴾

“...will obtain sins.”

[*al-Furqān* (25): 68],

in other words punishment for sins. It was also narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Indeed, *ghayyan* is a valley in Hell that its own valleys seek refuge from”,<sup>1</sup>

and this is to refer to meeting evil. On the other hand, Allāh, the Exalted, said:

أَضَاعُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَاتَّبَعُوا الشَّهَوَاتِ فَسَوْفَ يَلْقَوْنَ غِيًّا

“...they neglect the prayer and follow desires.”

[*Maryam* (19): 59],

and the prayer is about seeking the Face of Allāh, as He, the Exalted, said:

وَلَا تَطْرُدِ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُم بِالْغَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ  
وَجْهَهُ

“And do not drive away those who call their Lord day and night desiring His Face.”

[*al-An‘ām* (6): 52],

referring to the *Fajr* and *‘Aṣr* prayers. Those who call their Lord are seeking the pleasure of His Lord and desiring to obey Him, thus the hearts when obeying Him are desirous to please their Lord and loving Him.

<sup>1</sup> Ṭabarī transmitted it in his *Tafsīr*, vol.9, p.100.

### [1.3 Following Desires]

‘Following desires’ (*ittibā‘ al-shahawāt*) is to follow what the ‘self’ (*nafs*) desires, Allāh, the Most High, said:

وَيُرِيدُ  
الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الشَّهَوَاتِ أَنْ تَمِيلُوا مَيْلًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٢٧﴾

“And those who follow desires wish that you deviate greatly.”

[*al-Nisā*’ (4): 27]

wherein He made repentance (*tawbah*) the opposite to following desires, meaning He wants to forgive us. In other words, Allāh prefers repentance for us, is pleased with it, and commands it. The ones referred to in this part of the *ayah* are the deviated

﴿٢٧﴾ أَنْ تَمِيلُوا مَيْلًا عَظِيمًا

“...for you to deviate greatly”,

meaning they want to deviate us from the Straight Path and take us to the path of following desires. Indeed, deviation is inevitable for those who follow desires, just as the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Be on the straight path, although you won't be able to, and know that the best of your actions is the prayer, one will not persevere in maintaining ritual ablution except the Believer.”<sup>2</sup> Narrated by Aḥmad and Ibn Mājah transmitted it on authority of Thawbān (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*).

Thus the Prophet (ﷺ) informed us that it is very difficult to uphold to the Straight Path or imagine its reward. Allāh, the Most High, said:

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Mājah #277; declared authentic by al-Albānī.

وَلَنْ تَسْتَطِيعُوا أَنْ تَعْدِلُوا  
 بَيْنَ النِّسَاءِ وَلَوْ حَرَصْتُمْ فَلَا تَمِيلُوا كُلَّ الْمَيْلِ  
 فَتَذُرُوهَا كَالْمُعَلَّقَةِ

“And you will never be able to be equal between wives even if you desire to. So do not incline completely towards one thus leaving the other suspended.”

[*al-Nisā'* (4): 129]

His statement

كُلَّ الْمَيْلِ

“...incline completely”

means ‘the utmost of inclination’, ‘swerving from the path’, and ‘deviation from the evenness of the path to the utmost of evil’. Therefore if you ever experience that, then take a middle course and return to the path through repentance.

This is just like the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ) wherein he said: “The example of a believer is like a horse in his corral—he wanders then returns to his corral. As such a believer wanders then returns to his Lord.”<sup>3</sup>

Allāh, the Exalted, said:

❖ وَسَارِعُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا  
 السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٧٣﴾

“And hasten to the forgiveness of your Lord and a Paradise as wide as the Heavens and the Earth prepared for

<sup>3</sup> Musnad Aḥmad #11335; declared weak by al-Albānī and al-Arnāʿūt.

those who fear Allāh.”

[*Āl-‘Imrān* (3): 133],

to where He said:

وَنِعْمَ أَجْرُ الْعَمَلِينَ ﴿١٣٤﴾

“And how excellent a reward for those who work.”

[*Āl-‘Imrān* (3): 136].

In these verses, He does not say: ‘*those who do not transgress*’ or ‘*those who do not commit sins*’, rather He said:

إِذَا فَعَلُوا فَحِشَةً أَوْ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ

“When they commit lewdness or transgress against themselves.”

[*Āl-‘Imrān* (3): 135].

In other words, He mentioned that there is a sin other than lewdness (*fābisha*) as He linked the general term with the specific. It is just as Prophet Mūsā (*‘alayhis-salām*) said:

رَبِّ إِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي

“My Lord, indeed I have wronged myself.”

[*al-Qaṣaṣ* (28): 16],

and Balqīs said:

رَبِّ إِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي

“My Lord, indeed I have wronged myself.”

[*al-Naml* (27): 44],

‘and He, the Exalted, said in general about the people of the destroyed towns:

وَمَا ظَلَمْتَهُمْ وَلَكِنْ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ

“And We wronged them not, rather they wronged themselves.”

[*Hūd* (11): 101],

meaning that they wronged themselves by their commission of what they were prohibited from, their disobedience of their Prophets, and their neglect of repentance.

Allāh, the Exalted, said:

ذَكُرُوا اللَّهَ فَاسْتَغْفِرُوا لِذُنُوبِهِمْ

“They remember Allāh then seek forgiveness for their sins.”

[*Āl-‘Imrān* (3): 135],

and due to this He said:

وَاللَّهُ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ

“And Allāh wishes to turn to you in forgiveness.”

[*al-Nisā’* (4): 27],

then He said:

يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُخَفِّفَ عَنْكُمْ وَخُلِقَ الْإِنْسَانُ ضَعِيفًا ﴿٢٨﴾

“Allāh wishes to lighten for you as man was created weak.”

[*al-Nisā’* (4): 28].

Mujāhid and others said: ‘They followed the desires of fornication’.

Ibn Zayd said: ‘They are the people of falsehood (*abl al-bāṭil*)’.

Al-Suddī said: ‘They are the Jews, Christians and all other interpretations are correct, for indeed they could follow desires along with disbelief (*kufir*), or do so while recognizing that it was a sin



(*ma'siya*)’.

Then He mentioned that He has created man weak, and the context of the *ayah* indicates that he is weak to abandon desire, thus it is inevitable for him to have permissible desires to suffice in keeping away from what is prohibited.

Ṭāwūs and Muqātil said: ‘Weak in the sense of being unable to overcome his desire for women’.

Al-Zajjāj and Ibn Kaysān said: ‘Weak in resolve (*ḍa‘if al-‘aẓm*) regarding subduing own whims (*qabr al-hawā*)’. And it is said: ‘Weak in the root of his creation because he was created from a contemptible liquid’; that is transmitted on authority of al-Ḥasan, however undoubtedly along with that it is deemed that he is weak in terms of patience (*ṣabr*) in order to conform with what is mentioned in the *ayah*:

رِيدُ اللَّهِ أَنْ يُخَفِّفَ عَنْكُمْ

“Allāh wishes to lighten for you.”

[*al-Nisā*’ (4): 28]

It is the lightening of a commandment in that He permits you what you have a need for and are not able to be patient about. Like He permitted marriage to slave girls, and before that He said:

لِمَنْ خَشِيَ  
الْعَنَتِ مِنْكُمْ وَأَنْ تَصْبِرُوا خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

“For whoever fears hardship among you, and to be patient is better for you. And Allāh is forgiving, merciful”

[*al-Nisā*’ (4): 25]

Thus along with His permitting marriage to slave girls upon lacking

the strength and fearing hardship, He, glorified is He, said:

وَأَنْ تَصْبِرُوا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ

“And to be patient is better for you.”

[*al-Nisā'* (4): 25]

Thus that demonstrates that one is capable of patience despite fearing hardship and that this marriage is not like the permissibility of carcasses at the point of starvation, for indeed one is not able to be patient at that point.

#### [1.4: The Ruling on Masturbation]

Likewise, whoever permitted masturbation (*istimnā'*) based on necessity, holds that patience is superior to it. For it has been transmitted on authority of Ibn 'Abbās (*radīy Allāh 'anhumā*): “To marry slave girls is better than masturbation, and it is better than fornication, and since patience is better than marriage to slave girls, then it is also better than masturbation all the more so. In particular, a great number of scholars, or a majority of them were absolutely resolved in prohibiting it, and it is one of the views in the school of Imām Aḥmad. Ibn 'Aqil preferred that view in *al-Mufradāt*, and the famous view from him—meaning from Imām Aḥmad—is that it is prohibited unless one fears hardship. The third view is that it is disliked unless one fears hardship. If Allāh said about marriage to slave girls:

وَأَنْ تَصْبِرُوا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ

“And to be patient is better for you.”

[*al-Nisā'* (4): 25]

then there is an element of what is more appropriate in it, and it proves that patience with regards to both [marriage to slave girls and

masturbation] is possible. So since He has made permissible what is possible to be patience with, then that is in order to lighten the commandment just as He said:

يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُخَفِّفَ عَنْكُمْ وَخَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ ضَعِيفًا ﴿٢٨﴾

“Allāh wishes to lighten for you as man was created weak.”

[*al-Nisā'* (4): 28].

Masturbation is not permissible according to the majority of scholars past and present regardless of whether one fears hardship. The words of Ibn 'Abbās (*raḍīy Allāh 'anhumā*) and what is transmitted on the authority of Imām Aḥmad about it is only for those who fear hardship (*'anat*), which is in this case fornication (*zina*) and sodomy (*liwāt*). One must be in utter fear for himself that he will fall into that, and then in that case it will be permissible for him in order to shatter the strength of his hardship and desire.

As for who masturbates for enjoyment, or from memory or out of habit: in that he recalls an image while masturbating as if he is being intimate with a woman, then all of that is prohibited and is not the view of Imām Aḥmad or anyone else. Some of the scholars have obligated restraint and patience from that as being from among the acts which are obligated (*wājibāt*) and not the recommended acts (*mustahabāt*).

### [1.5: The Obligation of Refraining from Prohibited Acts]

As for patience from prohibited acts (*muḥaramāt*), then it is an obligation (*wājib*), even if the 'self' desires and inclines toward them. Allāh, exalted is He, said:

وَلْيَسْتَغْفِرِ الَّذِينَ لَا يَجِدُونَ نِكَاحًا حَتَّىٰ يُغْنِيَهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ ۗ

“And let those who cannot find marriage abstain from prohibited acts until Allāh enriches them from His favour.”

[*al-Nūr* (24): 33].

‘Abstain’ (*isti‘afāf*) means to abandon what is prohibited. It is similar to what is transmitted in the authentic narration on authority of Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “He who abstains from prohibited acts, Allāh will protect him from them, and he who is content with what little Allāh has bestowed on him, Allāh will enrich him, and he who is patient, Allāh will help him be patient. And no one has been given a gift better and more generous than patience.”<sup>4</sup>

The person who is content with the little Allāh has bestowed on him does not seek to be exalted with his heart, and the person who abstains from prohibited acts does not ask of people with his tongue. And the person who is being patient is the one who does not feign patience because it is reported that he who is patient, Allāh will help him be patient. However, this is as if it is in the context of patience with poverty (*faqr*), so as endure the bitterness of need and worry not about his state of poverty i.e. He is patient in hardship (*bā’sā’*) and distress (*darrā’*), as Allāh, exalted is He, said:

وَالصَّابِرِينَ فِي الْبَأْسَاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَحِينَ الْبَأْسِ ۗ

“And those who are patient with poverty and hardship and the moment when battle is fierce.”

[*al-Baqarah* (2): 177].

<sup>4</sup> Bukhārī, vol.11, p.303 and Muslim, vol.2, p.295.

## [1.6: Patience upon Afflictions]

*Al-Darrā'* is 'sickness', and the above *ayab* refers to being patient with what a person is afflicted with need (*ḥājah*), sickness (*marad*) and fear (*kaanf*), and patience with what one is afflicted with by choice, like *Jihād*. In fact, being patient with *Jihād* is better than patience with sickness that a person is afflicted by without a choice in it. Due to this, when one is afflicted by hardship in *Jihād* and is patient upon it, it would be better than patience upon it in his own town since this level of patience is from the epitome of *Jihād*. And as such, if one is afflicted with poverty (*fāqa*) or sickness in *Jihād*, patience upon it is more superior as a result, as this has been explained in different places.

## [1.7 Patience in Acts of Obedience]

As such, anything that a person be harmed by in performing acts of worship such as prayer, commanding good and preventing evil, and seeking knowledge, then being patient with them is better than being patient upon that which is not related to them. Likewise when the 'self' invites its owner to do prohibited acts such as power, taking wealth unjustly, and committing lewdness, being patient upon it is better than being patient with what is below that in priority. For indeed the greater a good deed is, being patient upon it is greater than what is without either [a high level of good or patience].

Indeed, knowledge (*ilm*), power (*imārā'*), *Jihād*, commanding good and preventing evil (*amr bil-ma'rūf wa nahyi 'an-munkar*), prayer, *Hajj*, fasting, and *Zakāh* have tribulations in respect to one's desires that other matters do not have. In those issues, a person is exposed to the inclinations of the self in terms of power, wealth, and appearances. When the 'self' is incapable of attaining any of that, it is not tempted

to achieve them in the case where they are attainable. Being capable to attain them makes it asking for the prohibited matters as opposed to its condition without the ability. It is for this reason, patience while having the ability to obtain something is a form of *Jihād*, rather it is among the greater forms of *Jihād* and perfect from three angles:

- 1) Patience from prohibited acts is superior to patience upon calamities.
- 2) Abandoning prohibited acts while having the ability to commit them and while subjected to the invitation of the self [to attain them] is superior to abandoning them without experiencing that.
- 3) Being subjected to the invitation of the self when it is a result of a religious matter—like going out in order to pray, seeking knowledge, or *Jihād*—therefore one is tempted to attain that which his ‘self’ is inclined to, then being patient with that includes doing what is commanded and abandoning what is prohibited—is in contrast to what one’s self inclines towards when not dealing with a righteous act. Yūnus Ibn ‘Ubayd<sup>5</sup> used to recommend three things:
  - 1) Do not visit the ruler, even if you say ‘I want to order him to be obedient to Allāh’;
  - 2) Do not visit a woman, even if you say ‘I will teach her the Book of Allāh’; and
  - 3) Do not pay attention to a person who started an innovation, even if you say ‘I want to refute him’.

It shows that he commanded people to safeguard themselves from

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<sup>5</sup> Yūnus Ibn ‘Ubayd Ibn Dinār al-‘Abadī, their freed slave, Abū ‘Ubayd al-Baṣrī. Ibn Sa‘d said: ‘He was trustworthy and related a great number of narrations. Imām Aḥmad, Ibn Ma‘in and al-Nasā’ī said: ‘Trustworthy’. He was from among the people of Baṣrah and he sold silk there. He died in the year 140AH.

the causes of tribulation, for indeed when a person is exposed to that, they will be put to trail and not be safe.

Therefore, if it was decreed that he be tried by [the causes of tribulation] without a choice or one got involved in it by choice and so they were tried, then they ought to fear Allāh, be patient and sincere, and strive to resist. Being patient and safe upon tribulations as well as establishing the obligations are among the most superior deeds, like one who is entrusted with authority and is just with regards to it, or a person who is refuting the innovators with the pure Sunnah while not being subject to or effected by their doubts, or is teaching women religion in an appropriate manner without being subject to temptation.

### [1.8: The Trials]

However, when Allāh afflicts a slave and decrees that for them, He helps them, but when they expose themselves to trials, Allāh entrusts their affairs to themselves. The Prophet (ﷺ) said to ‘Abdu’l-Raḥmān Ibn Samurah (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*): “Do not seek out leadership, for if you are granted it through seeking it, you are responsible for it, and if you are granted it without seeking it, you will be helped in it.”<sup>6</sup>

Similarly, he (ﷺ) said regarding plague: ‘When it falls upon a land and you are there, then do not leave trying to escape it. And if you hear of it in a land, then do not proceed to it’.<sup>7</sup> Thus whoever does what Allāh commands him then a trial befalls him without choice, then indeed Allāh will help him with it as opposed to those who expose themselves to trials.

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<sup>6</sup> Bukhārī #6622.

<sup>7</sup> Bukhārī #3473.

## [1.9: Repentance]

Nonetheless, the door of repentance (*tawbah*) is open, for a man may have sought an authoritative position and so Allāh leaves him to it, but then he regrets it and repents from seeking it, and so Allāh will forgive him and help him, whether in establishing an obligation or deliverance from the authority he sought. The same applied to the rest of the trials. Allāh, the Most High, said:

قُلْ يٰعِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِن رَّحْمَةِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا

“Say: ‘Oh slaves of Mine who go to extremes against themselves, do not despair of the mercy of Allāh. Indeed Allāh forgives all sins.’”

[*al-Zumar* (39): 53],

and these matters require an explanation that is not feasible at this point.

## [1.10: Guidance (*al-Hidāyah*)]

What is intended is that Allāh, glorified is He, wishes to clarify for us and guide us to the traditions of those who came before us, about whom He said:

أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ هَدَىٰ اللَّهُ فَبِهِدْيِهِم مَّتَّعْتَهُم

“Those, they are those whom Allāh has guided, so follow their guidance.”

[*al-An‘ām* (6):90],

and they are those whom we are commanded to ask for guidance to their path in the *ayah*:



أَهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ﴿٥﴾ صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ  
عَلَيْهِمْ

“Guide us to the Straight Path, the path of those who you have favoured.”

[*al-Fātiḥah* (1): 6-7]

He, Exalted be He, prefers for us and commands us to follow their path, and it is the path those who return to Him. Three matters are mentioned here: clarification (*bayān*), guidance (*hidāyah*), and repentance (*tawbah*).

### [1.11: What is intended by ‘Traditions’?]

It is said that what is intended by ‘traditions’ (*sunan*) here are the traditions of the people of truth (*ahl al-ḥaqq*) and falsehood (*bāṭil*), in other words, He wishes to clarify to us the traditions of both groups, thus he guides His believing slaves to the truth, and misguides others. For indeed guidance and misguidance come only after clarification, as He said:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا  
مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا لِيُبَيِّنَ لِقَوْمِهِ ۖ لِيُتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ فَيُضِلَّ اللَّهُ  
مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِيَ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۚ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

“And We have not sent a Messenger except with the language of his people in order to make things clear to them. Thus Allāh misguides whoever He wills and guides whoever He wills. And He is the Almighty, the Wise.”

[*Ibrāhīm* (14):4]

He also said:

وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضِلَّ قَوْمًا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَاهُمْ حَتَّىٰ  
يُبَيِّنَ لَهُم مَّا يَتَّقُونَ

“And Allāh does not misguide people after guiding them until He has made clear to them what they should fear.”

[*al-Tawbah* (9):115].

Thus ‘*traditions*’ are connected with making the traditions of the people of falsehood clear, not those who were guided. While the people of truth are connected with His statement:

وَيَهْدِيكُمْ

“...and guide you.”

[*al-Nisā*’ (4):26].

Az-Zajjāj said: “The traditions (*sunan*) means paths, thus the meaning in the *ayah*:

يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ وَيَهْدِيَكُمْ سُنَنَ الَّذِينَ  
مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَيَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٦٦﴾

“Allāh wants to make clear to you [the lawful from the unlawful] and guide you to the [good] practices of those before you and to accept your repentance. And Allāh is Knowing and Wise.”

[*al-Nisā*’ (4):26]

is ‘He directs you to the way of His obedience, just as He has directed Prophets and their followers’. This understanding is more appropriate since the two verbs in the sentence [clarify and guide] are advanced in the statement and the first one is not designed to be the lone governing word, rather it is either the second alone or both of the two, as in His statement:

ءَاتُونِي أُفْرِغْ عَلَيْهِ قِطْرًا

“Bring me molten copper to pour on it.”

[*al-Kahf* (18):96]

Or if the following meaning is intended: ‘to make clear to you the traditions of those who were before you and guide you to those traditions’, then it shows that He guides us to their traditions—that is to say, the traditions of the people of truth, in contrast to His statement:

قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ سُنَنٌ

“Traditions have passed away before you.”

[*Āl-‘Imrān* (3): 137],

for indeed after that He said:

فَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكْذِبِينَ

“So travel the world and see what was the end of those who denied.”

[*Āl-‘Imrān* (3): 137].

Truly it means identifying the end of the oppressors by witnessing, and here He revealed for us from the Qur’ān what will guide us of the traditions of those before us, and they are those whom Allāh has favoured.

In this context, He mentioned three elements: clarification (*tibyīn*), guidance (*hudā*) and repentance (*tawbah*) because people first need to know what is good and evil, what commanded and what is prohibited. After that, they need to be guided so they seek the truth and act by it as opposed to falsehood. This is the traditions of the Prophets and righteous. After that, it is inevitable for them to sin, so they will want to be purified from their sins with repentance; therefore, they

need knowledge and to act according to it, and repentance along with that. It is inevitable for them to fall short or be heedless (*ghafla*) in adhering to these traditions which Allāh guided them to, so they repent from it in whatever has happened of negligence in each of these traditions. Keeping in mind that these traditions include acts which are obligated and those which are recommended, so it is evitable for the one taking the path to fall short and be heedless, thus they must seek forgiveness (*istighfār*) from Allāh and repent to Him. And indeed the slave, no matter how much worship and obedience they show, cannot establish for Allāh in truth that which He has obligated upon him, thus it is not possible to do so without seeking forgiveness and repenting after every act of obedience.

### [1.12: The Explanation of ‘Guidance’]

It is said that ‘guidance’ (*hidāyah*) here means ‘clarification’ (*bayān*) and ‘identification’ (*ta’rīf*), in other words, ‘to inform you of the traditions of those before you of the people of happiness (*sa’āda*) and misery (*shaqāwa*) in order for you to follow one group and keep away from the other, just as He, exalted is He, said:

وَهَدَيْنَاهُ النَّجْدَيْنِ ﴿١٠﴾

“And We guided him to the two high paths.”

[*al-Balad* (90):10].

‘Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*) and Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*) said: ‘[It refers to] the paths of good and evil’. Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāh ‘anhumā*) said: ‘[It refers to] the path of guidance and misguidance’ while Mujāhid said: ‘[It refers to] the path of happiness and misery; meaning, [Allāh] has created mankind upon that, and informed mankind of that; it is all the same. The two high paths refer to the clear paths because a ‘high path’ is whatever is raised from the earth. So the

meaning is: ‘Have We not informed mankind of the path of good and evil and made it as clear to them as two high paths’, however the children of Adam have a share in the ‘guidance’, ‘clarification’, and ‘identification’ in this *ayah*, and they know it by their intellects.

As for the path of the Prophets, then it is essential that Allāh communicates it, just as He said:

تِلْكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الْغَيْبِ نُوحِيهَا إِلَيْكَ مَا كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُهَا أَنْتَ  
وَلَا قَوْمُكَ مِنْ قَبْلِ هَذَا

“This is from the news of the Unseen that We reveal to you that neither you nor your people knew before this.”

[*Hūd* (11):49]

However this requires that if this meaning is intended then He would have said: ‘Allāh intends to clarify for you the traditions of those who were before you’, and He would not need to mention ‘guidance’ since the meaning was implied. So considering that he mentioned that He wished to clarify and guide, it is known that this is not the same. So ‘to clarify’ is ‘identify’ and ‘teach’ and guidance is ‘the commands and prohibitions’ and the invitation to goodness. Just as He, exalted is He, said:

وَلِكُلِّ قَوْمٍ هَادٍ

“And for each people is a guidance.”

[*al-Ra’d* (13):7],

in other words, an invitation, inviting them to goodness. Just as He, exalted is He, said:

وَإِنَّكَ لَتَهْدِي إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٥٢﴾

“And indeed you are guiding to a Straight Path.”

[*al-Shūra* (42):52],

in other words, you are inviting them to it with a call of instruction.

### [1.13: The Legal and Universal Will]

His guidance in this context extends beyond to reach others because the estimated meaning is: '[He wishes] to obligate upon you the traditions of those before you; so do not deviate from it' and the intended meaning here is not '*the revealed guidance*' just as stated in His statement:

أَهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ﴿٦﴾

“Guide us to the Straight Path.”

[*al-Fātiḥah* (1):6]

This is because if He intended that, indeed it would have happened, and there will not be a misguided person among us. Rather that is not the case, and this is a legally commanded will signifying preference and being pleased with something. Due to this, al-Zajjāj said: ‘He wishes to show you what will be a means for your repentance, thus He connected the will to an act of His self’. For indeed al-Zajjāj believed that ‘*will*’ in the Qur’ān is not anything except that, and it is not as he believed, rather ‘*will*’ connected with His act are whatever is intended by it. As such, then indeed whatever He wills comes to pass, and whatever He does not will, will not come to pass. As for ‘*obtainable will*’ regarding His command and law, then it is as He stated:

مَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ  
لِيَجْعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ حَرَجٍ وَلَٰكِنْ يُرِيدُ لِيُطَهِّرَكُمْ

“Allāh does not wish to place you in difficulty, rather He wishes to purify you.”

[*al-Mā'idah* (5): 6],

and His statement:

إِنَّمَا  
يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمْ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ

“Allāh only wishes to remove impurity from you, people of the [Prophet’s] household.”

[*al-Aḥzāb* (33): 33],

and similar to that.

That said, this is His will for what He commanded with the meaning that He prefers it and is pleased with it and will reward the one who does it. It does not mean that He wishes to create and so it comes to pass, like in His statement:

فَمَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَهْدِيَهُ يَشْرَحْ صَدْرَهُ لِلْإِسْلَامِ وَمَنْ يُرِدْ  
أَنْ يُضِلَّهُ يَجْعَلْ صَدْرَهُ ضَيِّقًا حَرَجًا

“Thus whoever Allāh wills to guide, He expands his chest to Islām. And whoever He wills to misguide, He makes his chest narrow, tight.”

[*al-An‘ām* (6):125]

And as Nūḥ (*‘alayhis-salām*) said:

وَلَا يَنْفَعُكُمْ  
نُصْحِي إِنْ أَرَدْتُ أَنْ أُنصِحَ لَكُمْ إِنْ كَانَ اللَّهُ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يُغْوِيَكُمْ  
هُوَ رَبُّكُمْ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ

“And my advice will not benefit you if I wanted to advise you, if Allāh wills to lead you astray. He is your Lord and to Him you will return”

[*Hūd* (11):34]

And this is a will such that whatever He creates of it will come to pass. Just like the Muslims say: ‘Whatever Allāh wills, is, and whatever He did not will, will not be’. And this will is connected with every event while the legally commanded will is not connected except with acts of obedience. Just as people say to whoever does something obscene: ‘He does something Allāh does not wish him to’, along with their saying: ‘Whatever Allāh wills, is, and whatever He did not will, will not be. For indeed this ‘will’ is of two types, just as was explained in another place in this book.

With the word ‘guidance’ He means ‘revelation’ and the address is to the believers that are obedient whom Allāh has guided to obeying Him. For indeed Allāh, exalted is He, wishes to forgive them and guide them, and thus they are guided, and if He does not wish that for them, they are not guided, just as they said:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي هَدَانَا لِهَذَا  
وَمَا كُنَّا لِنَهْتَدِيَ لَوْلَا أَنْ هَدَانَا اللَّهُ لَقَدْ جَاءَتْ رَسُولُنَا بِالْحَقِّ

“All praise is due to Allāh who guided us to this; and we would not have been guided if Allāh had not guided us. Messengers from our Lord did come with the truth.”

[*al-Ar‘āf* (7):43].

However those who are addressed by the *ayah* are all the Muslims, like those who are addressed with the *ayah* of ritual ablution. And those who are addressed by His statement in the following *ayah* are the people of the Prophet’s (ﷺ) household:

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ

“Allāh only wishes to remove impurity from you.”

[*al-Aḥzāb* (33):33].

And due to this whoever does not obey Him is destroyed. And like



what is found regarding fasting:

يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمْ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمْ الْعُسْرَ

“Allāh wishes ease for you and He does not wish difficulty for you.”

[*al-Baqarah* (2):185].

Thus this is a ‘legally commanded’ will meaning preference and being pleased with something, not the will of ‘the creation of what is necessitated according to what is intended’. If it was like that, the *ayah* would not be addressed except to whoever adopted the ease and did what was commanded; and whoever failed to do that would not be included in the commands and prohibitions which are in the *ayah*, and it is not like that. Rather legal rulings are a requirement for all Muslims. Whoever obeys will be rewarded and whoever disobeys will be punished. Those who obey Him are only doing so by His guiding them—the guidance of revelation and help in that He makes them among those who are guided. It is the same in that He is the one who makes those who pray, pray, and those who submit, Muslims.

If the ‘will’ here was required from people in order to fall under what was intended, He would not say:

وَيُرِيدُ

الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الشَّهَوَاتِ أَنْ يَمِيلُوا مَيْلًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٢٧﴾

“And those who follow desires wish that you incline greatly.”

[*al-Nisā*’ (4):27],

for indeed at the time their will had no effect rather it was same whether it existed or not. Like in the statement of Nūḥ (*alayhis-salām*):

وَلَا يَنْفَعُكُمْ  
 نُصْحِي إِنْ أَرَدْتُ أَنْ أُنصَحَ لَكُمْ إِنْ كَانَ اللَّهُ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يُغْوِيَكُمْ  
 هُوَ رَبُّكُمْ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

“And my advice will not benefit you if I wanted to advise you, if Allāh wills to lead you astray. He is your Lord and to Him you will return.”

[Hūd (11):34].

For indeed whatever Allāh wills, it is [as He wills], even if people do not want it; and whatever He does not will, will not be, even if people desire it.

### [1.14: Following Desires and Whims]

What is intended by the *ayah* is to warn them from following those who follow their desires. In other words, it means: ‘I wish for you good which will benefit you and they wish evil for you which will harm you, like *Shayṭān* who wishes to lead you astray and the people of desire follow him; so do not take him and his children as friends and protectors beside Me, rather adhere to the paths of the guidance and right guidance, and beware of the paths of straying and corruption’. As He, exalted is He, said:

فَمَنْ أَتَّبَعَ هُدَايَ فَلَا يَضِلُّ وَلَا يَشْقَى ﴿١٢٣﴾

“So whoever follows guidance, then he will not be misguided or be unhappy.”

[Tābā (20): 123].

And His statement:

يَتَّبِعُونَ الشَّهَوَاتِ

“...follow desires.”

[*al-Nisā'* (4): 27]

is in two places. To follow desires is a type of following whims, as He, exalted is He, said:

أَنَّمَا يَتَّبِعُونَ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ وَمَنْ أَضَلُّ مِمَّنِ اتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ بِغَيْرِ  
هُدًى مِنَ اللَّهِ

“They only follow their whims, and who is more misguided than he who follows his whims without guidance from Allāh.”

[*al-Qaṣaṣ* (28): 50]

And He, exalted is He, said:

وَلَوْ اتَّبَعَ الْحَقُّ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ لَفَسَدَتِ السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ وَمَنْ  
فِيهِنَّ

“And if the truth was according to their whims truly the Heavens, the Earth and all that is in them would be corrupted.”

[*al-Mu'minūn* (23): 71]

Allāh also said:

وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا أَهْوَاءَ قَوْمٍ قَدْ ضَلُّوا مِنْ قَبْلُ

“And do not follow the whims of a people that strayed before you.”

[*al-Mā'idah* (5): 77],

He, exalted is He, said:

أَفَمَنْ كَانَ عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٍ  
مِنْ رَبِّهِ كَمَنْ زُيِّنَ لَهُ سُوءُ عَمَلِهِ وَاتَّبَعُوا أَهْوَاءَهُمْ ﴿١٤﴾

“Is he who is upon a proof from his Lord like those whose evil deeds are made to appear good to them and they follow their whims?”

[*Muḥammad* (47): 14]

And Allāh said:

وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

“And do not follow the whims of those who do not have knowledge.”

[*al-Jāthiyyah* (45): 18]

This is mentioned in the Qur’ān a great deal.

‘Whim’ (*hawā*) is a verbal noun from the verb ‘to fancy’. The present tense form of the verb is ‘*yahwi*’ and the past tense form is ‘*hawā*’ as well. For a person who is desirous (*mahwiyy*) whatever he fancies is called ‘*hawā*’, thus he follows it like he follows a path. As Allāh, exalted is He, said:

وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا أَهْوَاءَ قَوْمٍ قَدْ ضَلُّوا مِنْ قَبْلُ

“And do not follow the whims of a people that strayed before you.”

[*al-Mā'idah* (5): 77],

and as in the term ‘*shahwah*’, then what is intended by following whims is a term itself based on the verbal noun, in other words, following his desires and fancies which are his whims. Following desires is acting upon whatever the ‘*self*’ desires. It is as Allāh, exalted is He, said:

وَاتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ مَنْ أَنَابَ إِلَيَّ تُرَابِي

“And follow the path of he who turns in repentance to Me.”

[*Luqman* (31): 15]

and

وَأَنَّ هَذَا صِرَاطِي مُسْتَقِيمًا فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا السُّبُلَ  
فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ

“And this, My path, is straight, so follow it and do not follow the [other] paths for they will separate you from His path.”

[*al-An‘ām* (6): 153]

and further, He said:

وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ

“And do not follow protectors or friends beside Him.”

[*al-A‘rāf* (7): 3]

So the term ‘follow’ means to follow the authoritative prohibition, the command and the prohibition, and it is directed at the one commanded and the one prohibited. It is the straight path.

Likewise for whims there is a command and a prohibition- a command of the self and a prohibition. Just as Allāh, exalted is He, said:

إِنَّ النَّفْسَ  
لَأَمَّارَةٌ بِالسُّوءِ إِلَّا مَرَّعَةً رَبِّيَ إِنَّ رَبِّيَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

“Indeed the self constantly urges evil except for when my Lord grants mercy. Indeed my Lord is forgiving, merciful.”

[*Yūsuf* (12): 53]

However what [the self] commands of objectionable acts, then one of them requires another. Thus the following of a command is an act of one who is commanded and following a command of the self is an act of what [the self] desires. So based on this, it is known that the following of desires and the following of whims is following the desire of the self and its whims and that is by acting upon what

it desires and fancies.

Rather it has been said: this is what is specified in the wording '*following desires and whims*' since that which one desires and fancies only comes into being after desiring and fancying and a person is disparaged only when he does what he desires and fancies upon its coming into being. So at the time he acts [upon his desires and whims], he is not prohibited from it after its coming into being, and it is not said to its companion '*do not follow your whims*'.

Also, the act that is desirable and wished for which a person fancies is to follow his desires and whims, thus desires and whims do not follow him. So to follow desires is to follow the desires of the self. And when [the self] produces a desire, in the sense of something that it find desirable, in spite of contradicting the source [to be internal], it calls for producing externally what is desired and the person follows it like a desired woman or food. And if the woman is designated as a desire and food as well, like what the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Every act of the son of Adam is for him except fasting. For indeed it is for Me and I will reward him for leaving his food, drink and desire for My sake"<sup>8</sup> in other words, he abandons his desire. He only neglects what he desires like he neglects food, not that he leaves his food through abandoning the desire existing in his self. For indeed that is a characteristic in him that he is naturally disposed to and he is only rewarded if he abandons what that desire demands of him.

'*The reality of the matter*' consists of two inseparable things- whoever follows a desire existing in himself, he follows what he desires; and similarly whoever follows a whim existing in himself, he follows what he fancies. That is among the effects of desire and following desires- obedience to its command and acting upon what it demands

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<sup>8</sup> Bukhārī, vol.13, p.464 and Muslim vol.2, p.807.

of him like a follower of orders who follows the command of his commander. It is inevitable that he will imagine the objective that he fancies and desires in his self and he will envision it before acting upon it. That image persists, like the Imām with the one following him in prayer- he follows him wherever he is, and his external actions follow the lead of what is internal. Thus the image of what is desired and sought after, which is in the self, is the motivation and commander of the individual.

Due to this, it is said: the final cause is the effective cause, so the person, due to the final cause—through this imagining and wishing—becomes a doer because of the act and this image in the self that is fancied and sought after makes the doer act. Thus the person is a follower of it and *Shayṭān* helps him in straying, and [*Shayṭān*] strengthens this image and its effects and makes following it seem attractive to the person. This image reaches for the form of the very thing wished for such as what is desirable among images, food and drink. It reaches for the essence of the act which is the pursuit of that wished for desirable thing, and which *Shayṭān* and the self fancy, and whenever he imagines that desirable thing in his self, he wishes for it to exist externally. Then indeed the first thought is the last acted upon and the first wished for is the last obtained.

Because of this, a person remains a prisoner to his desires and whims; because of that he is subdued under the authority of a whim greater than any conqueror. For indeed this capricious conqueror, the conqueror of the slave is a characteristic existing in his self. And the mental image that the self seeks after is impossible for him to definitively separate from. So the beloved thing the self seeks to obtain and represent in his self, is a follower of the wish, even if the mental image and adornment of the matter are from the beauty and desired fantasy in his self. What is desired existing externally

holds two motivations for him- the fantasy and the desired thing. This provokes in him a movement of seeking and command, and it commands him to follow its demands and commands. Thus following the desires and whims deals with all of this in contrast to every conqueror a person can break away from. For indeed it is possible for him to break away from him while his self remains upon the same state, and in this case [of desires and whims] he can only break away from it by altering the condition of his self.

Thus the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “There are three things which lead to destruction: stinginess (*shubḥ*) obeyed, a whim (*hawā*) followed, and the admiration (*aʿjāb*) of a man for himself. And three things lead to salvation: Fearing Allāh in private and in public, moderation (*qaṣd*) in poverty and richness, and a word of truth (*kalima al-ḥaqq*) while angry (*ghadab*) or pleased (*ridā*).”<sup>9</sup>

In the narration, his statement ‘a whim followed’ is proof that what is followed is something that lies in the self, like what is said about the statement ‘stinginess obeyed’. He made stinginess something obeyed because it commands while he made the whim something to be followed. That is because something followed is a leader to be imitated and it is not a commander.

In both Bukhārī and Muslim it is related that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Beware of stinginess (*shubḥ*) for indeed it destroyed those before you. It commanded them to be miserly (*bukḥl*), so they were miserly. It commanded them to be oppressive (*ẓulm*), so they oppressed. And it commanded them to cut ties of kinship (*qaṭiʿah*), so they cut the ties of kinship.”<sup>10</sup> Thus he clarified that stinginess commands miserli-

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<sup>9</sup> *Shuʿab al-Īmān* #731; declared ḥasan by al-Albānī.

<sup>10</sup> Abū Dāwūd #1698 with a slightly different wording; declared ṣaḥīḥ by al-Albānī.



ness, oppression, and the severing of ties. Miserliness is an obstacle to that which benefits people through their selves and wealth while oppression is an aggression against them.

The first is negligence in what is obligated, so he will be negligent in what he is obligated to do and aggressive against them in acting upon what is prohibited. And he singled out the severing of ties by mentioning it out of respect for it since it is involved in the two matters that came before it.

### [1.15: The Explanation of ‘Miserliness’ (*bukhū*), ‘Stinginess’ (*shubh*) and ‘Envy’ (*ḥasad*)]

The exegetes said regarding the *ayah*:

وَمَنْ يُوقَ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِ

“And whoever is saved from the stinginess of his self...”

[*al-Ḥashr* (59): 9],

it is to not take something that Allāh has prohibited and to not refuse something that Allāh has commanded to be paid. Stinginess commands the opposite of what Allāh and His Messenger command. Allāh prohibits oppression and orders good deeds, and stinginess orders oppression and prohibits good deeds.

‘Abdu’l-Raḥmān Ibn ‘Awf (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*) used to circumambulate the Ka‘bah often and during the stay on ‘Arafah would say: ‘Oh Allāh, save me from the stinginess of my ‘self’. He was asked about that, so he said: ‘When I am saved from the stinginess of my ‘self’, I am saved from oppression, miserliness, and severing ties of kinship’. It was also transmitted from him<sup>11</sup>: ‘Indeed I fear that I will

<sup>11</sup> This is actually transmitted on authority of Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*)

be destroyed'. Someone said: 'By what?' He said: 'I heard Allāh saying:

وَمَنْ يُوقَ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِ

“And whoever is saved from the stinginess of his self...”

[*al-Hashr* (59): 9],

while I am a stingy man. I can barely let anything go from my hands.' So he said: 'That is not the stinginess that Allāh mentions in the Qur'ān. Stinginess is only that you consume the wealth of your brother oppressively and miserliness. And what an evil thing is miserliness.'

Allāh, exalted is He, has mentioned 'stinginess' in the context of envy and selflessness in the *ayah*:

وَلَا يَجِدُونَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ حَاجَةً  
مِمَّا أُوتُوا وَيُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ

“And [*al-Anṣār*] do not find in their chests a need for what [*al-Muhājirūn*] were given and they prefer them over themselves even though they are in poverty”

[*al-Hashr* (59): 9],

then He said:

وَمَنْ يُوقَ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

“And whoever is saved from the stinginess of his self, then those, they are the successful.”

So whoever is saved from the stinginess of his self is not envious and hateful towards the one he envies. The basis of envy is the hatred towards the one envied.

Stinginess can be in a man along with greed (*hirs*), a strong desire (*raghba*) for wealth, hatred (*bughd*) for another, and oppression (*zulm*)

of him, as Allāh, exalted is He, stated:

فَدَبَعَهُمُ اللَّهُ الْمَعْوِفِينَ مِنْكُمْ وَالْقَائِلِينَ  
لِإِخْوَانِهِمْ هَلُمَّ إِلَيْنَا وَلَا يَأْتُونَ الْبَأْسَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿١٨﴾ أَشِحَّةً  
عَلَيْكُمْ

“And Allāh knows those who stay behind among you and say to their brothers ‘Come to us’. And they do not come to the fiercest part of the battle except a few in indignation towards you...”,

up to:

أَشِحَّةً عَلَى الْخَيْرِ أُولَئِكَ لَمْ يُؤْمِنُوا فَأَحْبَطَ  
اللَّهُ أَعْمَالَهُمْ

“...stingy at any good. Those do not believe. Thus Allāh has frustrated their efforts”

[*al-Aḥzāb* (33): 18-19]

So their stinginess with the Believers and anything good includes disliking and hating them. Hating any good demands evil, and hating people demands oppressing and severing ties with them, as with envy. For indeed envy demands that a person envy the other through oppressing the one envied and severing ties with him as with the sons of Adam and the brothers of Yūsuf.

So envy and stinginess include hatred and dislike and they both pose as an obstacle to the obligatory and an oppression of that person. Indeed the act originates in him from hatred in contrast with whims, which originate from fancy. A person fancies something then follows it and does it, and his aim in that is a non-existent order, and the non-existent has no benefit. However that objective [envy] is a matter with an existent order, so its command is obeyed. Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*) made miserliness outside of stinginess and the

Prophet (ﷺ) made stinginess demand miserliness.

There are those who say that stinginess and miserliness are the same as Ibn Jarīr said: ‘Stinginess in the Arabic language is miserliness and an obstacle to blessings from wealth.’ And it is not as he said, rather what the Prophet (ﷺ) and Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāb ‘anhu*) said has more of a right to be followed for indeed the miserly are miserly with wealth out of love for what they are able to obtain of enjoyment and comfort in it. He cannot be truly delighted with it or comfortable, rather his self becomes tight from spending and it dislikes that to the point that he dislikes to spend on himself from it despite having a large amount of wealth. And this is despite his enjoyment in gathering wealth and his love of seeing it. There is no real enjoyment here as a basis, rather he dislikes to do any good for anyone to the point that even if someone else wished to give something, he dislikes that. It is out of hatred for any good, not for the one giving and not for the one being given, rather out of hatred for any good whatsoever. To hate and envy the one giving and the one given is stinginess and this is that which absolutely demands miserliness, although every instance of stinginess is miserly, though not every instance of miserliness is stinginess.

Al-Khaṭṭabī said: ‘Stinginess is more serious in posing as an obstacle than miserliness. Miserliness is only one out of the various issues and characteristics of things. Stinginess is general, so it is like the description required for a person with respect to natural disposition and innate character.’

Al-Khaṭṭabī related about some of them: ‘Miserliness is to begrudge people with wealth, and stinginess is to begrudge with wealth and goodness.’ And it is said stinginess is to be stingy about someone else doing good for others and miserliness is to be miserly about doing good for others. Those who follow desires and follow their

whims love that and wish for it so they follow their fancies and wishes without knowledge. They do not look to see whether that benefits or harms them in the end.

### [1.16: The Levels of Following Whims]

Due to this, He said:

فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا يُتَّبَعُونَ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ

“Thus know that they only follow their whims”,

and then said:

أَنَّمَا يُتَّبَعُونَ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ وَمَنْ أَضَلُّ مِمَّنْ اتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ يُغَيِّرُ  
هُدًى مِنَ اللَّهِ

“And who is more misguided than one who follows his whims without guidance from Allāh?”

[*al-Qaṣaṣ* (28): 50]

‘Following whims’ has various levels (*darajāt*). Among them are the polytheists and those who worship beside Allāh what they deem as good without knowledge or proof, as He said:

أَفَرَأَيْتَ مَنِ اتَّخَذَ إِلَهَهُ هَوَاهُ

“Have you seen the one who take his whims as a god?”

[*al-Jāthiyah* (45): 23]

In other words, he takes as his god who he worships, and it is who he fancies among gods. It is not said that his whims themselves are his god for not everyone who fancies something, worships it. For indeed whims have divisions, rather what is intended is that he made what he fancies a thing to be worshiped. Thus his worship was to follow the whims of his self in acts of worship. Indeed he does not

worship what he fancies to worship and does not perform the worship which he was commanded to do.

This is the condition of the people of innovation, for indeed they worship something other than Allāh and they innovate acts of worship alleging that they are worshipping Allāh through it. Thus they are only following their whims for indeed one of them follows the fancy of his self, its tastes, passions and whims without knowledge, guidance or an illuminating book. For if they followed knowledge and the Illuminating Book, they would not worship but Allāh through what He wills and not through fabrications and innovations.

What is intended is that there are large number of gods and the ways of worshipping them vary. In general all of what a person wishes for and fancies is inevitable for him to imagine it in his self. So that cognitive image is a motivation for him towards what he fancies and the dictates of that fancy. Thus whoever worships it, worships something other than Allāh and demons appear to him in the form of who he worships. This continues a great deal and has not ended. Due to this, everyone who worships something other than Allāh is only worshipping *Shayṭān*. Due to this, *Shayṭān* unites with the sun when it is rising and setting and becomes level with it so that the prostrations of whoever worships it are for him as well. Demons appear in the form of whoever is worshiped just like they speak to them from the idols which they worship. Similarly, in our time a great number of people from those who attribute themselves to Islām, the Christians and polytheists, they commit *Shirk* with some of those who they aggrandize from the living and the dead mashāyikh and others—they call upon [the beloved figure], seek his help in his lifetime and after his death and see him. He comes and speaks to them and fulfills their needs while it is only a *Shayṭān* appearing in his form in order to lead astray this polytheist.

*Shayṭān* does not cease appearing to those afflicted with passion (*‘ishq*) for something in the form of what they are passionate about, or he mimics its form. Thus [the polytheist] does not cease seeing [the beloved’s] form despite his absence from him after his death. *Shayṭān* only reveals himself to his heart and due to this when the slave mentions the remembrance of Allāh which the retreating whisperer (*waswās al-khannās*) withdraws from, this Satanic image and the image of the beloved withdraws.

At times it overpowers the lover (*mahbūb*) to the point that he does not see anything else, he does not hear any other words, and thus his self remains exploited by it. A form of that happens to some of those taking the path of loving Allāh as a deficient path. It is called *‘istilām*’ and *‘fanā’*.

A form of that happens to some of those taking the path of loving Allāh as a deficient path. It is called *‘istilām*’ and *‘fanā’*? He disappears with his beloved from his love, with his grace from his awareness and with his remembered from his remembrance until he does not sense anything of the Names, Attributes, Speech, commands and prohibitions of Allāh.

Among them are those who have moved on from this to divine *‘Union*’ (*ittihād*). They say: ‘I am Him, and He is me, and I am Allāh’. The majority of those who follow this path believe this person is the highest degree of those who follow this path and that this is true *‘faith in the Oneness of Allāh*’ (*tawhīd*) which is the final stage of every follower. They are in error in this, rather this is among the types of views of the Christians although they strayed because they did not follow the legal path inwardly regarding the reports of Allāh and His commands. The discussion of this has been expanded upon at another point.

What is intended is that what those who follow their desires crave for of images, food, drink and clothing overwhelms their heart to the point that it subdues it, reigns over it, and leaves it a slave. Whatever he fancies diverts him in whatever way that sought after thing behaves, and due to this some of the predecessors said: ‘What I fear more for the ascetic youth than a predatory animal leaping on him is a young boy sitting with him.’

It is that the unadulterated self (*nafs al-ṣāfiyya*) which has the delicateness of training (*riyāda*) and is not attracted to the love of Allāh and His worship has complete attraction. And what diverts [the self] from its fancy does not accomplish it out of complete fear of Allāh when it becomes subject to an image among the images; this image overwhelms [the self] just as the predatory animal overcomes what he preys upon. Thus the predatory animal takes his prey by force and the prey is not able to stop it. Similarly what a person portrays in his heart of beloved images swallows and subdues his heart. So his heart is not able to refrain from it and it remains engrossed in this image in a greater way than the prey is immersed in his fear of the lion. This is because the beloved and sought after thing is the objective of the self (*ghāya al-nafs*) and it has a powerful authority over it.

### [1.17: The Heart is Between Love (*ḥubb*) and Fear (*kawf*)]

The heart drowns in whatever overpowers it whether from what is loved or feared just like what happens with love of wealth, status, image and fear of others. A person’s heart and mind remain drowning in it just like the drowning person drowns in water. It is inevitable that what surrounds bodies and hearts will overcome them; whatever is portrayed to it of fears, loves and dislikes will overpower [the self], for what is loved demands it, what is disliked repels it, while hope



is attached to what is loved and fear is attached to what is disliked. Only Allāh bestows good deeds and removes sins:

وَأِنْ يَمَسُّكَ اللَّهُ بِضُرٍّ فَلَا كَاشِفَ لَهُ إِلَّا هُوَ وَإِنْ  
يُرِيدَ بِكَ بَخِيرًا فَلَا رَادَّ لِفَضْلِهِ يُصِيبُ بِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ  
وَهُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٠٧﴾

“And if Allāh touches you with harm then there is no one who can remove it except Him; and if intends some good for you, then there is no one who can repel His favour. He afflicts whoever He wills from among His slaves, and He is the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful”

[*Yūnus* (10): 107],

and:

وَمَا يَكُم مِّنْ  
نِّعْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ تُمْرًا إِذَا مَسَّكُمُ الضُّرُّ فَإِلَيْهِ تَجْتَرُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾

“And what you have of blessings, then it is from Allāh. Then when some harm touches you, to Him you supplicate”

[*al-Nabl* (27): 53]

When the slave calls his Lord to bestow upon him something he seeks and to repel from him something he fears, He gives it to him out of his faith in Allāh, his love, knowledge, faith in the Oneness of Allāh, hope, and the life in his heart. He illuminates for him with the light of faith what would be the most beneficial for him from that which he seeks, whether it was a vanity of this world or if he asked that He support him with remembering and thanking Him, to make his worship excellent and whatever pertain to that. Thus here, what is sought after can be more beneficial than the manner of seeking, and it is the supplication itself for that which is sought

after is remembrance, thankfulness, and standing in worship upon the most excellent of intentions, among other things. And this is for elaboration at another point in time.

What is intended is that the heart is engulfed, then what the slave wishes for, loves, fears, and is weary of overpowers it, whoever it is, and due to this Allāh, exalted is He, said:

بَلْ قُلُوبُهُمْ فِي غَمْرٍ مِّنْ هَذَا وَهُمْ أَعْمَلُ مِنْ دُونِ ذَلِكَ هُمْ لَهَا  
عَمِلُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

“Rather their hearts are in distress [literally, a flood] from this [Qur’ān]. And they have deeds beside that which they are performing”

[*al-Mu’minūn* (23): 63]

What [the self] is covered from is what it is warned by. So that covers it from the remembrance of Allāh, the Final Abode and whatever is in it of pleasures and agonizing punishment. Allāh, exalted is He, said:

فَذَرَّهُمْ فِي غَمْرَتِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ حِينٍ ﴿٥٤﴾

“So leave them in their misguidance [literally, a flood] for a time”

[*al-Mu’minūn* (23): 54],

in other words, [leave them] in whatever has drowned their hearts of the love of wealth and children—the obstacle to hastening towards good and righteous deeds. He, exalted is He, said:

قُلْ الْخَرَّاصُونَ ﴿١٠﴾ الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي غَمْرٍ وَسَاهُونَ ﴿١١﴾

“May the liars be cursed, who are in doubt [literally, a flood], oblivious”

[*al-Dhāriyāt* (51): 10-11],

in other words, oblivious about the matter of the Afterlife. So they are in ‘a flood’ with regards to [the Afterlife], meaning, their hearts are drowning from love for the worldly life and its wares, oblivious to the matter of the Afterlife and what they were created for. This is similar to what Allāh said:

وَلَا تُطِيعَنَّ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُ، عَنِ ذِكْرِنَا وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ وَكَانَ  
 أَمْرُهُ فُرُطًا ﴿٢٨﴾

“And do not obey the one whose heart We have made heedless from Our Remembrance, who follows his whims, and whose affair is destroyed”

[*al-Kabf* (18): 28]

Thus the ‘flood’ (*gamra*) is from following whims (*hawā*) and ‘obliviousness’ (*sahn*) is a type of heedlessness (*ghafla*). Due to this, some said that ‘obliviousness’ is heedlessness about something and the departing of the heart from it. This is the combination of the evil of heedlessness and desires. So heedlessness from Allāh and the Final Abode blocks the gate of good which is remembrance and vigilance.

And desires (*shahwa*) open the gate of evil (*sharr*), obliviousness (*sahn*) and fear (*kamf*) so the heart remains drowning in what it fancies and fears, heedless of Allāh, seeking something other than Allāh, and oblivious to His remembrance. He has toiled for something other than Allāh; his affair has been dissolved; and love for the worldly life has overwhelmed his heart. This is just as was transmitted in Bukhārī and other collections on authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “May the slave of the *dīnār* be destroyed; may the slave of the *dirhām* be destroyed; may the slave of plush clothing be destroyed; may the slave of the shirt be destroyed; may he be destroyed and fall backwards. If he is afflicted with a thorn, let him not be able to remove it. If given something, he is pleased,

and if refused, he becomes resentful.’<sup>12</sup>

He appointed him as worshiper of that which its existence was pleasing to him and whose loss made him resentful to the point that he was a slave of the *dīnār* and a slave of all that was described in this narration. ‘Plush clothing’ refers to that which is sat upon, thus he is its servant just as some of the predecessors said: ‘Wear garments that serve you and do not wear ones that you serve.’ And they are like a carpet which you sit on. ‘*Shirt*’ is that which worn out of having very little wealth. The Prophet (ﷺ) only pointed out what is superior to the person, thus he is a slave to that: in it are disunited lords and quarreling partners.

Due to this the Prophet (ﷺ) said: ‘If given something, he is pleased, and if refused, he becomes resentful.’ So that which its occurrence is pleasing to a person and its loss makes him resentful, then he is its slave since the slave is pleased with being connected to them both and is resentful due to losing them both. ‘The one deserving of worship’ is He who there is no god worthy of worship except Him, since the Believer worships and loves Him. Belief, faith in the Oneness of Allāh, love, remembrance and worship take place for the Believer in his heart through that. So he is pleased with that, and if he is prevented from that, he gets angry.

Similarly, whoever loves something, then it is inevitable that he imagine it in his heart, and he will wish to be connected with it to the extent that he is able.

Al-Junayd said: ‘The slave is not really a slave until he is free from everything except Allāh.’

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<sup>12</sup> Bukhārī, vol.6, p81 and Ibn Mājah vol.2, p1386.

That is in harmony with the aforementioned narration, for indeed one is not a pure, sincere slave to Allāh whose entire religion is for Allāh alone until he is not a slave to anything except Him and does not have in him any branch and does not draw near to even a fraction of worship for anything except Allāh. Thus, if he is pleased with or resentful about something besides Allāh, then he is a slave to that 'other', and has in him polytheism in proportion to his love for it and his worship for that 'other' is in addition to that.

Al-Fuḍayl Ibn 'Iyād said: 'By Allāh, Allāh has not approved of divinity for anything in creation.' And Zayd Ibn 'Amr Ibn Nufayl said:

Is there a single Lord or a thousand?  
Is it a religion since the affairs are scattered?

Imām Aḥmad, Tirmidhī and Ṭabarānī transmitted a narration from 'Asmā' Ibn 'Umays (*radīy Allāh 'anhā*), that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: "How evil is the servant who shows off, struts, and forgets the Most Exalted. How evil is the slave who acts tyrannically, transgresses, and forgets the All-powerful, Most High. How evil is the slave who is oblivious, distracted, and forgets the grave and decomposition. How evil is the slave who rebels, transgresses, and forgets the Beginning and the End. How evil is the slave who cheats the worldly life with the religion. How evil is the slave who cheats the religion with doubts. How evil is the slave who is greedy, and it lowers him and makes him slip from the truth. How evil is the slave whose covetousness directs him. How evil is the slave whose whims misguide him." Tirmidhī said the narration is 'unique' [*gharīb*], however there is a previously mentioned narration which strengthens it, and Allāh knows best.

Likewise there are a number of narrations and reports transmitted that have that meaning, just as Allāh, exalted is He, said:

وَمِنَ  
النَّاسِ مَن يَتَّخِذُ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ أَندَادًا يُحِبُّونَهُمْ كَحُبِّ اللَّهِ  
وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ

“And among the people are those who take equals beside Allāh, loving them as they should love Allāh. And those who believe have a greater love for Allāh”

[*al-Baqarah* (2): 165]

Speech which has in it aggrandizement, even if false, pleases those who seek leadership, even if through falsehood. And speech which has in it dispraise of him, even if true, angers him. While words of truth, whether for or against him, please the believer, and words of falsehood, whether for or against him, anger him. This is because Allāh, exalted is He, loves the truth, honesty and justice and He gets angry at lies and oppression.

If it is said: ‘Truth (*haqq*), honesty (*sidq*) and justice (*‘adl*) which Allāh loves are more beloved to him even if in that is something that opposes his whims’, it is because his whims have become subjected to what the Messenger came with. Therefore it is said: ‘Oppression and lies anger Allāh and they anger the Believer even if they agree with his whims.’

Similarly is the seeker of wealth, even if through falsehood, as Allāh, exalted is He, said:

وَمِنْهُمْ مَّن يَلْمِزُكَ  
فِي الصَّدَقَاتِ فَإِنْ أُعْطُوا مِنْهَا رَضُوا وَإِنْ لَمْ يُعْطُوا مِنْهَا إِذَا  
هُمْ يَسْخَطُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾

“And among them are those who find fault with you

regarding the voluntary charity- for if given from it, they are pleased; and if not given from it, then they are resentful”

[*al-Tawbah* (9): 58]

These are the ones about whom it is said: “*May the slave of the dīnār be destroyed...*” in the narration. So how, when what is greater overpowers the heart, in subjugation to the *dirbām* and *dīnār* [money], to desires, whims, and beloved things which draw the heart away from completing his love and worship for Allāh, due to what is in it of rivalry and ascribing partners with Allāh to created thing—how can the heart repel this while it diverts him from completing his love, worship and fear for his Lord? This is because all beloved things attract the heart to what is beloved to it and divert him away from loving what is not beloved to it. Likewise what is disliked repels him, causes him to slip and distracts him from worshipping Allāh, exalted is He.

And because of this, Imām Aḥmad transmitted in his *Musnad* and other collections that the Prophet (ﷺ) said to his Companions: “You fear poverty. I do not fear poverty for you. I only fear the worldly life for you so that when any of your hearts deviate, it will not be diverted except by [the worldly life].”<sup>13</sup>

Similarly are those who love the slave, like his friends, and those who anger him like his enemies. Those he loves are loving towards him and when their love for him is not for the sake of Allāh, that is something that will cut him off from Allāh. And those who anger, harm, and are hostile towards him, through their harm they distract him from Allāh. Even if his friends, who love him for the sake of something other than Allāh, are good towards him, his love for them

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<sup>13</sup> This narration is transmitted with a different wording than this in the *Musnad* vol.6, p21 and also by Ibn Mājah vol.1, p4 with a different wording.

necessitates their goodness towards him and the gravitation of his heart towards them. Even if he was on a non-righteous path and it necessitated his reciprocation of their [goodness], they would cut him off from Allāh and worshipping Him.

### [1.18: Rescuing the Heart from Trials]

Trials (*fitna*) do not cease coming over the heart unless the slave's entire way of life is for the sake of Allāh, lofty and sublime is He. Thus his love would be for Allāh and for anything Allāh loves and his anger would be for Allāh and anything that angers Allāh, and likewise his alliances and hostilities. Otherwise love for the creation will draw him in. Love of the creation is a means for him to attract them towards him, the none makes the other stronger. Thus when he defeats his whims, neither something defeated nor its being beloved will attract him towards it despite his whims. On account of the defeat of his whims, there is a prohibitive factor from whims for his self, due to what is in his heart of fear and love for Allāh which prevents him from gravitating toward beloved things.

As for people's love for him, then indeed it necessitates that they draw him in, and they with their strength, towards them. So if he does not possess the strength to repel them from his self out of love and fear of Allāh, then they will draw him in and take him towards them, like the love of the wife of al-'Aziz for Yūsuf. For indeed the strength of Yūsuf and his love, sincerity and fear for Allāh was stronger than the beauty and charm of the wife of al-'Aziz and his fondness for her. This is since one of them loved his appearance, and in addition to that, the motives were strong than him and them. In this case the one who is protected is he who Allāh protects. Otherwise, in most cases some evil happens between people regarding



love from both angles.

Due to this, the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: “A man is not alone with a woman except *Shayṭān* is the third of them.”<sup>14</sup>

### [1.19: The Condition of Those Who Support Something Other Than Allāh]

Loving him due to his knowledge, way of life and goodness or other qualities, makes the trial in this greater unless there is a strong belief (*quwa imāniyya*), fear (*khashiya*) and complete faith in the Oneness of Allāh (*tawḥīd*). For indeed the trial of knowledge, status and appearances is a trial for all who are captivated. And despite that they seek from him their objectives—if he does not do it, otherwise the love decreases or a form of anger takes place. Perhaps it increases or leads to the disengagement from love for him- so he becomes one who causes anger after being one who was loved. So the friends of a person love for him to be subjugated to and employed in their aims to the point that he is like a slave for them. And his enemies strive to hurt and harm him. And they seek their own advantage from him even if it is harmful to him and corruptive for his way of life; they do not give any thought to that. And few of them are thankful.

So in reality, the above two groups [friends for other than Allāh and enemies] do not intend on benefitting him nor do they defend him from harm, rather they only seek their own objectives through him. For if the person is not a slave of Allāh, one who relies completely on Him, a supporter for Him, and hostile for His sake, then the two groups will consume him and that will lead to his destruction in the

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<sup>14</sup> Aḥmad vol.1, p26 and Tirmidhī vol.2, p319 transmitted it; declared ṣaḥīḥ by al-Albānī.

worldly life and the Afterlife.

This is well-known as among the conditions of the children of Adam and what happens between them of battles, disputes, differences and trials.

### [1.20: The Straight Path]

A people support Zayd and are hostile towards 'Amr, and others the reverse, on account of their objectives, therefore their objectives are reached with whom they support. And if they do not obtain what they seek from Zayd, they change to the side of 'Amr, and likewise with the companions of 'Amr. This is just like what the reality is between the different types of people.

Similarly is the *'leader'* from two sides who inclines towards one side who support him. If their support is not for the sake of Allāh, they are more harmful to him than the other side. For indeed the other side only intend on corrupting his worldly life whether by killing him, taking his wealth or removing him from his position and all of this is a worldly harm. It is trivial when the slave accepts it. It is the reverse of the situation for people concerned with the worldly life and their love for it and those who, as long as their worldly life is secure, they are not concerned if their religion is corrupted. Thus they are not worried by that. As for the religion of the slave which is between him and Allāh, then they have no power over him in that.

## [1.21: The Harm of Support for the Sake of Worldly Interest]

With regards to his supporters who support him for certain objectives, then they only intended to corrupt his religion through his assistance with their objectives and other matters. If he does not assist them, they change into enemies. By that harm is introduced against him from two angles:

- 1) from the angle of their departure
- 2) from the angle of their enmity.

The enmity [of former supporters] is worse for a person than that of his enemies since [former supporters] have observed him and they know what his enemies do not. So with that they can enlist the enmity of others, thus the enmity [against who they formerly supported] doubles.

And if he does not prefer for them to depart, he takes their flattery and assistance for what they want of him, even if that includes corruption of his religion. If he helps them to obtain a worldly position, whatever work they do he obtains an abundant and complete share of their oppression and injustice. And they still demand that he support them in their objectives, even if his worldly objectives are not achieved. So how about religious objectives, if even considered at all, for indeed the human being is an oppressor, ignorant, and does not seek but his own whims.

Thus, if this does not exist on the inside, he will be nice towards them and be patient with their harm. He will fulfill their needs for the sake of Allāh and seek help from Him against them and rely on Allāh completely. Otherwise, they will corrupt his religion and worldly life just as is the reality witnessed from the people who seek worldly

leadership. For indeed what he achieves through this leadership calls for oppression and disobedience from him and this idea becomes fair seeming to him. It antagonizes him if it is not situated with him just as that has happened with many people.

It happens with someone who loves a person for his appearance. He serves him, honours him and gives him whatever he is able to. He also seeks from him something prohibited that will corrupt his religion.

It also happens with someone who loves a companion of innovation due to him being a caller to this innovation. [The caller] needs him to support the falsehood that he knows is falsehood, otherwise [if he does not support the caller] he treats him as an enemy. Due to this the scholars of the disbelievers and the people of innovation, despite their knowledge that they are following falsehood, become supporters of that falsehood because their followers and those who love them treat the people of truth as enemies and disparage their path.

So whoever loves and relies on someone other than Allāh will dislike those who love and rely on Allāh. And whoever loves another person for the sake of something other than Allāh, his friendship is more harmful for that person than the harm of his enemies. For indeed the objective of his enemies to intervene between him and some worldly love and to pose as a hindrance between him and [the worldly love] is in fact a mercy for him. And his friends help him to deny this mercy and its departing from him. So what kind of friendship is this? They prefer to perpetuate that [worldly] love to use it for their own objectives and for what they desire of it, and each of those two things is harmful to him.

Allāh, exalted is He, said:

إِذْ تَبَرَّأَ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوا مِنَ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوا وَرَأَوْا الْعَذَابَ  
وَتَقَطَّعَتْ بِهِمُ الْأَسْبَابُ ﴿١٦٦﴾

“When those who were followed disavow those who followed them, they see the punishment and sever all ties with them”

[*al-Baqarah* (2): 166].

Al-Fuḍayl bin ‘Iyāa said, on authority of Layth, on authority of Mujāhid: ‘[The ‘*ties*’] are the friendships which were for the sake of something other than Allāh, and the connections which existed between them in the worldly life:

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوا لَوْ كُنَّا  
لَنَا كَرَّةٌ فَنَتَبَرَّأُ مِنْهُمْ كَمَا تَبَرَّأُوا مِنَّا كَذَلِكَ يُرِيهِمُ اللَّهُ  
أَعْمَالَهُمْ حَسَرَاتٍ عَلَيْهِمْ وَمَا هُمْ بِخَارِجِينَ مِنَ النَّارِ ﴿١٦٧﴾

“And those who followed them will say: ‘If we had another chance, then we would disavow them just as they have disavowed us’. Like that Allāh will cause them to see their actions as regrets, and they will not exit from the Fire”

[*al-Baqarah* (2): 167]

Thus the ‘*actions*’ which Allāh will cause them to see as regrets are those which some of them committed with others in the worldly life that were for the sake of something other than Allāh. Loyalty, friendship and love are among those actions which were for the sake of something other than Allāh. So the best thing regarding all of that is to worship Allāh alone, without partner, and there is no strength or might except through Allāh.

## [1.22: The Cause of Love]

Among the things which bring about these matters is that the one who loves something is attracted and the thing which is loved attracts. So whoever loves something is drawn to it in proportion to its strength. And for the one who loves an image, this image draws him in towards what is available of the loved thing exterior to him in proportion to its strength. For indeed the cause of the lover is action-based, and the cause of the beloved is purpose-based, and each of them has an influence on the occurrence of the effect. The lover is only attracted to the beloved through the image he has of the beloved in his heart which he has imagined. So this image attracts him in the sense that it draws him towards it, not that it, in itself, is an end or act. For indeed in the beloved, in conformity with its connotation, is what demands the attraction of the lover to it, just as a person is attracted to food in order to eat it, to a woman in order to make love to her, and to his friend in order to keep his company. This is just like the hearts of those who love Allāh and His Messenger are attracted to Allāh, His Messenger and the righteous among His slaves due to the Attributes He, glorified is He, possesses and because of which, He deserves to be loved and worshiped.

Rather, it is not permitted to love anything among the existing things for the sake of itself except Him, glorified is He, and through His praise. Thus every beloved thing in the world is only permitted to be loved for the sake of something other than it—not for the sake of itself. And the Lord, exalted is He, is He who loves to be loved for His own sake. This is among the meaning of His Oneness in Divinity:

لَوْ كَانَ فِيهِمَا آلِهَةٌ إِلَّا اللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَا

“If there had been in them gods except Allāh, truly they would both be corrupted”

[*al-Anbiyā'* (21): 22].

Loving something for its own sake is polytheism, thus nothing should be loved for its own sake except Allāh. Since that is among the things which are specific to His Oneness in Divinity [*Ilahiyah*], then no one deserves that except Allāh alone. And every beloved thing except Him, if it is not loved for His sake or for what is loved for His sake, then its love is a matter of corruption.

Allāh, exalted is He, created in the Selves love for nutrients and women due to what they entail of preserving the body and the perpetuation of the individual. For indeed if there were no love of nutrients, what people ate would corrupt their bodies, and if there were no love of women, they would not marry and having children would come to an end. The purpose of the existence of all that is to perpetuate each of them in order to worship Allāh alone and for Him to be the one who is loved and worshipped for His own sake; He who is alone in deserving that.

The Prophets and righteous only love in accordance with His love. So to have complete love is to love what He loves, and it is to love the Prophets and righteous and righteous deeds. Thus loving them for the sake of Allāh is from the completeness of loving Him. As for the love which one has along with Him, then it is the love of the polytheists who love their partners as they love Allāh. When the creation loves something for the sake of Allāh, its love pulls towards love of Allāh. And when two men love each other for the sake of Allāh, they unite and separate over that. Each of them pulled the other towards love for Allāh, just as Allāh, exalted is He, said in a narration: “Those who love each other for My sake, truly love Me. Those who sit together for My sake, truly love Me. Those who give generously for My sake, Truly love Me. Allāh has servants who are not Prophets or martyrs, they the Prophets and martyrs will envy

them for their nearness to Allāh. They are the people who love each other through the mercy of Allāh, without the exchange of any wealth between them or sharing any ties of kinship. Their faces will have a light and they will be on thrones of light. They will not fear when everyone else is afraid nor will they grieve when they grieve.”<sup>15</sup>

Thus, when you love an individual for the sake of Allāh, it is Allāh who is beloved for His own sake. So whenever you think of him in your heart, you are thinking of the truly Beloved, thus your loving Him increases your love for the sake of Allāh. Just like when you mention the Prophet (ﷺ) the Prophets before him, the Messengers, and their righteous companions, and you imagine them in your heart, so that draws your heart towards love for Allāh, the one who bestows blessings upon them and through them. When you love them for the sake of Allāh, then the beloved for the sake of Allāh attracts towards love for Allāh, and the lover for the sake of Allāh, when he loves an individual for the sake of Allāh, then indeed Allāh is his beloved. Thus He loves that it attracts him towards Allāh, exalted is He, and all of those who love for the sake of Allāh and who are loved for the sake of Allāh, attract towards Allāh.

Likewise when love is for the sake of something other than Allāh, for instance, when each of two individuals love the other for their appearance: like a woman with a man, then indeed the lover seeks out the beloved and the beloved seeks out the lover through the attraction of the beloved. When both love each other, each of them becomes attracted and attracting from both angles. So it necessitates the connection. Even if the love was from one of the two sides, truly the lover would attract the beloved and the beloved attracts him, however the beloved does not intend to attract him and the lover intends to attract the other and drawn them in.

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<sup>15</sup> Different wording are reported for this narration. See Abū Dāwūd #3527; declared ṣaḥīḥ by al-Albānī.



This is *'the way of influence regarding the beloved'*, whether an image takes shape in his heart, then it draws him in, or he is drawn in without love, like when a man eats food, wears certain clothes, lives in a home, and similar things related to beloved matters for which there is no desire for them.

As for animals, then some love others because they are a means for good towards them. The souls have been molded to love whoever is good towards them however this is only a love for the good done to them in reality, not the love for the self of whoever did some good towards it. And if that [good] was cut off due to that love dwindling, and perhaps it results in anger, then indeed it was not for the sake of Allāh, lofty and sublime is He.

Truly whoever loves a person because of something he gave him, then he does not love but what was given. And he who says that he loves the one gave him something for the sake of Allāh is lying; it is inconceivable and false in saying. Likewise is whoever loves a person because of his helping him- he only loves the help and not the helper. And all of this is from following what the Selves desire, for in reality he does not love anything but what leads to obtaining a benefit or repelling a harm. Thus he only loves that benefit or the elimination of the harm. And he only loves that because it is a means to that which he loves and this is not love for the sake of Allāh and not for the sake of the beloved itself.

In general, the love of the creation with one another takes this course, and they will not be rewarded for this in the Afterlife nor will it benefit them, rather maybe that will lead to hypocrisy and flattery. For in the Afterlife, they could be among the friends who are enemies to one another except for those who feared Allāh. Only love in Allāh and for the sake of Allāh alone will benefit them in the Afterlife. As

for the one who hopes for some benefit or help from a person, then alleges that he loves him for the sake of Allāh, then this is from the schemes of the souls and hypocrisy of words.

Only loving for the sake of Allāh what Allāh loves among His creation, like the Prophets and righteous will benefit the slave. This is because loving them draws one nearer to Allāh and love for Him and them, they are those who deserve the love of Allāh.

Our Prophet (ﷺ) gave in order to reconcile the hearts of some and others claim they are more beloved to him than whoever he gave something to. He measured them according to what was in their hearts of faith and he only gave to reconcile their hearts due to what was in their hearts of anxiety and worry. He did it so that what he gave them could be a means to draw their hearts towards loving Islām, and then they could love Allāh. So his intention in that was to invite the hearts towards loving Allāh, lofty and sublime is He, and to divert them away from the opposite. Due to this, he would give to people fearing that Allāh would flip them around on their faces in the Hell-Fire. Thus through that gift he withheld them from what He disliked from them, thus he would give for the sake of Allāh and withhold for the sake of Allāh. The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Whoever loves, gets angry, gives, and withholds for the sake of Allāh, then he has complete faith.”<sup>16</sup>

And also in Bukhārī, on authority of the Prophet (ﷺ): “Indeed I, by Allāh, am only a distributor- I do not give to anyone or withhold from anyone, rather I put things wherever I am commanded.”<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Abū Dāwūd #4681; declared ṣaḥīḥ by al-Albānī.

<sup>17</sup> Bukhārī, vol.6, p217

### [1.23: The Control of That Which is Loved Over the One Who Loves]

The one who loves is moved by the image of the beloved imagined in the self, he desires it, loves, gets angry, rejoices and becomes pleased upon remembering it in any way. So it remains like a prohibitive commander for him. And due to this he finds in his self that it is as if it speaks to him, commanding and prohibiting him, just as happens to the majority of people that see in their dreams someone they love and venerate. He commands, prohibits, and informs them of matters.

### [1.24: The Deception of *Shayṭān* With Those Who Love Something]

Demons appear to polytheists in the images of those they worship, commanding and prohibiting them.

One of those who says he is a ‘*witness*’ and is associated with the *Ṣūfī* paths said: ‘Indeed [the one who is loved] addresses him internally in the voice of the ‘*witness*’. So among them is the one who prays at night and that [beloved Shaykh] comes face-to-face with him in order that he see him in the light. And among them is he who sees [the beloved Shaykh] in the ‘*state of audience*’ (*samā*) and outside of it, they think that they are being addressed and through that they come across a kind of increase in their hearts.’ That is because they are imagining [their beloved figures] in their souls, and perhaps *Shayṭān* is appearing in their image, and so they encounter in their souls an address from this image. Then they say: ‘We were addressed by so-and-so.’ Even if this speaker exists, who is actually speaking to him? So the criterion is here—that speech is only from the whispers of *Shayṭān* and the self.

They are addressed with good things as a bribe from [*Shaytān*] to them, and he will not address them with what they know is falsehood so that maybe they might flee from him. Rather *Shaytān* addresses one of them with what he thinks is true. When a monk is pleased with himself, at times he sees in his self an image of the Trinity. Perhaps he may be addressed by them since he had imagined them before that. So when his self becomes polished with being pleased, they appear to him. The believer who loves Allāh and His Messenger see the Messenger in his dreams in proportion to his faith, just as was expanded upon at another point in this text.

A great number of ascetics and worshipers aid the disbelievers and they allege that they are 'commanded' to do that and spoken to about it. They think that Allāh is the one who commanded them to do that, while in fact Allāh is far removed from that. The only ones who would command them with that are the self, *Shaytān* and whatever is in their souls of polytheism. Therefore if he was one whose religion was sincerely for the sake of Allāh, then truly nothing of that would appear to him. For indeed this could not happen except to someone who has polytheism in his worship or commits some innovation. This definitely does not befall someone who is sincerely adhering to the Sunnah.

Therefore 'visions' have three categories:

1. A vision from Allāh;
2. A vision from related by the self;
3. A vision from *Shaytān*.

As such, if anything occurs to the self of a person, in that case the three categories should alert him. And due to this there are three cases—divine (*Rahmānī*), self-induced (*nafsānī*) and Satanic (*Shaytānī*).

And what takes place of the types of 'divine disclosure' (*mukāshafa*) and 'supernatural disposal of affairs' (*tasarruf*) are three categories as well—angelic, self-induced and Satanic. For indeed the angels, self, *Shayṭān* and the heart (*qalb*) of the believer have strength. So whatever is from an angel or the heart of a believer, then it is true; and whatever is from *Shayṭān* and the whispers of the self, then it is falsehood.

This has caused a large number of groups to be in doubt about these matters, for they did not distinguish between the saints of Allāh and the enemies of Allāh. Rather they began thinking about those who were types of polytheists and disbelievers—in most cases people of the Book—that they were pious, saints of Allāh.

Rather they began thinking about those who were types of polytheists and disbelievers—in most cases people of the Book—that they were pious, saints of Allāh. The discussion of this has been elaborated upon elsewhere.

Due to the above, there were those among them who saw it as permissible to fight the Prophets, those who thought that they were better than the Prophets, and other types. That is because they experienced what they thought were miracles of saints when in fact what took place were Satanic and self-induced visions, disclosures, and supernatural affairs. So they thought that they were from among the saints, when the matter was actually the reverse. The root of this is that they devoted themselves to worshiping what their Selves loved and with regards to the acts of worship which Allāh loves and is pleased with, they did not love or want to perform them only. They thought that when they worshiped Allāh in the manner He and His Messenger commanded it lowered them from a position of authority. So they produced strong love, devotion, worship, longing and asceticism, however it contained polytheism and innovation.

Love (*maḥabba*) for the Oneness of Allāh only takes place for the sake of Allāh alone and those who follow His Messenger, as Allāh said:

قُلْ  
 إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحِبَّبِكُمْ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ

“Say: If you love Allāh then follow me. Allāh will love you and forgive your sins”

[*Al-Imrān* (3): 31]

That is why the people of imitation have *Jihād* and good intentions (*niyya*) in their love—they love for the sake of Allāh and get angry for the sake of Allāh. And they are firm upon the religion of Ibrāhīm (*‘alayhis-salām*):

إِذْ قَالُوا لِقَوْمِهِمْ  
 إِنَّا بُرَاءُ مِنْكُمْ وَمِمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ كَفَرْنَا بِكُمْ وَبَدَا بَيْنَنَا  
 وَبَيْنَكُمْ الْعَدَاوَةُ وَالْبَغْضَاءُ أَبَدًا حَتَّى تُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَحْدَهُ

“And those who were with him when they said to their people: ‘Indeed we are free from you and what you worship besides Allāh. We reject you and enmity and anger has appeared between us and you forever until you believe in Allāh alone’”

[*al-Mumtatanah* (60): 4].

Their love had polytheism in it and they did not imitate the Messenger or those who fight in the path of Allāh. Thus it was not a sincere love and it was coupled with faith in the Oneness of Allāh. Due to this Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī named his book *‘The Nourishment of the Hearts in Dealing with the Beloved and a Description of the Path of the Adherent towards the Station of Faith in the Oneness of Allāh’*. And Allāh, glorified is He, knows best.

## [1:25: Asceticism (*zuhd*) and Piety (*waraʿ*)]

Shaykh al-Islām, may Allāh have mercy on him, said: I have written a section in the booklet of facts regarding the ‘*Combination of Asceticism and Piety*’:

‘*Asceticism*’ (*zuhd*) is [to abstain] from what has no benefit whether due to the absence of its benefit or its being preferred over, since it is passed over for what has more benefit than it, or as a result of its harm exceeding its benefit. As for the true or preferable benefit, then asceticism from it is foolishness.

‘*Piety*’ (*waraʿ*) is to abstain from what is harmful so it involves what is prohibited (*muḥaramāt*) and doubtful (*shubahāt*) since they definitely cause harm. For he who seeks refuge from doubts seeks to exonerate his honour and religion (*dīn*), while he who falls into doubts, also falls into that which is prohibited. He is like the one who herds his animals around a protected area on the verge of falling into it.

With regards to piety and abstaining from that which is not harmful or which has some harm that is outweighed by its good—whether due to being coupled with achieving a prevailing benefit or warding off another prevailing harm—then it is ignorance and oppression. And that includes three areas where one should not be pious or abstain from: the ‘*sufficiently*’ beneficial, the ‘*prevailingly*’ beneficial and the ‘*absolutely*’ beneficial. They are like those things which are categorized as absolutely ‘*permissible*’, ‘*recommended*’ or ‘*obligatory*’, such that piety and abstention from them is deviation.

Here I will mention some details regarding that:

Asceticism is contrast of desire (*raghba*). It is said: ‘So-and-so is an

ascetic regarding such-and-such,’ and ‘so-and-so is desirous regarding it’. ‘Desire’ is a type of wish and asceticism regarding something is the lack of wishing for it, whether accompanied by the presence of dislike for it or a lack of wish or dislike for it so that one is not wishful or disinclined towards it. Anyone who is not desirous regarding something and at the same he wishes for it, he is an ascetic regarding it.

Just as asceticism is praiseworthy in the path of Allāh in regards to what Allāh induces one to abstain from of the comforts of the worldly life, thus desiring and wishing are praiseworthy when Allāh holds as praiseworthy his wishes and desires. Due to this, the foundation for the path is ‘wishing’, just as Allāh, exalted is He, said:

وَلَا تَطْرُدِ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ  
وَجْهَهُ

“And do not drive out those who call upon their Lord morning and evening, wishing for His Face”

[*al-An‘ām* (6): 52]

And He, exalted is He, said:

وَمَنْ أَرَادَ  
الْآخِرَةَ وَسَعَىٰ لَهَا سَعْيَهَا وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُولَٰئِكَ كَانَ  
سَعْيُهُمْ مَشْكُورًا

“And whoever wishes for the Afterlife and strives for it with its due effort, while he is a Believer, then these, their effort will be appreciated”

[*al-Isrā’* (17): 19]

There are numerous similar *ayahs*.



[1.26: Asceticism—Between Objection (*dhamm*) and Praise (*madh*)]

This is like His asking for asceticism and censuring its opposite in the *ayah*:

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْحَيَاةَ  
الدُّنْيَا وَزِينَتَهَا نُوَفِّ إِلَيْهِمْ أَعْمَلَهُمْ فِيهَا وَهُمْ فِيهَا لَا يُبْخَسُونَ  
﴿١٥﴾ أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَيْسَ لَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ إِلَّا النَّارُ

“Those who wish for the worldly life and its adornments, We will repay them for their deeds in the worldly life, while they are in it without being short-changed. They are those who do not have but Hell-Fire in the Afterlife”

[*Hūd* (11): 15-16].

And Allāh, exalted is He, said:

الْهَنَكُمُ التَّكَاثُرُ ﴿١﴾

“Competing for worldly goods diverts you”

[*al-Takāthur* (102): 1],

Also, Allāh, exalted is He, said:

وَتَأْكُلُونَ  
الَّذَاتَ أَكْلًا لَمًّا ﴿١٩﴾ وَتُحِبُّونَ الْمَالَ حُبَّ جَمًّا ﴿٢٠﴾

“And you consume the inheritance whole. And you love wealth completely”

[*al-Fajr* (89): 19-20].

And He said:

إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ  
لِرَبِّهِ لَكَنُودٌ ﴿٦﴾ وَإِنَّهُ عَلَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ لَشَهِيدٌ ﴿٧﴾ وَإِنَّهُ لِحُبِّ  
الْخَيْرِ لَشَدِيدٌ ﴿٨﴾

“Verily! Mankind is ungrateful towards his Lord. And to this, he [himself] is a witness over that. And indeed he [mankind] is madly [intensely] in love with the best of this world”

[*al-‘Adiyāt* (100): 6-8].

He also said:

أَنَّمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَهَوٌّ وَزِينَةٌ وَتَفَاخُرٌ بَيْنَكُمْ

“Know that the worldly life is play, vanity, an adornment and competition in worldly goods between you”

[*al-Hadid* (57): 20],

the *ayah*. This topic is extensive.

Here the intention is only to distinguish legal, or praiseworthy asceticism from what is not; and also to distinguish the legal, or praiseworthy desire from what is not- for indeed there is a great deal that resembles asceticism in laziness, failure (*‘ajz*) and idleness (*batāla*) from legal commands, and a great deal that resembles legal desire in covetousness (*hirs*), greed (*tama’*) and acts which misguide the efforts of its companion.

As for piety, then it is to avoid the act, to have caution towards it, abstention, refraining and vigilance from it. It is to revert to distaste for a matter, disinclination from it and hatred (*bughd*) for it. It is an existential matter as well—even if it has differed regarding what is required by the prohibition. Is it the lack of the prohibition or an act to the contrary? The majority of the people of affirmation hold the

second view—so there is no doubt that something or someone is not called '*piety*', '*pious*' or '*fearful of Allāh*' unless there is discovered in it abstention and refrainment which is an act of opposition to what is forbidden.

The confirmation is that along with the lack of prohibition, there occurs the lack of harm associated with prohibited actions and it is censure and punishment for it and similar such things; and along with the presence of abstention, caution and avoidance, there are found righteous acts, obedience and fear of Allāh, thus there is an advantage for this act in praise, reward and similar things. Thus the lack of harm is due to the lack of evil actions, and the presence of benefit is due to the presence of good actions.

### [1.27: The Difference Between Asceticism and Pious Abstention]

To summarize, asceticism is a matter of lack of desire and wish for that which is abstained from, while pious abstention is a matter of the presence of aversion and dislike towards that which is refrained from. The lack of wishing for something is good only regarding that which has no absolute or prevailing benefit. As for the presence of dislike, then it is only good regarding that which has an absolute or prevailing harm. Thus if what has no benefit or harm, or something whose benefit and harm are the same in every way is made obligatory, then it is not good to wish for or dislike like it; asceticism is a virtue in that case not a form of pious abstention. What this makes apparent is that everything in which pious abstention is a virtue, asceticism in it is a virtue as well, without the reverse being true, and this is clear. For indeed whatever is good to dislike and disincline from is also something which is good to not wish for or desire. For indeed the lack of wishing for something is more appropriate than the presence

of dislike, and the presence of dislike is necessitated by the lack of wishing for something without the reverse being true. And not all that is good that is not wished for is good to dislike. Rather what is not good to wish for, dislike, love, hate, command and prohibit has become apparent from matters.

Through this it is made clear that asceticism and pious abstention regarding obligations and recommendations are not good. As for prohibited and disliked things, then asceticism and pious abstention are good in them. As for permissible things then asceticism and not pious abstention is good in them. This account is apparent, known through minimal contemplation.

The concern is only regarding what is contradictory in effect. Is it something commanded to do, prohibited or permissible? And [the concern] is regarding when something that is permissible becomes coupled with something else that makes it commanded or prohibited, or when coupled with what is commanded that makes it prohibited, and vice-versa. Thus upon combining advantages, evils, benefits, harms and their conflicts, it is in need of criterion.

### [1.28: Is Reward in Proportion to Hardship?]

The statement of some of the people that ‘the reward is in proportion to the hardship’ is not correct at all, just as the sects have concluded upon the types of monasticisms (*rabbāniyyāt*) and innovated acts of worship (*‘ibādāt al-mubtad‘a*) which Allāh and His Messenger did not legislate—from the kind of prohibited things of the polytheists and others that Allāh exonerated from the pure things—for example the excessiveness and exaggeration, which the Prophet

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<sup>18</sup> Muslim #7.

(ﷺ) censured when he said: “The excessive ones are destroyed.”<sup>18</sup>

And he (ﷺ) said: “If the month was made longer for me, truly I would perform such an uninterrupted fast that the exaggerators would abandon their exaggeration.”<sup>19</sup>

Like the hunger or excessive thirst which harms the mind and body and prevents the performance of obligations and recommended acts more beneficial than it. This is like the bare-footedness, nudity and walking which harms a person without benefit, for example, in the narration of Abū Isrā’il (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*) who swore an oath to fast and stand in prayer continuously and to not sit, take shade, or speak. Thus the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Command him to sit, take shade, speak and complete his fast.”<sup>20</sup> This is an expansive topic.

As for the reward being in proportion to the amount of obedience, then obedience to Allāh and His Messenger in an easy act is like what Allāh has made easy for the people of Islām in the ‘Two Statements’, i.e. ‘*there is no god except Allāh*’, and ‘*Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh*’; and they are the most superior of deeds. Due to that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Two light statements upon the tongue are two heavy things in the Balance, both beloved to the Most Merciful—

سبحان الله وبحمده، سبحان الله العظيم

‘Glory be to Allāh, and by His praise’, and ‘Glory be to Allāh, the Almighty’.<sup>21</sup>

And if it is said that the reward is according to the amount of benefit and good in the act, truly the first description would be

<sup>19</sup> Abbreviated from Bukhārī #7241 and a slightly different wording from Muslim #59.

<sup>20</sup> Abū Dāwud #3300; declared ṣaḥīḥ by al-Albānī.

<sup>21</sup> Bukhārī #6682 and Muslim #31.

correct with respect to its connection with the command; and the second with respect to the description itself. The benefit and good of an act can be from the perspective of the command alone at times, at times from the perspective of the description itself and at times from both of the two areas. So with respect to the first, it is divided into obedience and disobedience, and the second is divided into good and evil; obedience and disobedience are terms based on the perspective of commands while good and evil are terms based on the perspective of itself... Even though the majority of people do not affirm but the first, like the Ash'aris and a group of jurists among our companions and others hold.

Among the people are those who do not affirm but the second, like the Mu'tazilah and a group of jurists among our companions and others. The correct view is to affirm both perspectives just as is demonstrated by the texts of the Imāms, words of the Salaf, the majority of scholars and others.

As for its being a hardship, then it is not the cause for the virtue and superiority of an act, rather the virtuous act can be a hardship, thus its virtue is due not to the significance of the hardship. Patience in spite of it increases its recompense and reward. So the reward increases with hardship just as a person's distance from home in the course of the major and minor pilgrimage to Makkah increases, and his reward is greater than the one who lives nearby, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said to 'Ā'ishah (*radīy Allāb 'anhā*) during the minor pilgrimage: “[Your reward] is according to the amount of your effort.”<sup>22</sup> This is because the reward is in proportion to the work in terms of the distance, and with distance the effort increases, and thus the reward increases. *Jihād* is like that as well. The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The one proficient in the Qur'ān is with the noble and dutiful recording angels,

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<sup>22</sup> Muslim #126.

or Safarah; and he who recites it and falters and it is difficult for him, has two rewards.”<sup>23</sup>

Frequently the recompense increases in proportion to hardship and difficulty, not because the difficulty and hardship are the goal of the act, rather because the act entails hardship and difficulty. In our law, this is through which burdens and shackles are removed from us, no harm is placed on us and no difficulty is intended. With regards to the law before our time (i.e. of past nations), then indeed hardship was intended for them. A majority of slaves see the issue of hardship, pain and difficulty as a demand to draw near to Allāh due to what it entails of the self fleeing from the delights and reliance on the worldly life and stopping the heart from being solely connected to the body. This a type of asceticism practiced by the Sabians, Hindus and others.

Due to this you find these people, along with those who resemble them from the monastics (*rahbān*), dealing with extremely difficult and strenuous acts among the various forms of worship and ascetic practices despite there being no benefit, advantage or good in them except an insignificant amount that will not stand up to the severe punishment which they will encounter.

Seeing this corrupt foundation, some of the ignoramus praise it by saying: ‘So-and-so has not married or slaughtered (meat for food).’ And this is a form of praise of the monastics who do not marry or slaughter, while as for those who truly turn away from falsehood in the world, the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Rather I fast and break the fast, I marry women and eat meat, therefore whoever disinclines from my way is not from me.”<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Muslim #244.

<sup>24</sup> Bukhārī #5063.

These things are from a corrupt in the religion and are just as objectionable as having tranquility and contentedness towards the worldly life.

### [1.29: The Categories of People]

People can be separated into the following categories:

Those who are purely interested in the worldly-life, and opposed to the Afterlife.

Those who are corrupted in their way of life—disbelievers and innovators who bring forward forms of worship and asceticism that Allāh did not legislate.

Those who have the correct way of life- the people of Islām who adhere to the Book, the Sunnah and the main body of Muslims. All praise is due to Allāh who has guided us to that. Truly we would not have been guided aright without Allāh guiding us for indeed the Messengers of our Lord have come with the Truth.



## CHAPTER TWO

### Purifying the Self and the Means to Achieve it

**S**HAYKH UL-ISLĀM AḤMAD BIN TAYMIYYAH, may Allāh have mercy on him, said: The section on purifying the self (*tazkiyya al-nafs*) and how to purify it through abandoning prohibited matters while performing that which is commanded of it. Allāh, exalted is He, said:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّهَا ۝٩

“He has succeeded who purifies it”

[*al-Shams* (91): 9]

and

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ تَزَكَّى ۝١٤

“He has succeeded who purifies himself”

[*al-'Alā* (87): 14]

#### [2.1: The Meaning of ‘*Purifying Oneself*’]

Qatādah, Ibn ‘Uyaynah and others said: ‘He has succeeded who purifies himself through obeying Allāh and performing righteous

deeds'. Al-Farā' and al-Zajjāj said: 'A soul has succeeded that Allāh has purified and a soul has failed that Allāh has corrupted'. Al-Wālibī mentioned the same thing on authority of Ibn 'Abbās (*radīy Allāh 'anhumā*) in a way such that the chain of transmission was not connected. However that is not what was intended by the *ayah*. Rather what was intended is the first statement with its authoritative wording and meaning.

As for the wording '*he who purifies it*', the '*he*' part is considered in the Arabic language to be a relative pronoun and it necessarily refers back to the self. So when it is said: '*A person has succeeded who purifies himself*', the pronoun for '*person*' in the Arabic word '*purifies himself*' is referred to by the word '*who*'. This is an aspect of Arabic discourse about which there is no doubt in its correctness, just as it is said: '*He has succeeded who fears Allāh and he has succeeded who obeys his Lord*'.

As for the meaning of '*he has succeeded who Allāh purifies*', the pronoun does not continue referring back to the term '*who*' in the phrase. The pronoun in this case refers back to Allāh and not the term for '*he*', and the pronoun of the object refers back to the previously mentioned '*self*'. Thus neither the pronoun of the subject nor the object refer back to the term '*who*'. So the connection of the reference is dropped and this is not allowed [in the language].

Yes, if it is said: '*He has succeeded who Allāh purifies his self*' without a pronoun attached to the verb, or '*who Allāh purifies for him*' with a feminine pronoun attached to the verb, or similar manners of speaking, the expression is correct. For this to be hidden from those grammarians who hold this view is strange. He would not say: '*It has succeeded a soul [that] purifies itself*', for indeed here '*purifies itself*' is an attribute for '*itself*', not a connection; rather He said:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا ①

“He has succeeded who purifies it”

[*al-Shams* (91): 9]

So the phrase is connected due to the term for ‘*who*’ not an attribute for it.

Also, he would not say: ‘*It has succeeded the soul which purifies it*’, for indeed if that was said and the pronoun in the term ‘*purifies it*’ is made to refer back to the name of Allāh, it would be correct. If they pretended to say: ‘The assumption about “*He succeeds who purifies it*” is that it is the ‘*self*’ that ‘*purifies it*’. They say: ‘The pronoun of the object in the term ‘*purifies*’ refers back to ‘*who*’ and it [the term ‘*who*’] is appropriate for the masculine or feminine, and the singular or plural. So the pronoun refers back to its feminine use and its feminization is not literal. For this reason it is said: “*He’ has succeeded*” and it is not said: ‘It [feminine] has succeeded’. It is said to them: “This is also considering that it is outside the scope of eloquent use of the language for it is only correct when the discourse indicates that in the same manner and whoever...<sup>1</sup> based upon that the intended meaning for us and likewise His statement:

وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ يَسْتَمِعُونَ إِلَيْكَ

“And among them are those who listen to you”

[*Yūnus* (10): 42],

and similar examples.

In this case, then there does not exist in the term ‘*who*’ or in what comes after something that indicates that the intended meaning is the feminine term for ‘*self*’, thus it is not allowed to intend with speech what does not contain proof of its intention; for indeed the

<sup>1</sup> This part of the text could not be recovered in the original manuscripts.

Speech of Allāh, lofty and sublime is He, is safeguarded from the likes of this. And if it is assumed to be possible for the pronoun of ‘purifies himself’ [with a feminine pronoun] to refer to ‘self’ and to ‘who’ despite that the term ‘who’ has no proof obligating its reference back to it, truly its reference to the feminine is more appropriate than its reference to what could possibly be masculine and feminine; while its being masculine demonstrates the lack of proof of the feminine for indeed when discourse has two possible meanings, its conveyance upon their most apparent is obligated. Whoever pretends that it is otherwise has exited well-known Arabic speech and the Qur’ān is free from that. Deviating from what the surface of speech demonstrates and moving towards what is not demonstrated by it without proof is definitely not allowed, then how so with a text from the perspective of its meaning? For Allāh has conveyed that piety and evil deeds are inspired. This has been expanded upon at some other point.

## [2.2: Purifying Oneself in the Book and the Sunnah]

The objective here is to command people with purifying (*tazkiyya*) their ‘selves’ and to warn (*tadhīr*) from corrupting them, just like in His statement:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ تَزَكَّى

“He has succeeded who purifies himself”

[*al-‘Alā* (87): 14]

Thus if it is assumed that the meaning is ‘he has succeeded who Allāh purifies his ‘self’, there would not be a command (*amr*) or prohibition (*nahy*) in it for them, nor exhortation (*targhīb*) and admonishment (*tarhīb*). And when the Qur’ān commands or prohibits it does

not mention Divine Decree (*qadr*) alone. It does not say: ‘He who Allāh has made a Believer’. Rather it says:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١﴾

“The Believers have succeeded”

[*al-Mu'minūn* (23): 1],

and

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ تَزَكَّى ﴿١٤﴾

“He has succeeded who purifies himself”

[*al-'Alā* (87): 14] ,

since the mere mention of ‘Divine Decree’ (*qadr*) in this defeats the purpose and this would not be appropriate for even the weakest of people in intelligence, so how about for the Speech of Allāh?! Do you not see that [purification] is in the position of commands and prohibitions, exhortation (*targhib*) and admonishment (*tarhib*) to mention what is consistent with promises (*wa'd*) and threats (*wa'id*), praise (*madh*) and censure (*dhamm*)? And [the Qur'ān] only mentions the Divine Decree when making clear His favour upon them—whether for something they did not do or for His favours of belief and righteous deeds, thus [the Qur'ān] mentions [purification] in the context of His might and will; and as for when in connection with commands, then [the Qur'ān] does not mention it except along with favours, like in His statement:

وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ مَا زَكَايَ

“And were it not for the favour and mercy of Allāh upon you, not one of you would ever have been purified..”

[*al-Nūr* (24): 21]

Thus this is consistent. And His statement: “*He has succeeded who purifies himself*” is an *ayah* of the second type, not the first.

The purpose of mentioning purification is in what He, exalted is He, said:

قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا

“Tell the Believers: ‘Lower...’”

[*al-Nūr* (24): 30],

and

فَارْجِعُوا هُوَ أَزْكَىٰ لَكُمْ

“Then return. It is purer for you”

[*al-Nūr* (24): 28],

and

لَا يُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ

“Those who do not give *zakāb*”

[*Fuṣṣilat* (41): 7],

and

وَمَا عَلَيْكَ الْأَلْبُرُكِيُّ ۝٧

“And what does it matter to you if he will not be purified”

[*Abasa* (80): 7]

The basis of *zakāb* is to increase in goodness. From this meaning it is said: ‘*The crop grew (zakā)*’ and ‘*the wealth grew (zakā)*’ when it increased. Goodness will never increase except through abandoning evil and crops will not grow until it stops getting dense and twisted. Likewise the self and deeds will not grow until that which opposes it stops. And a person cannot be someone pure except along with abandoning evil, for indeed it contaminates and corrupts the self.

Al-Zajjāj said: “...*corrupts it*”, [means to] make it low, ignoble and

contemptible'. Ibn Qutaybah said: 'In other words to cover it with evil deeds and disobedience'. So the person who commits evil corrupts his self, or stifles and tarnishes it; and the person who performs good deeds allows his self to shine and elevates it. For the most generous among the Arabs the pregnant ewe would get down in order to show herself, and the ignoble would go down the outskirts and small valleys.<sup>2</sup>

Thus goodness (*birr*) and piety (*taqwā*) delight the self (*nafs*) and expand the chest (*sadr*) so that the person finds spaciousness (*baṣṭ*) and joy (*itisā'a*) in himself compared to how he was before that. For indeed when someone widens through goodness, piety and sincerity, Allāh makes him happy and expands his chest. While the evil and stingy stifle, degrade and debase the self so that the stingy finds constriction in his self. The Prophet (ﷺ) has made that clear in the authentic narration: "The likeness of the stingy and charitable is two men who have on a garment of iron and their hands are tied to their necks. So whenever the charitable gives [the garment] widens and stretches until it covers the tips of his toes and [the garment] erases his footsteps. Whenever the stingy gives [the garment] shrinks and every link constricts in its place. And I saw the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) saying so with his finger in his collar, as if trying to widen it and it would not do so."<sup>3</sup>

The concealment and exposure of the abode is pursuant to that, as Allāh, exalted is He, said:

يُنَوِّرِي مِنَ الْقَوْمِ مِنْ سُوءِ مَا بُشِّرَبِهِ<sup>٤</sup>

"He hides himself from people out of the evil he has been informed of"

<sup>2</sup> Not sure about this reference.

<sup>3</sup> Bukhārī, Muslim and Aḥmad transmitted it with a slightly different wording.

[*al-Nabl* (16): 59]

As such the stingy, evil self has been concealed in parts of its body by its owner, and due to this, at the time of death, [the soul] is torn out from its body like thorns from wet wool; and the good, pious, pure self whose owner has purified it, as a result it was elevated, widened, was praised and noble, at the time of death [the soul] exits the body flowing like drops from a water-skin and like hair from dough.

Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāh ‘anhumā*) said: ‘Indeed due to good (*ḥasan*) there is a light (*nūr*) in the heart, a brightness (*diyā’*) on the face, a strength (*qumā*) in the body, an abundance (*wus‘ā*) in provision and a love (*muhabbah*) in the hearts of creation. And indeed due to evil (*say’ab*) there is a darkness (*ẓulma*) in the heart, a blackness (*sumwād*) on the face, a weakness (*wahn*) in the body, a restriction (*diq*) in provision and an anger (*bughd*) in the hearts of creation’. Allāh, exalted is He, said:

وَالْبَلَدُ الطَّيِّبُ

“And the pure land...”

[*al-A‘rāf* (7): 58],

This is the likeness of the stingy and charitable. He, exalted is He, said:

فَمَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَهْدِيَهُ يَشْرَحْ صَدْرَهُ

“So whoever Allāh intends to guide, He expands his chest...”

[*al-An‘ām* (6): 125],

And Allāh, exalted is He, said:

اللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا

“Allāh is the guardian of those who believe...”



[*al-Baqarah* (2): 257]

He told him in the context of the accusation of sin, the censure of those who liked for it to appear among the believers and the one who speaks with what he does not know:

وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ مَا زَكَا

“And were it not for the favour of Allāh upon you and His mercy, not one of you would ever have been purified.”

[*al-Nūr* (24): 21]

Thus He made it clear that purification only takes place with the abandonment of sin and due to this He said:

قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ

“Tell the Believers: ‘Lower your eyes...’”

[*al-Nūr* (24): 30]

The abandonment of evil is among the actions of the self (*a'māl al-nafs*), for indeed it knows that evil is blameworthy and its performance disliked. His self struggles when he calls it to [evil] if he accepts the Book of his Lord believing what His Prophet (ﷺ) came with. Due to this the acceptance (*tasdiq*), belief (*īmān*), dislike (*karaha*) and struggle of the self (*jihād al-nafs*) are actions the purified self performs, and as a result is purified through that as well, in contrast to what happens when it commits evil. For indeed it becomes impure, contaminates and becomes constricted like crops when thick, twisted undergrowth grows with it.

Rewards (*thawāb*) are based on actual deeds as is punishment (*iqāb*). As for the lack of purity, then there is no reward or punishment in it, rather there is a lack of reward and punishment. Allāh, glorified is He, commands good (*khayr*) and prohibits from evil (*sharr*) and

mankind is in agreement that what is sought by commands are actual deeds while they differ regarding whether prohibitions are actual matters or non-existent. Some say it is 'existent', and it is to abandon something, and this is the view of the majority. While other say what is sought is a lack of evil, and it is to not do something.

The confirmation is that when the believer is prohibited from something abominable, there is no doubt that he does not approach it and is determined to abandon it and he dislikes doing it. This is an actual matter no doubt, so it unimaginable that the believer who knows that it is ...<sup>4</sup> actual however it would not be desirable to him like disliking consuming non-ritually slaughtered animals instinctively. Along with that, it is essential for him to believe in the prohibition and to be determined to abandon out of obedience to the legislator, and this is an increased amount beyond the instinctive dislike and a real matter which one is rewarded for. However it is not like the reward of one who refrains himself. ...however it is not like the reward of he who refrains his self and struggles against it with respect to desire for prohibited matters. And he whose dislike for prohibited matters is a dislike based on faith, and his faith overwhelms the dictates of his nature, then this is the highest of the three categories [of people], and this type of person possesses the 'tranquil' soul (*nafs mutma'inna*). He is more elevated than the 'owner of the blameful [soul]' (*ṣāhib lawwāma*) which committed sin, who found blame in its owner over it, and it lingered and hesitated [saying]: 'Should you do it or not?!'

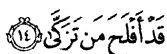
As for someone that it did not even cross his mind whether Allāh prohibited a matter and he was not desirous of it, rather he simply did not commit [that which is prohibited], then this type of person is not punished nor is he rewarded since no actual command was fulfilled to be rewarded or punished over. So whoever says: 'The

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<sup>4</sup> Missing from the original manuscript.

demand is to not commit [prohibited actions]’, if he means that this demand suffices in terms of the lack of punishment, then he has said the truth, and if he means that one shall be rewarded on top of this lack [of punishment], then it is not the case. Since the disbeliever does not believe in Allāh and His Messenger, then it is inevitable for his self to have actions through which he is distracted from faith and the abandonment of which is disbelief that he will be punished for.

For this reason, when Allāh mentions the punishment of the disbelievers in Hell-Fire, He mentions actual matters, and [matters] that corrupted the self. Thus *tawhīd* and faith are the greatest things by which a self can be purified and polytheism is the greatest thing that can corrupt it. The *Salaf* mentioned all of this and that righteous deeds (*a‘māl al-naḥs*) and charity purify [the self]. They said about the *ayah*:



“He has succeeded who purifies himself”

[*al-‘A‘lā* (87): 14]

‘It is to purify oneself from polytheism and disobedience through repentance’. And on authority of Abū Sa‘id, ‘Atā’ and Qatādah: ‘It is the charity given at the end of Ramaḍān’. They did not mean to say that the *ayah* does not apply to anything except that, rather what they meant was that whoever gives the charity due at the end of Ramaḍān and prays the *‘id* prayer, then it applies to that and everything afterwards. For this reason, every time Yazīd Ibn Ḥabīb would leave for the prayer, he would bring something to give in charity with him and give it away before the prayer, even if all he could find was an onion. Al-Ḥasan said about the *ayah*:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ تَزَكَّى ﴿١٤﴾

“He has succeeded who purifies himself”

[*al-‘Alā* (87): 14]

‘It is anyone whose actions increase (*ẓākī*)’. Abū’l-Aḥwaṣ said: ‘The *ẓākāb* of all matters’. Al-Zajjāj said: ‘He purifies himself through obeying Allāh, lofty and sublime is He’. And the meaning of *ẓākī* is ‘a great deal of increase’.

They said something similar regarding His statement:

وَوَيْلٌ لِّلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٦﴾ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ

“And woe to the polytheists who do not give charity [*ẓākāb*]”

[*Fuṣṣilat* (41): 6-7]

Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāh ‘anhumā*) said: ‘They do not testify that there is no god except Allāh’. Mujaḥid said: ‘Their deeds do not increase, in other words, they are not righteous’. It is also said that they did not purify [their deeds] with sincerity, as if he intended—and Allāh knows best—people who show off, for indeed it is polytheism. On authority of al-Ḥasan: ‘They do not believe in *ẓākāb* and they do not establish it’. On authority of al-Daḥḥāk: ‘They do not voluntarily give charity or spend out of obedience’. And on authority of Ibn al-Sā’ib: ‘They do not give *ẓākāb* from their wealth’. He said: ‘They would make the major and minor pilgrimages and not give *ẓākāb*’.

In effect, the *ayah* deals with anything with which people can be purified whether it is *tawḥīd* or righteous acts, as in His saying:

فَقُلْ هَلْ لَكَ إِلَىٰ أَنْ تَزَكَّىٰ ﴿١٨﴾

“...would you purify yourself”

[*al-Nāzi‘āt* (79): 18]

and “*He has succeeded who purifies himself*”, and upon the revelation of the latter, voluntary charity (*sadaqa*) was no longer obligatory to give.

And if it is said: ‘The term ‘give’ is a transitive verb’. It is said: this is like His statement:

ثُمَّ سِئِلُوا الْفِتْنَةَ لِأَنَّهُمْ

“and *fitnah* [i.e., disbelief] had been demanded of them, they would have done it done it.”

[*al-Aḥzāb* (33): 14].

Before this *ayah*, the Messenger called to them and it was demanded from him [to do so]. So this term involves establishing the proof against them through the Messengers and they only called them to that by which they could purify themselves.

From what is befitting is that *zakāh* involve purity (*ṭaharab*) since its meaning is the concept of purity. His statement:

حُذِّمْنَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ صَدَقَةً تُطَهِّرُهُمْ

“Take charity from their wealth to purify them”

[*al-Tawbah* (9): 103]

from evil “*And increase them*” in good. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«اللهم طهرني بالماء والبرد والثلج»

“Oh Allāh purify me with water, cold and snow...”<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Muslim.

He would supplicate with it in the opening of the prayer, upon standing up from bowing and for major ablution.

These matters necessitate the cooling of the person washing with them and *'snow'* grants strength and firmness; what is pleasing is described with *'coolness'* and *'delight of the eye'*. Due to this tears of joy are cold and tears of grief are hot because whatever offends the self necessitates its sadness and grief, and whatever gladdens it necessitates its happiness and joy—and that is from whatever cools on the inside.

So the Prophet (ﷺ) asked to wash the sins from the perspective of greatly cooling the heart so there could be through what is in it of happiness (*farḥ*) and joy (*surūr*) that which eliminates from him what offends the self of sins.

And his statement: “...with ice, cold and cold water” is a representation of what is in it of this type, otherwise the self of sins could not be washed by that, like what is said: ‘Make us taste the coolness of Your pardon and the sweetness of your forgiveness’. And when Abū Qatādah paid the debt of the debtor, the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Now his body has cooled”.<sup>6</sup>

It is also said that coolness is certainty (*yaqīn*) and hotness is doubt (*shakk*). It is said: ‘This matter has *'cooled'* his chest or made him pleased’ since it is a truth that the heart recognizes and he is gladdened by it to the point that it becomes like the coolness of ice. The ailment of the self (*marad al-nafs*)—whether it is a doubt (*shubb*), desire (*shahwa*) or anger (*ghadab*)—all three necessitate hotness. And it is said to whoever obtains what he desires: ‘His heart has cooled’, for indeed in the seeker is the heat of desire (*ḥarārat al-ṭalab*).

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<sup>6</sup> Aḥmad #14536; declared ḥasan by al-Arnāʿūt.

And His statement:

خُذْ مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ

“Take from their wealth”

[*al-Tawbah* (9): 103]

is proof that good deeds cleanse the self and purify it from previous sins, for He said that after saying:

وَأَخْرُونَ اعْتَرَفُوا

“And others recognize their sins”

[*al-Tawbah* (9): 102]

Thus cleansing and purification take place with repentance and righteous deeds and due to this He said in the context of His statement:

قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا

“Tell the Believers: ‘Lower...’”

[*al-Nūr* (24): 30]

the *ayahs*:

وَتُوبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ

“And repent to Allāh.”

[*al-Nūr* (24): 31]

So He commanded them all to repent in the context of what He mentioned because no one is safe from this type, like what is mentioned in the Ṣaḥīḥ: “Indeed Allāh has written for the son of Adam his allotment of fornication”<sup>7</sup>, the narration. And also in the Ṣaḥīḥ that: “His statement:

<sup>7</sup> Bukhārī.

إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبْنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ

“Indeed good deeds wipe out evil ones”

[*Hūd* (11): 114],

was revealed because a man used to do everything except intercourse with a woman [not his wife], then he repented, so it was revealed.”<sup>8</sup>

A Muslim needs to fear Allāh in that and prevent the self from desires. A self of desires and appetites is not punished for them, rather for following and acting upon them. So when the self desires something and the person prohibits it, his prohibiting it is an act of worship for Allāh and a righteous act. It is established that he said: “The Mujāhid is the one who fights against himself for the sake of Allāh.”<sup>9</sup> Thus one is commanded to fight against it just like one is commanded to fight against whoever commands disobedience and calls to it. A person is in greater need of fighting against his self for indeed it is an individual obligation while the former is a communal obligation. Patience (*ṣabr*) in this matter is among the most meritorious of acts, for indeed the fight against one’s self is the essence of the fight against [the enemy], for whoever is patient upon the former, can be patient upon the latter. Likewise, it is like he said: “And the immigrant is he who flees from evil deeds.”<sup>10</sup>

Furthermore, the person [in the first type of fighting] is not praiseworthy unless victorious in contrast with the second<sup>11</sup> type [of

<sup>8</sup> Bukhārī.

<sup>9</sup> Tirmidhī who said ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ Aḥmad.

<sup>10</sup> Bukhārī.

<sup>11</sup> The text says ‘first’, however it appears he is referring to the second type of *Jihād* here.



fighting], for indeed he is one who:

﴿٧٤﴾ فَيُقْتَلْ أَوْ يَغْلِبَ فَسَوْفَ نُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٧٤﴾

“...is killed or attains victory, thus We will grant him a great reward”

[*al-Nisā'* (4): 74]

And due to this the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The strong one is not the one who can throw another down...”<sup>12</sup>, and that is because Allāh commanded people to prohibit the self from desires and to fear the position of their Lord, so belief takes hold in them and that aids them in fighting. So if defeated, it is due to a weakness in his belief, thus he would have been excessive in neglecting what was commanded; in contrast with the disbelieving enemy, for indeed his body could be stronger.

Thus sins only take place when the self does not abide by what it is commanded with, and along with complying with what is commanded, one should not commit what is prohibited, for indeed they are mutually exclusive. Allāh, exalted is He, said:

كَذَلِكَ لِنَصْرِفَ عَنْهُ السُّوءَ

“As such in order that We divert evil from him”

[*Yūsuf* (12): 24]

And He said:

إِنَّ عِبَادِي لَيْسَ لَكَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَانٌ

“Indeed My slaves- you do not have authority over them”

[*al-Hijr* (15): 42]

Thus *Shayṭān* cannot cause the sincere slaves of Allāh to stray, and ‘to

<sup>12</sup> Bukhārī.

*stray*' is the opposite of '*correct guidance*', and it is to follow desires. So he whose self inclines towards a prohibited matter, then he performs an act of worship as Allāh commanded—making the *din* for His sake alone; then indeed that will divert from him evil and sin....<sup>13</sup> fearing, loving and worshipping for Him alone, and this prevents evil deeds.

So if he is repentant, then falls short in some way and sins take place from owner [of the repentance], it serves as an erasure [of the sins] after the fact. So it is like the antidote which eliminates the effects of poison and removes it after its taking effect; like nutrients from food and drink; like the enjoyment of permissible matters which prevent the self from seeking the prohibited—and if [the prohibited] does occur to him, he seeks to eliminate it; like knowledge which prevents doubt and removes it after its taking place; like the medicine which preserves health and removes sickness; and likewise what is in the heart of faith, safeguarding from anything arising in it in similar ways.

When a sickness of doubts and desires arises from him, they are eliminated through this way, and sickness does not take place except due to a deficiency in the causes of good health. Likewise is the heart—it does not become sick except due to a deficiency in one's faith. And likewise faith and disbelief are two opposites. For all opposites, does not one prevent and remove the other at times, like black and white? ...<sup>14</sup> it takes its place and removes it when it occurs. As such are good deeds and evil deeds. And the thwarting ...<sup>15</sup> and the *Mu'tazilah* is that major sin is thwarted by good deeds as well as

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<sup>13</sup> The original manuscript is unreadable or blank here.

<sup>14</sup> The original manuscript is unreadable or blank here.

<sup>15</sup> The original manuscript is unreadable or blank here.

Faith. And indeed whoever dies upon it is not ...<sup>16</sup> al-Jubbā'i and his son in the balance. However they said: 'He whose sins weigh more will be eternally in the Hell-Fire', while the balance not having eternal ramifications is the view ...<sup>17</sup> the thwarting that is agreed upon is the thwarting of all good deeds through disbelief, as He said:

وَمَنْ يَرْتَدِدْ مِنْكُمْ عَنْ دِينِهِ

“And whoever among you apostates from his religion...”  
[*al-Baqarah* (2): 217]

And His statement:

وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِالْإِيمَانِ فَقَدْ حَبِطَ عَمَلُهُ

“And whoever rejects Faith, then his deeds amount to nothing”  
[*al-Mā'idah* (5): 5]

He also said:

وَلَوْ أَشْرَكُوا لَحَبِطَ عَنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾

“And if they join partners, truly whatever they used to do would amount to nothing”  
[*al-An'ām* (6): 88].

And He said:

لَئِنْ أَشْرَكْتَ لَيَحْبَطَنَّ عَمَلُكَ

“Indeed if you join partners, surely your deeds will amount to nothing”  
[*al-Zumar* (39): 65]

The claims of the Mu'tazilah contradict the views of the Salaf,

<sup>16</sup> The original manuscript is unreadable or blank here.

<sup>17</sup> The original manuscript is unreadable or blank here.

for indeed He, glorified is He, mentioned the legal punishment of the fornicator and others, and He did not declare them disbelievers (*kuffār*) whose deeds had been thwarted or amounted to nothing. And He did not command for them to be killed, unlike the apostates (*murtadūn*) and the hypocrites (*munāfūq*) who did not manifest their disbelief. The Prophet (ﷺ) ordered that the extremist and the one who committed suicide be prayed over, and if they had been disbelievers and hypocrites, prayer over them would not be permitted. Thus it is known that their belief was not completely thwarted. And he said about the one who drank intoxicants: “Do not curse him for indeed he loves Allāh and His Messenger.”<sup>18</sup> And that love is among the greatest of the branches of faith. So it is known that his addiction did not remove every ‘branch’ [of faith]. Also established through many routes is the narration: “Whoever has in his heart an atom’s amount of faith will be removed from the Hell-Fire”<sup>19</sup>, and if it amounted to nothing, there would not exist anything of [faith] in their hearts. And Allāh, exalted is He, said:

ثُمَّ أَوْرَثْنَا الْكِتَابَ

“Then We bequeathed the Book...”

[*Fāṭir* (35): 32]

So He appoints from among those who are chosen.

So since evil deeds do not thwart all good deeds (*ḥasanāt*)—then are they thwarted in proportion to them and are some good deeds thwarted by sin aside from disbelief (*kuffr*)? There are two views about this among those who are attributed to the Sunnah. Among them are those who reject it and those who affirm it, just as the texts indicate.

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<sup>18</sup> Bukhārī.

<sup>19</sup> Bukhārī.

For example, in His statement:

لَا يُبْطَلُوا صَدَقَاتِكُمْ بِالْمَنِّ وَالْأَذَى

“Do not nullify your charity with reminders and harm”

[*al-Baqarah* (2): 264]

It indicates that this sin invalidates the charity and another example of this is with the one who shows off. ‘Ā’ishah (*radīy Allāh ‘anhā*) said: “Inform Zayd that he nullified his fighting...” the narration.<sup>20</sup>

As for His statement:

أَنْ تَحْبَطَ أَعْمَالُكُمْ

“...so that your deeds amount to nothing”

[*al-Hujarāt* (49): 2]

and the narration about the afternoon [*‘Aṣr*] prayer, then there is a dispute about that. Allāh, exalted is He, said:

وَلَا يُبْطَلُوا أَعْمَالَكُمْ

“And do not invalidate your deeds”

[*Muḥammad* (47): 33],

and al-Ḥaṣan said: ‘...through disobedience and major sins’; on authority of ‘Atā’: ‘...through polytheism and Hypocrisy’; on authority of Ibn al-Sā’ib: ‘...through showing off and [for] reputation’; on authority of Muqātil: ‘...through reminding’—and that is for people to remind others of their Islām. What is mentioned on authority of al-Ḥaṣan demonstrates that disobedience and major sins thwart one’s deeds.

<sup>20</sup> Al-Dāraqutnī #3002.

If it is said: ‘It does not intend but the invalidation [of one’s deeds] through disbelief’. It is said: that is prohibited for him in itself and is a cause for lasting eternity [in Hell-Fire]. Thus the prohibition of it is not expressed through this rather he mentions it by way of harshness, like His statement:

مَنْ يَرْتَدَّ مِنْكُمْ عَنْ دِينِهِ

“He among you who apostates from his religion”

[*al-Mā'idah* (5): 54],

and similar *ayahs*. And Allāh, glorified is He, in this one and in the *ayah* of ‘reminding others of good one has done’<sup>21</sup> designates [that particular deed] as ‘invalidated’ and does not designate [all deeds] as ‘amounting to nothing’. And for this reason, afterwards He mentions disbelief by saying:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ مَاتُوا وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ

“Indeed those who disbelieve and turn away from the path of Allāh, then die while disbelievers”

[*Muḥammad* (47): 34],

If it is said: ‘What is intended is when you enter [the reminding] into [a matter] and complete it’, and those who said ‘enlistment in the beginning is required’ relied on this.

It is said: If it is supposed that the *ayah* demonstrates that it is disallowed to invalidate some of the deeds, then [a deeds] complete invalidation is more appropriate through [reminding] entering into it. So how, while that is before its completion, is [an act] not designated as prayer or fasting? Then it is said: ‘Invalidation happens before the completion [of an act] or after it’. And what they mentioned is a

<sup>21</sup> *Al-Baqarah* (2): 264.

matter of the completion and invalidation, and it is the invalidation of the reward. We do not accept that one who does not complete an act of worship invalidates all of its reward, rather it is said: ‘Indeed one is rewarded for whatever he has done of that [act]’. And in the Ṣaḥīḥ is the narration of *‘the bankrupt’*: ‘...who comes with good deeds the likes of a mountain.’<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Muslim #59 with a different wording but the same meaning.

## CHAPTER THREE

### The Ruling of Travelling while Cutting Family Ties

**S**HAYKH UL-ISLĀM AḤMAD BIN TAYMIYYAH, may Allāh have mercy on him, was asked about a man who understood and was cognizant of what Allāh commanded and what He prohibited, then he became ascetic and left off worldly matters, money, relatives and children, fearful of earning prohibited and questionable wealth, and (fearful) of the resurrection in the Hereafter. He sought Allāh's pleasure and that of His Messenger, and he travelled through Allāh's earth and lands. So, is it permissible for him to sever his family ties and travel, as was mentioned, or not?

He answered: All praise is for Allāh alone.

#### [3.1: The Legislated Asceticism]

Asceticism (*zuhd*) that is legislated is leaving off everything that will not be of benefit in the life Hereafter, and having heartfelt trust in what is with Allāh, as is mentioned in the ḥadīth in Tirmidhī: "It is not asceticism in this life to prohibit (oneself) that which is permitted, or to waste money, but asceticism is to be more certain of what



is in Allāh's Hands than of what is in your hand and for the reward attained from (bearing) a calamity to be more desirous to you than whatever the calamity caused you to miss out on."<sup>1</sup>

As Allāh has said:

لِكَيْلَا  
تَأْسَوْا عَلَىٰ مَا فَاتَكُمْ وَلَا تَفْرَحُوا بِمَا آتَاكُمْ

“...so that they wouldn't grieve what has forsaken them, nor would they rejoice at what they have been given.”

[*al-Ḥadīd* (57):23]

This is the description of the heart (*ṣifāh al-qalb*). So from what is apparent (*ẓāhir*), leaving off excesses that do not help in obeying Allāh, from (excessive) food, clothes, wealth and other than these things, is like Imām Aḥmad said, “Rather, it is food less than food (of the Hereafter), and clothes less than clothes (of the Hereafter), and patience for a few short days (of the worldly life).”

### [3.2: The Messenger's (ﷺ) Asceticism]

All of this is combined in the character of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ), as it has been verified in the Ṣaḥīḥ that he used to say, “The best speech is Allāh's speech; and the best guidance is the guidance of Muḥammad; the worst of things (in religious affairs) are the newly invented ones; and every innovation is a misguidance.” It was his habit when it came to food that he didn't reject what was available, nor did he demand what was unavailable. In clothing, he wore whatever was available from cotton, wool or other than that. He preferred cotton.

<sup>1</sup> Tirmidhī, vol.4, p.3 and Ibn Mājah, vol.2, p.1373

If he found out that some of his companions wanted to be excessive and increase in asceticism or worship beyond what was legislated, saying “Which of us is like Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ)?”, he used to be angry at that and he would say “By Allāh, I am the most fearful of Allāh from among you, and the most knowledgeable of His boundaries.” He found out that some of his companions said “As for me, I will fast and not break the fast,” and another said “As for me, I will stand (in prayer) and not sleep,” and another said “As for me, I will not marry women,” and another said, “As for me, I will not eat meat.” So he (ﷺ) said, “But I fast and break the fast; and I stand (in prayer) and I sleep; and I marry women and I eat meat. So whoever renounces my way, he is not of me.”<sup>2</sup>

So abandoning one’s family and children are not from what Allāh or His Messenger (ﷺ) love. Neither is it from the way of the messengers. In fact, Allāh said:

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلًا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُمْ أَزْوَاجًا وَذُرِّيَّةً

“And indeed We sent Messengers before you, and made for them wives and offspring.”

[*al-Ra’d* (13):38]

Spending on one’s dependents and earning for them is sometimes compulsory and other times it is commendable. So how can leaving off a compulsory or commendable act be from the religion?

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<sup>2</sup> Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim

### [3.3: The Categories of Travel and their Rulings]

Also, travelling the lands for other than a legislated purpose, like what some monks undertake, this is a prohibited action. Imām Aḥmad said “Travelling<sup>3</sup> is not something from Islām, nor is it from the actions of the Prophets, or the righteous people.”

As for the travelling mentioned in Qur’ān, from His saying:

التَّائِبُونَ الْعَمِيدُونَ الْحَمِيدُونَ الْمُغِيظُونَ

“...those who repent (to Allāh), who worship (Him), who praise (Him), who go out in Allāh’s Cause...”

[*al-Tawbah* (9):112],

and from His saying:

مُسَلِّمَاتٍ مُّؤْمِنَاتٍ قَانِتَاتٍ تَتَّبِعْنَ عِدَابَ سَيِّئَاتٍ  
ثَيِّبَاتٍ وَأَبْكَارًا

“Muslim women, believers, obedient (to Allāh), turning (to Allāh) in repentance, worshipping (Allāh), going out (in Allāh’s Cause), previously married and virgins”

[*al-Tahrim* (66):5.];

it does not refer to this contrived travelling, as Allāh described the women who married His Messenger with it (i.e. those who go out in His Cause), and it is not legislated for the married woman to travel about in the wilderness in this manner.

Rather, what is meant by going out is two things:

One of them is fasting. As ‘Amr Ibn Dīnār narrated from Yaḥyā

<sup>3</sup> TN: Travelling for worship and religion.

Ibn Ju'dah, that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "What is permissible is clear, and what is prohibited is clear, and what is between them are doubtful matters, about which many people don't know. So he who avoids doubtful matters exonerates himself in regard to his honour and his religion. But he who falls into doubtful matters (eventually) falls into what is unlawful, like a shepherd who pastures around a sanctuary, all but grazing therein. Truly, every king has a sanctuary, and truly Allāh's sanctuary is his prohibitions. Truly, in the body there is a morsel of flesh which if it is good, then the entire body is good, and if it is diseased, the entire body is diseased. Truly, it is the heart."<sup>4</sup>

However, if someone leaves off what is prohibited or doubtful by leaving off what is compulsory or recommended, and the resulting sin or shortcoming is greater than the sin of doing the prohibited or doubtful thing, then this is not legislated. This is like what Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī and Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī have mentioned, that Imām Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal was asked about someone who left off something that was not doubtful (some wealth), and he had an outstanding debt, so his son asked him, 'Should I leave this money that is doubtful and not repay it (the debt)?' So he said to him, 'Deposit it'.

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<sup>4</sup> Agreed upon (Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukharī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim)

## CHAPTER FOUR

The meaning of absolute truth (*'ayn al-yaqīn*), truth with certainty (*ḥaqq al-yaqīn*), and a sure knowledge (*'ilm al-yaqīn*)

**S**HAYKH UL-ISLĀM AḤMAD BIN TAYMIYYAH, may Allāh have mercy on him, was asked about Allāh's Speech:

حَقُّ الْيَقِينِ ﴿١٥﴾

“...absolute truth (*'ayn al-yaqīn*).”

[*al-Wāqi'ah* (56):95]

and

عَيْنُ الْيَقِينِ ﴿٧﴾

“...truth with certainty (*ḥaqq al-yaqīn*).”

[*al-Takathur* (102):7]

and

عِلْمُ الْيَقِينِ ﴿٥﴾

“...sure knowledge (*'ilm al-yaqīn*).”

[*al-Takathur* (102):5]

So what is the meaning of each of these positions and which of them is highest?

He answered: All praise is for Allāh, Lord of the worlds. With respect to these names, the people have well-known statements. From them, it is said ‘*Sure knowledge*’ for what is known from listening, information, analogy and looking. ‘*Truth with certainty*’ is what was witnessed and has been viewed with one’s own sight. ‘*Absolute truth*’ is what a person has embarked on, and found (for himself) and tried and known from experiencing it.

So the first (level of knowledge) is like the one who has been informed that there is honey, and he believes the informer or he saw the effects of the honey, so he inferred its existence.

The second (level of knowledge) is like the one who saw the honey and witnessed it and observed it; and this level is higher than the previous, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said, “The one who is informed is not like the one who observed.”<sup>1</sup>

And the third (level of knowledge) is like the one who tasted the honey, and experienced its flavour and sweetness. And it is known that this level is higher than the previous ones, so that is why the people of knowledge are designated for what they have of experience and discovery. As the Prophet (ﷺ) said in the authentic ḥadīth, “Whoever possesses the following three qualities will have the sweetness (delight) of faith: The one to whom Allāh and His Messenger become dearer than anything else; the one who loves a person and loves him only for Allāh’s sake; and the one who hates to revert to disbelief after Allāh has rescued him from it, as he hates to be thrown into

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<sup>1</sup> Aḥmad, vol.1, p215 and Ibn Ḥibbān, vol.1, p153.

the fire.”<sup>2</sup> And he (ﷺ) said, “He has found the taste of faith who is content with Allāh as his Lord, with Islām as his religion and with Muḥammad as his messenger.”<sup>3</sup>

### [4.1: The Levels of the People of Faith]

So those who are from the people of faith, those who taste from the sweetness of faith and its delight, they are of three levels:

- **THE FIRST LEVEL:** He who knows it, like the one whose teacher has informed him of it and he believes his teacher. Or he has been informed what those who are knowledgeable have conveyed of it about themselves. Or he sees effects of their conditions that point to it.
- **THE SECOND LEVEL:** The one who witnesses it and observes it, like witnessing the situation of the people known for knowledge (*maʿrifā*), truthfulness (*ṣidq*) and certainty (*yaqīn*) what he knows of their experiences and discoveries. Even though in reality he did not witness what they have discovered and experienced, but he witnessed what indicates it. He is closer than the one who was informed or who inferred based on its effects.
- **THE THIRD LEVEL:** To experience for himself what he used to hear of, as some scholars said, “I was in a state I say of it: If the people of Paradise in Paradise are in a state like this, truly they are in a good life.” And another one said, “There are times when joy would make the heart dance.” And another said, “For the people of the night<sup>4</sup> their nights are more pleas-

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<sup>2</sup> Bukhārī, vol.1, p72 and Muslim, vol.1, p.62.

<sup>3</sup> Muslim, vol.1, p.66 and Tirmidhī, vol.4, p.126.

<sup>4</sup> TN: Those who stand in prayer at night, devoted.

urable than (the pleasure of) the people of amusement in their amusements.”

## [4.2: The Levels of the People Pertaining to Belief in the Hereafter]

The people are of three levels (*darajāt*) concerning what they know about the affairs of the Hereafter:

- THE FIRST of the levels is the knowledge they have that the Messengers informed them of, and whatever stands as evidence of its existence.
- THE SECOND level is when they have witnessed what they have been promised of reward, punishment, Paradise and Hell.
- THE THIRD level is when they experience it. So the people of Paradise enter Paradise and taste what they have been promised, and the people of the Hellfire enter the Hellfire and taste what they have been promised.

So as it pertains to what is in the heart, and what is outside it, the people are of these three levels.

## [4.3: The Levels of the People Pertaining to the Affairs of the Worldly Life]

Similarly, concerning the matters of this world. So whoever is informed of passion (*ishq*) and marriage (*nikāh*), and he has not seen or experienced it, he (only) knows of it. If he witnesses it and doesn't experience it, he has certain knowledge of it. If he has undergone it for himself, then he has experience and expertise in it, and whoever hasn't tried something he does not know its reality. So the expression avails exemplification (*tamdhīl*) and approximation (*taqrīb*). As



for understanding the reality (*ma'rifa al-haqīqa*), it cannot be attained with just an expression, except for the one who has tried the thing being expressed, and he knows it and has experience of it. This is why they are called people of knowledge (*abl al-ma'rifa*), because they know based on trial (*khibra*) and experience (*dhawq*) what others know based on being informed (*khabr*) and observing (*naẓr*).

In an authentic ḥadīth, “Hiraql (Caesar), the Roman Emperor, asked Abū Sufyān ibn Ḥarb about the Prophet’s (ﷺ) affairs. He said, “Do any of his followers leave his religion displeased after entering it?” He (Abū Sufyān) said “No.” He said, “And so is faith, when its radiance mingles with the heart, it displeases no one.”<sup>5</sup>

#### [4.4: The Heart between Faith and Love]

So faith (*īmān*), when it embarks on the heart and its radiance mingles with it, the heart is not displeased with it. In fact, it loves it and is pleased with it. The beholder of it has from its sweetness (*ḥalāwa*) in his heart, and pleasure (*ladha*), and happiness (*surūr*) and delight (*baḥja*), that which cannot be expressed to one who hasn’t experienced it. People vary when it comes to experiencing it. And the pleasure (*riḍā*) and happiness (*farḥ*) in the heart, he has from its radiance accordingly. So when it mingles with the heart, it does not displease him. Allāh, the Most High, says:

قُلْ بِفَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَرَحْمَتِهِ فَبِذَلِكَ فَلْيَفْرَحُوا هُوَ خَيْرٌ مِمَّا  
يَجْمَعُونَ

“Say: ‘In the Bounty of Allāh, and in His Mercy—therein let them rejoice.’ That is better than what (the wealth) they amass.”

[*Yunūs* (10):58]

<sup>5</sup> Bukhārī, vol.1, p32 and Muslim, vol.3, p.1395.

And He, the Most High, says:

وَالَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَفْرَحُونَ  
بِمَا أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ وَمِنَ الْأَحْزَابِ مَنْ يُنْكِرُ بَعْضَهُ

“Those to whom We have given the Book rejoice at what has been revealed unto you, but there are among the Confederates those who reject a part thereof.”

[*al-Ra'd* (13): 36]

And He, the Most High, says:

وَإِذَا مَا أَنْزَلْنَا سُورَةً فَمِنْهُمْ مَن يَقُولُ أَيُّكُمْ زَادَتْهُ هَذِهِ  
إِيمَانًا فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا فَزَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَهُمْ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ

“And whenever there comes down a *Sūrah* (chapter from the Qur’ān), some of them say: ‘Which of you has had his Faith increased by it?’ As for those who believe, it has increased their faith, and they rejoice.”

[*al-Tawbah* (9): 124]

So He informed us, Glorified is He, that they rejoice at what is revealed from the Qur’ān. And this joy is happiness and gladness, and that is because of what they find in their hearts of sweetness, pleasure and delight for what Allāh has revealed.

And pleasure (*ladha*) always follows love (*maḥabba*). So whoever loves something, and he attains what he loves, he finds pleasure in it. Experiencing something, or getting a taste of it, is having an appreciation of the desired thing. Apparent delight, for example in eating, is the person’s state when he craves food and loves it. Then he tastes it and consumes it, so he discovers its delightfulness and sweetness. And so it is with marriage and things like that.

And there is none of the creation's love greater, more perfect or more complete than the believers' love for their Lord. And there is nothing in existence deserving of being loved intrinsically, from every angle, except Allāh, the Most High. And whatever is loved other than Him, that love is subordinate to His love. So the Messenger (ﷺ), indeed he is loved for Allāh's sake, and he is obeyed for Allāh's sake. As Allāh, the Most High says:

قُلْ  
 إِنَّ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحِبُّكُمْ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ

“Say (O Muḥammad): ‘If you love Allāh then follow me, Allāh will love you and forgive you of your sins. And Allāh is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.’”

[*Āl-‘Imrān* (3):31]

And in the ḥadīth: “Love Allāh for what He nourishes you with of His blessings; love me due to love of Allāh; and love the people of my house due to love of me.” And Allāh, the Most High, says:

قُلْ إِنْ كَانَ آبَاؤُكُمْ

“Say: ‘If your fathers...’”

until His saying:

أَحَبَّ إِلَيْكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَجِهَادٍ  
 فِي سَبِيلِهِ فَتَرَبَّصُوا حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِأَمْرٍ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي  
 الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ

“...are dearer to you than Allāh and His Messenger, and striving hard and fighting in His Cause, then wait until Allāh brings about His Decision. And Allāh guides not

the people who are rebellious, disobedient (to Him).”

[*al-Tawbah* (9): 24]<sup>6</sup>

And the Prophet (ﷺ) said, “None of you truly has faith until I am more beloved to him than his son, his father and all of the people.”<sup>7</sup>

And in a ḥadīth collected by Imām al-Tirmidhī and other than him, “Whoever loves for the sake of Allāh, hates for the sake of Allāh, gives for the sake of Allāh, withholds for the sake of Allāh, truly he has perfected his faith.”

And Allāh, the Most High, says,

وَمِنَ  
النَّاسِ مَن يَتَّخِذُ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ أَنْدَادًا يُحِبُّونَهُمْ كَحُبِّ اللَّهِ  
وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ

“And of mankind are some who take others (for worship) besides Allāh as rivals (to Allāh). They love them as they love Allāh. But those who believe, love Allāh more (than anything else).”

[*al-Baqarah* (2):165]

So those who believe they love Allāh more than anything else, from everyone who loves whatever he loves. And we have explained this in multiple places.

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<sup>6</sup> *Surah al-Tawbah* (9): 24. The complete *ayah* is: “Say: ‘If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your kindred, the wealth that you have gained, the commerce in which you fear a decline, and the dwellings in which you delight are dearer to you than Allāh and His Messenger, and striving hard and fighting in His Cause, then wait until Allāh brings about His Decision. And Allāh guides not the people who are rebellious, disobedient (to Him).”

<sup>7</sup> Bukhārī, vol.1, p57 and Muslim, vol.1, p.58.

And the point here is that the people of faith, because of their love for Allāh and His Messenger, they discover the sweetness and delight of faith that befits that love. And that is why the Prophet (ﷺ) associated what they feel (of faith) with love, so he said, “Whoever possesses the following three qualities will have the sweetness (delight) of faith: The one to whom Allāh and His Messenger are dearer to him than anything else; the one who loves a person and loves him only for Allāh’s sake; and the one who hates to revert to disbelief, as he hates to be thrown into the fire.”<sup>8</sup>

So from this, what they feel from the fruits of Islāmic monotheism and sincerity (to Allāh), trusting (in Him), and supplicating to Allāh only, in this regard the people are of three levels.

#### [4.4: The Levels of the People regarding what They Feel of the Fruits of *Tawḥīd*]

From them: he who knows based on what he has heard and seen evidence of.

And from them: he who witnessed and has seen for himself what happens.

And from them: he who discovers the reality of sincerity (to Allāh) (*ḥaqīqa al-ikblās*) and dependence (*tawakkul*) on Him, and of taking protection (*iltijāʾ*) with Him, and seeking His help (*istiʿānah*), and severing devotion (*qataʿ al-taʿallaq*) to other than Him, and he has tried for himself having devotion to some creation and having hope in them bringing some benefit to him, or averting some harm, and he finds that they forsake him and his purpose is not attained. In

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<sup>8</sup> Reference mentioned already.

fact, he may exert himself in serving them, or (giving them) money or other than that, hoping that they will be of benefit to him in his time of needing them, but they do not benefit him; either due to their inability to do so, or because their hearts have turned away (*insirāf*) from him. And if he turns to Allāh with true dependence (*sidq al-iftiqār*) on Him, calling for His help (*istighāth*), being faithful (*mukhlis*) to the religion, He answers his supplication (*du'ā*), and He removes what is harmful to him, and He opens for him doors of mercy (*abwāb al-rahma*). So whoever is like this he has certainly realized the reality of dependence (on Allāh) and supplication to Allāh, which others have not felt. And likewise for the one who relished being faithful to the religion for the sake of Allāh, seeking His Face and none other, he finds circumstances and results and benefits that are not felt by those who are not like that.

In fact, whoever follows his desires when it comes to things like leadership and rank, and being attached to beautiful images, or amassing wealth; he finds that throughout all of this, he has anxiety (*humūm*), grief (*gumūm*), sadness (*ahzān*), distress (*ālām*) and heartache that cannot be expressed. Perhaps his heart refuses to leave the desires, and he cannot achieve what makes him happy. Rather, he is always in a state of fear (*kawf*) and sadness (*huzn*). If he is seeking what he desires, then he is depressed and suffering before attaining it, until he gets it. And when he attains it, he is fearful of it being removed and being parted from it.

The friends of Allāh, they are not fearful nor are they grieved. So if this one, or other than him, experiences the sweetness of faithfulness (*ḥalāwa al-ikhlās*) to Allāh, and worshipping Him, and the delight of remembering (*ḥalāwa al-dhikr*) and praising Him (*munājāb*) and understanding (*fahm*) His Book, and he submits his face to Allāh and performs good deeds, such that his actions are righteous and done for Allāh's Face sincerely, then truly he finds happiness, pleasure

and joy greater than what is felt by the supplicant who is reliant (on Allāh) and by his supplication and reliance he obtains what benefits him in the worldly life, or averts from him something harmful. And there is nothing of greater avail to the heart than *tawhīd* and sincerity of religion for Allāh, nor anything more harmful than associating partners (with Allāh).

So if he discovers the reality of sincerity, the actualization of which is:

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ

“You alone (Oh Allāh) do we worship.”

[*al-Fātiḥah* (1):5],

with the reality of reliance, the actualization of which is:

وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

“You alone (Oh Allāh) do we ask for help.”

[*al-Fātiḥah* (1):5]

then this is beyond what everyone feels who has not found this. And Allāh knows best.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### The Concise Legacy

**I**N ANSWER TO THE QUESTION OF ABŪ'L-QĀSIM al-Maghribī: This is a request to the Shaykh and Imām, the remainder of the pious predecessors (*salaf*), the fine example (*qudwā*) for those that came after, and the most knowledgeable man I have met in all of the East and the West, Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad Ibn Taymiyyah.

It is my request that he grant me advice for rectifying my religious and worldly life, and that he direct me to a book on the science of ḥadīth and other Islāmic sciences upon which I can rely. I would like him to tell me about the best deeds of righteousness after the obligatory actions and to clarify the best ways of earning (the acceptance of Allāh).

I seek a brief reply and a reference to what is right, may Allāh, Most High, grant him protection. Abundant peace and the mercy and blessings of Allāh be upon him.

The answer:

All praise be to Allāh, the Lord of the worlds.



[5.1: Allāh’s Counsel in His Book]

With regard to counsel (*waṣīyya*), I know of no counsel as beneficial as that of Allāh and His Messenger (ﷺ) for those who contemplate and follow it. Allāh, Most High, says:

وَلَقَدْ وَصَّيْنَا  
الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَإِيَّاكُمْ أَنْ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ

“And We have instructed those who were given the Scripture before you and yourselves to fear Allāh.”

[*al-Nisā’* (4): 13]

[5.2: The Prophet’s (ﷺ) Counsel to Mu‘ādh  
(*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*)]

When the Prophet (ﷺ) sent Mu‘ādh (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*) to Yemen, he advised him as follows: “Mu‘ādh, fear Allāh where ever you may be. Follow a bad deed with a good one and it erases it, and treat the people in a fine manner.”<sup>1</sup>

Mu‘ādh (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*) had a high status with the Prophet (ﷺ), for he once told him: “O Mu‘ādh! By Allāh, I really love you.”<sup>2</sup> He (ﷺ) used to seat Mu‘ādh behind him on his riding beast. It has been narrated about him that: ‘He is the most knowledgeable person of this nation regarding the lawful (*ḥalāl*) and the unlawful (*ḥarām*).’<sup>3</sup> and on the Day of Resurrection will be resurrected one step ahead

<sup>1</sup> Tirmidhī, vol.3, p240; Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, vol.5, p228; and others.

<sup>2</sup> Abū Dāwūd, vol.2, p181; Aḥmad, vol.5, p229; and others.

<sup>3</sup> Tirmidhī, vol.5, p230; Ibn Mājah, vol.1, p55; and others.

of the scholars.<sup>4</sup>

What further signifies his virtue is the fact that the Prophet (ﷺ) sent him to Yemen to convey his message and to call the people to Islām, making him the teacher, legal advisor, and ruler of the Yemeni people. The Prophet (ﷺ) would say that he resembled Ibrāhīm ('alayhis-salām), the Khalīl, and Ibrāhīm was the leader of the people. Likening him to Ibrāhīm, Ibn Mas'ūd (radīy Allāh 'anhu) would say: 'Mu'ādh was a leader, devoutly obedient to Allāh, inclining toward truth, and he was not of the polytheists.'<sup>5</sup>

### [5.3: Explanation of the Prophetic Counsel]

The Prophet (ﷺ) gave this advice to Mu'ādh (radīy Allāh 'anhu), knowing that it was comprehensive. This becomes clear to whoever contemplates this advice which is actually a clarification of the meaning of the counsel given in the Qur'ān.

The Prophet's (ﷺ) words are comprehensive because a person has two duties: his duty towards Allāh and his duty towards the servants of Allāh. One will inevitably fall short in fulfilling these duties at times, either by not doing what he is commanded to do or by committing an act of disobedience. Thus, the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Fear Allāh where ever you may be," which is a comprehensive statement. His words: "where ever you may be" affirm man's need for god-consciousness (taqwā) in both public and in private.

Then he (ﷺ) said: "Follow a bad deed with a good one and it erases it," for if a patient has taken something harmful, the doctor prescribes

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<sup>4</sup> Ibn Hajar in his *al-Iṣābah*, vol.3, p407; Ibn Sa'd in his *Tabaqāt*, vol.2, p347; and others.

<sup>5</sup> Abū Na'im in *al-Hilyah*, vol.1 p.230.

for him that which will fix him. It is as if sinning is an inevitable part of a servant's life, so the truly smart one is he who never ceases to do good deeds that erase his sins. The ḥadīth mentions bad deeds before the good ones because the main emphasis here is on erasing sins, not on doing good. This is similar to the ḥadīth where the Bedouin urinated in the Masjid and the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Pour a bucket of water on it."<sup>6</sup>

### [5.4: Things That Erase Sins]

One's good deeds should be of the same sort with his bad ones as this is more effective in erasing sins. The consequences of sins can be erased by a number of things, among them what follows:

1. Repentance (*tawbah*)
2. Seeking forgiveness (*istighfār*) without repentance, for Allāh may still forgive him in response to his invocation. The most complete way, however, is to combine both repentance and seeking of forgiveness.
3. Righteous deeds (*a'māl al-ṣālih*) that compensate for one's sins. This includes pre-measured compensations (*kaffārāt al-muqadira*) like those prescribed for having sexual intercourse in Ramaḍān, pronouncing the *ḡihār*-divorce<sup>7</sup>, and violating the pilgrimage (*ḥajj*) by committing the unlawful, leaving the obligatory, or hunting. There are four types of pre-measured compensations: slaughtering, freeing slaves, charity, and fasting.

<sup>6</sup> Bukhārī, vol.1 p.323 and Muslim, vol.1 p.236

<sup>7</sup> Saying to one's wife, "you are like a mother to me."

Unrestricted compensations (*kaffārāt al-mutalaqa*) are those found in Hudhayfah's (*radīy Allāh 'anhu*) words to 'Umar (*radīy Allāh 'anhu*): "A man's problems with his family, wealth, and children are compensated for by prayer, fasting, charity, and enjoining the good and rebuking the evil."

The Qur'ān and the ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīths confirm this as they inform us that one's sins are compensated for by the five daily prayers, the Friday prayer, fasting, the pilgrimage, and other good deeds that are referred to in the following manner: "If someone says such and such a thing and then does another thing, he is forgiven" or: "his past sins are forgiven." One will find many such actions in the ḥadīth collections, especially in the works about virtuous deeds.

### [5.5: Having Concern for Sin Erasing Deeds]

You should know that focusing on this is one of the greatest needs of man because the moment a man reaches maturity and especially in these times and other similar periods that bear some resemblance to the pre-Islāmic days, he is subject to be stained by a number of things from the days of ignorance. This is the case of a man who grows up in an environment of knowledge and religion, so what about one who does not?

The Two Ṣaḥīḥs relate the following ḥadīth from Abū Sa'īd (*radīy Allāh 'anhu*): "You will surely follow closely the ways of those before you to the extent that that should they enter a lizard's hole, you would enter it too." They asked: "O Messenger of Allāh, (are they) the Jews and the Christians?" so he said: "Who else?"<sup>8</sup> The words of Allāh, Most High, affirm this:

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<sup>8</sup> Bukhārī, vol.13 p.300 and Muslim, vol.4, p.2054

فَأَسْتَمِعْتُمْ بِخَلْقِكُمْ  
 كَمَا اسْتَمَعَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ بِخَلْقِهِمْ وَخُضْتُمْ  
 كَالَّذِي خَاضُوا

“And you have enjoyed your portion as those before you enjoyed their portion, and you have engaged [in vanities] like that in which they engaged.”

[*al-Tawbah* (9): 69]

This message is further affirmed by the narrations found in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* and acceptable *ḥadīth* collections.

This is prone to pervade the elite of the religious as stated by a number of the *Salaf*, among them Ibn ‘Uyaynah. Men known for their knowledge have been afflicted by many problems of the Jews and others known for their religious devotion have been afflicted by many problems of the Christians. This is clear to those who understand the religion of Islām with which Allāh sent Muḥammad (ﷺ) and then view the various states of the people in the light of this understanding.

Having said this, if Allāh expands one’s heart to embrace Islām and makes him follow a light from his Lord by resurrecting him from the dead and giving him radiance with which he walks among the people, it is inevitable that such a person becomes aware of the problems of the pre-Islāmic era and the path of the two nations; the one under His anger and the one that wanders astray. Once he knows this, he will notice that he himself has some of these problematic traits as well.

The most beneficial thing that both the elite and the general public

can do is to learn how to save themselves from these predicaments by following bad deeds with good ones. Good deeds are the actions (*a'māl*), manners (*akhlāq*), and characteristics (*ṣifāt*) that Allāh has encouraged through the tongue of the Seal of the Prophets (*kaṭim al-nabiyīn*).

## [5.6: The Afflictions That Compensate for Sins]

Various afflictions can be a compensation for one's sins. By afflictions I mean all the painful things like worry, grief, and damage inflicted upon one's wealth, honour, and body. These things, of course, are not something that the servant himself can do.

After this, having by these two sentences covered the duty towards Allāh, which comprises righteous action and fixing the bad, the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "*And treat the people in a fine manner.*"<sup>9</sup> This is referring the rights of the people.

## [5.7: What Comprises All Good Treatment of Others]

Good manners with the people are comprised in connecting with those who have severed their ties with you by greeting and honouring them, praying and seeking forgiveness for them, and praising and visiting them. They also involve giving to those who have refused to give their knowledge, help, or money to you, and pardoning those who have wronged you by harming your person, wealth, or honour. Some of these are obligatory, others are recommended.

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<sup>9</sup> Tirmidhī, vol.3, p240; Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, vol.5, p228; and others.

### [5.8: The Meaning of Great Character]

The great character (*khuluq al-‘azīm*) with which Allāh described Muḥammad (ﷺ) refers to the religion that includes everything that Allāh has commanded. This has been stated by Mujāhid and others. This character is the interpretation of the Qur’ān, for ‘Ā’ishah (*radīyAllāh ‘anhu*) says: “His character was the Qur’ān.”<sup>10</sup> What it means, in its true essence, is taking immediate action in order to do what Allāh, Most High, loves, with a joyful and welcoming heart.

### [5.9: The Meaning of God-consciousness (*taqwā*)]

The fact that all that has thus far been mentioned is included in the counsel of Allāh becomes clear once we know that God-consciousness, or *taqwā*, means that one abides by all of Allāh’s orders, which either signifies obligations or recommendations—and all of His prohibitions that either signify unlawfulness or detestability. This covers the rights of Allāh and the rights of His servants.

However, since the Prophet (ﷺ) sometimes used the word God-consciousness in reference to the fear of the punishment that makes one abstain from the unlawful, the intended meaning was clarified in the ḥadīth of Mu‘ādh (*radīyAllāh ‘anhu*). The ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah (*radīyAllāh ‘anhu*) related and authenticated by Tirmidhī also says: “It was said: ‘O Messenger of Allāh, what makes people enter Paradise the most?’ so he said: ‘God-consciousness towards Allāh and fine character.’ Then it was said: ‘What makes people enter Hell the most?’ so he said: ‘The two hollow things; the mouth and the private part.’”<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, vol.6, p188 and Muslim, vol.1, p.513.

<sup>11</sup> Tirmidhī, vol.3, p245; Ibn Mājah, vol.2, p1418; and others.

The ḥadīth of ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Umar (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*) in the Ṣaḥīḥ says: “The Messenger of Allāh said (ﷺ): ‘The most complete believer in faith is the best of them in character.’”<sup>12</sup> In this ḥadīth, the Prophet (ﷺ) joined completeness of faith (*kāmil al-īmān*) with completeness of character (*kāmil ḥusn al-kbuluq*), and it is well-known that faith is all about having God-consciousness towards Allāh.

### [5.10: The Comprehensive Nature of God-consciousness]

A detailed elucidation of the foundations and branches of God-consciousness is too vast of a topic to be covered here as that covers the entire religion. The source of all good, however, is a servant’s sincerity (*ikhlās*) towards his Lord in his worship (*‘ibadā*) and seeking of assistance (*isti‘āna*). Allāh says:

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ﴿٥﴾

“It is You we worship and You we ask for help.”

[*al-Fātiḥah* (1): 5]

And

فَاعْبُدْهُ وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَيْهِ

“So worship Him and rely upon Him.”

[*Hūd* (11):123]

And

عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَإِلَيْهِ أُنِيبُ ﴿١٠﴾

“Upon Him I have relied, and to Him I turn back to.”

[*Shūrā* (42): 10]

<sup>12</sup> Abū Dāwūd, vol.5, p60; Tirmidhī, vol.2, p315; and others.



And

فَابْتَغُوا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الرِّزْقَ وَاعْبُدُوهُ وَاشْكُرُوا لِلَّهِ

“So seek from Allāh provision and worship Him and be grateful to Him.”

[*al-‘Ankabūt* (29): 17]

In having these traits, the servant stops his heart from connecting with the creation and consequently seeks no benefit from it nor acts for its sake. Instead, he directs his concern towards his Lord, Most High, by constantly invoking Him in every need, whether poverty, need, fear, or anything else, and by doing all that is beloved (to Him) for His sake. For those who master this, the results are beyond description.

### [5.11: The Best Deeds after the Obligatory Matters]

Regarding your question about the most virtuous deeds (*afḍal al-a‘māl*) after the obligations (*farā’id*), the answer depends on one’s ability and schedule and there is no detailed answer that fits everyone. However, what is basically agreed upon by those who have been granted knowledge about Allāh and His matter is that constant remembrance of Allāh at all times is the best thing one can do in general.

This is supported by the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*) related by Muslim: “The loners (*mufarridūn*) have preceded.” The Companions asked: “O Messenger of Allāh, who are the loners?” so he (ﷺ) replied: “The men and women who remember Allāh abundantly.”<sup>13</sup>

Abū Dāwūd relates from Abū’l-Dardā’ (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*) that the

<sup>13</sup> Muslim, vol.4, p2062.

Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Should I tell you about the best of your deeds, the purest of them before your True King, and the highest of them in your ranks? It is better for you than giving out gold and silver or meeting your enemy and striking their necks while they too strike yours.” They said: “Do tell us, O Messenger of Allāh!” so he said: “The remembrance of Allāh.”<sup>14</sup>

The Qur’ān points to this fact in many ways and its numerous manifestations in people’s faith can be seen, heard, and contemplated.

The least that one can do is stick to the words of remembrance (*adhkār* pl. *dhikr*) narrated from the teacher of goodness and the leader of the righteous. These include the remembrance performed at fixed times like the first and last part of the day, prior to sleep and after waking up, and right after the five daily prayers. There is also the remembrance prescribed for specific situations like eating and drinking, getting dressed, sexual intercourse, entering the house, going and leaving the toilet, and during rain and thunder. There are books that have been written on these exclusively called the Deeds of Day and Night (*‘Amal al-Yawm wa al-Layla*).

### [5.12: The Best Form of Remembrance]

After this, the best remembrance would be that which is not restricted to a specific time or situation. The most virtuous of such remembrance is:

«لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ»

“*Lā ilaha illā Allāh*”

“There is no god worthy of worship except Allāh.”

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<sup>14</sup> This is ḥadīth is not found in Abū Dāwūd but reported by Mālik in his *al-Muwattā’*, vol.1, p.211 and others

There might come situations, however, where other words are better, such as:

«سبحان الله والحمد لله والله أكبر ولا حول ولا قوة

إلا بالله»

“Subḥāna Allāh, wa al-ḥamdu li Allāh, wa Allāhu akbar, wa lā hawla wa lā quwwata illā bi'l Allāh.”

“Exalted be Allāh, all praise be to Allāh, Allāh is the greatest, and there is no might nor power save by Him.”

This said, one should know that all utterances of the tongue and all thoughts of the heart that bring one closer to Allāh—like learning, teaching, and commanding the right and rebuking the wrong—fall within the fold of remembering Allāh. Therefore, if one fulfills his duties and then occupies himself with studying beneficial knowledge or partakes in a gathering to learn or teach that which Allāh and His Messenger have called understanding (*fiqh*), he is taking part in one of the best forms of remembering Allāh. Once you know this and contemplate, you will see that the utterances of the forefathers regarding the most virtuous of actions are not much different from each other.

If the servant finds that something is unclear to him, he should perform the Prayer of Guidance (*istikbāra*) prescribed by the Sacred Law, for there is no regret for those who seek the guidance of Allāh, Most High. He should be constant in doing so and recite numerous supplications, as this is the key to all good. Once he does this, he should not hurry the results and say: “I supplicated but there was no answer!” Finally, he should be eager to carry out all of this in the most virtuous times like the last part of the night, right after the five daily prayers, at the time of the adhān, and during rain.

### [5.13: The Best Profession]

The best way to make a living is to trust Allāh by having confidence in the fact that He really is enough for the servant and to think good about Him. Those concerned about their provisions must turn to Allāh, Exalted, and supplicate, for He says (as related by the Prophet (ﷺ)): “Every one of you is hungry save the one I feed, so ask me to feed you and I will do so. My servants, every one of you is naked save the one I clothe, so ask me to clothe you and I will do so.”<sup>15</sup>

Al-Tirmidhī relates from Anas (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*) that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: “Let each of you ask what he needs from His Lord, even if it be a strap for his sandal (to replace a broken one), for if He does not facilitate that, then no one will.”<sup>16</sup>

Allāh, Most High, says in His Book:

وَسْأَلُوا اللَّهَ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ

“And ask Allāh of his bounty.”

[*al-Nisā’* (4): 32]

And

فَإِذَا قُضِيَتِ الصَّلَاةُ فَانْتَشِرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ  
وَابْتَغُوا مِنْ فَضْلِ اللَّهِ

“And when the prayer has been concluded, disperse within the land and seek from the bounty of Allāh.”

[*al-Jumm‘ah* (62): 10]

<sup>15</sup> Muslim, vol.4, p1994.

<sup>16</sup> Tirmidhī, vol.5, p242.

While it is true that the previous *ayah* talks about the Friday Prayer, the meaning applies to all other prayers equally. It is for this reason, and Allāh knows best, that the Prophet (ﷺ) ordered those who wish to enter a masjid to say:

«اللهم افتح لي أبواب رحمتك»

“O Allāh, open for me the doors of Your mercy”

and those who exit one to say:

«اللهم إني أسألك من فضلك»

“O Allāh, I ask from your bounty.”<sup>17</sup>

The *Khalīl* (*‘alayhis-salām*) said:

فَابْتَغُوا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الرِّزْقَ وَاعْبُدُوهُ وَاشْكُرُوا لَهُ

“So seek from Allāh provision and worship Him and be grateful to Him.”

[*al-‘Ankabūt* (29): 17]

This is a command, and a command in the Islāmic law is binding. It is thus clear that seeking help from Allāh and turning to Him is an extremely important foundation for seeking provisions and other matters as well.

When collecting one’s money, a person should do so with a generous heart in hope that it will be blessed for him. He should not collect it with patronage and anxiety. He should see money like he sees the toilet; he is in need of it but it has no place in his heart. Seeking money—if he chooses to seek it—should therefore be like fixing the toilet. Al-Tirmidhī and others relate a ḥadīth connected to the

<sup>17</sup> Muslim, vol.1, p494.

Prophet (ﷺ) which says: “If one starts his morning with the world as his greatest concern, Allāh deranges his affairs and disperses his means of subsistence and he will only get from this world what has been written for him. On the other hand, if one starts his morning with the hereafter as his greatest concern, Allāh composes his state of affairs and puts his richness in his heart. The world will come to him yielding.”<sup>18</sup>

Some of the *Salaf* have said: ‘You need the world but you need your portion of the afterlife more. If you begin from your portion of the afterlife, it will pass by your portion of the world and you may gather it in abundance.’ Allāh, Most High, says:

وَمَا  
خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ ﴿٥٦﴾ مَا أُرِيدُ مِنْهُمْ مِنْ رِزْقٍ  
وَمَا أُرِيدُ أَنْ يُطْعَمُونِ ﴿٥٧﴾ إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الرَّزَّاقُ ذُو الْقُوَّةِ الْمَتِينُ

“And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me. I do not want from them any provision, nor do I want them to feed Me. Indeed, it is Allāh who is the [continual] Provider, the firm possessor of strength.”

[*al-Dhāriyāt* (51): 56-58]

With regard to the preferred profession and whether it should be manufacture, trade, construction, agriculture, or something else, this varies from one person to another. I do not know of any general rule regarding this, but if an opportunity presents itself, one should perform the Prayer of Guidance (*istikhāra*) as received from the teacher of goodness. There are unbelievable blessings in doing so. In any other case, one should do what suits his situation the best without going through great trouble in trying to find another job

<sup>18</sup> Tirmidhī, vol.4, p57; Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, vol.5, p183 and others.

unless there is something abhorrent religion wise in what he is currently doing.

### [5.14: The Relied Upon Books in Islāmic Sciences]

Regarding the books of different disciplines upon which one should rely, there is a lot of room for options here. It also depends on how people are brought up in different countries, as knowledge itself or one's preferred method or school of seeking it may be more available in some countries than others. All good, in any case, is in seeking the assistance of Allāh, Exalted, in learning the knowledge inherited directly from the Prophet (ﷺ). This is what truly deserves to be called knowledge while everything else is either knowledge that does not benefit or not knowledge at all in spite of carrying its name.

If knowledge about something is indeed beneficial, there is undoubtedly something similar and even better in the heritage of Muḥammad (ﷺ) that can take its place. Therefore, one should focus on understanding the intent behind the commands, prohibitions, and all of the speech of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ). Then, when his heart is content with something being the true intent behind the Messenger's (ﷺ) words, he must not change his view before Allāh, Most High, and not before the people either, if he is able.

He should make sure that every chapter of knowledge that he studies is backed by evidence from the Prophet. If he is unsure about a matter that people have differed about, let him supplicate with the words found in the ḥadīth of 'Ā'ishah (*radīy Allāh 'anhā*) which was related by Muslim in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*. This ḥadīth states that when the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) got up to pray at night he would say:

اللهم رب

جبريل وميكائيل وإسرافيل، فاطر السموات والأرض  
عالم الغيب والشهادة أنت تحكم بين عبادك فيما كانوا  
فيه يختلفون، اهديني لما اختلف فيه من الحق بإذنك إنك  
تهدي من تشاء إلى صراط مستقيم»

“O Allāh, the Lord of Jibrīl, Mikā’īl, and Isrāfīl, the creator of the heavens and the earth, the knower of the hidden and the seen! You rule between your servants regarding their differences. Guide me to the truth concerning that over which they have differed, by Your permission. Indeed, You guide whom You will to the straight path.”<sup>19</sup>

Allāh, Most High, has said, as narrated by His Messenger: “My servants! All of you are lost save the ones I guide, so ask for My guidance and I will guide you.”<sup>20</sup>

With regard to written works and their authors, Allāh, Exalted, facilitated for the questioner to hear us talk about them in our study sessions earlier. All in all, there is no classified book as beneficial as the Ṣaḥīḥ of Muḥammad Ibn Ismā’īl al-Bukhārī, but it alone does not contain all the foundations of Sacred Knowledge and does not mention everything needed by those who are well acquainted with the topics of this field. One has to be aware of other ḥadīths as well and see what the people of understanding and knowledge have said about matters that are their specialty.

The Muslim nation has taken up every discipline of Sacred Knowledge in a thorough manner. If Allāh illuminates a person’s heart, He lets him be guided by whatever of this knowledge reaches him, but

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<sup>19</sup> Muslim, vol.1, p534

<sup>20</sup> Muslim, vol.4, p1994



those whom He blinds will only become more confused and lost as their books increase. The Prophet (ﷺ) told Abū Labīd al-Anṣārī (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*): “Do not the Jews and the Christians have the Torah and the Bible? Yet how have they helped them?”<sup>21</sup>

We ask Allāh All-Mighty to grant us guidance and correctness and to inspire us to follow good sense. May He protect us from the evil of our own selves and not allow our hearts to go astray after having guided us. We ask Allāh to grant us His mercy, for truly, He is the Bestower. All praises be to Allāh, the Lord of the worlds, and may His mercy be upon the noblest of all Messengers.

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<sup>21</sup> Tirmidhī, vol.4, p140.

## CHAPTER SIX

### Beautiful Patience, Pardon, and Avoidance

**T**HE SHAYKH AND IMĀM, THE COMBINER of knowledge and action, and the complete scholar, Shaykh al-Islām and the Mufti of mankind, Taqī al-Dīn Ibn Taymiyyah, may Allāh support him and increase him from His mighty grace, was asked about “*beautiful patience*” (*ṣabr al-jamīl*), “*beautiful pardon*” (*ṣafḥ al-jamīl*) and “*beautiful avoidance*” (*hajr al-jamīl*).” He was also asked about the categories of God-consciousness (*taqwā*) and the patience (*ṣabr*) practiced by the people.

His answer, Allāh have mercy on him, was as follows:  
All praise be to Allāh.

Allāh commanded His Prophet to practice beautiful patience (*ṣabr*), pardon (*ṣafḥ*), and avoidance (*hajr*). Beautiful avoidance means avoidance without harm (*adāb*), beautiful pardon is pardon without rebuke (*itāb*), and beautiful patience means patience without complaining (*shakwā*). Ya‘qūb (*‘alayhis-salām*) said:

إِنَّمَا أَشْكُوا بَنِيَّ وَحُزْنِي إِلَى اللَّهِ

“I only complain of my suffering and my grief to Allāh.”

[*Yūsuf* (12): 86]

And

فَصَبْرٌ جَمِيلٌ وَاللَّهُ الْمُسْتَعَانُ عَلَى مَا تَصِفُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

“So patience is most fitting. And Allāh is the one sought for help against that which you describe.”

[*Yūsuf* (12): 18]

As we can see, complaining to Allāh does not contradict beautiful patience. It is narrated that Mūsā (*alayhis-salām*) would say: “O Allāh, to You belongs all praise and to You I complain. You are the one who is sought for help and deliverance and upon You I place my trust.”

One of the Prophet’s (ﷺ) supplications was: “O Allāh, to You I complain my lack of strength, the scarcity of my means, and my insignificance to the people. You are the Lord of the oppressed and You are my Lord. O Allāh, to whom will You leave me? Will it be a person distant who receives me harshly or an enemy to whom You have given power over me? As long as You are not angry with me, I do not care, but Your pardon for me is vaster. I seek refuge with the light of Your Face, by which all darkness is illuminated and the affairs of the world and the afterlife are rectified, lest Your displeasure or anger should befall me. To the seeking of Your acceptance I shall keep returning until You are pleased.”<sup>1</sup>

‘Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*) used to read in the Morning Prayer (*fajr*):

إِنَّمَا أَشْكُو بَثِّي وَحُزْنِي إِلَى اللَّهِ

“I only complain of my suffering and my grief to Allāh.”

[*Yūsuf* (12): 86]

<sup>1</sup> Ṭabarānī, see also *Mujam‘ al-Zawā’id*, vol.6, p35.

In doing so he would cry so much that the people in the last row heard his sobbing.

Complaining to the creation should not be like this. When Imām Aḥmad was sick in his deathbed it was read to him that Ṭāwūs had disliked the moaning of the sick and had said: “It is complaining.” After this, Imām Aḥmad did not moan once until he died. This is because when one complains he is giving the message that he wants others to help him by either stopping whatever is hurting him or by doing something to help him. The servant has been commanded by his Lord to ask Him alone, not His creation. Allāh, Most High, says:

فَإِذَا فَرَغْتَ فَانصَبْ ۖ وَإِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ فَارْغَبْ ﴿٨﴾

“So when you have finished [your duties], then stand up [for worship]. And to your Lord direct [your] longing.”

[*al-Sharḥ* (94): 7-8]

The Prophet (ﷺ) told Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāh ‘anhumā*): “When you ask, ask Allāh, and when you seek help, seek help from Allāh.”<sup>2</sup>

Every human being has two duties: obedience to Allāh by following His commands and leaving the forbidden and having patience with the pre-destined afflictions. The first is God-consciousness and the second is patience. Allāh, Most High, says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ  
ءَامَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا بَطَانَةً مِّن دُونِكُمْ لَا يَأْلُونَكُمْ خَبَالًا

“O you who have believed, do not take as intimates those

<sup>2</sup> Tirmidhī, vol.3, p76; Aḥmad in his Musnad, vol.1, p293.

[Publishers Note] See the detailed commentary on this ḥadīth under the title, ‘*The Legacy of the Prophet* (ﷺ)’ by Ibn Rajab [Published by Dār as-Sunnah Publishers, Birmingham, UK, 1st ed, 2009.]

other than yourselves, for they will not spare you [any] ruin.”

[*Āl-‘Imrān* (3) 118]

and

وَإِنْ نَصَبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ كَيْدُهُمْ شَيْئًا  
 إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطٌ ﴿١٢٠﴾

“And if you are patient and fear Allāh, their plot will not harm you at all. Indeed, Allāh is encompassing of what they do.”

[*Āl-‘Imrān* (3) 120]

and

بَلَىٰ إِنْ نَصَبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا وَيَأْتُوكُم مِّن فَوْرِهِمْ  
 هَذَا يُمْدِدْكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ بِخَمْسَةِ آلَافٍ مِّنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ مُسَوِّمِينَ

“Yes, if you remain patient and conscious of Allāh and the enemy come upon you [attacking] in rage, your Lord will reinforce you with five thousand angels having marks [of distinction].”

[*Āl-‘Imrān* (3) 125]

and

لَتُجْلِبُوا فِي أَمْوَالِكُمْ  
 وَأَنْفُسِكُمْ وَلَتَسْمَعُنَّ مِنَ الَّذِينَ أَوْتُوا الْكِتَابَ  
 مِن قَبْلِكُمْ وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا أَذَىٰ كَثِيرًا  
 وَإِنْ نَصَبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِن عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ ﴿١٢٨﴾

“You will surely be tested in your possessions and in yourselves. And you will surely hear from those who were

given the Scripture before you and from those who associate others with Allāh much abuse. But if you are patient and fear Allāh—indeed, that is of the matters [worthy] of determination.”

[*Āl-‘Imrān* (3) 186]

Yūsuf (*‘alayhis-salām*) said:

أَنَا يُسُفٌ وَهَذَا أَخِي قَدَّمَنَا اللَّهُ  
عَلَيْنَا إِنَّهُ مَنْ يَتَّقِ وَيَصْبِرْ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ  
الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٩٠﴾

“I am Yūsuf, and this is my brother. Allāh has certainly favoured us. Indeed, he who fears Allāh and is patient, then indeed, Allāh does not allow to be lost the reward of those who do good.”

[*Yūsuf* (12): 90]

## [6.1: The Counsel of Shaykh ‘Abdu’l-Qādir]

It is for this reason that Shaykh ‘Abdu’l-Qādir and other upright Shaykhs would regularly tell the people to adhere to the two foundations of swift abidance by orders while abstaining from the unlawful and patient acceptance of destiny. Not just a good number of laymen but those on the spiritual path as well have erred regarding this matter.

Some of them only bear witness to pre-decreed destiny and the “universal reality” (*ḥaqīqa al-kawniyya*) but not the “reality of the religion” (*ḥaqīqa al-diniyya*). They see that Allāh is the Creator and Lord of everything and whilst admitting that it is He who destined it all they do not differentiate between the things that He loves and is pleased with and that which makes Him angry.

They do not distinguish between the oneness of worship (*tawḥīd al-ʿulūbiyya*) and the oneness of lordship (*tawḥīd al-rubūbiyyah*), and as such only bear witness to the union affirmed by everyone, the happy and the wretched alike. This belief is attested to by people of all sorts; the believers and the unbelievers, the pious and the sinful, the true prophets and the imposters, the inhabitants of Paradise and Hell, the proteges and enemies of Allāh, and the angels brought close and the defiant devils.

## [6.2: Erroneous Notions about Destiny]

All of these people believe in this union; this universal reality that Allāh is their sole Lord, Creator, and Sovereign King. They do not attest to that which Allāh used to separate His proteges from His enemies, the believers from the unbelievers, the pious from the sinful, and the dwellers of Paradise from the inhabitants of Hell.

This criterion is the oneness of worship which necessitates worshipping Allāh alone without joining partners with Him and obeying Him and His Messenger. It necessitates doing what He loves and is pleased with, which in turn entails following all that He and His Messenger command, whether these commands indicate obligatoriness or recommendation, and abstaining from everything that they have forbidden. It is also necessary to have loyalty for the proteges of Allāh and enmity towards His enemies and to command the right and rebuke the evil. Waging *jihād* against the unbelievers and hypocrites with one's heart, hand, and tongue is also what this oneness of worship entails.

One must bear witness to this religious reality which separates the two groups from each other and one must adhere to its people.

Otherwise he will be like the pagans which is worse than being a Jew or a Christian.

### [6.3: The Pagans Believe in the Universal Reality]

The pagans believe in the universal reality as they testify to the fact that Allāh is the Lord of everything. Allāh, Most High, says:

وَلَيْنَ سَأَلْتَهُمْ مَنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ

“And if you asked them, ‘Who created the heavens and earth?’ they would surely say, ‘Allāh.’”

[*Luqman* (31): 25]

And

قُلْ لِمَنِ الْأَرْضُ وَمَنْ فِيهَا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾ سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ قُلْ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾ قُلْ مَنْ رَبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ السَّبْعِ وَرَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٨٦﴾ سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ قُلْ أَفَلَا نُنْفِقُ ﴿٨٧﴾ قُلْ مَنْ يَدْرِيءُ مَلَكُوتُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ يُحْيِيهِ وَيُمِيتُهُ وَلَا يُجَارُ عَلَيْهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾ سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ قُلْ فَأَنَّى تُسْحَرُونَ ﴿٨٩﴾

“Say, [O Muḥammad], ‘To whom belongs the earth and whoever is in it, if you should know?’ They will say, ‘To Allāh.’ Say, ‘Then will you not remember?’ Say, ‘Who is Lord of the seven heavens and Lord of the Great Throne?’ They will say, ‘[They belong] to Allāh.’ Say, ‘Then will you not fear Him?’ Say, ‘In whose hand is the realm of all things—and He protects while none can protect against Him—if you should know?’ They will say, ‘[All belongs] to Allāh.’ Say, ‘Then how are you deluded?’”

[*al-Mu'minūn* (23): 84-89]



For this reason, Allāh said:

﴿وَمَا يُؤْمِنُ أَكْثَرُهُمْ بِاللَّهِ إِلَّا وَهُمْ مُشْرِكُونَ﴾ (116)

“And most of them believe not in Allāh except while they associate others with Him.”

[*Yūsuf* (12): 106]

Some of the *Salaf* have said: ‘You ask them who created the heavens and the earth and they say ‘Allāh,’ yet they still worship others.’

Therefore, he who attests to the reality of pre-decreed destiny (*qadr*) but does not affirm religious commands and prohibitions is deeper in disbelief than the Jews and the Christians because they at least affirmed the truthfulness of the Angels and the Messengers who informed them of the lawful and the unlawful. Their only problem was that they only believed in some of these laws while rejecting the rest. Allāh, Most High, says:

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْفُرُونَ  
بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَيُرِيدُونَ  
أَنْ يُفَرِّقُوا بَيْنَ اللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ  
وَيَقُولُونَ نُوْمِنُ بِبَعْضٍ  
وَنَكْفُرُ بِبَعْضٍ وَيُرِيدُونَ  
أَنْ يَتَّخِذُوا بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ  
سَبِيلًا﴾ (105) ﴿أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ  
الْكَافِرُونَ  
حَقًّا﴾

“Indeed, those who disbelieve in Allāh and His messengers and wish to discriminate between Allāh and His messengers and say, ‘We believe in some and disbelieve in others,’ and wish to adopt a way in between. Those are the disbelievers, truly.”

[*al-Nisā'* (4): 150-151]

These people who only bear witness to the “*universal reality*” (*ḥaqīqa*)

*al-kawmiyya*) or the oneness of Lordship (*tawhid al-rubūbiyyah*) which the entire creation believes in whilst affirming that all servants of Allāh come under His pre-decreed destiny are more involved in unbelief than the Jews and the Christians. As they base their understanding on this reality alone, they do not differentiate between the god-fearing believers who obey Allāh's command with which He sent His Messengers and between the unbelievers and sinners who disobey Him.

This said, there are some who do perceive the difference in some matters. This means that they distinguish a believer from an unbeliever but they still see no difference between the pious and the sinful. Others differentiate between some of the pious and some of the sinful but still do not make a distinction between others because of their assumptions and desires. The deficiency of faith with such people depends on how big a distinction they make between the pious and the sinful. The amount of faith that these people have in the religion of Allāh, which is the true criterion, depends on how big a distinction they make between His followers and enemies.

Those who attest to the truthfulness of religious commands and prohibitions but do not believe in pre-ordained destiny are Qadarites like the Mu'tazilites<sup>3</sup> and other groups, and these people are the Zoroastrians of this nation. While these people resemble the Zoroastrians, the ones mentioned before them resemble the pagans, and they are even worse. Those, then, who affirm both beliefs as correct and make the Lord a contradiction are the followers of *Iblīs* who, as has been related about him, objected to the Lord, Exalted, and attempted to dispute with Him.

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<sup>3</sup> See Index of Sect p.323.

This is the classification regarding theology.

## [6.4: The Classification of People in Worship (*'ibādah*)]

The people are like this regarding their states and actions as well. The correct state is that of the believer who fears Allāh by doing what he has been commanded and abstaining from the unlawful, and by having patience with the pre-destined afflictions that befall him. Such a person abides by the divine commands and prohibitions, adheres to the religion and the *Shari'ah*, and seeks the help of Allāh in that:

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ﴿٥﴾

“It is You we worship and You we ask for help.”

[*al-Fātiḥah* (1): 5]

When he commits a sin he seeks forgiveness and repents. He does not use destiny as an excuse for his sins and does not hold that the creation can object to the Lord of all existence in any way. He believes in destiny and does not use it as an excuse. It is stated in a sound ḥadīth: “The best seeking of forgiveness is that the servant says:

اللهم أنت ربي لا إله إلا أنت،  
 خلقتني وأنا عبدك، وأنا على  
 عهدك ووعدك ما استطعت،  
 أعوذ بك من شر ما صنعت،  
 أبوء لك بنعمتك علي وأبوء بذنبي،  
 فاغفر لي فإنه لا يغفر الذنوب إلا أنت

‘O Allāh, You are my Lord and there is no god but You. You created me and I am Your servant. I abide by Your

covenant and promise the best I can. I seek refuge with You from the evil I have done. I acknowledge to You Your blessings upon me and I admit my sin. Forgive me, for none can forgive sins but You.”<sup>4</sup>

A believer acknowledges the blessing of Allāh when he does something good and knows that it is He who guided him and facilitated for him the state of ease. He also admits his sins and repents. Some of the pious have said: ‘I have obeyed You by Your grace, and the favour is Yours, and disobeyed you while You knew, and the proof is with You. I ask You by the necessity of Your proof against me and the absence of mine that You forgive me.’ A sound divine ḥadīth states: “My servants! It is only your deed that I count for you and then give you in full. Let the person who then finds good praise Allāh, and let the one who finds something else only blame himself.”<sup>5</sup>

This topic has been studied in greater detail elsewhere.

Others are of the type that only focuses on the commands; they do their best to obey their Lord but the lack of their observance of the divine decree renders them unable to truly seek His help and to truly put their trust in him with patience.

Another group only observes the divine decree; they seek Allāh’s help more earnestly than the previous group and put their trust in Him with true patience, but do not adhere to the commands of Allāh and His Messenger (ﷺ). They do not abide by His laws by sticking to the religious rules of the Book and the Sunnah. This group seeks His help while not worshipping Him and the one before them wants to

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<sup>4</sup> Bukhārī, vol.11, pp.97-98 and others

<sup>5</sup> Muslim, vol.4, p.1194 and Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, vol.5, p.160.

worship Him but does not seek His help. The true believer, however, both worships Him and seeks His help.

The fourth category is the worst: under it falls the group that neither worships Allāh nor seeks His help, thereby belonging to neither those who focus on the *Sharī'ah* nor those who emphasize the universal decree.

These four categories are the outcome when we look at the level of people's reliance, seeking of help and other such acts before afflictions befall them and the level of their patience, contentment and other such virtues after them. People are thus divided into four categories of God-consciousness-which means abidance by religious commands-and patience with the universal decree.

### [6.5: The Classification of People in Their God-consciousness and Patience]

- **THE FIRST CLASS:** The people of God-consciousness (*taqwā*) and patience (*ṣabr*); these are the truly happy ones in this world and the hereafter upon whom Allāh has bestowed His favour.
- **THE SECOND CLASS:** Those with some *taqwā* but no *ṣabr*; these are the ones who do the obligatory acts of worship, such as the prayer, and abstain from the unlawful but are taken by great fear and anxiety when afflicted by bodily illness or something else of that sort, or when their wealth and honour is harmed, or when they are threatened by a frightening enemy.
- **THE THIRD CLASS:** People with some *ṣabr* but no *taqwā*; these are like the shameless sinners who choose to bear the consequences of following their desires. This group includes

the thieves and highwaymen who patiently endure the pains that come with illegal seizure and snatching the unlawful as well as the scribes and divan officials who choose to endure the consequences of stealing money by cheating. The seekers of leadership and power endure harm that most people could not bear and those obsessed with lust and unlawful images have patience with the suffering that follows their forbidden actions.

Here we have men who desire high rank or corruption in the land by seeking leadership and power and striving to become rich by transgressing against others and men who pleasure themselves with unlawful images by either looking or touching them. All of them endure various forms of harm with *ṣabr* but have no *taqwā* in their abandonment of the religious commands and their indulgence in sin.

Similarly, one may have patience when afflictions like illness and poverty befall him and be void of all *taqwā* when healthy and able.

- 4) The fourth and worst class: These do not fear Allāh when free and able nor have *ṣabr* upon being tested. They fit the following words of Allāh:

﴿إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ خُلِقَ هَلُوعًا ﴿١٩﴾  
 إِذَا مَسَّهُ الشَّرُّ جَزُوعًا ﴿٢٠﴾ وَإِذَا مَسَّهُ الْخَيْرُ مَنُوعًا ﴿٢١﴾

“Indeed, mankind was created anxious: When evil touches him, impatient.”

[*al-Ma‘ārij* (70): 19-21]

Such people are most oppressive and tyrannical when free and extremely humble and frightened upon being subdued. If you over-

power them, they act humble and hypocritically show deference to you and beg for mercy. In such a condition they will try to repel harm from themselves by telling lies (*kadhib*), manifesting humility (*dhull*), and venerating (*ta'zim*) the threat.

But if they manage to gain the upper hand, they behave like the worst tyrants with the coldest of hearts, having no mercy, kindness, or excuses for anyone. The Muslims have seen this with all those men who drifted far away from faith, like the Tatars whom they fought and others who have proven to be very much like them.

It makes no difference if such men disguise themselves as Muslim soldiers, scholars, devotees, merchants, or manufacturers, for what really matters is what they really are: "Allāh does not look at your appearances or possessions; He only looks at your hearts and actions."<sup>6</sup>

If a person's heart and actions are like those of the Tatars, he is, from this perspective, similar to them and his Islām or the Islām he at least manifests to others is like that of the Tatars. In fact, some other Muslim-looking people besides the Tatar soldiers have committed even greater apostasy than the Tatars and are even closer to the pre-Islāmic character.

A ḥadīth in the Ṣaḥīḥ states that the Prophet (ﷺ) would say in his sermon: "The best speech is the speech of Allāh and the best guidance is that of Muḥammad. The worst of all matters are the invented ones, and every innovation is misguidance."<sup>7</sup> Since the best of all speech is the speech of Allāh and the best guidance is the guidance

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<sup>6</sup> Muslim, vol.4, p.1987 and Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, vol.2, p.285.

<sup>7</sup> Muslim, vol.2, p.592 and Abū Dāwūd, vol.5, p.15.

of Muḥammad, we can say that the closer a person is to them and the more his reality resembles them, the closer he is to perfection and the more perfection befits him. Similarly, the further he is from them and the less his reality resembles them, the further he is from perfection and the more falsehood befits him.

The most complete person is he who obeys Allāh the most and has the most patience with afflictions. The closer one follows the commands of Allāh and His Messenger, the more his actions agree with what Allāh loves and is pleased with, and the greater his patience is with His pre-decree, the more complete and virtuous he is. One is only as faulty as his abidance by these two.

### [6.6: *Ṣabr* and *Taqwā* in the Book and the Sunnah]

Allāh has mentioned *ṣabr* and *taqwā* in numerous places in His book. He says that He will help the servants against their unbelieving and defiant enemies who wage war against them as well as the hypocrites and the Muslims that oppress them. Victory will come to those who practice *ṣabr* and *taqwā*. Allāh, Most High, says:

بَلِّغْ إِن تَصْبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا وَيَأْتُوكُم مِّن فَوْرِهِمْ  
هَذَا يُمْدِدْكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ بِخَمْسَةِ آلَافٍ مِّنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ مُسَوِّمِينَ

“Yes, if you remain patient and conscious of Allāh and the enemy come upon you [attacking] in rage, your Lord will reinforce you with five thousand angels having marks [of distinction].”

[*Āl-ʿImrān* (3) 125]

And



لَتَبْلُوكَ فِي أَمْوَالِكُمْ  
وَأَنْفُسِكُمْ وَلَتَسْمَعُنَّ مِنَ الَّذِينَ أَوْتُوا الْكِتَابَ  
مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا أَذًى كَثِيرًا  
وَإِنْ تَصْبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ ﴿١٨٦﴾

“You will surely be tested in your possessions and in yourselves. And you will surely hear from those who were given the Scripture before you and from those who associate others with Allāh much abuse. But if you are patient and fear Allāh—indeed, that is of the matters [worthy] of determination.”

[*Al-Imrān* (3) 186]

And

يَتَأَيَّأُ الَّذِينَ  
ءَامَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا بَطَانَةً مِنْ دُونِكُمْ لَا يَأْتُونَكُمْ خَبْرًا  
وَدُّوا مَا عَنِتُّمْ قَد بَدَتْ الْبَغْضَاءُ مِنْ أَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَمَا تَخْفَى  
صُدُورُهُمْ أَكْبَرُ قَدْ بَيَّنَّا لَكُمْ الْآيَاتِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٧٨﴾  
هَاتَتْمْ أَوْلَاءٌ يُحِبُّونَهُمْ وَلَا يُحِبُّونَكُمْ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْكِتَابِ كُلِّهِ  
وَإِذَا لَقُواكُمْ قَالُوا ءَامَنُوا وَإِذَا خَلَوْا عَضُّوا عَلَيْكُمْ الْأَنَامِلَ  
مِنَ الْغَيْظِ قُلْ مُوتُوا بِغَيْظِكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ ﴿١٧٩﴾  
إِنْ تَمَسَسْتُمْ حَسَنَةً تَسَوْهُمْ وَإِنْ تَضَبَّكُمْ سَيِّئَةً يَفْرَحُوا  
بِهَا وَإِنْ تَصْبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ كَيْدُهُمْ شَيْئًا  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطٌ ﴿١٨٠﴾

“O you who have believed, do not take as intimates those other than yourselves, for they will not spare you [any] ruin. They wish you would have hardship. Hatred

has already appeared from their mouths, and what their breasts conceal is greater. We have certainly made clear to you the signs, if you will use reason. Here you are loving them but they are not loving you, while you believe in the Scripture—all of it. And when they meet you, they say, ‘We believe.’ But when they are alone, they bite their fingertips at you in rage. Say, ‘Die in your rage. Indeed, Allāh is Knowing of that within the breasts.’ If good touches you, it distresses them; but if harm strikes you, they rejoice at it. And if you are patient and fear Allāh, their plot will not harm you at all. Indeed, Allāh is encompassing of what they do.”

[*Āl-‘Imrān* (3) 118-120]

The brothers of Yūsuf told him:

قَالُوا أَيْنَ نَكَ  
لَأَنْتَ يُونُسُ قَالَ أَنَا يُوسُفُ وَهَذَا أَخِي قَدْ مَنَّ اللَّهُ  
عَلَيْنَا إِنَّهُ مَنْ يَتَّقِ وَيَصْبِرْ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ  
الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٠٩﴾

“‘Are you indeed Yūsuf?’ He said ‘I am Yūsuf, and this is my brother. Allāh has certainly favoured us. Indeed, he who fears Allāh and is patient, then indeed, Allāh does not allow to be lost the reward of those who do good.’”

[*Yūsuf* (12): 90]

Patience has been combined with righteous deeds (*al-a‘māl al-sāliḥah*) in all situations, both specific (*khushūṣ*) and general (*‘amūm*):

وَأَتَّبِعْ  
مَا يُوحَىٰ إِلَيْكَ وَأَصْبِرْ حَتَّىٰ يَخْرُجَ اللَّهُ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الْخَارِجِينَ ﴿١٠٩﴾

“And follow what is revealed to you, [O Muḥammad], and be patient until Allāh will judge. And He is the best of judges.”

[*Yūnus* (10): 109]

Following what was revealed to him covers the entire meaning of taqwā as it entails belief in Allāh’s words and obedience to His commands. Allāh says:

وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ طَرَفِي النَّهَارِ وَرُفَا مِّنَ  
الَّيْلِ إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبْنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ ذَلِكَ ذِكْرَى لِلذَّاكِرِينَ  
﴿١١٤﴾ وَأَصْبِرْ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١١٥﴾

“And establish prayer at the two ends of the day and at the approach of the night. Indeed, good deeds do away with misdeeds. That is a reminder for those who remember. And be patient, for indeed, Allāh does not allow to be lost the reward of those who do good.”

[*Hūd* (11): 114-115]

and

فَأَصْبِرْ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ  
حَقٌّ وَأَسْتَغْفِرْ لِذَنْبِكَ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ بِالْعَشِيِّ  
وَالْإِبْكَرِ ﴿٥٥﴾

“So be patient, [O Muḥammad]. Indeed, the promise of Allāh is truth. And ask forgiveness for your sin and exalt [Allāh] with praise of your Lord in the evening and the morning.”

[*al-Ghāfir* (40): 55]

and

فَاصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا يَقُولُونَ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ  
قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ الْغُرُوبِ ﴿٣٩﴾ وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ

“So be patient over what they say and exalt [Allāh] with praise of your Lord before the rising of the sun and before its setting; and during periods of the night.”

[*al-Qāf* (50): 39-40]

And

وَأَسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ وَإِنَّهَا لَكَبِيرَةٌ إِلَّا عَلَى الْخَاشِعِينَ

“And seek help through patience and prayer, and indeed, it is difficult except for the humbly submissive [to Allāh].”

[*al-Baqarah* (2): 45]

And

أَسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ ﴿١٥٣﴾

“O you who have believed, seek help through patience and prayer. Indeed, Allāh is with the patient.”

[*al-Baqarah* (2): 153]

In all of these places of the Qur’ān prayer is joined with patience. Mercy (*rahma*) and patience are mentioned together in verses like:

وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالرَّحْمَةِ ﴿١٧﴾

“And advised one another to patience and advised one another to compassion.”

[*Balad* (90): 17]

Rahma entails kindness (*ihsān*) towards other beings through the payment of *zakāt* and other such actions. The division of the people regarding their patience and mercy is fourfold: some, like the strong

and the cold-hearted, are patient but have no mercy. Others are merciful but have no patience, like the weak and the lenient, among them many women and others just like them. Some people have neither patience nor mercy, like the cold and the anxious.

What is praiseworthy, however, is having both *ṣabr* and *raḥma*. The jurists have said about the ideal ruler that he should be strong but not aggressive and soft but not weak. His patience enables him to be strong and his softness makes him merciful. One only gains victory through patience, for victory goes hand in hand with patience. As one shows mercy to others Allāh, Most High, shows mercy to him. The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Allāh only has mercy on the merciful of his servants.”<sup>8</sup> And He (ﷻ) said: “He who has no mercy will not be granted mercy.”<sup>9</sup> And He (ﷻ) said: “Mercy is only taken away from the wretched.”<sup>10</sup> Also He (ﷻ) said: “The merciful will be granted mercy by the Merciful. Have mercy on those on the earth and you will be granted mercy by Him who is in the heaven.”<sup>11</sup>

Allāh knows best.

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<sup>8</sup> Bukhārī, vol.3, p.151 and Muslim, vol.2, p.636 and others.

<sup>9</sup> Bukhārī, vol.10, p.426 and Muslim, vol.4, p.1809 and others.

<sup>10</sup> Tirmidhī, vol.3, p.216; Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, vol.2, p.301 and others.

<sup>11</sup> Abū Dāwūd, vol.5, p.231 and Tirmidhī, vol.3, p.217 and others.

## CHAPTER SIX

# On the Words of al-Qushayrī Regarding Contentment (*riḍā*)

### [7.1: The Meaning of Contentment (*riḍā*)]

**S**HAYKH AL-ISLĀM—MAY ALLĀH have mercy on him—was asked about the correctness of the following statement of Shaykh Abū Sulaymān as quoted by Shaykh al-Qushayrī in the Chapter of Contentment (*riḍā*): ‘Contentment is when one does not ask Allāh for Paradise nor seeks His protection from Hell.’<sup>1</sup>

His answer, Allāh have mercy on him, was as follows:

The answer:

All praise be to Allāh, Lord of the worlds.

Regarding this statement, two things should be looked at:

Firstly: did the Shaykh really say this?

And secondly: how correct is this statement?

With regard to the first, it should be noted that Ustadh Abū’l-Qāsim did not mention the chain of narrators behind the statement

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<sup>1</sup> See *Risālah al-Qushayrī*, chapter on *al-Riḍā*, p.90.

when he related it from Shaykh Abū Sulaymān. His attribution to the Shaykh is expedient (*mursal*). Abū'l-Qāsim mentions the full chains of the reports from the Prophet (ﷺ), the Companions, the *Tabi'īn*, the Shaykhs, and others in his *Risālah* at times, but there are also reports that are expedient (*mursal*). It is common for him to use the expression: 'And it has been said.'

Furthermore, when he does mention the chains (*isnād*), they are sometimes sound (*ṣaḥīḥ*), sometimes weak (*da'īf*), and sometimes forged (*mawḍū'*). Some chains he keeps expedient (*mursal*), omitting the very first narrator from the chain. What we see here is much like what we find in the books of the jurists as they cater for all types of ḥadīths; the sound, weak, and the forged.

## [7.2: The ḥadīths in the Books of Heart-Softening Traditions]

The narrations found in the books of heart-softening traditions and Ṣūfism can be sound, weak, and forged, and this is agreed upon by all Muslims. There is no dispute about the fact that these books contain ḥadīths from all of these categories. In fact, weak ḥadīths have found their way even into the books of *Tafsīr*, in spite of the fact that the scholars of ḥadīth are more learned in the science of narration. If this is the case with their books, what about the books of others?

Sometimes the authors of these works are actually Imāms of Jurisprudence, *Ṣūfism*, or ḥadīth and end up relating these ḥadīths because they do not know that they are lies. This is the case most of the time with religious men as they do not use anything as proof if they know that it is a lie.

Sometimes they know that these ḥadīths are false but still relate them as their sole intention is to mention everything that has been narrated about a particular topic.

Relating false ḥadīths and accompanying that with a clarification about their status is permissible while doing so with ḥadīths that encourage action is unlawful according to the scholars unless one states their rank. The Prophet (ﷺ) says in a ḥadīth found in the Ṣaḥīḥ: “He who narrates a ḥadīth from me while considering it a lie is one of the two liars.”<sup>2</sup>

Many scholars have done this with the interpretation that instead of lying they are merely relating what has been narrated by others. This is not serious if they only relate them to teach the reader that such narrations exist without wanting them to act and rely upon them.

### [7.3: Ibn Taymiyyah’s Opinion on al-Qushayrī’s *Risālah*]

The point is that there are sound, weak, and forged narrations from the Prophet (ﷺ) and the *Salaf* in *Risālah* and other works of the jurists and the *Ṣūfis*. The sound reports are those that are proven truthful, the forged are those that are proven false, and the weak are those that are narrated by people whose truthfulness is unknown because of their bad memory or due to being accused of lying. The truthfulness of the latter group cannot be totally negated, for a sinner might speak the truth and one prone to error may remember something correctly.

Most chapters of *Risālah* contain all three types, including the

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<sup>2</sup> Tirmidhī, vol.4, p.143. This ḥadīth is ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ.



Chapter of Contentment<sup>3</sup> which states that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “He who is pleased with Allāh as his Lord, Islām as his religion, and Muḥammad as his Prophet, has tasted faith.”<sup>4</sup> This ḥadīth was related by Muslim in his Ṣaḥīḥ with a sound chain, but the Ustadh did not say this.

In the beginning of the chapter there is a weak or in fact a forged ḥadīth, namely the long ḥadīth of Jābir which he narrates through the route of Faḍl Ibn ‘Isā al-Raqāshī, from Muḥammad Ibn al-Munkadir, from Jābir.

This is the first ḥadīth in the chapter, even though the ḥadīths of al-Faḍl Ibn ‘Isā are extremely weak and disclaimed, which is why the Imāms agree that they cannot be relied upon or used as evidence. That being said, even though the weakness of his reports is evident, he did not lie on purpose; he is just like the many jurists whose narrations are not accepted not because they are liars but because they have a bad memory.

The scholars agree that this Raqāshī narrator is weak and the Imāms of the science are well aware of this:

Ayyūb al-Sakhtiyānī said: ‘Had he been born mute it would have been better for him.’

Sufyān Ibn ‘Uyaynah said: ‘He is nothing.’

Imām Aḥmad and al-Nasā’ī said: ‘He is weak.’

Yaḥyā Ibn Ma‘īn said: ‘He is a man of evil.’

Abū Ḥātim and Abū Zur‘ah said: ‘His ḥadīths are rejected.’

The same goes for other than Prophetic narrations (in the book).

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<sup>3</sup> See *Risālah al-Qushayrī*, p.88.

<sup>4</sup> Muslim, vol.1, p62; Tirmidhī, vol.4, p.126 and others.

They include good reports with good chains like the statement of Shaykh Abū Sulaymān al-Daranī: ‘When the servant has forgotten his desires he is content.’ This man narrated the statement from his Shaykh Abū ‘Abdu’l-Raḥmān al-Sulamī with his chain. Shaykh Abū ‘Abdu’l-Raḥmān used to focus on collecting the statements and stories of these Shaykhs, wrote biographical works such as *Tabaqāt al-Ṣūfīyyah* (Biographies of the Ṣūfīs) and *Zuhbād al-Salaf* (Devotes of the Forefathers). One of the works he wrote on the topic of Chapters was *Maqāmāt al-Awliyā’* (The Stations of the Saints). His works contain all three categories (of ḥadīth).

It has been told that Shaykh Abū ‘Abdu’l-Raḥmān said that he heard al-Naṣr Abādī say: ‘He who wishes to reach the position of content acceptance must adhere to that in which Allāh has placed His acceptance.’ This is very beautifully put, for those who do what pleases Allāh by following His orders and abstaining from what He has forbidden—especially if they do both the obligatory and the recommended parts—will earn His pleasure. Likewise, he who adheres to what Allāh, the Truth, loves, will be loved by Allāh.

A sound ḥadīth related in Bukhārī states: ‘I have declared war on anyone who shows enmity to a friend of Mine. My servant does not draw near to Me with anything I love more than what I have made obligatory on him. And my servant continues to draw near to Me with superogatory actions until I love him.’<sup>5</sup>

This is because contentment is of two types:

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<sup>5</sup> Bukhārī, vol.11, pp.240-241. See the detailed book on this subject published by Dār as-Sunnah Publisher, under the title, *The Criterion between the Friends of Allāh and the friends of Shayṭān*, 2007.

## [7.4: The Types of Contentment]

- 1) The first type: contentment (*ridā*) with following orders and abstaining from the unlawful, which naturally means only doing what Allāh has permitted and abstaining from the unlawful; Allāh says:

وَاللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَحَقُّ أَنْ يُرْضَوْهُ

“But Allāh and His Messenger are more worthy for them to satisfy...”

[*al-Tawbah* (9): 62]

And

وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ رَضُوا مَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ  
 وَرَسُولُهُ وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ سَيُؤْتِينَا اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ  
 وَرَسُولُهُ إِنَّا إِلَى اللَّهِ رَاغِبُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾

“If only they had been satisfied with what Allāh and His Messenger gave them and said, ‘Sufficient for us is Allāh’; Allāh will give us of His bounty, and [so will] His Messenger; indeed, we are desirous toward Allāh.”

[*al-Tawbah* (9): 59]

This type of contentment is obligatory, which is why He rebukes those who do not have it:

وَمِنْهُمْ مَن يَلْمِزُكَ  
 فِي الصَّدَقَاتِ فَإِنْ أُعْطُوا مِنْهَا رَضُوا وَإِنْ لَمْ يُعْطُوا مِنْهَا إِذَا  
 هُمْ يَسْخَطُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ رَضُوا مَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ  
 وَرَسُولُهُ وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ سَيُؤْتِينَا اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ  
 وَرَسُولُهُ إِنَّا إِلَى اللَّهِ رَاغِبُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾

“And among them are some who criticize you concerning the [distribution of] charities. If they are given from them, they approve; but if they are not given from them, at once they become angry. If only they had been satisfied with what Allāh and His Messenger gave them and said, ‘Sufficient for us is Allāh’; Allāh will give us of His bounty, and [so will] His Messenger.”

[*al-Tawbah* (9): 58-59]

- 2) The second type: contentment (*riḍā*) with difficulties (*masā'ib*) like poverty (*faqr*), illness (*marad*), and humiliation (*dhull*); This type of contentment is recommended but not obligatory according to one scholarly opinion while others have stated that it is indeed obligatory. The correct opinion, however, is that the obligatory thing is patience. Al-Ḥasan once said: “Contentment is in the nature, but patience is the reliance of the believer.” Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) narrates that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “If you are able to act with contentment alongside certainty, do so. If you cannot, then there is abundant good in having patience with what you dislike.”

As for being pleased with unbelief, sins, and disobedience, the Imāms of our religion have stated that this must not happen because Allāh Himself is not pleased with them:

وَلَا يَرْضَىٰ لِعِبَادِهِ الْكُفْرَ

“And He does not approve for His servants disbelief.”

[*al-Zumar* (39): 7]

and

وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفُسَادَ

“And Allāh does not like corruption.”

[*al-Baqarah* (2): 205]

and

فَإِنْ  
تَرْضَوْا عَنْهُمْ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَرْضَىٰ عَنِ الْقَوْمِ الْفَاسِقِينَ

“But if you should be satisfied with them—indeed, Allāh is not satisfied with a defiantly disobedient people.”

[*al-Tawbah* (9): 96]

and

فَجَزَاءُ وُجْهِهِ جَهَنَّمُ خَالِدًا فِيهَا وَعَصِيبُ  
اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ وَلَعْنَةُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُ عَذَابًا عَظِيمًا ﴿١٣٧﴾

“His recompense is Hell, wherein he will abide eternally, and Allāh has become angry with him and has cursed him and has prepared for him a great punishment.”

[*al-Nisā'* (4): 93]

and

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ اتَّبَعُوا مَا آسَخَطَ اللَّهُ  
وَكَرِهُوا رِضْوَانَهُ فَأَحْبَطَ أَعْمَالَهُمْ ﴿٢٨﴾

“That is because they followed what angered Allāh and disliked [what earns] His pleasure, so He rendered worthless their deeds.”

[*Muḥammad* (47): 28]

and

وَعَدَّ اللَّهُ  
الْمُنَافِقِينَ وَالْمُنَافِقَاتِ وَالْكُفَّارَ نَارَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ  
فِيهَا هِيَ حَسْبُهُمْ

“Allāh has promised the hypocrite men and hypocrite

women and the disbelievers the fire of Hell, wherein they will abide eternally. It is sufficient for them.”

[*al-Tawbah* (9): 68]

And

لَيْسَ مَا قَدَّمَتْ لَهُمْ أَنفُسَهُمْ  
أَنْ سَخِطَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَفِي الْعَذَابِ هُمْ خَالِدُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾

“How wretched is that which they have put forth for themselves in that Allāh has become angry with them, and in the punishment they will abide eternally.”

[*al-Mā'idah* (5): 80]

and

فَلَمَّا أَصَفْنَا نَقَمْنَا مِنْهُمْ

“And when they angered Us, We took retribution from them...”

[*al-Zukhruf* (43): 55]

If this is the case and instead of approving of their actions, Allāh, Exalted, is displeased with them and thus angry at those who do them, how could it be lawful for a believer to be pleased with them? How could it be permissible for him to not become upset and angry by actions that anger Allāh?

## [7.5: Notions about Contentment (*riḍā*) and Will (*irāda'*)]

Two groups of people have gone astray here:

- 1) The first group: A group of theologians who affiliated themselves with the Sunnah and debated the Qadarites, thinking that the love of Allāh, the Truth, as well as His pleasure, displeasure, and anger all go back to His will; this is because unlike the Qadarites, they knew that everything exists only because Allāh wants it to exist. Similarly, they said, He loves all of it (the aforementioned evil) as well and wants it to be.

They then began distorting His words and said that “*He does not like corruption*” actually means that He does not want corruption; to the believers, that is. They also said that “*He does not like for His servants unbelief*” means that He does not want it for His believing servants.

This is a grave mistake because according to them, one could say that He does not love faith and does not like for His servants faith because that really means that He does not want faith for the unbelievers and does not like it for them.

The people of Islām are in agreement that everything that Allāh has commanded is lovable and beloved to Him. Some of those things are obligatory and some are recommended whether a person actually does them or not. This has been discussed in greater detail elsewhere.

- 2) The second group: The erroneous *Ṣūfis* who drunk from the same fountain; they bear witness that Allāh is the Lord of all

beings and that He decreed everything by His will, but assume that they will never be truly content and pleased until they are pleased with everything including the unbelief and sinful disobedience Allāh has decreed. Some of them even said: ‘Love is a fire that burns from the heart everything besides the will of the Beloved, and the entire creation is the will of the Beloved.’

This group is utterly lost by not distinguishing between the universal and the religious will and the universal and the religious sending which we have elaborated on elsewhere.

The beliefs of these people necessitate no separation between orders and prohibitions, between the enemies and friends of Allāh, and between the Prophets and regular God-fearing servants. Those who believe and do righteous deeds are thus like those who do mischief in the land; the godly servants are one with the sinners and the Muslims are one with the criminals. Similarly, there are no commands or prohibitions and no promises and warnings.

They might call this “*the reality*,” and it indeed is a universal reality. This reality alone, however, was recognized even by the idol worshippers. Allāh says:

وَلِيْنَ سَأَلْتَهُمْ مَنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ

“And if you asked them, ‘Who created the heavens and earth?’ they would surely say, ‘Allāh.’”

[*Luqman* (31): 25]

And

قُلْ لِمَنِ الْأَرْضُ وَمَنْ فِيهَا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾ سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ قُلْ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ



“Say, [O Muḥammad], ‘To whom belongs the earth and whoever is in it, if you should know?’ They will say, ‘To Allāh.’ Say, ‘Then will you not remember?’”

[*al-Mu'minūn* (23): 84-85]

The idol worshippers admitted that Allāh is the creator, lord, and sovereign ruler of everything, so if this is one's final conclusion about the matter, he is closer the idol worshippers.

What makes the believer distinct from unbelief is his faith in Allāh and His Messengers by affirming what they have said, obeying their orders, and following what pleases Allāh. Following the acts of unbelief and sinfulness which He has decreed is not a part of this. A believer is content with the afflictions that befall him but not with his own shameless actions. He seeks forgiveness for his sins and has patience with trials, abiding by the words of Allāh:

فَاصْبِرْ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَأَسْتَغْفِرْ لِدُنْيَاكَ

“So be patient, [O Muḥammad]. Indeed, the promise of Allāh is truth. And ask forgiveness for your sin.”

[*al-Ghāfir* (40): 55]

In this way, he combines following orders and bearing the days of difficulty with patience. Allāh, Most High, says:

وَإِنْ تَصْبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ كَيْدُهُمْ شَيْئًا

“And if you are patient and fear Allāh, their plot will not harm you at all.”

[*Āl-Imrān* (3) 120]

and

وَإِنْ تَصْبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ ﴿١٨٦﴾

“But if you are patient and fear Allāh—indeed, that is of the matters [worthy] of determination.”

[*Āl-‘Imrān* (3): 186]

Yūsuf (*‘alayhis-salām*) said:

مَنْ يَتَّقِ وَيَصْبِرْ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ  
الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٠﴾

“Indeed, he who fears Allāh and is patient, then indeed, Allāh does not allow to be lost the reward of those who do good.”

[*Yūsuf* (12): 90]

## [7.6: Al-Fuḍayl and al-Junayd on Contentment]

The point is that al-Qushayrī’s quote from al-Naṣr Abādī is very beautiful: ‘He who wishes to reach the position of (being) content acceptance must adhere to that in which Allāh has placed His acceptance.’<sup>6</sup> The same goes for Shaykh Abū Sulaymān’s words: ‘When the servant has forgotten his desires he is content.’<sup>7</sup>

This is because the only thing that stops a person from being pleased and content is the fact that his soul keeps seeking fulfillment from superfluous desires and becomes annoyed if it fails. Therefore, when one does not think about his desires, he is content with the provisions Allāh has granted him.

Similarly beautiful is his quote from al-Fuḍayl Ibn ‘Iyād who says to Bishr al-Ḥāfi: ‘Contentment is better than the abandonment of superfluous matters because a content person does not desire things

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<sup>6</sup> See *Risālah al-Qushayrī*, p.89

<sup>7</sup> See *Risālah al-Qushayrī*, p.89

that are above his status.’ These are fine words, though I have my doubts about Bishr al-Hāfi ever hearing from al-Fuḍayl.

He also related the following suspended (*mu‘allaq*) narration: ‘Al-Shiblī said in front of al-Junayd: ‘*Lā hawla wa lā quwwa illā billāh!*’ so al-Junayd told him: ‘The words you have uttered indicate unease, and unease is caused by a lack of contentment with the divine decree.’<sup>8</sup>

This, too, is a fine statement indeed and al-Junayd, may Allāh be pleased with him, really was the master of the group (of *Ṣūfiyah*) and one of its finest teachers, educators, and rectifiers. Contrary to popular belief, this sentence is actually a plea for help, not a plea to return things the way they were. Many utter it at times of difficulty in a plea to regain what they have lost, and thereby utter it in a state of anxiety, not patience. What al-Junayd actually rebuked in the narration was the attitude which led al-Shiblī to say the words, as it signified a lack of contentment. Had he uttered them in the right context, he would have not rebuked him.

### [7.7: [Prophet] Mūsā on Contentment]

There are also weak reports in the book, like the following suspended (*mu‘allaq*) one: ‘Mūsā said: ‘My God! Show me an action which, if I do it, will make You pleased with me!’ He (Allāh) said: ‘You cannot bear it.’ Thereupon, Mūsā fell prostrate, imploring, so Allāh revealed to him: ‘O son of ‘Imrān! My acceptance lies in your contentment with Me.’<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> See *Risālah al-Qushayrī*, p.89-90

<sup>9</sup> See *Risālah al-Qushayrī*, p.89

This story from Banu Isrā'īl is questionable as one may say that such things should not be related about Mūsā, the son of 'Imrān. Furthermore, it is well-known that these Jewish reports have no chain of narrators and as such cannot be accepted as valid proof regarding religious matters. It is a different case if they have sound chains like the reports from Banu Isrā'īl that the Prophet related to us, but some reports like the aforementioned report are known to be lies.

Mūsā was one of the greatest of the Messengers of determination and a major Muslim figure. How could it then be said that he could not bear to do the actions that please Allāh? After all, if Allāh is pleased with the very first of the Emigrants and the Helpers and those who followed them in goodness, why would he not be pleased with Mūsā the son of 'Imrān, the one whom the Most Merciful Himself spoke to? Allāh, Most High, says:

إِنَّ  
 الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمْ خَيْرُ الْبَرِيَّةِ ﴿٧﴾  
 جَزَاءُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنَّاتُ عَدْنٍ يَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ  
 فِيهَا أَبَدًا رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ

“Indeed, they who have believed and done righteous deeds—those are the best of creatures. Their reward with Allāh will be gardens of perpetual residence beneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide forever, Allāh being pleased with them and they with Him.”

[*al-Bayyinah* (98): 7-8]

It is a well-known fact that Mūsā the son of 'Imrān was among the best of those who believed and did righteous deeds. Moreover, Allāh granted Mūsā a special status above mere contentment:

وَأَلْقَيْتُ عَلَيْكَ مَحَبَّةً مِنِّي وَلَوُضِعَّ عَلَى عَيْنِي ﴿٣٩﴾

“And I bestowed upon you love from Me that you would be brought up under My eye.”

[*Tabā* (20: 39)]

It should also be noted that the statement “O son of ‘Imrān!”, as occurs in the report, contradicts Allāh’s way of addressing Mūsā in the Qur’ān which says: “O Mūsā!” instead. The expression in the report, as we can see, is also less respectful.

In a yet another beautiful report mentioned by him, ‘Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*) writes to Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*) and says: ‘All good is in contentment. Be content if you can, and if you cannot, have patience.’ This is a fine statement even though there is no knowledge about its chain.

It is thus clear that he mentions connected (*musnad*), expedient (*muṣal*), and suspended (*mu‘allaq*) reports, some of which are sound and some of which are not. This particular statement of Abū Sulaymān is but expedient, and nothing can be attributed to Abū Sulaymān through such a chain by the agreement of the people. Yes, it has been said that an expedient report is acceptable, but the person who said this did not know that the expedient report is like a ḥadīth that is weak and not weak; if a person knows this, there remains no dispute over the fact that it is rejected, just like when one knows that a narrator sometimes memorizes the chains (of the ḥadīths he narrates) and sometimes errs regarding them.

### [7.8: Abū Sulaymān on Contentment]

The books that compile the sound narrations about these Shaykhs and their statements do not report this statement from Shaykh Abū Sulaymān. These books include Abū Nu‘aym’s *Ḥilyah al-Awliyā’*, Abū ‘Abdu’l-Raḥmān’s *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfiyyah* and Ibn al-Jawzi’s *Ṣafwat al-Ṣafwah* and other similar works. Just look at the statement he narrates from him with a connected chain, saying: ‘He told Aḥmad Ibn Abi al-Hawāri: ‘O Aḥmad! I have been given such contentment that were He to throw me in Hell I would be content with that.’<sup>10</sup> This statement has been narrated from Abū Sulaymān with a connected chain, which is why al-Qushayrī connected it to him through his Shaykh Abū ‘Abdu’l-Raḥmān. As for the statement at hand, it is not like this, for its chain is not connected to him. Therefore, there is no proof that Shaykh Abū Sulaymān actually uttered these words.

It is worth noting that Al-Qushayrī joined this second statement of Abū Sulaymān with something even better; before narrating it he said: ‘Abū ‘Uthmān al-Hirī al-Naysaburī was asked about the Prophet’s (ﷺ) words: “I ask You for contentment after the decree.”<sup>11</sup> He then replied: “This is because contentment after the decree is true contentment.”’

These words of Shaykh Abū ‘Uthmān are very good and accurate. After this, he relates from Shaykh Abū Sulaymān with a connected chain: ‘I like to think that I have learned something about contentment; were He to throw me in Hell, I would be content with that.’

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<sup>10</sup> See *Risālah al-Qushayrī*, p.90

<sup>11</sup> Nasā’ī, vol.3, p55; Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, vol.5, p.191.

[7.9: Abū Sulaymān’s Statement Was about Determination to Be Content]

It is thus clear that Abū Sulaymān’s words were not about contentment but determination to have it, for contentment comes after the divine decree. Then, if this is determination, it must be remembered that just as determination can last it can also vanish. Indeed, people, and especially the Sūfis, lose their determination in so many occasions. Because of this, when one of them was asked: “What made you know your Lord?” he said: “By the annulment of determination and ambition.” Allāh, Most High, said to men much better than these Shaykhs:

وَلَقَدْ كُنْتُمْ تَمَنَّوْنَ الْمَوْتَ مِنْ  
 قَبْلِ أَنْ تَلْقَوْهُ فَقَدْ رَأَيْتُمُوهُ وَأَنْتُمْ نَنْظُرُونَ ﴿١٤٣﴾

“And you had certainly wished for martyrdom before you encountered it, and you have [now] seen it [before you] while you were looking on.”

[*Al-Imrān* (3) 43]

And

يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لِمَ تَقُولُونَ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٢﴾  
 كِبْرًا مَقْتًا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٣﴾ إِنَّ  
 اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِهِ صَفًّا كَانَهُمْ  
 بَنِينَ مَرْصُوصًا ﴿٤﴾

“O you who have believed, why do you say what you do not do? Great is hatred in the sight of Allāh that you say what you do not do. Indeed, Allāh loves those who fight in His cause in a row as though they are a [single] structure joined firmly.”

[*al-Saff* (61) 2-4]

Al-Tirmidhī relates that some Companions told the Prophet (ﷺ): “If we would know the deed most beloved to Allāh, we would do it.”<sup>12</sup> Thereupon, it was revealed:

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ قِيلَ لَهُمْ كُفُّوا أَيْدِيَكُمْ  
وَأَقِمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ فَلَمَّا كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقِتَالُ إِذَا فَرِيقٌ  
مِّنْهُمْ يَخْشَوْنَ النَّاسَ كَخَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ أَوْ أَشَدَّ خَشْيَةً وَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا لِمَ  
كُتِبَ عَلَيْنَا الْقِتَالُ لَوْلَا أَخَّرْتَنَا إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ قَرِيبٍ

“Have you not seen those who were told, ‘Restrain your hands [from fighting] and establish prayer and give zakah’? But then when fighting was ordained for them, at once a party of them feared men as they fear Allāh or with [even] greater fear. They said, ‘Our Lord, why have You decreed upon us fighting? If only You had postponed [it for] us for a short time.’”

[*al-Nisā* (4): 77]

This party had made up their minds to join *jihād* and loved it, but once they were tried by it they began to hating and avoiding it. But what is the pain of *jihād* compared to Hell and the punishment of Allāh which none can bear?

It is told that Samnūn the Lover once said:

There is nothing for me in anything beside You  
So test and try me in any way You wish

At that instant, he was afflicted with dysuria (i.e. he was unable to urinate), so he began going around the Qur’ān schools, distributing walnuts to the children and saying: ‘Invoke Allāh for your lying uncle!’

<sup>12</sup> Tirmidhī, vol.5, p85.



## 7.10: Samnūn's Affliction

Abū Nu'aym al-Aṣbahānī relates from Abū Bakr al-Wāsiṭī that Samnūn said: 'O Lord, I am content with everything you decree for me!' At that very instant, he was unable to urinate for fourteen days. He would bend like a snake, left and right. When he was finally able to urinate again he said: 'O Lord, I have repented to you!'

Abū Nu'aym said: "This was the contentment Samnūn claimed, but the first minor affliction proved him wrong." This was in spite of the fact that stories about Samnūn were famous and his special love for God was well-known. It is narrated that Ibrahīm Ibn Fātik said: 'I saw Samnūn address the people in the Sacred Masjid. A small bird came and approached him and finally sat on his hand. Then it began pecking the ground till it was bleeding and finally died.' He also said: "I saw him talking about love one day when the candles of the Masjid suddenly collapsed on each other and broke.'

## [7.11: The Statements of Ruwaym, al-Fuḍayl, and the Bedouin]

In the Chapter of Contentment, al-Qushayrī mentions a relevant story from Ruwaym al-Muqrī, a companion of Samnūn. Ruwaym said: 'The case of the truly content is such that even if *Jabannam* (Hell) would be put on his right side, he would not ask Allāh to move it to the left.'<sup>13</sup> These words are like those of Samnūn: "So test and try me in any way You wish!" If this one could not bear dysuria, will he be able to take Hell on his right side?

Al-Fuḍayl Ibn 'Iyād was higher in rank than these men, but when

<sup>13</sup> See *Risālah al-Qushayrī*, p.89

he was afflicted with dysuria the pain was so bad that he said: "I ask You by my love for You, to relief me, so grant me relief!" Then he was granted relief.

This said, even though Ruwaym was one of al-Junayd's peers, he was not considered a man of this rank. In fact, the *Ṣūfīs* say: 'He went back to the world and abandoned Ṣūfism.' It has even been narrated that Ja'far al-Khuldī, also a companion of al-Junayd, said: 'If one is able to keep a secret, let him do so like Ruwaym who hid his love for the world for forty years.' When someone asked: 'How could this even be imagined?' he said: 'He was close friends with Ismā'il Ibn Ishāq al-Qāḍī who became the judge of Baghdad and drew him close and made him his doorkeeper. He abandoned the garments of the *Ṣūfīs* and started wearing silk, brocade, and garments of Daybaq.<sup>14</sup> He began eating fine foods and constructed his house. He concealed his love for the world when it was not around, but when it came to him his love for it was manifested. Still, in spite of this, he—may Allāh have mercy on him—he was known for his abundant worship. He adhered to the school of Dawūd.'

These utterances made in a temporary spiritual state (*ḥāl*) without realizing what they entail should not be taken as guidelines, but they might imply, for example, the great amount of contentment and love of the person who said them along with his shortcomings in learning the duties of the path. They also give us a picture of the God-consciousness and patience that the person managed to have or not have.

The Messengers had more knowledge of Allāh's path and provided better guidance and counsel; those who deviate from their established ways will fall short, err, and be deprived of good, even if they are

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<sup>14</sup> A garment made of silk, named after the old Egyptian town.

not counted as sinners, hypocrites, or unbelievers.

Close to this comes the Bedouin whom the Prophet (ﷺ) went to while he was sick as a young bird (i.e. very weak due to his illness). The Prophet (ﷺ) asked him: “Did you invoke Allāh with anything?” so he replied: “I said: ‘O Allāh! Whatever You are going to punish me with in the afterlife, make it happen in this world!’” The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Glory be to Allāh! You cannot do that and will not bear it! You should have said instead: “Our Lord, give us good in this world and good in the afterlife, and protect us from punishment of Hell.”<sup>15</sup>

This person’s fear of Hell and love for a good ending drove him to ask Allāh to hasten his punishment and carry it out in this world. This was a grave mistake. Errors and mistakes do happen frequently in spite of the good intentions of the people and in spite of a man’s righteousness, religious virtue, abstinence from vanities, godly cautiousness, and miracles. Infallibility from mistakes—even sins—is not a requisite of being a protegee of Allāh. The best of Allāh’s proteges after the Messengers was Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), for a sound narration about him states that after he had interpreted a dream, the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “You are right in some of it but erred in some.”<sup>16</sup>

It seems to me—and Allāh knows best—that when Abū Sulaymān said: ‘Were He to throw me in Hell, I would be content with that,’ someone conveyed to others what he himself had understood from the statement and said: ‘Contentment is that you do not ask Allāh for Paradise nor seek His protection from Hell.’

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<sup>15</sup> Muslim, vol.4, p2069 and Tirmidhī, vol.5, pp.183-184.

<sup>16</sup> Bukhārī, vol.12, p431 and Muslim, vol.4, pp.1777-1778.

Even though the statement of Abū Sulaymān does not indicate contentment with that but determination to have contentment, we know that this type of determination does not last but vanishes at some point. Therefore, it would have been better that he not utter these words. Furthermore, such a statement will be proven wrong just like the claims of Samnun, Ruwaym, and others.

There is a big difference between the two statements here, for the second indicates that whoever asks Allāh for Paradise and seeks His protection from Hell is not content. It is one thing for a person to say: 'If such and such is done to me, I will be content,' and another to say: 'One is not content until he refrains from seeking good and fleeing from evil.'

This and other things thus indicate that Shaykh Abū Sulaymān was above making such statements, for he was one of the virtuous and leading Shaykhs who adhered to the Shari'ah so much so that he said: 'A subtle allusion of the people passes by my heart, but I only accept it by two witnesses: the Book and the Sunnah.' Would a person who does not even accept the allusions of his heart without two witnesses say something like this?

Shaykh Abū Sulaymān has also said: 'If a person gets an inspiration of goodness, he must not follow it with action until he hears a narration about it. If he hears a narration about it, it will be light upon light.' Also, his companion Aḥmad Ibn Abī al-Ḥawārī was one of the strictest Shaykhs in adherence to the Sunnah, so what about Abū Sulaymān himself?

What frees Abū Sulaymān from this speech once and for all will come in the second section where we discuss the statement of the unknown narrator: 'Contentment is that you do not ask Allāh for Paradise nor seek His protection from Hell.'

## [7.12: The Assumption that Paradise Is Only Worldly Pleasures]

Before going into the aforementioned topic, we clarify the root of the misunderstanding and inconsistency which statements like those discussed earlier have led to. Many people from the jurists, *Sūfis*, theologians, and others have thought that Paradise refers to worldly pleasures like eating, drinking, marital relations, fine garments, beautiful sounds, and fine fragrances. According to them, such sensations are the only pleasures of Paradise. These people consist of two groups:

### [7.13: Different Views on Seeing the Lord]

One group, among them the Mu‘tazilah and the Jahmiyyah, negated the belief that the believers would see their Lord. Others affirmed the vision (*rū‘yah*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) told us about, and this is the view of *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā‘ah*, while others like Ḍirār Ibn ‘Amr and different groups of rhetoric (*kalām*) theology who promote supporting *Ahl al-Sunnah* in this issue were of the view that the vision refers to increased awareness or knowledge (*‘ilm*) or to a sixth sense (*kashf*). Other views have been reported from them as well. Even though they affirm what the Mu‘tazilah and Ḍirāriyyah negate, their differences are really only about the wording. Their dispute with *Ahl al-Sunnah*, however, is about the meaning. This is why Bishr and others like him interpreted the issue of vision in a manner similar to one of the said views.

What we are saying here is that some of those who accepted the vision negated the chance of a believer actually enjoying the sight of his Lord on the basis that there is no correspondence between the originated (*muhdath*) and the Pre-Existent (*qadim*). Similar things were

stated by Ustadh Abū al-Ma‘ali al-Juwaynī in *al-Risālah al-Nizāmiyya* and Abū al-Wafā’ Ibn ‘Aqīl in some of his writings.

It has been related that Ibn ‘Aqīl once heard a man say (to Allāh): ‘I ask you the pleasure of looking at Your Face!’ Upon hearing this, he said: ‘Look at this! Suppose He had a face, but does he have a face that is pleasurable to look at?’ Abū al-Ma‘alī also stated that Allāh will create delight for them through something that He has created which is connected to the vision, but negated the chance of finding pleasure in the very vision itself. This issue, he said, is one of the ambiguous secrets of divine unity.

### [7.14: The View of the *Salaf* Regarding the Vision]

The majority of those who affirmed the vision (*ru’yah*) also affirmed that the believers will experience the delight of seeing their Lord. This is the position of the *Salaf*, the Imāms of the Muslim nation, and the Shaykhs of the path.

Al-Nasā’ī and others relate the following ḥadīth from the Prophet (ﷺ): “O Allāh, by Your knowledge of the unseen and Your ability to create: allow me to live if life is better for me, and take my soul if death is better. O Allāh, I ask You to grant me fear of You in private and in open, when angry and pleased, and I ask You for moderation in poverty and wealth. I ask You for a delight never ending and a coolness for my eyes that shall not disappear. I ask You for contentment after the decree and a life pleasant after death. I ask You for the delight of looking at Your Face, and I ask You for the yearning of meeting You without harmful distress or deceptive temptation. O Allāh, beautify us with the adornment of faith and make us guides upon guidance!”<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Nasā’ī, vol.3, pp.54-55; Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, vol.4, p.264.

Suhayb (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) narrates in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim and others that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “When the people of Paradise enter it, a call is made: ‘O people of Paradise! You have an appointment with Allāh that He wants to accomplish for you!’ They will say: ‘What is it? Have our faces not become bright already and our scales heavy? Has He not already let us enter Paradise and protect us from the Fire?’ Then the screen is removed and they look at Him; none of the things He had given them are as beloved to them as looking at Him.”

The more beloved something is to a person, the more delight he feels upon getting it. The *Salaf*, the Imāms of the nation and the Shaykhs of the path all agree on this. It has been narrated from al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī: “Should the worshipers learn that they will not see their Lord in the hereafter, their souls would melt in the world as they yearn it.” Many similar statements have been made by others.

This said, those who agree with the *Salaf*, the Imāms, and the Shaykhs of the path on the issue of the delight of looking at Allāh, have different views about the issue of love, which is the foundation. A group of jurists held that Allāh Himself cannot be loved, but rather it is the obedience and worship that is loved. They further said that He does not love his believing servants either, but rather what He loves is the will to do good for them and to protect them. Some rhetoric theologians who adhere to the supporters of Sunnah held this opinion, among them even such followers of Mālik, Shāfi‘ī, and Aḥmad as al-Qāḍī Abū Bakr, al-Qāḍī Abū Ya‘lā, and Abū’l-Ma‘alī al-Juwaynī.

## [7.15: Those Who Deny the Attribute of Love and the Delight of Gazing at Allāh]

The truth is that this is but a branch of Jahmism and *I'tizāl*, for the first to ever negate the attribute of love in Islām was none else but Ja'd Ibn Dirham, the mentor of al-Jahm Ibn Ṣafwān. He was slaughtered by Khālīd Ibn 'Abdullāh al-Qasrī who said: 'People! Offer your slaughter animals, for my sacrifice is Ja'd Ibn Dirham who has claimed that Allāh did not take [Prophet] Ibrāhīm (*'alayhis-salām*) as a friend and never spoke to [Prophet] Mūsā (*'alayhis-salām*)!' Then he came down and slaughtered him.

## [7.16: The Guidance of the Book and the Sunnah Regarding This]

The Qur'ān and the Sunnah clearly state that Allāh loves and is loved. The *Salaf* of the nation, its Imāms, and the Shaykhs of the path all agree on this. This is why the rhetoric theologians who took the path of Ṣūfism agreed with them, like Abū'l-Qāsim al-Qushayrī and Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī. The latter supported the view in *al-Ihyā'* and other works, and Abū'l-Qāsim mentioned this as well in *al-Risālah* in the way of the Ṣūfis, and so did Abū Ṭālib in his book called *Qut al-Qulub*. Regarding Abū Ḥāmid, even though he followed the Ṣūfis in this he relied on the proofs he found in the books of philosophy which state that Allāh loves and is loved. This important topic has been analyzed in greater detail elsewhere in the discussion about the great principles.

Allāh, Most High, says:

يُحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَهُ

“...a people He will love and who will love Him.”

[*al-Mā'idah* (5): 54]



and

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ

“But those who believe are stronger in love for Allāh.”

[*al-Baqarab* (2): 165]

and

أَحَبَّ إِلَيْكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ

“...are more beloved to you than Allāh and His Messenger.”

[*al-Tawbah* (9): 24]

It is related in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “He who has three (traits) will taste the sweetness of faith: a person who loves Allāh and His Messenger more than anything, a person who loves another only for the sake of Allāh, and a person who would abhor to go back to unbelief after Allāh saved him from it just like he abhors being cast in fire.”<sup>18</sup>

What we are saying here is that logic dictates that these neo-Jahmites, the Mu'tazila and their ilk, who negate the reality of the attribute of love should also negate the delight of gazing at Allāh. It is for this reason that Paradise according to them is really nothing but pleasures like eating and drinking. Such a view is wrong by the consensus of the Salaf and the scholars of the nation. This is one of the two groups we are discussing here.

<sup>18</sup> Aḥmad, vol.1, p215 and Ibn Ḥibbān, vol.1, p.153.

[7.17: Notions of Some *Ṣūfīs*, *Faqīrs* and Devotees]

The second group: This group consists of *Ṣūfīs*, *faqīrs*, and devotees who agreed with the first group on the notion that Paradise is nothing but the things enjoyed by the created beings but also agreed with the *Salaf* and the Imāms on the reality of seeing Allāh and the delight of gazing at Him. In this they were right. They then began seeking this bliss with great fervor in fear of not achieving it to the extent that one of them said: “I have not worshipped You out of yearning Your Paradise nor fearing Your Fire, but in order to gaze at You and in exaltation of You!” Other similar statements have been made by them.

What they mean with this is that gazing at Allāh is a much higher reward than eating and drinking and other worldly pleasures, but they erred in excluding it from Paradise. They are also wrong in thinking that they worship Allāh without wanting any share of pleasure for a reward and that everything that is asked from Him indicates selfish desire. In doing so they assumed that man acts without having a will or seeking what he loves, which is but a bad understanding of the reality of faith, religion, and the afterlife.

The reason behind this is that their passion which is solely attached to the One that they seek, love and worship completely distracts them from their own selves and as a result they do not notice themselves and what they themselves desire. They thus assume that their actions are not serving their own desires, yet at the same time the One they seek and attach their hearts to is their greatest desire, goal, and object of love.

This is the condition of many pious and sincere men of spiritual states and stations who experience a real state of spiritual ecstasy

and taste but cannot find the words to express it. As a result, they make erroneous statements that lack in good conduct even though they intent to say something correct. This said, there are, of course, those as well who really believe the apparent meaning of such statements.

In any case, if those who made statements like this were referring to the desire to see Allāh, they were correct but erred in placing that outside of Paradise. By doing so, they stripped the name Paradise of its revered status and opened the door to a number of repugnant things like what is found in the story of al-Shiblī, may Allāh have mercy on him: once he heard a man recite:

مِنْكُمْ مَّنْ يُرِيدُ الدُّنْيَا وَمِنْكُمْ مَّنْ يُرِيدُ  
الْآخِرَةَ

“Among you are some who desire this world, and among you are some who desire the Hereafter.”

[*Āl-‘Imrān* (3): 152]

Upon hearing this, he shouted: ‘Where are those who desire Allāh?!’

Here, al-Shiblī is naturally praised for wanting Allāh, but errs at the same time in thinking that those who desired the Afterlife did not desire Allāh; this particular *ayah* refers to the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) who fought at Uhud, and they are among the best of all creation. If they did not desire Allāh, could someone else, like al-Shiblī and his ilk, do so?

I also know that a Shaykh once asked about the *ayah*:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ اشْتَرَى مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَنفُسَهُمْ وَأَمْوَالَهُمْ  
بِأَنَّهُمْ لَهُمُ الْجَنَّةُ يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَيَقْتُلُونَ  
وَيُقْتَلُونَ﴾

“Indeed, Allāh has purchased from the believers their lives and their properties [in exchange] for that they will have Paradise. They fight in the cause of Allāh, so they kill and are killed.”

[*al-Tawbah* (9): 111]

He said: ‘If lives and properties are the price of Paradise, then with what is the gazing (at Allāh) purchased?’ Then someone answered him with something similar to the question.

One has to realize that the bliss of gazing at Allāh and everything else that Allāh has prepared for His proteges is in Paradise just like everything that He has promised for His enemies is in Hell. Allāh, Most High, says:

﴿فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّا أُخْفِيَ لَهُم مِّن قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ جَزَاءً  
بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ﴾

“And no soul knows what has been hidden for them of comfort for eyes as reward for what they used to do.”

[*al-Sajdah* (32): 17]

A sound ḥadīth of the Prophet (ﷺ) states: “Allāh says: ‘I have prepared for my righteous servants that which no eye has seen, and no ear has heard, and no heart has thought of, let alone what I have allowed them to witness.’”<sup>19</sup> Then, once we know that all of this is in

<sup>19</sup> Bukhārī, vol.13, p.465, Muslim, vol.4, p.2174 and others.

Paradise, we must know that the people of Paradise are of different levels. Allāh says:

أَنْظُرْ كَيْفَ فَضَّلْنَا  
بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ ۗ وَالْآخِرَةُ أَكْبَرُ دَرَجَاتٍ وَأَكْبَرُ تَفْضِيلًا

“Look how We have favoured [in provision] some of them over others. But the Hereafter is greater in degrees [of difference] and greater in distinction.”

[*al-Isrā'* (17): 21]

It must thus be known that all things of the Afterlife that the servant seeks through worship, invocation or other means are in Paradise.

### [7.18: Seeking Paradise and Protection from Hell is the Way of the Prophets and the Messengers]

Seeking Paradise and praying for protection from Hell is the path of Allāh's Prophets and Messengers and the path of every one of His past proteges brought close and of those of the right hand. It is related in the *Sunan* that the Prophet (ﷺ) asked a Companion of his: “What do you say in your invocation?” so he said: “I say: ‘O Allāh, I ask you for Paradise and seek Your protection from the Fire.’ I do not know your murmur or the murmur of Mu‘ādh.” The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “We murmur about those two.”<sup>20</sup>

As we can see, the Prophet (ﷺ) informed his Companion that he and Mu‘ādh (*raḍiy Allāh ‘anhu*), the best of the regular Imāms of Medīnah during the Prophet's (ﷺ) life, were only murmuring about Paradise. Is someone else's word then above the word of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) and Mu‘ādh (*raḍiy Allāh ‘anhu*) and the Emigrants (*al-Muhājirūn*) (*raḍiy Allāh ‘anhum*) and (*al-Anṣār*) Helpers (*raḍiy Allāh*

<sup>20</sup> Abū Dāwūd, vol.1, p501 and Nasā'ī, vol.1, p.295 and others.

'*anhum*) who prayed behind them? It is clear that the servant's supplication was sufficient to take him to Paradise.

## [7.19: The People of Paradise Are of Two Types]

There are two kinds of people in Paradise: the foremost brought near (*sābiqūn muqarrabūn*) and the righteous ones of the right hand (*abrār asḥāb al-yamīn*). Allāh, Most High, says:

كَلَّا إِنَّ كِتَابَ الْأَبْرَارِ لَفِي عِلِّيِّينَ  
 (١٨) وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا عِلِّيُّونَ (١٩) كِتَابٌ مَرْقُومٌ (٢٠) يَشْهَدُهُ الْمُقَرَّبُونَ  
 (٢١) إِنَّ الْأَبْرَارَ لَفِي نَعِيمٍ (٢٢) عَلَى الْأَرَآئِكِ يُنظَرُونَ (٢٣) تَعْرِفُ فِي  
 وُجُوهِهِمْ نَضْرَةَ النَّعِيمِ (٢٤) يُسْقَوْنَ مِنْ رَحِيقٍ مَحْحُومٍ (٢٥)  
 خِتْمُهُ مِسْكَ وَفِي ذَلِكَ فَلْيَتَنَافَسِ الْمُتَنَفِسُونَ (٢٦) وَمَرَجَاهُ  
 مِنْ تَسْنِيمٍ (٢٧) عَيْنَا يُشْرَبُ بِهَا الْمُقَرَّبُونَ (٢٨)

“No! Indeed, the record of the righteous is in ‘*illiyūn*. And what can make you know what is ‘*illiyūn*? It is [their destination recorded in] a register inscribed. Which is witnessed by those brought near [to Allāh]. Indeed, the righteous will be in pleasure. On adorned couches, observing. You will recognize in their faces the radiance of pleasure. They will be given to drink [pure] wine [which was] sealed. The last of it is musk. So for this let the competitors compete. And its mixture is of *Tasnīm*. A spring from which those near [to Allāh] drink.”

[*al-Mutaffifīn* (83): 18-28]

Ibn ‘Abbas (*radīy Allāh ‘anhumā*) said: ‘It will be mixed for those of the right hand while the ones brought close drink it pure.’

It occurs in the Ṣaḥīḥ that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “When you hear the muezzin, repeat what he says, then invoke a blessing on me, for everyone who invokes a blessing on me will receive ten blessings from Allāh; then ask from Allāh *al-Wasilah* for me, which is a rank in Paradise fitting for only one of Allāh’s servants, and I hope that I may be that one. If anyone who asks that I be given *al-Wasilah*, he will be assured of my intercession.”<sup>21</sup>

Here the Prophet (ﷺ) informs us that the *al-Wasilah*, which is fitting for only one of Allāh’s servants whom he himself wished to be, is a rank in Paradise; this being the case, is there then something higher in rank than *al-Wasilah* that is located outside of Paradise and suits the creation?

It is further stated in the Ṣaḥīḥ in the ḥadīth of the angels who look for the gatherings of remembrance:

“They tell the hallowed and exalted Lord: ‘We found them praising and exalting You and pronouncing Your greatness.’

He asks them: ‘What do they ask?’

They reply: ‘They ask for Paradise.’

He: ‘Have they seen it?’

Them: ‘No.’

He: ‘What if they had seen it!’

Them: ‘Had they seen it, they would have sought it even more!’

He: ‘From what do they seek protection?’

Them: ‘They seek protection from the Fire.’

He: ‘Have they seen it?’

Them: ‘No.’

He: ‘What if they had seen it!’

Them: ‘Had they seen it, they would have sought protection from it even harder!’

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<sup>21</sup> Muslim, vol.1, pp.288-289 and Abū Dāwūd, vol.1, pp.359-360 and others

He: ‘May you be witness that I have granted them their request and protected them from what they seek protection from (or along those lines).’

Them: ‘Among them is so and so, an enormous sinner, he came for something else and then sat with them.’

He: ‘They are such a group that no one who sits with them is miserable.’”<sup>22</sup>

These were the most virtuous of people and what they were seeking was Paradise and what they were fleeing from was Hell.

We know that those who gave their pledges to the Prophet (ﷺ) on the night of the *‘Aqabah* were the best of the first and foremost Muslims and better than all of these Shaykhs. When the Prophet took this pledge from the Helpers they told him: “Declare your conditions for your Lord, yourself, and your companions.” He said: “For myself, I ask you to exclude me from anything you exclude yourself and your families from. For my companions, I ask you to support them.” They said: “If we do that, what will we get?” He replied: “You shall have Paradise.” They then said: “Give us your hand, for by Allāh, we will not annul it nor ask you to annul it.”<sup>23</sup> In the course of the pledge, they told him: “We have agreements with these people, but we will break them.”<sup>24</sup>

These men who gave their pledges to the Prophet (ﷺ) were amongst those of Allāh’s creation who loved Allāh and His Messenger the

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<sup>22</sup> Tirmidhī, vol.5, p237; Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, vol.2, pp.251-252 and others.

<sup>23</sup> Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, vol.3, pp.239-240.

<sup>24</sup> Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, see *al-Fath al-Rabbānī*, vol.20, p.276



most and who sacrificed their lives and wealth in seeking their acceptance in a way that none of these later people could compete with. The highest reward they were after was Paradise, and had there been anything higher than that they would have sought it. They knew well that Paradise does not only contain every single desire and lofty goal but also holds within things not yet sensed by the soul and thus not yet desired; after all, seeking, loving, and wanting is dependent on sensing, feeling, and conceptualizing. If man cannot imagine, sense, or feel something, he simply cannot seek, love, and yearn it. In Paradise, both of the aforementioned exist. Allāh, Most High, says:

لَهُمْ مَا يَشَاءُونَ فِيهَا وَلَدَيْنَا مَزِيدٌ ﴿٣٥﴾

“They will have whatever they wish therein, and with Us is more.”

[*al-Qāf* (50): 35]

And

وَفِيهَا مَا تَشْتَهُهُ الْأَنفُسُ وَتَلَذُّ الْأَعْيُنُ ﴿٧١﴾

“And therein is whatever the souls desire and [what] delights the eyes.”

[*al-Zukhruf* (43): 71]

As we can see, Paradise holds what they desire and more: this ‘more’ is what they cannot desire yet because they do not know what it is. The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “...what no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what has not occurred to the heart of man.”<sup>25</sup> This is a vast topic.

<sup>25</sup> Bukhārī, vol.13, p465 and Muslim, vol.4, p2174 and others.

[7.20: The Error in Saying: “*Contentment Is When You Do Not Ask Allāh for Paradise and Do Not Seek His Protection from Hell.*”]

Once you understand this introduction, we come back to the words: ‘Contentment is when you do not ask Allāh for Paradise and do not seek His protection from Hell.’ Here we should ask if the person who said this meant that one should not ask Allāh for the contents of what is defined as Paradise in the Shari‘ah and thus not ask for the chance to gaze at Him or anything else that all the Prophets and proteges have asked. Does he also mean that one should not ask Allāh not to conceal Himself and not to punish him with fire? If this is the case, then this speech not only contradicts all the Prophets and Messengers and all believers in general but is also self-contradictory and illogical.

This is because the only reason one does not ask for the state of being content is that he is content with Allāh. This state of being content with Allāh only occurred after knowing Him and thereby loving Him. If this contentment and love no longer remain, a person is basically saying that he is pleased not to be pleased, which is a contradiction.

Therefore, this kind of speech was undoubtedly uttered by one who does not realize nor understand what he is saying. This is further made clear by the fact that what makes the content person bear the pains and difficulties of life is the pleasure and sweetness of being content; should this sweet delight vanish, he would not be able to bear the bitterness and hurt. How could he then be imagined as being content and not having this sweet feeling? Such words are uttered only by men in the state of spiritual intoxication and “passing away” who taste the sweetness of contentment and erroneously think that

it will last in all situations. This, of course, is a grave mistake like that of Samnūn mentioned earlier.

If the one who uttered this statement was trying to say that one should not ask for worldly pleasures but should rather ask for what is above that, he has erred in two ways:

The first error: he did not include the said matter in the contents of Paradise even though it really is the greatest pleasure therein.

The second error: he affirmed that he is indeed seeking something in spite of being content. If this request does not go against the reality of being content, there should be nothing wrong in asking for something else as well if one is in need of that.

Moreover, it is well-known that one cannot reach the delight of gazing at Allāh without first being spared from Hell and tasting the enjoyment of Paradise that is less in rank than the gazing. The maxim states: what is necessary in achieving a goal is itself a goal, so seeking to gaze at Allāh entails seeking what comes with it, and this includes deliverance from the Fire.

Therefore, his contentment is not at odds with asking for that which benefits and seeking refuge from all that is harmful and asking for Paradise and seeking refuge from Hell. The same applies to everything else that is inseparable with the gazing, so the statement of this person contradicts itself.

Then, if he does not ask Allāh for Paradise nor seek His protection from Hell, his condition is such that he is either asking or not asking Him to fulfill some lesser need by helping him in some other way or repelling some other harm. If he is doing this, then he might as well be asking for Paradise and seeking protection from Hell as

they are more important. But if he holds contentment to mean that he should never ask for anything, even in a state of dire need, and should not seek protection from any harm, then there are two scenarios: either he is hoping in his heart that Allāh helps him or he is not hoping for anything.

If he is indeed hoping for Allāh's help in his heart, his state indicates that he is really seeking His protection as there really is no difference between one who asks something through his tongue and one who does so through his state. If the two are combined, the case is naturally even clearer and more perfect.

But if he is not hoping for anything, we all know that he cannot stay alive without some necessities which enable him to survive and repel harm. This said, he either loves and seeks these necessities of life and wants someone to provide him with them or not.

If he does indeed love and seek them and wants them from someone else than Allāh, he is a blameworthy polytheist and is not to be praised in any way. But if he says that he does not love nor seek them and neither wants them from Allāh or His creation, we say that this is not possible as far as living beings are concerned, for they cannot be void of love towards that which they need to survive. This is known by basic sense. If someone is like this, he cannot be described as being content, for true contentment necessitates that one have a specific type of love and want within him. How could a content person be void of all of that? This and other arguments clearly show the futility of these statements.

With regard to the path and religion of Allāh, the people who claim contentment have erred from a number of angles:

The first angle: the actions of a content person have to be in accord-

ance with what pleases Allāh. If they are not, how can he be content with Allāh while not doing what Allāh is pleased with? Moreover, how is it acceptable for one to be content with what angers Allāh and what He detests, rebukes and forbids?

The clarification of this is as follows:

Contentment is either something that Allāh loves and is pleased with or something He is not pleased with. Regarding the contentment that falls under the latter, there is no command of obligation or recommendation to have it. To clarify this, some types of contentment can actually be unbelief, like the contentment of the unbelievers with polytheism and killing and belying the Prophets and their contentment with everything that Allāh hates and is angry with. Allāh, Most High, says:

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ اتَّبَعُوا مَا أَصْحَبَ اللَّهُ  
وَكَرِهُوا رِضْوَانَهُ، فَأَحْبَطَ أَعْمَالَهُمْ ﴿٢٨﴾

“That is because they followed what angered Allāh and disliked [what earns] His pleasure, so He rendered worthless their deeds.”

[*Muḥammad* (47): 28]

Therefore, if one follows that which angers Allāh with his contentment and action, he has angered Allāh. The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “When a sin is committed on earth, the one who is absent but pleased with it is like those who are there, and the one who witnesses it but hates it is like those who were not there and disapproved of it.”<sup>26</sup> He also (ﷺ) said: “There will be rulers after me from whom you will approve some and disapprove some. He who disapproves (the bad) is free of blame, he who hates (the bad) is safe, but perished is he who is

<sup>26</sup> Abū Dāwūd, vol.4, p.515

content and follows.”<sup>27</sup>

Allāh, Most High, says:

يَخْلِفُونَ لَكُمْ لِتَرْضَوْا عَنْهُمْ فَإِن تَرْضَوْا عَنْهُمْ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَرْضَىٰ عَنِ الْقَوْمِ الْفَاسِقِينَ

“They swear to you so that you might be satisfied with them. But if you should be satisfied with them—indeed, Allāh is not satisfied with a defiantly disobedient people.”

[*al-Tawbah* (9): 96]

Therefore, our satisfaction and contentment with sinners is not something that Allāh loves and is pleased with, nor is He pleased with the sinners. Allāh says:

أَرْضَيْتُمْ بِالْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا مِنَ الْآخِرَةِ  
فَمَا مَتَّعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا فِي الْآخِرَةِ إِلَّا لِقَلِيلٍ

“Are you satisfied with the life of this world rather than the Hereafter? But what is the enjoyment of worldly life compared to the Hereafter except a [very] little.”

[*al-Tawbah* (9): 38]

Here, Allāh rebukes this type of satisfaction and contentment. He also says:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ لِقَاءَ نَا وَرَضُوا بِالْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَاطْمَأَنَّنُوا  
بِهَا

“Indeed, those who do not expect the meeting with Us and are satisfied with the life of this world and feel secure

<sup>27</sup> Muslim, vol.3, pp.1480-1481 and Abū Dāwūd, vol.5, pp.119-120

therein...”

[*Yūnus* (10): 7]

This, too, is blameworthy contentment. After this, there is a lot of contentment that is neither this nor that (i.e. it is permissible).

If one is content with his unbelief and sins and the unbelief and sins of others, he is not following that which pleases Allāh nor is he a believer in Allāh. Rather, he is displeasing his Lord and his Lord is angry with him. Upon him are the curses and blame of His Lord and he is subject to His punishment.

The path of Allāh which the guided Shaykhs order us to follow is but abidance by the command to obey Allāh and the prohibition to disobey Him. If someone orders, recommends, or praises the contentment which Allāh hates, rebukes, and forbids, and which leads to His punishment, he is an enemy of Allāh rather than His protege. He is a person who turns others away from His path and does not walk it himself either.

We now know that the contentment of the children of Adam can be beloved to Allāh and can be displeased and hated by Him. It can also be neither of these and thus merely permissible and neutral. This is the case with all of the actions of the heart including love and hate. All of these things are either beloved to Allāh, detested by Him, or permissible. Therefore we say to those who do not ask Allāh for Paradise nor seek His protection from Hell:

First, the ruling on asking Allāh for Paradise and seeking His protection from Hell should be obligated, recommended, permissible or disliked. As for it being forbidden or disliked, no Muslim makes such a claim. Neither is it permissible and neutral. If it is said that it is permissible and neutral, we say that even if this was the case, doing

something permissible and neutral does not negate contentment because abstaining from things like eating, drinking, and wearing clothes (which are all permissible) is not a requisite of contentment—if doing these things does not negate contentment, how is the case of permissible supplication any different?

If we say that asking and supplicating is in fact obligatory or recommended, we all know that Allāh is pleased with the obligatory and surplus deeds of His servants. One then wonders how a content person and a protege of Allāh would abstain from doing what Allāh loves and is pleased with and would instead insist on doing what He hates and dislikes. This is a trait of His enemies rather than a trait of His proteges.

[7.21: The Reply of *Ahl al-Sunnah* to the Argument  
of the *Qadariyyah*: Contentment with Allāh’s  
Decree Is Obligatory]

Al-Qushayrī mentions this in the beginning of the Chapter of Contentment saying: ‘Know that the servant must be pleased with those parts of Allāh’s decree which he has been commanded to be pleased with. This is because it is not allowed or obligatory for one to be pleased with all parts of His decree, like disobedience and the various calamities that befall the Muslims.’<sup>28</sup>

The same was said by many scholars before and after him and also in his time, like al-Qādī Abū Bakr and al-Qādī Abū Ya‘lā. They made their statements when the Qadarites argued that since being pleased with Allāh’s decree is obligatory, we are also commanded to be pleased with sins if they too are decreed by Him, but being

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<sup>28</sup> See *Risālah al-Qushayrī*, p.89



pleased with what Allāh has forbidden is not allowed. *Ahl al-Sunnah* gave them three answers:

The first answer: this was the answer given by the aforementioned scholars and the majority of the Imāms: it is incorrect to generalise the matter, for we have not been commanded to be pleased with everything that Allāh has decreed to be, and there is nothing to this effect in the Book or the Sunnah. What is correct is that we have to be pleased with the decree we have been ordered to be pleased with, like the obedience of Allāh and His Messenger. This is the reply mentioned by Abū'l-Qāsim.

The second answer: 'We are pleased with the act of decreeing, which is an attribute or actions of Allāh, but not with the decreed.' This, however, is a weak answer as we have explained elsewhere.

The third answer: 'These sins can be looked at from two angles: from the angle of the servant who commits them as they are a result of his doing and choosing, and from the angle of the Lord who created and destined them to be; we must be pleased with them by their virtue of being attributed to Allāh, and displeased with them by the virtue of them being attributed to the servant. This is because these sins are only described as evil, vile, and forbidden deeds that result to punishment and blameworthiness because they are attributed to the servant.'

There are many realities and secrets to be revealed here, and we have mentioned some of them elsewhere. This, however, is not the right place to elaborate on this as it is related to the issue of the attributes and the divine decree which is one of the greatest topics of the religion and the noblest knowledge of the first and the last. The topic is also extremely delicate and somewhat hard to grasp by most minds of the world.

The conclusion is that the Shaykhs of the *Ṣūfīs*, the scholars, and others than them have explained that some types of contentment are permissible while others are definitely not so, let alone being recommended and among the traits of those close to Allāh. Abū'l-Qāsim mentioned this in his *Risālah* as well.

If it is said: what you have said is obvious, but where is the mistake of the person who said: 'Contentment is that you do not ask Allāh for Paradise nor seek His protection from Hell?' And where is the mistake of those—whoever they may be—who think that this is a good statement?

The answer: they have erred because they thought that when one is truly content with something he does not seek anything else besides it. In other words, when the servant is in some particular situation, being truly content requires him to abstain from seeking anything else than that very situation. As the highest thing one can seek is Paradise and the worst thing one can experience is Hell, they said that since a content person must not seek anything, he must not even seek Paradise, and since he must not dislike anything, he must not even dislike Hell. This is where they went wrong and misguidance found a way to their thought in two ways:

The first: they thought that being satisfied with everything that exists is something that Allāh loves and is pleased with as one of the greatest ways of His proteges. They made contentment with every occurrence or every situation a way for the servant to reach Allāh and thus went completely astray.

The real path to Allāh is taken by pleasing Him by doing what He loves and is pleased with, not by being satisfied with everything that happens and is. This is because He did not command you to do this

and does not love it or like it. In fact, He, the Exalted, abhors, dislikes, and hates so many existing actions that only He knows their number. Being a friend or a protegee of Allāh requires one to agree with Him by loving what He loves and hating what He hates. One must abhor what He abhors and dislike what He dislikes and support whom He supports and show enmity towards those He shows enmity towards. If you love and like with what He abhors and dislikes, you are His enemy, not His friend, and you get the same blame as the rest of those who like what Allāh dislikes.

Contemplate this, for it reveals a major fundamental rule, and God only knows how many groups of devotees, worshippers, *Ṣūfis*, and laymen have gone astray regarding it.

The second: they do not make a distinction between the invocation they have been commanded to perform as an obligation or a recommendation and the invocation that they have been forbidden to perform or have neither been commanded nor forbidden to perform. The invocations and requests that a servant makes to his Lord are of three types:

## [7.21: The Types of Invocation to the Lord]

- 1) The first type: the invocations that the servants have been commanded to perform either as obligations or recommendations. These are like his words:

أَهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ﴿٦﴾

“Guide us to the straight path”

[*al-Fātiḥah* (1): 6]

and the invocation at the end of the prayer which the Prophet (ﷺ) ordered his Companions to perform: “When one of you sits down

in his prayer, let him seek refuge from four things: the punishment of Hell-fire, the punishment of the grave, the calamity of life and death, and the calamity of *al-Māsiḥ al-Dajjāl*.<sup>29</sup>

This is the invocation that the Prophet (ﷺ) commanded his Companions (*radīy Allāh ‘anhum*) to perform at the end of their prayers. The Imāms are in agreement that it is an Islāmic act that Allāh and His Messenger love and are pleased with, but they differ as to whether it is obligatory or not. Ṭāwūs deemed it obligatory while a group of scholars said that it is recommended.

The invocations performed by the Prophet (ﷺ) are either obligatory or recommended, so Allāh loves both and is pleased with them. Therefore, if someone performs them, Allāh is pleased with him and shall make him pleased as well. How could it then be said that abstinence from that which Allāh loves and is pleased with is a sign of true contentment?

The second type: the forbidden invocations like those that cross the proper limits. A man might, for example, ask for something that was given to the Prophets alone while not being a prophet himself, or he might even go as far as asking for an attribute of the Lord, Exalted and Most High, Himself. Others might ask for the intercession (*wasilah*) given only to one specific servant, or ask Allāh to grant him the knowledge of everything, or to make him capable of anything, or to lift all veils that prevent him from viewing the unseen.

Other forbidden forms of invocation are those performed with the assumption that Allāh is in need of His servants and that they can harm and benefit Him. Someone with this belief might invoke

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<sup>29</sup> Muslim, vol.1, p.412 and Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, vol.2, p.477.

Allāh for some of the aforementioned things and tell Him that if He does not do them the creation will hurt him. This and other similar things all stem from sheer ignorance about Allāh and are a way of overstepping the limits of lawfulness, in spite of the fact that a group of Shaykhs have fallen guilty of this.

Similar to this are their words: “O Allāh, forgive me if You wish!” People who say this assume that Allāh does some things due to being compelled and others out of His free will, much like the kings (of this world). Thus a person says: ‘Forgive me if You wish!’ The Prophet (ﷺ) forbade us from doing this and said: “Let none of you say: ‘O Allāh, forgive me if You wish, O Allāh, have mercy on me if You wish!’ Be determined in your request instead, for nobody forces Allāh.”<sup>30</sup> Someone might also attempt to make their sentences rhyme in the invocation while crying out loud and speaking in a declamatory manner. All of these invocations and anything that resembles them are forbidden.

Finally, there are invocations that are merely permissible, like asking for unnecessary things that do not entail sinfulness.

### [7.24: Opinions on Contentment]

What we are saying here is that the contentment that leads to Allāh does not include abstinence from obligatory or recommended acts. Leaving an obligatory or recommended invocation is not a part of being content just like leaving any other obligatory deed or committing an unlawful one is not a part of it. We can now see the mistake of these people in thinking that contentment with everything that happens is prescribed in Islām and in not differentiating between the invocation that has been prescribed as an

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<sup>30</sup> Bukhārī, vol.13, p.448 and Muslim, vol.4, p.2063

obligation or a recommendation and the invocation that has been declared unlawful.

It is necessarily known by all the followers of the religion of Islām that asking for Paradise and seeking protection from Hell is one of the greatest prescribed supplications of all of the Messengers and the Prophets as well as the truthful, the martyrs, and the pious. It is further common knowledge that this invocation is either obligatory or recommended. The path taken by the proteges of Allāh is nothing less than doing the obligatory and recommended acts. The rest, namely the forbidden, the disliked, and the merely permissible, is of no religious benefit.

One of the things that led these individuals to err like this was their observation that many people did not ask Allāh to grant them beneficial things and to ward off evil from them, not even to grant them Paradise and to protect them from Hell, with the intention of worship, obedience, and doing good deeds. What they found instead was that many were doing all of these things because the souls wants it. Therefore, they decided that being on the correct path entailed abstaining from everything that the soul decides and desires. This in turn led to the notion that they should have no will of their own at all, that the only thing one should seek, whoever he may be, is being subject to the divine decree.

As a result, many of them began leading monastic lives that contradicted the Shari‘ah to the extent that they would abstain from the necessary food, drink, and marriage, which are the requirements of a truly religious life. They saw how the laypeople considered these acts as mere natural inclinations, desires, and customs, and it is well-known that actions done with this intention are not considered worship, obedience, or an attempt to earn Allāh’s proximity. This led them to assume that for one to travel the true path to Allāh he has to

leave these acts of worship and deeds that are only performed due to the natural inclination. They then began living lives that included hunger, staying awake, isolation, silence, and other practices that entail abstinence from one's share in this world and bearing great difficulties. In the end, they began to abandon obligatory and recommended actions and committed the disliked and even the unlawful.

Neither of the aforementioned ways of looking at the matter is commendable and there is no order anywhere to indicate that. These views do not lead to Allāh: not the view of the negligent who did the things they were in need of with no intention of worship and earning the proximity of Allāh, nor the view of the extremists who left these actions all together. The correct way that Allāh has prescribed is doing these things with the intention to earn the proximity of Allāh while giving thanks to Him.

Allāh, Most High, says:

كُلُوا مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَعَمَلُوا صَالِحًا

“Eat from the good foods and work righteousness.”

[*al-Mu'minūn* (23): 51]

and

كُلُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ وَأَشْكُرُوا لِلَّهِ

“Eat from the good things which We have provided for you and be grateful to Allāh.”

[*al-Baqarab* (2): 172]

Here Allāh commands eating and drinking. He who eats without giving thanks is worthy of blame and so is he who neither eats nor gives thanks. It is related in the Ṣaḥīḥ that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“Indeed, Allāh is pleased when a servant takes a bite of his food and praises Him for it and when he takes a sip of his drink and praises Him for it.”<sup>31</sup> The Prophet (ﷺ) also told Sa’d (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*): “Indeed, there is not a single thing you spend with the intention of seeking the pleasure of Allāh but it raises you in status and rank; even something as small as a morsel that you put in your woman’s mouth.”<sup>32</sup> Another ḥadīth in the Ṣaḥīḥ says: “What a believer spends on his family in anticipation of Allāh’s reward is charity.”<sup>33</sup>

We can apply this to the invocations we are discussing here: some people do not ask Allāh to grant them what benefits them and to avert harm from them with the intention of following the Shari‘ah and worshipping Allāh, but because it is the natural thing to do and something they are used to. This, however, does not mean that I myself have an Islāmic justification to stop invoking Allāh completely because of the shortcomings and negligence of these people. Rather, I am to do what they did but with the intention of following the Shari‘ah and worshipping Allāh.

After this, you should know that those who do this as an act of following the Shari‘ah and worshipping Allāh are ultimately seeking to benefit themselves and to collect their praiseworthy share which is the good of this world and the hereafter. This is not the case with those who do this out of natural inclination, for they are only seeking worldly benefits. Allāh, Most High, says:

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<sup>31</sup> Muslim, vol.4, p.2095 and Tirmidhī, vol.3, p.172.

<sup>32</sup> Bukhārī, vol.1, p.136 and Muslim, vol.3, p.1251.

<sup>33</sup> Bukhārī, vol.7, p.317 and Tirmidhī, vol.3, p.232.



فَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن  
يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَمَا لَنَا فِي الآخِرَةِ مِن  
خَلْقٍ ﴿٢٠٠﴾ وَمِنْهُمْ مَن يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا  
حَسَنَةً وَفِي الآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ﴿٢٠١﴾  
أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا كَسَبُوا وَاللَّهُ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ ﴿٢٠٢﴾

“And among the people is he who says, ‘Our Lord, give us in this world,’ and he will have in the Hereafter no share. But among them is he who says, ‘Our Lord, give us in this world [that which is] good and in the Hereafter [that which is] good and protect us from the punishment of the Fire.’ Those will have a share of what they have earned, and Allāh is swift in account.”

[*al-Baqarah* (2): 200-202]

This being the case, the seeker of Paradise who also seeks protection from the Fire is only seeking the good of the Hereafter, so his deed is praiseworthy.

What further clarifies the matter and proves the futility of the notion of these people is that the logical consequence of their belief is that a servant ends up following no commands and does not abstain from the unlawful. In other words, he does not pray, fast, give charity, perform the pilgrimage, join *jihād*, or do any of the acts that bring one closer to Allāh because the only benefit of these acts is the reward and the averting of the punishment. If one does not seek the reward, which is Paradise, and does not try to avoid the punishment, which is Hell, he will not follow orders nor abstain from the unlawful. Instead, he will say: ‘I am content with everything that He does with me, even if I am to become an unbeliever and a repugnant sinner.’ In fact, he might even say: “I disbelieve, sin, and disobey until He punishes me

and I remain content with that. By doing so I achieve the rank of being content with His decree.” Such words are only uttered by the most ignorant and idiotic beings that have taken the worst path of deviance and unbelief.

As for their ignorance and idiocy, it is because being satisfied with that is impossible as it necessitates bringing two contradictories together. As for their unbelief, it is because their belief leads to the nullification of Allāh’s religion with which He sent His Messengers and Books.

There is no doubt that thinking about the divine decree has led many *Ṣūfīs* who focus on the issue of will to this abandonment of obligations and committing of sins, and as a result they have become either deficient and deprived of good, or disobedient sinners, or even sheer unbelievers. I have seen all kinds of beliefs like this. Allāh says:

وَمَنْ لَمْ يَجْعَلِ اللَّهُ لَهُ نُورًا فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ نُورٍ ﴿٤٠﴾

“And he to whom Allāh has not granted light—for him there is no light.”

[*al-Nūr* (24): 40]

These Mu‘tazilites and their ilk from the Qadariyyah hold diametrically opposed views as one group focuses on destiny and dismisses the divine orders and the other group focuses on the divine orders and dismisses destiny. Both groups assume that paying attention to both the divine orders and destiny is impossible and one group says that such would be against wisdom and justice. These three parties are the Zoroastrian Qadarites (*al-qadarīyyah al-mujūsiyyah*), the Polytheist Qadarites (*al-qadarīyyah al-mushbrikīyyah*), and the Iblisite Qadarites (*al-qadarīyyah al-Iblīsiyyah*). We have talked about them in detail elsewhere.

The Polytheist Qadarites are the source of what the wayfarers who focus on the issue of will and the laypeople have been afflicted with in our times, because they focus on the divine decree but dismiss the divine commands. Some scholars have said about them: ‘When it comes to obedience, you are a Qadarite, but when it comes to sinning, you are a Jabarite! Whenever an ideology agrees with your desires, you adopt it!’

The real Islāmic position is the opposite: one must seek the help of Allāh before an act of obedience and thank Him after it. He must strive to abstain from sinning, but if he does sin, he must repent at once and seek forgiveness. The ḥadīth of the most virtuous forms of seeking forgiveness (*Sayyid al-Istighfār*) says: “I acknowledge to You Your blessings upon me and I acknowledge my sin.” A ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth *qudsī* states: “My servants! It is only your deeds that I count for you and then give you in full. Let the person who finds good praise Allāh, and let the one who finds something else only blame himself.”<sup>34</sup>

This is also where some of the “*people of will*” stopped invoking Allāh and others considered having reliance on Allāh and loving Him something that only a layman would resort to. We have talked about these and other similar blunders elsewhere and clarified the difference between the correct position and the wrong ones. This is why some of the Shaykhs command the people to follow sound knowledge and the Shari‘ah. Sahl Ibn ‘Abdullah al-Tustarī says: ‘All ecstasy (*wajd*) that is not testified to by the Book and the Sunnah is null and void.’ Al-Junayd Ibn Muḥammad says: ‘Our discipline is qualified by the Book and the Sunnah, so he who has not read the Qur’ān and has not written ḥadīth cannot talk about our discipline.’ And Allāh knows best.

<sup>34</sup> Referenced already mentioned.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### Inclination (*hamm*) and Determination (*‘azm*)

**QUESTION:** WHAT DO THE NOBLE Scholars say about someone who is absolutely determined to commit a sin like adultery, theft, or drinking wine, but fails to commit it because of death or something else? Has he sinned just by having determination or not? If you say yes, what is the reply to those who say that he is not sinful and prove their case by the ḥadīth: “When My servant is inclined towards doing an evil deed but does not do it, it is not written against him”<sup>1</sup> and also: “Allāh has overlooked for my nation that which their souls tell them as long as they do not act or speak”<sup>2</sup>

They approach this from two angles:

*The first angle:* The Prophet (ﷺ) told us that the whispering of the soul (*ḥadīth al-nafs*) is overlooked, and this general statement includes determination (*‘azm*), which is the same as inclination (*hamm*). This was stated by Ibn Sida.

<sup>1</sup> Muslim, vol.1, p117; Tirmidhī, vol.4, p330 and others.

<sup>2</sup> Bukhārī, vol.11, p.549 and Muslim, vol.1, pp.116-117.

*The second angle:* They say that this overlooking (mentioned in the ḥadīth) covers everything that does not transform into speech or action, so anything that comes before that is overlooked. As for the Prophet's (ﷺ) words: "When two Muslims confront each other with their swords, both the slayer and the slain are in the Fire,"<sup>3</sup> they claim that there is no proof therein to state otherwise because the reason the slain is in the Fire is that he confronted his brother; and confrontation is an action, not just an intention.

They also negate any evidence in the ḥadīth that relates the words of a man: "If only I had money, I would do such and such," and the Prophet says about him: "They are equal in sin and equal in reward."<sup>4</sup> They hold that this ḥadīth proves nothing because the man spoke, and the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "As long as they do not act or speak."<sup>5</sup>

There has been a lot of talk about this issue, so an elaborate and exhaustive clarification is needed.

The Answer: Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah, may Allāh sanctify his spirit and illuminate his grave, answered:

All praise is for Allāh. Before speaking about the ruling of this and other similar matters, we must have a good understanding of it first, for the inconsistency of the people regarding these issues is mainly due to two things:

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<sup>3</sup> Bukhārī, vol.1, p.85 and Muslim, vol.4, p.2214.

<sup>4</sup> Tirmidhī, vol.3, p.385 and he said this ḥadīth is ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ.

<sup>5</sup> Bukhārī, vol.11, p.549 and Muslim, vol.1, pp.116-117.

## [8.1: The Reason behind the Inconsistency]

The first reason: not determining the different states and characteristics of the human heart which is what the topic revolves around.

The second reason: not analyzing the legal evidences as they ought to be analyzed.

Because of these two things, many people have fallen into much inconsistency regarding the topic at hand to the extent that if one reads their statements he finds that they make claims of consensus that appear to contradict each other.

## [8.2: The Disparity of Actions and Characteristics]

We must realise that between the beginning and the end of all attributes of the living, such as knowledge, ability, and will, there are levels that many servants of Allāh do not fully grasp. These include doubt (*shakk*), then conjecture (*ẓann*), then knowledge (*‘ilm*), then certainty (*yaqīn*) with its own levels, and also inclination (*hamm*), will (*irāda*), determination (*‘azm*), and others.

For this reason, according to the majority of *Ahl al-Sunnah* and also according to the apparent view of Aḥmad and the strongest of the two reports from him, the correct view is that knowledge, intellect and other similar characteristics are subject to increase and decrease. This is in fact the case with the characteristics of inanimate things as well, such as colors, tastes, and smells.

### [8.3: Definite Will and Its Ruling]

Firstly, definite will (*irāda jāzima*) is that which necessitates the occurrence of action as long as one has ability (*qudra*). Whenever there is definite will and full ability (*qudra al-tāma*), action must occur because of the full existence of what necessitates it and the absence of anything to prevent it. As for the case where will and full ability exist but action does not take place, it only means that the will was not definite. This is the will the created beings have when they want to do actions they are capable of doing but end up not doing them. It is true that the weakness and strength of these wills vary greatly in this regard, but as long as the willed action does not take place in spite of there being full ability, the will to act is not definite.

The only reason there is so much dispute about this matter is that they considered definite will to act to be totally disconnected from the action, which is not possible. This is only possible with resolve (*‘azm*) to act, for a person may have resolve to do something in the future while not doing any part of it at that moment. Resolve to do something in the future, however, does not suffice in bringing about the action, but rather when the action takes place there must be absolute will that necessitates it. This is what definite will (*irāda jāzima*) is.

When man has definite will and does with it as much as he is able to do, the Shari‘ah views him as someone who has fully committed the act and deserves the reward or punishment of a person who committed the willed action completely. Therefore, one is rewarded or punished for that which was beyond his ability like people who work together in doing righteous deeds. This includes the results of one’s actions like the actions of the preachers of guidance and deviance and those who establish a good or a bad practice (*sunnah*).

It is related in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “He who calls towards guidance gets the same reward as his followers with no decrease in their reward. He who calls towards misguidance gets the same sin as his followers with no decrease in their sin.”<sup>6</sup> It is also related in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs that he said: “He who establishes a good practice (*sunnah*) shall get its reward and the reward of those who practice it till the Day of Resurrection with no decrease in their reward.”<sup>7</sup>

### [8.4: The Will of the Preacher of Guidance or Deviance]

The caller (*dā'i*) towards guidance (*hudā*) or deviance (*dallāl*) is fully seeking and wanting what he calls others to follow, but his ability is connected to the act of calling and commanding and the ability of the follower is connected to following and acceptance. For this reason, Allāh, Most High, mentioned direct and indirect actions together:

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ لَا يُصِيبُهُمْ ظَمَأٌ وَلَا نَصَبٌ  
وَلَا مَخْمَصَةٌ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَا يَطْئُونَ مَوْطِئًا يَغِيظُ  
الْكُفْرَانَ وَلَا يَنَالُونَ مِنْ عَدُوِّ نَيْلًا إِلَّا كُتِبَ لَهُمْ  
بِهِ عَمَلٌ صَالِحٌ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٢٠﴾  
وَلَا يُنْفِقُونَ نَفَقَةً صَغِيرَةً وَلَا كَبِيرَةً وَلَا يَقْطَعُونَ  
وَادِيًا إِلَّا كُتِبَ لَهُمْ لِحَجْرِ يَهُمُّ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنَ مَا كَانُوا  
يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٢١﴾

<sup>6</sup> Muslim, vol.4, p.2060 and Abū Dāwūd, vol.5, p.16.

<sup>7</sup> Muslim, vol.4, p.2059 and Nasā'ī, vol.5, p.76 and others.



“That is because they are not afflicted by thirst or fatigue or hunger in the cause of Allāh , nor do they tread on any ground that enrages the disbelievers, nor do they inflict upon an enemy any infliction but that is registered for them as a righteous deed. Indeed, Allāh does not allow to be lost the reward of the doers of good. Nor do they spend an expenditure, small or large, or cross a valley but that it is registered for them that Allāh may reward them for the best of what they were doing.”

[*al-Tawbah* (9): 120-121]

Here we see that in the first verse He mentions what happens as a result of their actions without their actual ability, namely the thirst, hunger, and weariness that afflicts them, the rage of the unbelievers, and what they inflict upon the enemy. About this He says:

إِلَّا كُتِبَ لَهُم بِهِ عَمَلٌ صَالِحٌ

“But that is registered for them as a righteous deed.”

[*al-Tawbah* (9): 120]

He tells them that because of these things that occur and come to existence by their actions and also actions separate from them, righteous deeds are registered for them.

In the second verse He mentions their own actions that they were in direct contact with, namely their spending and travelling. About these, too, He says:

إِلَّا كُتِبَ لَهُم

“But that it is registered for them.”

[*al-Tawbah* (9): 121]

These things were in and of themselves righteous deeds, and in both cases their will to achieve their goal of making all religion to

Allāh and making His word the highest was definite. The things that occurred as a result of this definite will that were partly caused by their ability were all written for them as righteous deeds.

The same applies to the preacher of guidance or misguidance. If he has absolute and certain will to guide or misguide his followers and does whatever he is able to accomplish that, he is like someone who has done the deed (he calls others to do) completely. As such, he gets the same reward as all of his followers; the preacher who guides gets the reward of the guided and the preacher who leads astray gets the sins of those who go astray. A person who establishes a good or bad practice (that others follow) is like this as well because the Sunnah is that which is established so others follow for the establisher of a practice has complete will behind everything he does, and he does only what he is able to do.

Related to this is the agreed upon ḥadīth of Ibn Mas'ūd (*radīy Allāh 'anhu*) where the Prophet (ﷺ) says: “A person is never slain without right except that the first son of Adam has his share of responsibility for his blood. This is because he was the first to establish the practice of killing.”<sup>8</sup> This share is like the share of the slayer, as explained in the other ḥadīth. This [is because] the first son of Adam allowed himself the bloodshed of the inviolable; hence nothing could stop him from partaking in that action again, therefore he is considered a part in every slaying.

Similarly related to this are the words of Allāh, Most High:

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<sup>8</sup> Bukhārī, vol.6, p.364 and Muslim, vol.3, p.1304.

مِنَ أَجْلِ ذَلِكَ كَتَبْنَا عَلَىٰ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ أَنَّهُ مَن قَتَلَ  
نَفْسًا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ  
النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا وَمَن أَحْيَاهَا فَكَأَنَّمَا أَحْيَا النَّاسَ  
جَمِيعًا

“Because of that, We decreed upon the Children of Israel that whoever kills a soul unless for a soul or for corruption [done] in the land—it is as if he had slain mankind entirely. And whoever saves one—it is as if he had saved mankind entirely.”

[*al-Mā'idah* (5): 32]

This is much like the rule that belying one of the Messengers entails belying all of them. The Qur'ān refers to this in the following verses:

كَذَّبَتْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٠٥﴾

“The people of Nūḥ denied the messengers.”

[*al-Shu'arā'* (26): 105]

and

كَذَّبَتْ عَادَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٢٣﴾

“Ād denied the messengers.”

[*al-Shu'arā'* (26): 133]

Also related to this are the words of Allāh, Most High:

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّبِعُوا سَبِيلَنَا  
وَلْنَحْمِلَ خَطِيئَتَكُمْ وَمَا هُمْ بِحَامِلِينَ مِنْ خَطِيئَتِهِمْ مِنْ  
شَيْءٍ إِنَّهُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ ﴿١٤﴾ وَلِيَحْمِلُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَأَنْقَالَا  
مَعَ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَلَيْسَ لَن يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عَمَّا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ

“And those who disbelieve say to those who believe, ‘Follow our way, and we will carry your sins.’ But they will not carry anything of their sins. Indeed, they are liars. But they will surely carry their [own] burdens and [other] burdens along with their burdens, and they will surely be questioned on the Day of Resurrection about what they used to invent.”

[*al-'Ankabūt* (29): 12-13]

Here, Allāh says that the leaders of misguidance do not bear the sins of their followers at all (as they offered to carry them in exchange for their apostasy), but do indeed carry their burdens, which is a reference to their misdeeds (which they do as they follow these leaders), with no decrease in the sins of their followers. Their certain will and doing everything in their power earned them the reward of all their followers, for the reward of an action is earned by certain will and taking part in the action to the best of one's ability.

It occurs in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs, from Ibn 'Abbās (*radīy Allāh 'anhumā*) who narrates from Abū Sufyān, that the Prophet (ﷺ) wrote to Heracles: “If you turn away, the sins of the *Arisiyyūn* will be on your shoulders.”<sup>9</sup> In this ḥadīth, the Prophet explains that since Heracles was a religious leader, he would bear the sins of the *Arisiyyūn*, i.e. his followers. While it is said that this word was used to refer to the farmers and the tillers of land, like the word “*Tā*” in Turkish, it has a broader meaning. In any case, the message is clear as indicated by other texts of the Book and the Sunnah: shunning the Messenger would make Heracles bear the sins of his followers with no decrease in their sins. Among these texts are the following:

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<sup>9</sup> Bukhārī, vol.1, p.32 and Muslim, vol.3, p.1396.

إِلَهُكُمْ إِلَهُ وَاحِدٌ  
 فَالَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ مُنْكَرَةٌ وَهُمْ مُسْتَكْبِرُونَ  
 ﴿٢٢﴾ لَاجْرَمَ أَنْتَ اللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَسْخَرُونَ وَمَا تُعْلِنُونَ إِنَّهُ  
 لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْتَكْبِرِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾ وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ مَاذَا أَنْزَلَ رَبُّكُمْ  
 قَالُوا أَسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾ لِيَحْمِلُوا أَوْزَارَهُمْ كَامِلَةً  
 يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَمِنْ أَوْزَارِ الَّذِينَ يُضِلُّونَهُمْ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ

“Your god is one God. But those who do not believe in the Hereafter—their hearts are disapproving, and they are arrogant. Assuredly, God knows what they conceal and what they declare. Indeed, He does not like the arrogant. And when it is said to them, “What has your Lord sent down?” they say, “Legends of the former peoples,” That they may bear their own burdens [i.e., sins] in full on the Day of Resurrection and some of the burdens of those whom they misguide without [i.e., by lack of] knowledge.”

[*al-Nabl* (16): 22-25]

His words:

وَمِنْ أَوْزَارِ الَّذِينَ يُضِلُّونَهُمْ

“and from the sins of those whom they misguide”

[*al-Nabl* (16): 25]

refer to the sins of the misguided followers. These sins come to existence through both the one who commands them and the one who abides by the command, so the ability of both plays a part in the misguidance. This being the case, both bear a part of the sin, but each part is like the complete sin, as indicated by other

texts like the ḥadīth: “He who calls towards misguidance earns the sin of his followers with no decrease in their sin till the Day of Resurrection.”<sup>10</sup>

Also related to this are His words:

قَالَ ادْخُلُوا فِي أُمَمٍ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ مِنَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنْسِ  
فِي النَّارِ كُلَّمَا دَخَلَتْ أُمَّةٌ لَعَنَتْ أُخْتَهَا حَتَّى إِذَا آذَرَكُوا فِيهَا  
جَمِيعًا قَالَتْ أُخْرَيْنَهُمْ لِأَوْلَانِهِمْ رَبَّنَا هَؤُلَاءِ أَضَلُّونَا فَعَاتِبْهُمْ  
عَذَابًا ضِعْفًا مِنَ النَّارِ قَالَ لِكُلِّ ضِعْفٌ وَلَكِنْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

“[God] will say, ‘Enter among nations which had passed on before you of jinn and mankind into the Fire.’ Every time a nation enters, it will curse its sister until, when they have all overtaken one another therein, the last of them will say about the first of them, ‘Our Lord, these had misled us, so give them a double punishment of the Fire.’ He will say, ‘For each is double, but you do not know.’”

[*al-A‘raf* (7): 38]

Here, Allāh, the Exalted and Most High, informs us that the followers invoked Him to double the punishment for the leaders of misguidance. The same also occurs in the *ayah*:

وَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّا أَطَعْنَا سَادَتَنَا وَكُبَرَاءَنَا  
فَأَضَلُّونَا السَّبِيلًا ﴿٢٧﴾ رَبَّنَا آتِهِمْ ضِعْفَيْنِ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ  
وَالْعَنِّمْ لَعْنًا كَبِيرًا ﴿٢٨﴾

“And they will say, ‘Our Lord, indeed we obeyed our masters and our dignitaries, and they led us astray from the

<sup>10</sup> Muslim, vol.4, p.2059, Nasā’ī, vol.5, p.76 and others.

[right] way. Our Lord, give them double the punishment and curse them with a great curse.”

[*al-Aḥzāb* (33): 67-68]

Then He says that both the followed and the follower get a double torment but the followers do not know that.

This is why the leaders of guidance are so greatly praised and the leaders of deviance are so severely rebuked and cursed. It has even been narrated—though I cannot recall the chain—that there is no punishment in Hell but it starts from *Iblīs* and then moves up to others, and no bliss in Paradise but it starts from the Prophet (ﷺ) and then moves to others. This is because the Prophet (ﷺ) is the ultimate leader of guidance for the first and the last of the sons of Adam. He himself says: “I am the noble leader of the children of Adam, and I say this without [any] pride.”<sup>11</sup> Adam and the rest are under my flag on the Day of Resurrection, and I say this without pride. He is the intercessor of the first and the last at the time of their reckoning, and he is the first to ask for the door of Paradise to be opened.

Allāh took the covenant of believing in Him from all creation and also took a promise from every prophet to believe in all the prophets that were sent before them and to affirm the truthfulness of every prophet to come. Allāh, Most High, says:

وَإِذْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ النَّبِيِّينَ لَمَا آتَيْتُكُمْ مِنْ كِتَابٍ  
وَحِكْمَةٍ تَرْجَاءُكُمْ رَسُولٌ مُصَدِّقٌ لِمَا مَعَكُمْ لَتُؤْمِنُنَّ  
بِهِ ۖ وَلَتُنصِرُنَّهُ ۚ

“And [recall, O People of the Scripture], when God took

<sup>11</sup> Tirmidhī, vol.4, p.370 and he said the ḥadīth is ḥasan.

the covenant of the prophets, [saying], ‘Whatever I give you of the Scripture and wisdom and then there comes to you a messenger confirming what is with you, you [must] believe in him and support him.’”

[*Āl-‘Imrān* (3): 81]

Here, Allāh begins His speech with the letter *Lam* which signifies oath and is used when the sentence contains both an oath (*qasam*) and a condition (*shart*). The *Lam* is then connected to the “*ma of condition (ma al-shartiyya)*” to indicate generality. Thus, the meaning is: no matter what I give you of the scripture and wisdom, you have to believe in it and help the Prophet who affirms the past revelations when he arrives. Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāh ‘anhumā*) said: “Allāh never sent a Prophet without making him pledge that should Muḥammad be sent while he is alive, he would certainly believe in him and help him.”

Allāh, Most High, raised his mention and announced his name in the highest gathering between the creation of Adam’s body and the blowing of his soul in it. The ḥadīth of Maysara al-Fajr says: “I said: ‘O Messenger of Allāh! When were you a Prophet?’ (And in another report: ‘When were you written as a Prophet?’ He (ﷺ) said: “When Adam was between the soul and the body.”<sup>12</sup> This was related by Aḥmad.

It also occurs in the ḥasan ḥadīth of ‘Irbād Ibn Sariyah (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*) related by Aḥmad that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “I was the seal of the Prophets before Allāh while Adam was thrown down in his clay.”<sup>13</sup> At that time and in that state, Allāh wrote and decreed the matter of the leader of the offspring just as he wrote and decreed the

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<sup>12</sup> Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, vol.5, p59.

<sup>13</sup> Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, vol.4, p127.



states of Adam's offspring between the creation of his body and the blowing of his soul in it. That has been reported in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs<sup>14</sup> in the ḥadīth of Ibn Mas'ūd (*radīy Allāh 'anhu*).

Therefore, whoever of the first and the last believes in him is rewarded, even though the reward of those who believe in him and obey his specified laws is greater than the reward of mere general belief. This is because he is the absolute leader of Adam's offspring and gets a share of every early and late believer's faith, just like *Iblīs* gets a share of all the deviancy of the Jinn and man. This affirms what has been reported and supports the expedient ḥadīth (which is either an expedient report of al-Zuhrī or a *tabi'i* after him) in the copy of Shu'ayb Ibn Abī Ḥamzah, from al-Zuhrī, from the Prophet (ﷺ): "I have been sent as a caller, but no guidance is in my hands, and *Iblīs* was sent to beautify and lead astray, but no deviance is in his hands."<sup>15</sup>

Somewhat related to this is his statement in the ḥadīth found in the *Sunan*: "I was weighed with the nation and proved heavier, then Abū Bakr was weighed with the nation and proved heavier, then 'Umar was weighed with the nation and proved heavier. Then the scale was raised."<sup>16</sup>

The fact that the Prophet (ﷺ) weighs more in the balance than the entire Muslim nation is clear because he gets the reward of the entire nation in addition to his own. As for Abū Bakr and 'Umar (*radīy Allāh 'anhumā*), their weightiness is due to their support and certain will to make the entire nation believe, though of the two Abū Bakr

<sup>14</sup> Bukhārī, vol.11, p.477 and Muslim, vol.4, p.2036.

<sup>15</sup> Ibn 'Adi in al-Kāmal, vol.3, p.910 in mursal form

<sup>16</sup> Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, vol.2, p76 and others.

(*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*) was like this earlier and his will was more certain. They were the ones who supported the Prophet (ﷺ) in making the nation believe in both the big and the small matters before and after his passing.

Because of this, Abū Sufyān asked on the day of Uhud: “Is Muḥammad among you? Is Ibn Abī Quhafah among you? Is Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb among you?” Upon hearing this, the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Do not answer him.” Then he (Abū Sufyān) said: “You have been spared of these men!” At this point, ‘Umar could not refrain from speaking and said: “You have lied, O enemy of Allāh! Those whom you mentioned are alive and what you hate so much is still here for you!”<sup>17</sup> This is a ḥadīth of al-Barā’ Ibn ‘Āzib (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*) related by Bukhārī and Muslim. Abū Sufyān, who at that time was the head of unbelief, only asked about these three because they were the leaders of the believers.

It is also related in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs that when ‘Umar was laid to rest, ‘Aī Ibn Abī Ṭālib (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*) said: “By Allāh, there is no one on the face of this earth with whose deeds I would like to meet Allāh more than this one covered here. By Allāh, I truly hope that Allāh will resurrect you with your two companions, for I used to hear the Prophet (ﷺ) frequently say: ‘I, Abū Bakr and ‘Umar entered, I, Abū Bakr and ‘Umar left, I, Abū Bakr and ‘Umar went.’”<sup>18</sup>

There are many reports like this which clarify the worthiness of these two if they get the reward of the entire nation. They had certain will and were able to act upon that will unlike others who provided assistance in some things only and had the aforementioned will in

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<sup>17</sup> Bukhārī, vol.7, p.349 and not in Muslim as Ibn Taymiyyah mentioned.

<sup>18</sup> Bukhārī, vol.7, pp.41-42 and Muslim, vol.4, p.1859.

only some things.

If a person has certain will and does whatever he is able to do, he is like one who has done the action completely even if he is not an Imām or a preacher. Allāh, exalted by his mention, says:

لَا يَسْتَوِي الْقَاعِدُونَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ غَيْرَ أُولِي الضَّرَرِ وَالْمُجَاهِدُونَ  
 فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ  
 وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ عَلَى الْقَاعِدِينَ دَرَجَةً وَكُلًّا وَعَدَّ اللَّهُ الْحُسْنَىٰ وَفَضَّلَ اللَّهُ  
 الْمُجَاهِدِينَ عَلَى الْقَاعِدِينَ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٩٥﴾ دَرَجَاتٍ مِنْهُ وَمَغْفِرَةً  
 وَرَحْمَةً وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ﴿٩٦﴾

“Not equal are those believers remaining [at home]—other than the disabled—and the *mujāhidūn*, [who strive and fight] in the cause of Allāh with their wealth and their lives. Allāh has preferred the *mujāhidūn* through their wealth and their lives over those who remain [behind], by degrees. And to all [i.e., both] Allāh has promised the best [reward]. But Allāh has preferred the *mujāhidūn* over those who remain [behind] with a great reward—Degrees [of high position] from Him and forgiveness and mercy. And Allāh is ever Forgiving and Merciful.”

[*al-Nisā'* (4): 95-96]

## [8.5: Certain Will and Inability to Act]

Here Allāh negates equality between those who fight in His path and the able who sit down. The equality of those who join battle and those who remain behind due to inability to join is not negated, however, as the sentence indicates that both are indeed equal. The wording is clear: the *ulu al-darar* are excluded from the unequal, which means that they can be equal with those who fight, even if

not in everything. The Prophet’s (ﷺ) words in the Battle of Tabūk agree with this: “In Medīnah there are men; you have not marched a distance or crossed a valley but they were with you.” They said: ‘And they are in Medīnah?’ He (ﷺ) replied: “And they are in Medīnah, prevented by something.”<sup>19</sup>

Here the Prophet (ﷺ) says that those who sit down in Medīnah only for a good reason are just like those who are with them in this expedition. It is well-known that each participator in the battle deserved the reward of a fighter according to his intention, so similar is the case with those who remained behind for a good reason.

It occurs in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs in the ḥadīth of Abū Mūsā (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “When the servant becomes sick or travels, that which he used to do when healthy or settled down is written for him.”<sup>20</sup> Here we see that if a person does something when healthy or settled down and then stops because of illness or traveling, it is clear that he only stopped because of inability and hardship, not because his intention was wavering. Therefore, his will is as certain as before but he is unable to act.

Here it must be noted that even though a traveler, and in some cases a sick person, is able to act with difficulty, what is defined as ability in the Shari‘ah is that which can bring about an action without immoderate harm. Allāh, Most High, says:

وَلِلَّهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حُجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنِ اسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا

“And [due] to Allāh from the people is a pilgrimage to the House—for whoever is able to find thereto a way.”

[*Āl-‘Imrān* (3): 97]

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<sup>19</sup> Bukhārī, vol.8, p.116 and Muslim, vol.3, p.1518.

<sup>20</sup> Bukhārī, vol.6, p.136 and others

and

فَمَنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فِإِطْعَامُ سِتِّينَ مَسْكِينًا

“and he who is unable—then the feeding of sixty poor persons..”

[*al-Mujaadilah* (58): 4]

Ability in the legal sense is not just capability to act regardless of one’s state, but rather there must be no harming, even moderately.

Also related to the topic at hand is the Prophet’s (ﷺ) statement: “Whoever equips a soldier has fought in battle, and whoever takes good care of his family for him has fought in battle.”<sup>21</sup> He (ﷺ) also said: “Whoever help a fasting person break his fast get the reward with the fasting person with no decrease in his reward.”<sup>22</sup>

Joining battle requires fighting with one’s person and fighting with money. If one person sacrifices his person and another his money, and both have certain will, both are soldiers with their certain will and utmost effort. A soldier also needs someone to take good care of his family, so the one who does that is also considered a soldier. Similarly, fasting necessitates abstinence from food and drink and also eating the evening’s meal which concludes the fast; if one cannot eat in the evening, he cannot fast.

The Prophet (ﷺ) has said in a ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth: “When a woman spends from the money of her husband without causing harm thereby, she gets the reward of her spending and her husband gets the same. Neither decreases the reward of the other.”<sup>23</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Bukhārī, vol.6, p.49 and Muslim, vol.3, p.507.

<sup>22</sup> Tirmidhī, vol.2, p.151 and others.

<sup>23</sup> Muslim, vol.2, p.110.

It also occurs in the ḥadīth of Abū Mūsā (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*): “The trustworthy treasurer who gives according to his orders fully and completely with a kind heart is one of the spenders on charity.” This was related by Bukhārī and Muslim. This is the case because the trustworthy treasurer only gives according to his orders fully and completely with a kind heart due to the same type of certain will that his supervisor has, and since he does what he is able, he is considered as being among the charitable.

The Prophet (ﷺ) says in the ḥadīth of Abū Kabshah al-Anmārī which was related by Aḥmad and Ibn Mājah: “The world is only for four: a man whom Allāh has given knowledge and wealth and who uses them for obedience...A man said: ‘If I had what such and such has, I would do what he does.’” The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “They get the same reward.” Tirmidhī related the ḥadīth in its entirety and said: ‘It is a ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth.’<sup>24</sup>

This equality in reward and sin concerns those who say that while meaning it and whom Allāh knows to have certain will to act when able. If the state of a person is like this, he gets the same reward or punishment as those who actually act. This is not the case with everyone who says: “If I had what such and such has, I would do what he does;” it is only the case when there is certain will that necessitates the occurrence of action and ability. Many people say things like this with determination, but when they have the chance to act their determination disappears. Such is the case with most people who make promises and then break them.

Not everyone who has certain resolve before ability to act and before the removal of preventive factors can keep that resolve when ability comes to play alongside the preventive factors. Allāh, Most High, says:

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<sup>24</sup> Tirmidhī, vol.3, p.385.

“And you had certainly wished for death [i.e., martyrdom] before you encountered it, and you have [now] seen it [before you] while you were looking on.”

[*Al-‘Imrān* (3): 143]

And

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ ءَامَنُوْا لِمَ تَقُوْلُوْنَ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُوْنَ ﴿٦٥﴾

“O you who have believed, why do you say what you do not do?”

[*al-Saff* (61): 2]

And

وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ عٰهَدَ اللّٰهَ لَئِنِ  
ءَاتٰنَا مِنْ فَضْلِهٖ لَنَصَّدَّقَنَّ وَلَنَكُوْنَنَّ مِنَ الصّٰلِحِيْنَ ﴿٧٥﴾  
فَلَمَّآ ءَاتٰهُمْ مِنْ فَضْلِهٖ ءَبْجَلُوْا بِهٖ وَتَوَلَّوْا وَهُمْ مُّعْرِضُوْنَ

“And among them are those who made a covenant with Allāh,[saying], ‘If He should give us from His bounty, we will surely spend in charity, and we will surely be among the righteous.’ But when He gave them from His bounty, they.”

[*al-Tawbah* (9): 75-76]

The ḥadīth of Abū Kabshah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) regarding intentions is like the ḥadīth of the card (*bitāqa*) which is about words. The latter is a ḥadīth related by Tirmidhī and others from ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Amr who narrates from the Prophet (ﷺ): “On the Day of Resurrection, Allāh spreads for a man from the Prophet’s nation ninety-nine records, each of which extends as far as the eye can see. He is then asked: ‘Do you deny any of this? Have I wronged you?’ and he says: ‘No, Lord!’ Then he is told: ‘You shall not be wronged today.’ A card that contains the divine unity (*tawḥīd*) is then brought and

placed in a scale while the records are put on another. As a result, the records are raised up and the card is heavy.”<sup>25</sup> This is because of the truthfulness (*ṣidq*), sincerity (*ikhlāṣ*), purity (*ṣafāʾ*), and good intention (*ḥasan al-niyyah*) that accompany this sentence, for even though the apparent side of words and acts of worship is similar, there can be great disparity between them, depending on the states of the hearts.

Similar to this ḥadīth is the ḥadīth about the prostitute who gave a dog something to drink and was thereby forgiven. This was because of the pure intention and mercy that she had in her heart at that moment.

This is also like the Prophet’s (ﷺ) words: “A servant might utter something that pleases Allāh, having no idea that it could reach where it reaches—thereby, Allāh writes His acceptance for him till the Day of Resurrection. Similarly, a servant might utter something that displeases Allāh, having no idea it could reach where it reaches—thereby, Allāh writes His displeasure for him till the Day or Resurrection.”<sup>26</sup>

## [8.6: The Servant between Planning and Doing]

It is clear by what has preceded that the ḥadīths that differentiate between a much inclined and an acting persons—as well as other similar texts—all refer to inclination that is not on the level of certain will that necessitates action. It occurs in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs, in the ḥadīth narrated by Abū Rajāʾ al-ʿUtāridī from Ibn ʿAbbās (*radīy Allāh ʿanhumā*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) related from his Lord, the Holy and Exalted: “Allāh wrote the good and the bad deeds and then clarified

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<sup>25</sup> Tirmidhī, vol.4, p.134.

<sup>26</sup> Bukhārī, vol.11, p308 and Tirmidhī, vol.3, p.383.



the matter: for him who is much inclined towards doing a good deed but does not do it, Allāh writes a complete good deed with Him. If he is inclined towards it and does it as well, Allāh writes it as ten good deeds with Him. Similarly, for him who is much inclined towards a bad deed but does not do it, Allāh writes a complete good deed, and if he is inclined towards it and also does it, Allāh writes it with Him as a single bad deed for him.”<sup>27</sup> Another similar narration occurs in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs as well, namely the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*).

What is categorized here are the states of a man who is able to act, which is why He said: “*and does it*” and “*but does not do it.*” This said, whoever is able to act but does not act, his will is not certain. This because logic dictates that action must occur when certain will and ability to act are combined, as explained earlier. This is enough to bring about action and in fact necessitates it. Were it otherwise, certain will and ability would not suffice, but it is common knowledge and an observed fact that they do suffice.

That being said, there is no doubt that inclination, resolve, will, and other such states are sometimes certain and thus always lead to action if one is able to act and other times not. With the latter, a distinction must be made between a person who wants to do and a person who does. In fact, a distinction is even made between a will and another, for will is an action of the heart and the heart is the king of the body. Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*) says: “The heart is a king and the limbs are its army. If the king is good, so is the army, and if the king is bad, so is the army.” This is further clarified by what occurs in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs in the ḥadīth of al-Nu‘mān Ibn Bashīr (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*) who narrates that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “In the body, there is a piece of flesh; if it is good, the rest of the body is good for it, but

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<sup>27</sup> Bukhārī, vol.11, p323 and Muslim, vol.1, p.118.

if it is bad, the rest of the body is bad for it. Indeed, it is the heart.”<sup>28</sup>

Therefore, if a person plans to do something good but does not do it, he has already done a good deed, which is the planning. It is written for him as a complete good deed because the planning itself is a form of obedience and goodness. It is also commonly understood as such by most people:

I thank you for the good you planned to do  
For your planning to do good was goodness itself  
And I blame you not if it is not destined  
As things are averted by what is ordained

If he does do it, Allāh writes it for him as ten good deeds because of the aforementioned mercy of rewarding a single good deed tenfold or even seven hundredfold. Allāh, Most High, says:

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ  
أَنْبَتَتْ سَبْعَ سَنَابِلٍ فِي كُلِّ سُنْبُلَةٍ مِائَةٌ حَبَّةٌ

“The example of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allāh is like a seed [of grain] which grows seven spikes; in each spike is a hundred grains.”

[*al-Baqarah* (2): 261]

It occurs in a sound ḥadīth that the Prophet (ﷺ) said to a person who brought a she-camel: “You shall have for it on the Day of Resurrection seven hundred haltered she-camels.”<sup>29</sup> This, too, can be multiplied greatly, and it has been narrated directly from Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*): “Indeed, one is given thousands and

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<sup>28</sup> Hadīth Reference already mentioned.

<sup>29</sup> Muslim, vol.3, p.1505.

thousands of good deeds for it.”<sup>30</sup>

As for those who plan to do something wrong but end up not doing it, Allāh does not write it against them, as said by the Prophet in the sound ḥadīth. It makes no difference whether one calls this will or resolve or not; if one is able and determined to act but then refrains, his will is not certain. This is in agreement with the Prophet’s (ﷺ) words in a sound ḥadīth, namely the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*) which says: “Allāh has overlooked for my nation that which their souls tell them as long as they do not speak or act by it.”<sup>31</sup>

If a person is fully able to say or do something and plans it but then does nothing after all, his will to act on his inclination was not certain. These are things that Allāh does not write against the servant, as testified by the words: “He who plans to do an evil deed and then does not do it.”<sup>32</sup> Scholars like Ibn ‘Abdu’l Barr who reported a scholarly consensus on this matter (which has been derived from the aforementioned ḥadīth) are correct.

Regarding a person who plans to sin: if he refrains, he does so either because he fears Allāh or due to some other reason. If he refrains because of the former, Allāh writes it for him as a complete good deed, as clearly stated in the ḥadīth. It also occurs in another ḥadīth: “Write it as a good deed for him, for he only left it for My sake.”<sup>33</sup> If he refrains due to some other reason, no evil deed is written against

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<sup>30</sup> Ibn Kathīr in his *Tafsīr*, vol.1, p.299.

<sup>31</sup> Reference already mentioned

<sup>32</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> Bukhārī, vol.13, p.465.

him as occurs in the ḥadīth: “If he does not do it, it is not written against him.”<sup>34</sup> All the ḥadīths on the matter thus complement each other.

Then, if he does indeed go ahead and commits the sin, Allāh writes it as a single evil deed, for Allāh does not multiply sins without the sinner actually committing them multiple times. He only takes a servant into account in the afterlife for what he actually did, and Hell is only filled with humans and jinns who follow Iblīs. Allāh, Most High, says:

لَأَمْلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ مِنْكَ وَمِمَّن تَبِعَكَ مِنْهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾

“[That] I will surely fill Hell with you and those of them that follow you all together..”

[Ṣad (38): 85]

It occurs in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs in the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah and Anas (*radīy Allāh ‘anhumā*): “There shall remain space in Paradise, so Allāh creates people for it in the Afterlife. As for the Fire, its parts will draw together till He places His foot on it and it is filled with the followers of *Iblīs*.”<sup>35</sup>

For this reason, the affirmed view of upright Imāms like Aḥmad is that one should refrain from saying anything certain about the destiny of children whose parents were polytheists—one cannot be certain that a specific child is in Paradise or Hell and should instead say what the Prophet (ﷺ) said in the two sound ḥadīths of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*) and Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāh ‘anhumā*): “Allāh knows best what they would have done.”<sup>36</sup> The ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah

<sup>34</sup> Muslim, vol.1, p.118.

<sup>35</sup> Bukhārī, vol.13, p.368 and Muslim, vol.4, pp.2186-2187.

<sup>36</sup> Bukhārī, vol.3, p.245 and Muslim, vol.4, pp.2048-2049.

(*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*) can be found in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs and the ḥadīth of Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāh ‘anhumā*) is in Bukhārī.

Samura Ibn Jundub (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*) narrates in a ḥadīth related by Bukhārī: “Some of them shall enter the Fire,”<sup>37</sup> while a sound ḥadīth also states that: “Some of the will enter Paradise.”<sup>38</sup> The same is indicated by the story found in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim where Khidr slays a boy. All of this affirms the wording of the various narrations which indicate that these children will be tested on the Day of Resurrection and they appear as Allāh knows them to really be, after which He rewards them for their obedience and sins. This is what al-Ash‘arī relates from *Ahl al-Sunnah* and ḥadīth and also what he himself deemed correct.

As for the leaders of misguidance and their ilk who all get the sins of those whom they lead astray, we have explained that the reason behind their punishment is their certain will and ability to act. The Prophet (ﷺ) said in the ḥadīth of Abū Kabshah (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*): “They are equal in sin,”<sup>39</sup> and: “He who calls to misguidance gets the reward of his followers.”<sup>40</sup> Because of their certain will and ability to act, it is as if they do the actions of their followers themselves. As for he who plans and is able to do an evil deed but then refrains, such a person does not really have certain will to act. If he does commit the sin, it is only written as a single evil deed, as testified by the clear text.

We now understand the stance of the Imāms reflected in the words

<sup>37</sup> Bukhārī, vol.12, pp.438-439.

<sup>38</sup> Muslim, vol.4, p.2050.

<sup>39</sup> Reference already mentioned

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid*

of Imām Aḥmad: ‘Inclination (*hamm*) is of two types: inclination of suggestive ideas (*khatarāt*) and inclination of persistence (*isrār*). Inclinations of suggestive ideas occur to an able person, but a person whose inclination is definitely persistent will inevitably act.’

The first type of inclination is what Yūsuf (*‘alayhis-salām*) had; Allāh, Most High, says:

وَلَقَدْ هَمَّتْ بِدُورٍ وَهَمَّ بِهَا لَوْلَا أَنْ رَأَىٰ بُرْهَانَ رَبِّهِ ۗ

“and he would have inclined to her had he not seen the proof [i.e., sign] of his Lord.”

[*Yūsuf* (12): 24]

As for the inclination of the woman who attempted to seduce him, it is said that it was the inclination of persistence because she did everything she could to achieve her goal. Similarly, Allāh says about the hypocrites:

وَهُمْ أَيْمَانًا أَتَيْنَا لَوْ

“and planned that which they were not to attain..”

[*al-Tawbah* (9): 74]

This inclination of theirs is blameworthy, so Allāh rebuked them for it. Such inclinations are bad even if they are not certain, as we will explain in the last part of the answer in the discussion about what contradicts faith and what does not.

Similarly, if one is eager to commit a sin and has certain will to act but is then taken by inability, he is like a person who has committed the sin and gets punished accordingly. This is proven by the ḥadīth of Abū Kabshah (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*) and also another ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth which states: “When two Muslims confront each other with their swords, both the slayer and the slain are in the Fire.” It was then said: “This

is the slayer, but what did the one slain do?” and the Prophet (ﷺ) replied: “He was eager to kill his companion.”<sup>41</sup> Another report says: “He wanted to kill his companion.”<sup>42</sup>

The will mentioned in this ḥadīth is eagerness, which here refers to certain will. This certain will was accompanied by ability to act, which in the man’s case was ability to fight and kill, but he proved unable. This is not the type of evil inclination that is not written against a person.

The same cannot be said of a person who merely says: “If I would have what so and so has, I would do what he does.” This is simply because the punishment for merely expressing one’s longing for major sins is not like the punishment of actually committing them—there must be something else than mere speech. The Prophet (ﷺ) did not say that the person is punished for his words but said that they are equal in sin.

Based on this, his words: “Allāh has overlooked for my nation that which their souls tell them as long as they do not act on it or speak of it”<sup>43</sup> do not contradict the fact that certain will (to sin) which inevitably leads to action is subject to punishment. Certain will is that which always leads to whatever a person is able to do; if one’s will does not lead to this action, it is not certain. For example, if a person wants to commit adultery or theft or is inclined to drink wine and his will is certain, it is inevitable that his will leads him to act to the best of his ability, even if just by taking him a step closer to the sin. Consequently, a thief might move closer to the location of stolen

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<sup>41</sup> Bukhārī, vol.1, p.85.

<sup>42</sup> Muslim, vol.4, p.2214

<sup>43</sup> Bukhārī and Muslim

money, an adulterer might observe, listen, and speak to the object of adultery, and a drinker might order some wine and touch the vessel. If one's will is certain, the first steps of the sin will always be there in some shape or form.

In fact, the first steps can occur even without certain will, as mentioned by the Prophet (ﷺ) in the agreed upon ḥadīth: “The eyes commit adultery—their adultery is looking. The tongue commits adultery—its adultery is talking. The hand commits adultery—its adultery is striking. The leg commits adultery—its adultery is walking. The heart longs and desires, and the private part affirms or denies it.”<sup>44</sup>

It also occurs in the agreed upon ḥadīth of Abū Bakrah (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*): “When two Muslims confront each other with their swords, both the slayer and the slain are in the Fire.” It was then said: “O Messenger of Allāh, this is the slayer, but what did the slain do?” and the Prophet (ﷺ) replied: “He wanted to kill his companion.” Another report states: “He was eager to kill his companion.”<sup>45</sup>

This man wanted this with certain will and did whatever he could to achieve it, but could not act due to inability. He did not merely plan or have resolve to act in the future, so he became deserving of the Fire. As we have said before, if one has certain will and does whatever he can, he is just like a person who has done the deed completely.

We have now mentioned that if one has certain will, he will necessarily do whatever he can to achieve the willed or at least do a part of it. If he does not do what he can, his will is not certain. It may

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<sup>44</sup> Bukhārī, vol.11, p.26 and Muslim, vol.4, p.2047.

<sup>45</sup> Reference already mentioned.



also be that a person had certain will to do what he did but did not have it regarding the actions he could have done but decided not to do. For example, a person may commit the first steps of adultery, like touching and kissing, but refrains from the greatest atrocity. This is why the Prophet (ﷺ) says in the ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*): “The eye commits adultery, the ear commits adultery, and the tongue commits adultery...” until his words: “and the heart longs and desires,”<sup>46</sup> i.e. it longs for intercourse and desires it. Note that he did not say: “(the heart) wants,” as mere desire and longing do not comprise certain will, and as such do not inevitably lead to action. Thus, one is not punished for desiring and longing until he wants with certain will and is able to act. Certain will is what the private part affirms.

A ḥadīth narrated by Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*) in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs states: “A man kissed a woman and then went to the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) and told him what happened. Then Allāh revealed:

وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ طَرَفِي النَّهَارِ وَرُلْفَا مِنْ أَلَيْلٍ إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ  
يُذْهِبْنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ<sup>٤٧</sup>

“And establish prayer at the two ends of the day and at the approach of the night. Indeed, good deeds do away with misdeeds.”

[*Hūd* (11): 114]

The man asked: ‘Is this for me?’ and the Prophet (ﷺ) said: ‘It is for whoever acts upon it from my nation.’<sup>47</sup>

This man and those with similar circumstances must in most cases

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid*

worry about the greater sin, as stated by the Prophet (ﷺ): “The heart longs and desires, and the private part affirms or denies it.”<sup>48</sup> His will to kiss, however, was certain, so due to being accompanied by ability, it resulted in actually kissing. As for his will to have intercourse, it might have been uncertain or it might have been certain but he was unable to act. What seems to be the case with this man whom the *ayah* talks about is that he was able to act but decided not to.

The answer sought here is the distinction of Aḥmad and others between the inclination of suggestive ideas and the inclination of persistence. If nothing but sheer inability prevents one from acting, he will inevitably take some of those first steps towards the sin as best as he can. If he does commit the sin and is determined to commit it again, he is considered persistent. This is what Ibn al-Mubarak was referring to when he said: “A persistent sinner is he who drinks wine today and then stops for a month.” Another report says: “And then stops for thirty years.” This concerns someone who intends to drink again when he can.

A person may also be considered a persistent sinner if he is determined to abstain from sinning at some specific times only. One may, for example, have firm resolve to stop all sinning just for the month of Ramaḍan. Such a person has not repented at all, but is considered a person who has stopped sinning in Ramaḍan. As such, he is rewarded if he decides to abstain from the unlawful during this period for the sake of Allāh and out of reverence for His sacred rites. Such a person is not an absolutely persistent sinner, but is not among the repentant either who are completely forgiven. As for the person described by Ibn al-Mubarak, he is a persistent sinner as long as he intends to drink again.

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<sup>48</sup> *Ibid*

I say: a person who stops sinning in Ramaḍān but intends to sin again after it is also a persistent sinner, but his intention to drink once able is not the same as having an intention to drink while able, as his intention may or may not last all the way to the moment he is able. As for one who has certain will to drink and nothing but sheer inability stops him, he is punished for his will as mentioned previously.

We have said that acting to best of one's ability will necessarily follow the will of such a person, which clarifies what has been reported from al-Hārith al-Muhāsibī: he related a consensus that a person who intends to do something is not like a person who actually does it. This consensus is real regarding the person who is able to act, for a person who intends and is able to do something really is not like another who actually does it. As for a person who intends with certain will and does whatever he can, he is like a person who does the act completely.

What further clarifies this is the fact that in the Qur'ān, Allāh, Exalted and Most High, makes reward and punishment a result or mere will:

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْعَاجِلَةَ عَجَلْنَا لَهُ فِيهَا مَا نَشَاءُ لِمَنْ نُرِيدُ ثُمَّ  
 جَعَلْنَا لَهُ جَهَنَّمَ يَصْلَاهَا مَذْمُومًا مَدْحُورًا ﴿١٨﴾

“Whoever should desire the immediate—We hasten for him from it what We will to whom We intend. Then We have made for him Hell, which he will [enter to] burn, censured and banished.”

[*al-Isrā'* (17): 18]

and

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْحَيَاةَ  
الدُّنْيَا وَزِينَتَهَا نُوَفِّ إِلَيْهِمْ أَعْمَالَهُمْ فِيهَا وَهُمْ فِيهَا لَا يُبْخَسُونَ  
﴿١٥﴾ أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَيْسَ لَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ إِلَّا النَّارُ

“Whoever desires the life of this world and its adornments—We fully repay them for their deeds therein, and they therein will not be deprived. Those are the ones for whom there is not in the Hereafter but the Fire.”

[*Hūd* (11): 15-16]

and

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ حَرْثَ الْآخِرَةِ نَزِدْ لَهُ فِي حَرْثِهِ وَمَنْ  
كَانَ يُرِيدُ حَرْثَ الدُّنْيَا نُؤْتِهِ مِنْهَا وَمَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ  
نَصِيبٍ ﴿٢٠﴾

“Whoever desires the harvest of the Hereafter—We increase for him in his harvest [i.e., reward]. And whoever desires the harvest [i.e., benefits] of this world—We give him thereof, but there is not for him in the Hereafter any share.”

[*al-Shūrā* (42): 20]

Here, He makes reward and punishment a result of wanting the fast gain, the worldly life, and the tilth of this world. Allāh further says in a verse in *Surah Hūd*:

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْحَيَاةَ  
الدُّنْيَا وَزِينَتَهَا نُوَفِّ إِلَيْهِمْ أَعْمَالَهُمْ فِيهَا وَهُمْ فِيهَا لَا يُبْخَسُونَ  
﴿١٥﴾ أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَيْسَ لَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ إِلَّا النَّارُ

“Whoever desires the life of this world and its adornments—We fully repay them for their deeds therein,

and they therein will not be deprived. Those are the ones for whom there is not in the Hereafter but the Fire.”

[*Hūd* (11): 15-16]

This indicates that they had deeds which were then nullified, and that they were punished for other deeds, and that their will and wanting resulted inevitably into action. When He mentioned wanting the afterlife, He said:

وَمَنْ أَرَادَ الْآخِرَةَ وَسَعَىٰ لَهَا سَعْيَهَا وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ

“But whoever desires the Hereafter and exerts the effort due to it while he is a believer.”

[*al-Isrā'* (17): 19]

This is because even though wanting the afterlife necessitates acting for it, the reward is only granted for the commanded actions, not just for any action, and there must be faith.

Allāh also says:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لَأَزُوجِكُ إِن كُنْتُمْ تَرْضَوْنَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا  
وَرِزْقَهَا

“O Prophet, say to your wives, ‘If you should desire the worldly life and its adornment, then come.’”

[*al-Aḥzāb* (33): 28]

and

وَلِئِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَرْضَوْنَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَالْدارَ الْآخِرَةَ

“But if you should desire Allāh and His Messenger and the home of the Hereafter.”

[*al-Aḥzāb* (33): 29]

These *ayabs* are like the previous verse of *Surah Hūd*, and agree with the Prophet's (ﷺ) words: "When two Muslims confront each other with their swords"<sup>49</sup> after which he says: "He wanted to kill his companion"<sup>50</sup> or: "he was eager to kill his companion."<sup>51</sup> As we can see, the Prophet mentioned eagerness and will to kill, which inevitably lead to action. This is not related to the ḥadīth of overlooking which says: "Allāh has overlooked for my nation that which their souls tell them."<sup>52</sup>

What stems from this issue is well-known to *Abl al-Sunnab*, most of the scholars in general, and some Qadarites. That is the issue of the repentance of those who were unable to act (i.e. commit the sin). This includes such cases of inability as repentance from fornication by a person whose genitals have been cut off, and repentance from theft by one whose hands have been cut off. The majority of the scholars of *Abl al-Sunnab* and other groups hold that their repentance is valid, while some Qadarites assume otherwise on the basis that if one is unable to act, he cannot be rewarded for abstaining from acting, and is instead punished for it.

The latter opinion is wrong; the unable person is rewarded and punished according to his will, for, as we have explained, if one has certain will and ability to act, he is like a person who has done the action completely. Therefore, if this unable person does whatever he can with his words and deeds to stay away from things that lead to sin and abandons them completely in his heart, he and the repentant

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<sup>49</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid*

who is able to act are the same. The repentance of those who are unable to fully commit the sin is like the persistence of those who are unable to commit it.

Also among the issues that stem from this is the well-known issue of divorce: if a person divorces his wife within himself with resolve but does not actually utter anything, his divorce is not effective according to the majority of the scholars, though Mālik and Aḥmad—in one of the two reports from him—said otherwise. Aḥmad and other Imāms based the invalidity of such a divorce on the Prophet’s (ﷺ) words: “Allāh has overlooked for my nation that which their souls tell them.”<sup>53</sup>

The contenders say: “What is overlooked is the self-talk, but being resolute within oneself is not this type of self-talk.”

Their contenders then reply: “He said: ‘As long as they do not speak or act by it,’<sup>54</sup> thereby informing us that the overlooking of the self-talk within oneself extends to the point where speech or action takes place. This was mentioned in the beginning of the question as the logic of some people, and it really is good logic. Indeed, if a person with resolute self-talk that does not involve speech or action would be held responsible, it would contradict the clear text.

What is said here is that the ḥadīth concerns the commanded person who is able to speak or act but does neither. As for a person who has certain will and acts to the best of his ability, he is treated like someone who had certain will and did the deed completely. This is proven by the fact that if a mute person—and this also applies to

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<sup>53</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid*

those who cannot use their hands or other limbs—does whatever he can by making signs and pointing, his signs (and thereby also the rules related to him and his reward, punishment, and other matters) are treated like the speech of a normal person.

Regarding the second angle of the argument, namely the notion that resolve (*ʿazm*) and inclination (*hamm*) in all their forms come under this overlooked self-talk, this is not true. Saying that certain will necessitates the occurrence of action that leads to reward, punishment, or something else is the correct view, for if both ability and certain will to bring about an action exist, that action will inevitably occur. If full ability does not exist, the first steps of the desired action must occur in one way or another. If no action whatsoever occurs, we are talking about inclination and planning (*hamm*).

Self-talk (*ḥadīth al-nafs*) is not certain will, which is why the texts do not say that such actions of the heart as will (*irāda*), love (*ḥubb*), hate (*bugḥd*), jealousy (*ḥasad*), arrogance (*kibr*), self-amazement (*ʿujb*) are overlooked. The people who have committed these actions (of the heart) were rebuked and punished because they were complete and true characteristics that turned into speech and action.

This said, the Prophet's (ﷺ) words: “Allāh has overlooked for my nation”<sup>55</sup> are of course true, and it is a fact that people are held responsible for their certain wills which inevitably lead to bodily action.

A group of people, however, have said that certain will does not always lead to action or speech. After this, they debated whether a person who has certain will but does not act is punished or not: al-Qāḍī Abū Bakr and others who agreed with him—like Abū Ḥāmid and Abū'l-Faraj Ibn al-Jawzī—held that he is punished, but they

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<sup>55</sup> *Ibid*



really have no proof that a person is held responsible if he says or does nothing.

Al-Qādī based this on his foundation of faith in which he followed Jahm and al-Ṣāliḥī, and which is also the known opinion of Abū'l-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī. They held that faith is mere affirmation of the heart, even if one should disbelieve with his tongue and slander Allāh and His Messenger. The reason behind this is that slandering Allāh and His Messenger is only apparent unbelief but is a clear sign that his affirmation in the heart cannot be true in any way.

This foundation is wrong, as evidenced by both the Shari'ah and the intellect, and Imāms like Wakī' Ibn al-Jarrāḥ, Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal, and Abū 'Ubaydah even declared those who viewed faith in this way as unbelievers. The same does not go for the Murji'ah who said that faith is the affirmation of both the heart and the tongue, for even though they were considered innovators, none of the Imāms declared them apostates. Faith and related topics have been discussed in detail elsewhere, and it is clear that some people believe in the existence of things while there is nothing to bring them into being, assuming thereby things that do not exist.

### [8.7: How Jahm Erred Regarding Faith (*Īmān*)]

The foundation of faith as held by Jahm was wrong from a number of angles:

1. He thought that it is mere affirmation and awareness of the heart and does not include the actions of the heart like loving and fearing Allāh.
2. He thought that faith can reside in one's heart without any utterances and actions.

3. He thought that those whom the Shari‘ah has declared as unbelievers and eternal residents of the Fire cannot have any kind of affirmation in their hearts. This led them to believe that Iblīs, Fir‘awn, the ancient Jews, and others like them did not have any type of affirmation in their hearts.

This is what they say about characteristics like will, abhorrence, love, and hate. If these are nothing but inclinations (*hamm*) and self-talk (*ḥadīth al-nafs*), they are not recorded, but if they become certain will and love and hate, action must occur. This means that no one can assume that they just occur from nothing. Then they say: it is not sinful, and thereby the answer to the questioner’s argument is clear.

### [8.8: How Loving Allāh and His Messenger is Connected to Will]

The Muslim nation agrees that Allāh rewards his servants for loving Him and His Messenger and for loving and hating for His sake; He punishes the servants for hating Him and His Messenger and for hating His believing servants [the guided], and for loving the false idols instead of Him. With regard to the wills and resolutions that accompany this love, whether we say that one’s love is a type of will or another type that leads to will, it is always accompanied by will and resolve. Thus it is not said that it is a form of the self-talk that is overlooked.

In fact, it occurs in a ḥadīth related by Tirmidhī: “The firmest handhold of faith is love for Allāh and hate for Allāh.”<sup>56</sup> Anas (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*) narrates in another ḥadīth related in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs that the

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<sup>56</sup> Ṭabarānī vol.11, p.215 and it was not found in Tirmidhī.

Prophet (ﷺ) said: “By He in whose hand rests my soul, none of you believes until he loves Me more than his children, parents, and the entire mankind.”<sup>57</sup> It also occurs in Bukhārī that ‘Abdullāh Ibn Hisham (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*) says: “We were with the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) when he had taken ‘Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb by the hand. ‘Umar (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*) said: ‘Surely, you, O Messenger of Allāh, are more beloved to me than anything except my own self.’ Thereupon, the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “No, by He in whose hand rests my soul, not until I am more beloved to you than your own self.” ‘Umar (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*) then said: “Truly, you are now more beloved to me than my own self!” The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Now, O ‘Umar!”<sup>58</sup> In fact, Allāh, Most High, says:

قُلْ إِنَّ  
 كَانَ آبَاؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَاؤُكُمْ وَإِخْوَانُكُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُكُمْ وَعَشِيرَتُكُمْ  
 وَأَمْوَالٌ أُقْتَرَفَتْ مِنْهَا وَتِجَارَةٌ تَخْشَوْنَ كَسَادَهَا وَمَسَاكِنُ  
 تَرْضَوْنَهَا أَحَبَّ إِلَيْكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَجِهَادٍ  
 فِي سَبِيلِهِ فَتَرْتَبِصُوا حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِأَمْرٍ وَأَلَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي  
 الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾

“Say, [O Muḥammad], ‘If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your relatives, wealth which you have obtained, commerce wherein you fear decline, and dwellings with which you are pleased are more beloved to you than Allāh and His Messenger and *jihād* [i.e., striving] in His cause, then wait until Allāh executes His command. And Allāh does not guide the defiantly disobedient people.”

[*al-Tawbah* (9): 24]

<sup>57</sup> Reference already mentioned

<sup>58</sup> Bukhārī, vol.11, p.523.

Just look at this warning from Allāh for those who love their families and wealth more than Allāh and His Messenger and strive in His path. It is hereby known that a believer must love Allāh and His Messenger and strive in his path more than his family, wealth, house, business, companions, and brothers. If he does not, he is not a true believer. Similar to this is the ḥadīth related in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs on the authority of Anas (*radīy Allāb ‘anhu*): “The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: ‘No one finds the sweetness of faith until he loves another purely for Allāh’s sake, until he would rather be thrown into flames than return to unbelief, and until Allāh and His Messenger are more beloved to him than anything else.’”<sup>59</sup> This is the wording of Bukhārī. In this ḥadīth, the Prophet (ﷺ) tells us that no one will taste the sweetness of faith without these three loves:

- *The first:* He loves Allāh and His Messenger more than anything else. This is one of the fundamental aspects of faith without which one cannot be a believer.
- *The second:* He loves another person purely for Allāh’s sake. This is a necessary consequence of the first.
- *The third:* He loves being thrown in flames more than going back to unbelief.

Likewise, in the case of a person who repents from his sins, one of the strongest signs that his repentance is sincere is the existence of the traits of loving Allāh and His Messenger and loving the believers for His sake. Even though they are not connected to our actions as such like the connection of one’s will is, they do necessitate action; if one loves Allāh and His Messenger more than himself, his family, and his wealth, he will inevitably want to do what this love requires, like supporting Allāh and His Messenger and the religion, bringing others closer to Allāh and His Messenger, and showing hatred towards their enemies.

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<sup>59</sup> Reference already mentioned

Related to this is the famous ḥadīth of Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*), Abū Mūsā (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*), and Anas (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*) narrated in the sound collections where the Prophet (ﷺ) says: “A man is with those whom he loves.” Another report says: “A man may love a people whom he has not yet joined,” meaning: whose deeds he has not yet done. Regarding his words: “A man is with those whom he loves,”<sup>60</sup> Anas (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*) said: “After Islām, the Muslims had not rejoiced at anything like they rejoiced at this ḥadīth. I love the Prophet and I love Abū Bakr and ‘Umar and hope that Allāh joins me with them in spite of the fact that I have not done what they have.” This ḥadīth is correct, for the fact that a lover is with the beloved is something natural and it cannot be otherwise. He is with him because of his love for him; if it is average love or close to that, he is with the beloved to that extent, and if the love is complete, he is with the beloved completely. This being said, complete love necessitates doing what the beloved loves doing as long as one is able. If this action is lacking, the lover’s love, even though still present, is deficient to the same extent.

Loving and wanting something necessitates hating its opposite as long as one knows that the two things are indeed opposites. Allāh, Most High, says:

لَا تَجِدُ قَوْمًا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ يُوَادُّونَ مَنْ  
كَادَ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ.

“You will not find a people who believe in God and the Last Day having affection for those who oppose God and His Messenger.”

[*al-Mujādilah* (58): 22]

Having affection is an action of the heart. Having faith in Allāh

<sup>60</sup> Bukhārī, vol.10, p.557 and Muslim, vol.4, p.2034.

necessitates loving Him and His Messenger and that cannot exist together with affection for those who oppose them.

Everything that contradicts faith necessitates resolve and punishment because of the absence of faith. All the things that contradict faith like doubt, abandonment, apostasy of the heart, and hating Allāh and His Messenger lead to blame and punishment because they entail not abiding by a command of Allāh and His Messenger, and whoever does not abide by them deserves to be rebuked and punished.

The greatest of all obligations is the heart's faith, so the necessary consequence of anything that contradicts it is blame and punishment as it entails neglecting this obligation (unlike the actions that necessitate blame due to being unlawful, like acts of wickedness and oppression, as it is those actions where the discussion about inclination and planning is relevant, as long as they do not contradict the very foundations of faith and only affect the completeness of faith as usual). In fact, acts of obedience, too, entail abstaining from sins and abstaining from sins entails obedience. This is why prayer prevents one from wickedness and wrongdoing, as it consists of two things: the quality of preventing one from sinning and remembrance of Allāh, which is the greater of the two. This has been elaborated on elsewhere.

The point here is that complete love for Allāh and His Messenger necessitates the existence of what is beloved to Him. It occurs in a ḥadīth in Tirmidhī: "He who loves for Allāh and hates for Allāh and gives for Allāh and withholds for Allāh has completed his faith."<sup>61</sup> This is because when one's love and hate, which are actions of the heart, and giving and withholding, which are actions of the limbs,

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<sup>61</sup> Reference already mentioned

are all for Allāh, it indicates that his love for Allāh is complete, which in turn indicates that his faith is complete.

This is because complete faith means dedicating one's religion completely to Allāh which equals worshiping only Him and joining no partners with Him. This worship in entails complete love and humility, and love is the source of all willed actions. All living beings love and hate; if one loves those whom Allāh loves and hates whom He hates, the faith in his heart is true. This faith, however, can be strong and it can be weak depending on the resistance of one's whims which manifest themselves in spending, which is the very matter of the soul. If one's love, giving, and withholding are all for Allāh, it means that his faith is complete both inwardly and outwardly.

The root of the polytheism (*shirk*) of the pagans who divided their religion and became groups was their taking of (other than Allāh) as equals and loving them like they loved Allāh:

وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ

“And [yet], among the people are those who take other than Allāh as equals [to Him]”

[*al-Baqarah* (2): 165]

If one's love and hate are for Allāh, he only loves and hates for Allāh and gives and withholds for Allāh. This is the state of the forerunning servant of Allāh, as related by Bukhārī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* in the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāh 'anhu*) where the Prophet (ﷺ) says: “Allāh says: ‘Whoever shows enmity towards a friend of mine, I have declared war against him. My servant does not draw near to Me with anything more beloved to me than what I have made obligatory on him. And my servant continues to draw near to Me with voluntary actions until I love him. When I love him, I

am the hearing with which he hears, the sight with which he sees, the hand with which he strikes, and the legs with which he walks. When I love him I am his hearing with which he hears, his seeing with which he sees, his hand with which he strikes and his foot with which he walks. If he ask [something] of Me, I shall surely give it to him, and were he to ask Me for refuge, I shall grant him refuge. I do not hesitate regarding anything as much as hesitate taking the soul of my believing servant; he hates death and I hate hurting him, but he has to go through it.”<sup>62</sup>

These people whose love for Allāh was complete drew near to Him through the voluntary actions that are beloved to Him after first drawing near to Him through the obligatory ones. Consequently, Allāh’s love for them too was complete and they reach the levels they reached and perceived by Allāh and moved by Allāh, and Allāh granted them their requests and protected them from whatever they sought protection from.

In His Book, Allāh rebukes those who love the allegedly equal idols:

وَأَشْرَبُوا فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْعِجْلَ بِكُفْرِهِمْ

“And their hearts absorbed [the worship of] the calf because of their disbelief.”

[*al-Baqarah* (2): 93]

He also rebukes those who make their own whims their gods by deifying their objects of desire and love, which may be purely an action of the heart (*fi’l al-qalb*).

There are numerous places in the Book of Allāh where he has either

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<sup>62</sup> *Ibid*



praised or blamed certain actions of the heart like love (*mahabba*), will (*irāda*), hate (*bughd*), displeasure (*sakht*), joy (*farḥ*), and sadness (*ghamm*). Allāh says:

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ

“But those who believe are stronger in love for Allāh.”

[*al-Baqarah* (2): 165]

And

كَلَّا بَلْ تُحِبُّونَ الْعَاجِلَةَ ﴿٢٠﴾ وَتَذُرُونَ الْآخِرَةَ ﴿٢١﴾

“No! But you [i.e., mankind] love the immediate...”

[*al-Qiyamah* (75): 20]

and

يُحِبُّونَ الْعَاجِلَةَ وَتَذُرُونَ وَرَاءَهُمْ يَوْمًا ثَقِيلًا ﴿٢٧﴾

“Indeed, these [disbelievers] love the immediate and leave behind them a grave Day.”

[*al-Insān* (76): 27]

and

إِنْ تَمَسَّكُمْ حَسَنَةٌ تَسُؤْهُمْ وَإِنْ تُصِبْكُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ يَفْرَحُوا بِهَا

“If good touches you, it distresses them; but if harm strikes you, they rejoice at it.”

[*Āl-Imrān* (3) 120]

and

وَإِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ اشْمَأَزَّتْ  
قُلُوبُ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ وَإِذَا ذُكِرَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ  
دُونِهِ إِذَا هُمْ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

“And when Allāh is mentioned alone, the hearts of those who do not believe in the Hereafter shrink with aversion, but when those [worshipped] other than Him are mentioned, immediately they rejoice.”

[*al-Zumar* (39): 45]

and

وَإِذَا تُلِيَ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُنَا بَيِّنَاتٍ تَعْرِفُ فِي  
وُجُوهِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الْمُنْكَرَ يَكَادُونَ يَسْطُونَ  
بِالَّذِينَ يَتْلُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِنَا

“And when Our verses are recited to them as clear evidences, you will recognize in the faces of those who disbelieve [their] disapproval. They are almost on the verge of assaulting those who recite to them Our verses.”

[*al-Hajj* (22): 72]

and

وَدَكَّ كَثِيرٌ مِنْ أَهْلِ  
الْكِتَابِ لَوْ يَرُدُّونَكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ إِيمَانِكُمْ كُفَّارًا حَسَدًا  
مِنْ عِنْدِ أَنْفُسِهِمْ

“Many of the People of the Scripture wish they could turn you back to disbelief after you have believed, out of envy from themselves.”

[*al-Baqarah* (2): 109]

and

مَا يَوَدُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ وَلَا الْمُشْرِكِينَ  
 أَنْ يُنَزَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ

“Neither those who disbelieve from the People of the Scripture [i.e., the Jews and Christians] nor the polytheists wish that any good should be sent down to you from your Lord.”

[*al-Baqarah* (2): 105]

and

وَوَدُّونَ أَنْ غَيْرَ ذَاتِ الشَّوْكَةِ تَكُونُ لَكُمْ

“and you wished that the unarmed one would be yours.”

[*al-Anfal* (8): 7]

and

وَمَا مَنَعَهُمْ أَنْ تُقْبَلَ مِنْهُمْ نَفَقَتُهُمْ  
 إِلَّا أَنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَلَا يَأْتُونَ الصَّلَاةَ  
 إِلَّا وَهُمْ كُسَالَى وَلَا يُنْفِقُونَ إِلَّا وَهُمْ كَارِهِونَ ﴿٥٤﴾

“And what prevents their expenditures from being accepted from them but that they have disbelieved in Allāh and in His Messenger and that they come not to prayer except while they are lazy and that they do not spend except while they are unwilling.”

[*al-Tawbah* (9): 54]

and

ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَرِهُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأَحْبَطَ أَعْمَالَهُمْ ﴿٩﴾

“That is because they disliked what Allāh revealed, so He rendered worthless their deeds.”

[*Muhammad* (47): 9]

and

فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا فَرَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَهُمْ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ

“As for those who believed, it has increased them in faith, while they are rejoicing.”

[*al-Tawbah* (9): 124]

and

وَالَّذِينَ ءَاتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَفْرَحُونَ  
بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمِنَ الْأَحْزَابِ مَنْ يُنْكِرُ بَعْضَهُ

“And [the believers among] those to whom We have given the [previous] Scripture rejoice at what has been revealed to you, [O Muḥammad], but among the [opposing] factions are those who deny part of it [i.e., the Qur’ān].”

[*al-Ra’d* (13): 36]

and

قُلْ بِفَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَبِرَحْمَتِهِ فَبِذَلِكَ فَلْيَفْرَحُوا هُوَ خَيْرٌ مِمَّا  
يَجْمَعُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾

“Say, ‘In the bounty of Allāh and in His mercy—in that let them rejoice; it is better than what they accumulate.’”

[*Yūnus* (10): 58]

and

إِذْ قَالَ لَهُ قَوْمُهُ لَا تَفْرَحْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفَرِحِينَ

“Thereupon his people said to him, ‘Do not exult. Indeed, Allāh does not like the exultant.’”

[*al-Qaṣaṣ* (28): 76]

and

ذَلِكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَفْرَحُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ وَبِمَا كُنْتُمْ  
تَمْرَحُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾

“[The angels will say], “That was because you used to exult upon the earth without right and you used to behave insolently.”

[*al-Ghāfir* (40): 75]

and

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ ﴿١٨﴾

“Indeed, Allāh does not like everyone self-deluded and boastful.”

[*Luqmān* (31): 18]

and

وَإِنَّا إِذَا أَذَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنَّا رَحْمَةً فَفَرِحَ بِهَا

“And indeed, when We let man taste mercy from Us, he rejoices in it.”

[*al-Shūrā* (42): 48]

and

وَلَئِن أَذَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنَّا رَحْمَةً ثُمَّ نَزَعْنَا مِنْهُ إِتْنَهُ لَيْتُوسٌ كَفُورٌ ﴿١﴾  
وَلَئِن أَذَقْنَاهُ نِعْمَاءَ بَعْدَ ضَرْآءٍ مَسَّتَهُ لَيَقُولَنَّ ذَهَبَ السَّيِّئَاتُ عَنِّي إِنَّهُ لَفَرِحٌ فَخُورٌ ﴿١٠﴾  
إِلَّا الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ

“And if We give man a taste of mercy from Us and then We withdraw it from him, indeed, he is despairing and ungrateful. But if We give him a taste of favour after hardship has touched him, he will surely say, ‘Bad times

have left me.’ Indeed, he is exultant and boastful. Except for those who are patient and do righteous deeds; those will have forgiveness and great reward.”

[*Hūd* (11): 9-11]

and

وَتُحِبُّونَ الْمَالَ حُبًّا جَمًّا ﴿٢٠﴾

“And you love wealth with immense love.”

[*al-Fajr* (89): 20]

and

إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ  
لِرَبِّهِ لَكَنُودٌ ﴿٦﴾ وَإِنَّهُ عَلَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ لَشَهِيدٌ ﴿٧﴾ وَإِنَّهُ لِحُبِّ  
الْخَيْرِ لَشَدِيدٌ ﴿٨﴾

“Indeed mankind, to his Lord, is ungrateful. And indeed, he is to that a witness. And indeed he is, in love of wealth, intensely.”

[*al-‘Ādiyāt* (100): 6-8]

and

لَا يَأْتِيَنَّكَ مِنْ رَوْحِ اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْكَافِرُونَ

“and despair not of relief from Allāh. Indeed, no one despairs of relief from Allāh except the disbelieving people.”

[*Yūsuf* (12): 87]

and

وَمَنْ يَقْنَطُ مِنْ رَحْمَةِ رَبِّهِ إِلَّا الضَّالُّونَ ﴿٥٦﴾

“And who despairs of the mercy of his Lord except for those astray?”

[*al-Hijr* (15): 56]

### [8.9: The Actions of the Heart]

Allāh says:

وَذَلِكُمْ ظَنُّكُمُ الَّذِي ظَنَنْتُمْ بِرَبِّكُمْ أَرَدْتُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ  
مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ﴿٤٣﴾

“And that was your assumption which you assumed about your Lord. It has brought you to ruin, and you have become among the losers.”

[*al-Fussilat* (41): 23]

and

بَلْ ظَنَنْتُمْ أَنْ لَنْ يَنْقَلِبَ الرَّسُولُ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِلَى  
أَهْلِيهِمْ أَبَدًا وَأَوْرَثِينَ ذَلِكَ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ وَظَنَنْتُمْ ظَنًّا سَوْئًا  
وَكُنْتُمْ قَوْمًا بُورًا ﴿١٢﴾

“But you thought that the Messenger and the believers would never return to their families, ever, and that was made pleasing in your hearts. And you assumed an assumption of evil and became a people ruined.”

[*al-Fath* (48): 12]

and

أَمْ يَحْسَدُونَ النَّاسَ عَلَى مَاءِ آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ ۗ

“Or do they envy people for what Allāh has given them of His bounty?”

[*al-Nisā'* (4): 54]

and

وَمِنْ شَرِّ حَاسِدٍ إِذَا حَسَدَ ﴿٥﴾

“And from the evil of an envier when he envies.”

[*al-Falaq* (113): 5]

and

وَلَا يَجِدُونَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ حَاجَةً  
مِمَّا أُوتُوا وَيُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ

“and find not any want in their breasts of what they [i.e., the emigrants] were given but give [them] preference over themselves”

[*al-Hashr* (2): 9]

and

يَتَأَيَّبُوا عَلَىٰ الَّذِينَ  
آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا عِبَادَانَهُ مِن دُونِكُمْ لَا يَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ خِبْرًا لَّا  
وَدُّوهُمَا وَعَمَّيْنَتْ قَدَبَاتِ الْعَصَاةِ مَنَافِقِهِمْ وَمَا تَخْفَىٰ  
صُدُورُهُمْ أَكْبَرُ قَدْبَيْنَا لَكُمْ الْآيَاتِ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١١٨﴾  
هَآئِنْتُمْ أَوْلَىٰ لَهُمْ لِأَنَّكُمْ تَتَّبِعُونَ

“O you who have believed, do not take as intimates those other than yourselves [i.e., believers], for they will not spare you [any] ruin. They wish you would have hardship. Hatred has already appeared from their mouths, and what their breasts conceal is greater. We have certainly made clear to you the signs, if you will use reason. Here you are loving them but they are not loving you.”

[*Al-Imrān* (3) 118-119]

and



إِن

يَسْأَلْكُمْ هَا فِي حَفَنِكُمْ تَبَحَلُوا وَتُخْرِجَ أَضْفَانَكُمْ ﴿٣٧﴾

“If He should ask you for them and press you, you would withhold, and He would expose your hatred [i.e., unwillingness].”

[*Muḥammad* (2): 37]

and

إِذَا بُعْثِرَ مَا فِي الْقُبُورِ ﴿٩﴾ وَحُصِّلَ مَا فِي الصُّدُورِ ﴿١٠﴾

“But does he not know that when the contents of the graves are Scattered. And that within the breasts is obtained.”

[*al-ʿAdiyāt* (100): 9-10]

and

فَيَطْمَعَ الَّذِي فِي قَلْبِهِ مَرَضٌ

“lest he in whose heart is disease should yearn.”

[*al-Aḥzāb* (33): 32]

and

وَإِذْ يَقُولُ الْمُنَافِقُونَ وَالَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ

“And [remember] when the hypocrites and those in whose hearts is disease”

[*al-Aḥzāb* (33): 12]

And

أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ أَمَرِ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُطَهَّرَ قُلُوبَهُمْ هُمْ

“Those are the ones for whom Allāh does not intend to purify their hearts.”

[*al-Mā'idah* (5): 41]

And

فَدَجَاءَتْكُمْ مَوْعِظَةٌ  
مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَشِفَاءٌ لِّمَا فِي الصُّدُورِ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ

“O mankind, there has come to you instruction from your Lord and healing for what is in the breasts and guidance and mercy for the believers.”

[*Yūnus* (2): 57]

There are many texts like this in the Book of Allāh and the Sunnah of His Messenger (ﷺ), and the believers are in agreement about it; a person is either praised or rebuked for the actions of the heart that Allāh has willed for him. The Prophet (ﷺ) says in an agreed upon ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth: “Do not hate each other and do not be jealous of each other.”<sup>63</sup> He (ﷺ) also says: “None of you has believed until he loves for his brother the good that he loves for himself.”<sup>64</sup>

And he (ﷺ) says: “The likeness of the believers in their mutual love, mercy, and affection is that of the body: when one limb of it complains, the rest of the body reacts with fever and sleeplessness.”<sup>65</sup> And He (ﷺ) says: “He will not enter Paradise who has even a small ant’s weight of arrogance in his heart.”<sup>66</sup>

And He (ﷺ) also says: “He will not enter the Fire who has even

<sup>63</sup> Bukhārī, vol.10, p.481 and Muslim, vol.4, p1983.

<sup>64</sup> Bukhārī, vol.1, p.57 and Muslim.

<sup>65</sup> Bukhārī, vol.10, p.487 and Muslim, vol.4, pp.1999-2000.

<sup>66</sup> Muslim, vol.1, p.93 and Tirmidhī, vol.3, p.244.

<sup>67</sup> Reference already mentioned.

<sup>68</sup> Bukhārī, vol.10, p.566 and Muslim, vol.4, p.1763.

a small ant's weights of faith."<sup>67</sup> And "Do not call the grape-vine karm (the Arabic word for grapes, derived from karam, which means nobility and generosity), for it is only the heart of a believer that is karm."<sup>68</sup> There are many texts like this.

In fact, the statements and actions of the heart—like belief and rejection and love and hate—are the true foundation. Some of them lead to praise and rebuke and reward and punishment with no bodily action while others only lead to them through the limbs when one is able to act. If the bodily action is left undone due to inability, it is as if the person had done the action completely anyway. The statements and actions of the heart are thus of three types:

### [8.10: The Categories of the Heart's Actions]

- *The first type:* action that is a good deed or a sin in and of itself.
- *The second type:* action that is not a sin until it is done (this is the sin that one is able to do).
- *The third type:* action that is like an already committed good deed or a sin when one is unable to act, but not when one is able to act.

The first type pertains to the foundations of faith—belief, rejection, love, hate and everything that follows them. They lead to reward or punishment and elevated statuses or the lowest bottoms as actions of the heart, even if they do not manifest themselves on the limbs. Indeed, the hypocrites say and do good things with their limbs but their punishment of dwelling in the lowest bottoms of Hell is due to the illnesses in their hearts. The state of their hearts is sometimes accompanied by hateful speech or action, but they do not get punished only for this slight hate as that is but a sign (that they are total hypocrites). Allāh, Most High, says:

وَلَوْ نَشَاءُ لَأَرَيْنَاكُمْ فَلَعَرَفْتَهُمْ بِسِيمَاهُمْ وَلَتَعْرِفَنَّهُمْ فِي  
لَحْنِ الْقَوْلِ

“And if We willed, We could show them to you, and you would know them by their mark; but you will surely know them by the tone of [their] speech.”

[*Muḥammad* (47): 30]

As you can see, Allāh says that they will always be known by their tone.

The second and third type of the heart’s actions relate to actions that do not negate the very foundation of faith, namely natural acts of disobedience like adultery, theft, and drinking wine. It occurs in the Ṣaḥīḥ that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Whoever dies while bearing witness that there is no god but Allāh and Muḥammad is His Messenger, will enter Paradise even if he has fornicated, even if he has stolen, and even if he has drunk wine.”<sup>69</sup> In another sound ḥadīth he attests the love of a man who used to drink a lot and whom he used to lash every time he was brought to him. One time a man cursed this drinker so the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Do not curse him, for he loves Allāh and His Messenger.”<sup>70</sup> Another report reads that someone said: “May Allāh humiliate him! Look how often he is brought here because of drinking!” so the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Do not help the Devil against your brother.”<sup>71</sup> This is narrated in al-Bukhārī by Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*).

<sup>69</sup> Bukhārī, vol.3, p.110 and Muslim, vol.3, p110.

<sup>70</sup> Reference already mentioned.

<sup>71</sup> Bukhārī, vol.12, p.75.

### [8.11: Self-speech and Devilish Insinuation]

This is why he said: “Allāh has overlooked for my nation that which their souls tell them as long as they do not speak or act.”<sup>72</sup> This overlooking only concerns the nation of Muḥammad: the believers in Allāh, the angels, the Books, the Messengers, and the Last Day, so the wording of the ḥadīth only pertains to things that do not negate the very foundation of one’s faith; after all, a person who has negated his faith is not really a member of Muḥammad’s nation but a hypocrite, and nothing necessitates the overlooking of the self-talk and inclinations of a hypocrite. The clear difference between the two can be derived from the ḥadīth, and once we understand this, we can reconcile all the texts.

This is similar to the texts of the Book and the Sunnah which state that Allāh overlooks the errors and forgetfulness of this nation; if one’s faith is sound, his errors, forgetfulness, and self-talk are overlooked, just as he is exempted from Hell because of that. This is not the case with those who have no faith, for the texts do not state that they are not rebuked for their self-talk, errors, and forgetfulness. A report narrated by Abū Shaykh al-Aṣbahānī in *al-Amṭhāl*—from the expedient narrations of Thābit al-Bunānī—states: “A believer’s intention is better than his action.”<sup>73</sup> Ibn al-Qayyim related this in the discussion about intention (*niyyah*) through a number of chains attributed to the Prophet (ﷺ) and concluded that the report is weak. Allāh knows best.

This is because a believer is rewarded for his intention alone, as

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<sup>72</sup> Reference already mentioned.

<sup>73</sup> Al-Bayhāqī in *Shu‘b al-Imān* on the authority of Anas (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*).

intentions are treated like actions if nothing but inability to act stands on the way of turning them into action. This applies to most good deeds. Bodily actions, on the other hand, are dependant on ability to act, and as such, are but a little. This is why one of the Salaf said: ‘The strength of the believer lies in his heart and his weakness is in his body. The hypocrite’s strength is in his body and his weakness is in his heart.’

The following words of Allāh point to this foundation:

وَأِنْ تَبَدُّوا مَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَوْ تَخْفَوْهُ  
يُحَاسِبْكُمْ بِهِ اللَّهُ فَيَغْفِرُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ

“Whether you show what is within yourselves or conceal it, Allāh will bring you to account for it. Then He will forgive whom He wills and punish whom He wills”

[*al-Baqarah* (2): 284]

Some of the *Salaf* have said that this verse was abrogated. Bukhārī related this in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* from Marwān al-Aṣghar who narrated it from a man from the Prophet’s (ﷺ) Companions—Ibn ‘Umar (*radīy Allāh ‘anhumā*). The *Salaf* defined abrogation in a broader sense than the later generations; to them it meant the complete nullification of the meaning, even if that meaning used to specify something general or qualify something unqualified, for example. This is well-known about them. Others denied the abrogation on the basis that there is no evidence to support it. Some claimed that since the verse is informatory it cannot be abrogated, but this was rejected on the basis that this is information about a legal ruling, which is just like an informatory sentence that signifies command or prohibition.

Those who hold that the verse is abrogated say that it was replaced by the *ayah* that comes after it:

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا

“Allāh does not burden a soul more then its capacity.”

[*al-Baqarah* (2): 286]

Muslim relates this about this verse from Anas (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*) in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*.<sup>75</sup> Accordingly, the actions that are disregarded are explained in the ḥadīths, and they are the inclinations and self-talk related to actions they are able to do, as long as they do not speak or act. Mistakes, forgetfulness, and actions someone else forces them to do are included in this as well. Ibn Mājah and others narrate with a ḥasan chain: “Allāh has overlooked for my nation their mistakes, forgetfulness, and that which they are compelled to do.”<sup>76</sup>

The truth is, however, that Allāh’s words:

وَأِنْ تَبَدُّوْا مَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَوْ تُخْفُوْهُ

“Whether you show what is within yourselves or conceal it.”

[*al-Baqarah* (2): 284]

do not mean that a person is punished for these things; rather, he is called to account for them, which does not necessarily mean that he is punished. This is why Allāh says:

فَيَغْفِرُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ

“Then He will forgive whom He wills and punish whom

<sup>74</sup> Bukhārī, vol.8, p.205.

<sup>75</sup> Muslim, vol.1, p115.

<sup>76</sup> Ibn Mājah, vol.1, p.659.

He wills.”

[*al-Baqarah* (2): 284]

This verse does not mean that He might forgive or punish for no reason and for no prior action, nor does it mean that He forgives everything or punishes for everything. This said, He does not punish the believers and does not forgive polytheism unless one repents.

The most important thing here is to distinguish between what forms the foundations of faith and what negates it, and also between what one abstains from in spite of being able to act and what he abstains from because of inability. These two differences are the criterion in these matters of ambiguity.

We conclude after these details that the whole dispute is a result of their notion that there exists certain resolve that never leads to action, while the truth is that this can only be when action is connected to resolve but inability prevents it from taking place. This, however, is not certain will, for it is not possible for one to have certain will to do what he is unable to do. This is because certain will inevitably leads one to do whatever he can of the first steps of the desired action, even if that action itself does not occur.

If one analyses himself, he finds that the seeking, desire and will to act is stronger when he is actually able to act and weaker during moments of inability. His inability to speak is not always equal with his inability to act, nor is he equally unable to utter things by accident or make facial expressions that signify cheerfulness, frowning, welcoming, and scorning. These and other similar actions of the limbs result to blame and punishment or praise and reward.



Some people assume there exists certain resolve that never leads to action, but this can only be when inability occurs afterwards due to death or something else. So as you can see, they are calling the planning of a future action certain resolve. With this is mind, there should be no dispute regarding the words we use for things; after all, some people differentiate between the words *'azm* (resolve) and *qasd* (intention), saying that *qasd* is that which accompanies the action while *'azm* comes before it, and others say they mean the same thing. Another dispute that goes back to the usage of words is their dispute over whether Allāh's will to do something in the future is called *'azm* (resolve) or not.

If a person is determined to do something in the future, he must renew his will when it is time to act. This is not his previous resolve but the will that necessitates the occurrence of the action as long as one is able.

They also dispute whether action must occur in the presence of ability and will and mention two opinions about that, the most correct of which is that ability and complete will necessitate the occurrence of what one is able to do, and will accompanied by ability necessitate the occurrence of the willed.

One party of the dispute wants to affirm punishment for every type of resolve to act in the future, even that which does not lead to action, and the other wishes to affirm that none of it, even will that is certain, is punishable. Both also assume that one (certain will), can exist without resulting into action, and both have failed to view the matter with moderation.

Once we know that certain will accompanied by ability always results in action, we know that as far as reward and punishment are concerned, a person with this will and ability is just like a person

who has done the willed action all the way. If a deed that is within one's ability does not occur, there is no certain will to act—this is the inclination that is overlooked. With this understanding, we can reconcile all the texts and foundational principles.

After this, there are many issues to discuss regarding the conflicting desires that occur in the heart. One may entertain conflicting beliefs or desire two opposite things such as when the soul desires to sin but the heart hates it. One can also experience self-talk that entails unbelief while seeking refuge from it. Indeed, the companions of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) were bothered by this and told him: "Some of us notice within themselves such thoughts that they would rather burn to ashes or fall down from the sky than utter them!" The Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Have you noticed them?" and they replied: "Yes!" so he said: "That is manifest faith." Muslim related this from Ibn Mas'ūd (*radīy Allāh 'anhu*) and Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāh 'anhu*). The same ḥadīth says: "Praised be God who restricted his plot to mere insinuation."<sup>77</sup>

When I wrote this answer, I had no books with me that I could refer to. I say this because this topic has been dealt with extensively. In any case, as we can see, when these devilish insinuations were accompanied by abhorrence, it was a sign of evident—pure and unadulterated—faith. After all, the hypocrites and unbelievers do not feel such abhorrence when they experience these insinuations, and an unbeliever who shuns the Prophet's (ﷺ) message in spite of not being convinced that it is falsehood might not experience these whispers at all. That is simply because suggestions to abandon one's faith are only needed (by the devil) when one has something to abandon; if he has nothing to necessitate faith, nothing is needed to negate it. As for an unbeliever who attests that Islām is a false

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<sup>77</sup> Muslim, vol.1, p119.

religion, his unbelief is greater than these insinuations as he has no faith whatsoever that could make him dislike them.

Since all believers are subject to these insinuations, Allāh, Most High, says:

أَنْزَلَ مِنْ  
السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَسَالَتْ أَوْدِيَةٌ بِقَدَرِهَا فَاحْتَمَلَ السَّيْلُ زَبَدًا رَابِيًا  
وَمِمَّا يُوقِدُونَ عَلَيْهِ فِي النَّارِ ابْتِغَاءَ حِلْيَةٍ أَوْ مَتَاعٍ زَبَدٌ مِثْلَهُ

“He sends down from the sky, rain, and valleys flow according to their capacity, and the torrent carries a rising foam. And from that [ore] which they heat in the fire, desiring adornments and utensils, is a foam like it.”

[*al-Ra'd* (13): 17]

Here, Allāh compares the faith and the Qur’ān that are sent down to us with the water that flows in the valleys; the hearts are like the valleys, some big and some small. It occurs in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs that Abū Mūsā (*radīy Allāh ‘anhu*) narrates from the Prophet (ﷺ): “An example of the guidance and knowledge with which Allāh has sent me is that of a rain that falls on the land. One land is good; it accepts water and produces vegetation and grass in plenty. Another land is dry with a solid bed that reserves water so that people can drink and irrigate with it. The third kind is porous land that can neither retain water nor produce vegetation. This is an example of those who gain understanding of Allāh’s religion and whom Allāh benefits with the guidance and knowledge with which Allāh has sent me. It is also an example of those who do not take heed and do not accept Allāh’s guidance with which I was sent.”<sup>78</sup> This is one of the examples.

The other example is that which they heat in the fire—the ore of gold, silver, and other metals—desiring adornments and utensils.

Allāh tells us that the torrent carries a rising foam, and that a foam like it comes from the ore which they heat in the fire, desiring adornments and utensils. Then He says:

كَذَلِكَ يَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ الْحَقَّ وَالْبَاطِلَ فَأَمَّا الزَّبَدُ

“Thus God presents [the example of] truth and falsehood.  
As for the foam”

[*al-Ra'd* (13): 17]

that rises from the water and from that which is heated, it is like the doubt and confusion about creed and the bad desires that sometimes occur in the hearts of the believers, which is what the Companions complained about to the Prophet (ﷺ). Then Allāh, Most High, says:

فَيَذْهَبُ جُفَاءً

“It vanishes, [being] cast off”

[*al-Ra'd* (13): 17]

—the heart casts off these ill thoughts just like the water casts off the foam—

وَأَمَّا مَا يَنْفَعُ النَّاسَ فَيَمْكُتُ فِي الْأَرْضِ

“but as for that which benefits the people, it remains on the earth”

[*al-Ra'd* (13): 17]

—just like the certainty and faith that resides in the heart. Allāh says:

مَثَلًا كَلِمَةً طَيِّبَةً كَشَجَرَةٍ طَيِّبَةٍ

“an example, [making] a good word like a good tree.”

<sup>78</sup> Bukhārī, vol.1, p.136 and Muslim, vol.3, p1251.

[Ibrāhīm (14): 24]

till His words:

يُثَبِّتُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِالْقَوْلِ الثَّابِتِ فِي الْحَيَاةِ  
الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ وَيُضِلُّ اللَّهُ الظَّالِمِينَ وَيَفْعَلُ  
اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ ﴿٢٧﴾

“Allāh keeps firm those who believe, with the firm word, in worldly life and in the Hereafter. And Allāh sends astray the wrongdoers. And Allāh does what He wills.”

[Ibrāhīm (14): 27]

Every time a believer rejects the thoughts of unbelief (*kufr*) and hypocrisy (*nifāq*) that occur in his heart, his faith (*īmān*) becomes more and more certain (*yaqīn*), just as he increases in piety and God-consciousness (*taqwā*) each time he hates a sin suggested by his soul and negates it and abstains for the sake of Allāh.

The hypocrite, on the other hand, does not hate the whims and opinions of hypocrisy that occur to him nor negates them because only the sin of unbelief is found in him with no trace of the goodness of faith that could repel and negate them. Both faith and hypocrisy are presented to the heart of man, and both of them can overcome it.

The Prophet’s (ﷺ) words (as occurs in some wordings of the ḥadīth in the Ṣaḥīḥ): “Allāh has overlooked for my nation that which their souls whisper or tell them”<sup>79</sup> are restricted to the believers. As such, it does not concern those who only look like Muslims but harbor hypocrisy inside. There have been plenty of such people in the past and there are plenty in the present, but in these later times, they seem more religious than in the past in some places. In any case, if

<sup>79</sup> Bukhārī, vol.11, p.549.

one manifests faith sincerely and avoids what negates and weakens it, the inclinations that he could follow up with speech or action are overlooked, but nothing else, as indicated by the ḥadīth.

This being said, the two categories of the heart's actions for which a person is either rewarded or punished are not included in this ḥadīth. His words: "Whoever is inclined to do a good deed" and "whoever is inclined to do an evil deed"<sup>80</sup> only apply to the believers who plan to do a good or a bad deed that they are able to do and either do it or not. This is because the Prophet (ﷺ) informed us that a good deed is multiplied seven hundredfold or even much more. This only concerns those who do their good deeds for the sake of Allāh:

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ

"The example of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allāh."

[*al-Baqarab* (2): 261]

And

أَبْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ

"seeking means to the approval of Allāh"

[*al-Baqarab* (2): 265]

And

أَبْتِغَاءَ وَجْهِهِ أَعْلَى

"But only seeking the countenance of his Lord, Most High"

[*al-Layl* (92): 20]

So this is for the believers only. The unbelievers have not been

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<sup>80</sup> Reference already mentioned

promised such a multiplication of good deeds, though Allāh may feed them in this world and lighten their punishment in the After-life for the good they have done. Indeed, the punishment of Abū Tālib was lightened because of the good that he did for the Prophet (ﷺ) and because of the Prophet's (ﷺ) intercession (*shifā'ah*) for him. This qualification occurs in another ḥadīth which states that the ruling only applies to a Muslim who's Islām is good. And Allāh, exalted be He, knows best.

All Praise and Thanks belongs to Allāh, the Lord of the Worlds, and may the Peace and Blessing of Allāh be upon our Prophet Muḥammad and his Family and Companions.

## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

‘Ā’ISHAH: bint Abū Bakr *as-Ṣiddīq*, the Mother of the Believers and most beloved wife of the Prophet (ﷺ). She reported many *aḥādīth* from the Prophet and many Companions and Successors reported from her. She died in the year 58H.

‘ABBĀD IBN BISHR: Ibn Waqsh al-Anṣārī Abū Bishr. He witnessed *Badr* and the following battles and was one of those who killed Ka‘b al-Ashraf. He was martyred on the Day of *al-Yamāmah* in the year 12H.

‘ABDULLĀH IBN ‘ABBĀS: Ibn ‘Abdul-Muṭṭalib Ibn Hāshim Ibn ‘Abd Munāf al-Qurashī al-Hāshimī, the cousin of the Prophet (ﷺ) and the interpreter of the Qur’ān. He was born three years before the *Hijrah* and was called the ‘*Ocean of knowledge*’ due to his vast knowledge. He took part in the *Jihād* in North Africa in the year 27H and died in the year 68H.

‘ABDULLĀH IBN ‘AMR: Ibn al-‘Ās Ibn Wā’il Ibn Hāshim Ibn Su‘ayd Ibn Sa‘d Ibn Sahm al-Sahmī. He and his father were Companions. He was literate and attained permission from the



Prophet (ﷺ) to write everything he said. He died in the year 65H.

‘ABDULLĀH ABŪ JĀBIR: Ibn ‘Amr Ibn Ḥazzām Ibn Thalabah al-Anṣārī al-Khazrajī al-Sulamī, amongst those who gave the pledge of *‘Uqbah*. He witnessed *Badr* and was martyred at *Uḥud*.

‘ABDULLĀH IBN MAS‘ŪD: Ibn Ghāfil Ibn Ḥabīb al-Hadhli Abū ‘Abdur-Raḥmān. One of the scholars amongst the Companions and he witnessed *Badr* and the following battles. He had many virtues and died in the year 32H.

‘ABDULLĀH IBN RAWAHAH: ‘Abdullāh Ibn Rawahah Ibn Tha‘labah al-Anṣārī, a poet and warrior from the Khazraj tribe in Madīnah, gave allegiance to the Prophet (ﷺ) along with others at the valley of ‘Aqabah before the Prophet (ﷺ) migrated to Madīnah. He participated in all the battles beginning with *Badr*. In one of the campaigns, the Prophet (ﷺ) appointed him governor of Madīnah in the Prophet’s (ﷺ) absence. He was besieged along with others at *Mawtah* and killed.

‘ABDULLĀH IBN ‘UMAR: Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb al-‘Adawī, Abū ‘Abdul-Raḥmān, the noble Companion and scholar. He reported many *aḥādīth* from the Messenger (ﷺ) and died in the year 73H.

‘ABDUL-MALIK IBN MARWĀN: Ibn al-Hakam, Abū al-Walīd, the Leader of the Believers. He was a Legal Jurist and possessed knowledge of the religion. He died in the year 86H.

‘ABDUR-RAḤMĀN IBN AUF: Ibn Awf Ibn Abd Awf Ibn al-Ḥārith al-Qurashī al-Zuhrī, Abū Muḥammad, one of the ten promised Paradise. He migrated to Abyssinnia on both occasions and witnessed every battle with the Prophet (ﷺ). He was very rich and very generous when giving in the Way of Allāh. He died

in the year 32H.

‘ABDUL-WĀHĪD IBN ZAYD: The shaykh of the *Ṣūfis* at his time, his supplications were answered. He is trustworthy and precise and died in the year 177H.

ABŪ AL-‘ABBĀS IBN ‘AṬĀ’: Aḥmad Ibn Muḥammad Ibn Sahl Ibn ‘Aṭā’ al-Admī, from the shaykhs of the *Ṣūfis*. He died in the year 309H or 311H.

ABŪ ‘ABDUL-RAḤMĀN AL-SULAMĪ: Muḥammad Ibn Mūsā Abū ‘Abdul-Raḥmān al-Sulamī an-Naysābūrī. Author of a number of unique works on *Ṣūfism* and devoted to ḥadīth. Al-Ḥākīm reported from him but he was regarded to be *ḍa‘īf* in ḥadīth. He died in the year 412H.

ABŪ BAKR AL-ṢIDDĪQ: ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Uthmān Ibn Āmir al-Qurashī. The first *Khalīfah* of the Messenger (ﷺ), his companion in the cave, his closest friend and one of the ten promised Paradise. He was the first man to accept Islām and died in the year 13H.

ABŪ’L-DARDĀ’: Uwaymir Ibn Mālik Ibn Zayd Ibn Qays al-Khazrajī al-Anṣārī. There is a difference of opinion concerning his name. He accepted Islām on the day of *Badr* and witnessed *Uḥud*. He was from the Legal Jurists and ascetics of the Companions. He died in the year 32H.

ABŪ DĀWŪD: Sulaymān Ibn al-Ash‘ath Ibn Ishāq Ibn Bashīr, Abū Dāwūd al-Sijistānī, the Imām, Ḥāfiẓ and author of the famous Sunan. He died in the year 275H.

ABŪ DHARR AL-GHIFĀRĪ: Jundub Ibn Junādah Ibn Sakn, he was

of those who accepted Islām early on but delayed his migration and hence did not witness *Badr*. His virtues are many and he died in the year 32H.

ABŪ ḤĀMID AL-GHAZĀLĪ: Muḥammad Ibn Muḥammad al-Ghazālī al-Ṭūsī, Abū Ḥāmid, he excelled in many sciences and authored a number of works such as *Ihyā Ulum al-Dīn* and *Tabāfat al-Falāsifah*. He was known for his worship and asceticism and died in the year 505H.

ABŪ ḤANĪFAH: Nu‘mān Ibn Thābit al-Tamīmī al-Kūfī, one of the great Imāms of this nation and the earliest of the Four Imāms. He commenced his studies in philosophy and scholastic theology, but later abandoned them to study *fiqh*. He died in the year 150H.

ABŪ ḤĀTIM AL-BUSTĪ: see ibn Ḥibbān.

ABŪ HURAYRAH: ‘Abdul-Raḥmān Ibn Ṣakhr al-Dusī. His name is greatly differed over. He accepted Islām in the year 7H and reported the most ḥadīth from the Prophet (ﷺ). He died in the year 59H.

ABŪ JAHL: ‘Amr bin Hāshim Ibn al-Mughīrah al-Makhzūmī al-Qurashī, one of the greatest enemies of the Prophet (ﷺ). He was killed at Badr in the year 2H.

ABŪ MŪSĀ AL-ASH‘ARĪ: ‘Abdullāh Ibn Qays Ibn Salīm. He had a beautiful recitation and was one of the scholars amongst the Companions. He died in the year 42H or 44H.

ABŪ MUSLIM AL-KHAWLĀNĪ: ‘Abdullāh Ibn Thawb, the Legal Jurist, worshipper and ascetic. He was trustworthy and precise.

He accepted Islām before the death of the Prophet (ﷺ) but did not get to see him. He died in the year 62H.

ABŪ NU‘AYM: The great Ḥāfiẓ and Muḥaddith of his age, Aḥmad Ibn ‘Abdullāh Ibn Aḥmad Ibn Ishāq Ibn Mūsā Ibn Mahrān al-Asbahānī *al-Ṣūfīs*. He died in the year 430H at the age of ninety-four.

ABŪ SA‘ĪD AL-KHARRĀZ: Ahmad Ibn ‘Īsā, one of the *Ṣūfīs* Imāms. He died in the year 286H.

ABŪ SULAYMĀN AL-DĀRĀNĪ: ‘Abdul-Raḥmān Ibn Aḥmad Ibn ‘Aṭīyah al-‘Īsā ad-Dārānī, Abū Sulaymān, the famous ascetic. He died in the year 215H.

ABŪ ‘UTHMĀN AL-NAYSĀBŪRĪ: Sa‘īd Ibn Ismā‘īl Ibn Sa‘īd al-Ḥayrī al-Naysābūrī, Abū ‘Uthmān, the famous ascetic known for his excellent manners. It was through him that *Ṣūfism* spread in Naysābūr. He died in the year 298H.

ABŪ SA‘ĪD AL-KHUDRĪ: Sa‘īd Ibn Mālik Ibn Sinān Ibn ‘Ubayd al-Anṣārī al-Khazrajī. He and his father were both Companions and he witnessed all the battles that followed *Uḥud*. He was one of the scholars amongst the Companions and reported many *aḥādīth* from the Messenger (ﷺ). He died in the year 74H.

ABŪ ‘UBAIDAH IBN AL-JARRĀḤ: ‘Āmir Ibn ‘Abdullāh Ibn al-Jarrāḥ Ibn Hilāl al-Qurashī al-Fahrī, one of the ten promised Paradise. He accepted Islām early on and witnessed the battle of *Badr* and the following battles. He is the trustworthy one of this nation and died as a martyr due to a plague in the year 18H at the age of fifty-eight.

'ADĪ IBN ḤĀTIM: Ibn 'Abdullāh Ibn Sa'd Ibn al-Ḥashraj Ibn 'Amr al-Qays al-Ṭā'ī, Abu Ṭarīf. He was a Christian who accepted Islām and witnessed the battles of *al-Jamal*, *Ṣiffīn* and *an-Nabrawān* with 'Alī. He died in the year 68H.

AL-'ALĀ' IBN AL-KHADRAMĪ: al-Khazrajī. His supplications would be answered and he died in the year 21H.

AḤMAD: Ibn Muḥammad Ibn Ḥanbal Ibn Hilāl al-Shaybānī, Abū 'Abdullāh, the Imām of the Sunnah and author of the famous *Musnad*. He was known for his knowledge of *ḥadīth*, *fiqh*, and his *taqwā* and asceticism. He died in the year 241H.

'ALĪ IBN ABĪ ṬĀLIB: Ibn 'Abdul-Muṭṭalib Ibn Hāshim al-Qurashī al-Hāshimī, the fourth Rightly Guided *Khalīfah* and one of ten promised Paradise. He accepted Islām at the age of thirteen and was famous for his chivalry, bravery and knowledge. He married Fātimah, the daughter of the Prophet (ﷺ) and was martyred in the year 40H.

'AMR IBN AL-'ĀS: Ibn Wā'il al-Qurashī al-Sahmī. He accepted Islām during the year of *Ḥudaybiyyah* and was the one who conquered Egypt. He died in the year 43H.

ANAS IBN MĀLIK: Ibn al-Naḍar Ibn Ḍamḍam al-Anṣārī al-Khazrajī, the servant of the Messenger (ﷺ). He witnessed *Badr* but was not of age to actually participate. He died in the year 93H.

AWAIS AL-QARNĪ: Ibn 'Āmir, the famous ascetic. He lived during the time of the Prophet (ﷺ) but did not get to see him. He was trustworthy and precise and died in the year 37H.

AL-AWZĀ'Ī: 'Abdul-Raḥmān Ibn 'Amr Ibn Muḥammad, Abū 'Amr, one of the great scholars of his time. He was well versed in *ḥadīth*, *fiqh* and the military expeditions undertaken by the Prophet (ﷺ). The Muslims have agreed as to his excellence and being an Imām. His *fiqh* dominated Spain for a time and he died in the year 158H.

AL-BARĀ'A IBN MĀLIK: Ibn al-Naḍr al-Anṣārī. He witnessed *Uḥud* and gave the pledge of allegiance under the tree. He was martyred in the year 20H on the Day of *Tustor*.

BUKHĀRĪ: Muḥammad Ibn Ismā'īl Ibn Ibrāhīm Ibn al-Mughīrah, Abū 'Abdullāh. He was born in the year 194H and became one of the Imāms of *ḥadīth* and was nicknamed '*The Leader of the Believers in Ḥadīth.*' He died in the year 256H.

AL-DAḤḤĀK: Ibn Muzāhim al-Hilālī, Abū al-Qāsim al-Khurasānī, the Imām of *tafsīr*. He was trustworthy and precise and a student of Sa'īd Ibn Jubayr. He died in the year 105H.

AL-DĀRUQUṬNĪ: 'Alī Ibn 'Umar Ibn Ahmad, the Imām of his era in *ḥadīth*, knowledge of the defects of *aḥādīth* and author of the famous *Sunan*. He was well versed in the various recitations of the Qur'ān, *fiqh*, language and poetry. He died in the year 385H.

DĀWŪD AL-ZĀHIRĪ: Ibn 'Alī Ibn Khalaf al-Aṣbahānī, Abū Sulaymān, the Imām of the *ẓāhiri* School of Thought and one of the Mujtahids. He died in the year 270H.

FUḌAYL IBN 'AYĀD: Ibn Mas'ūd al-Tamīmī, Abū 'Alī, the shaykh of Mecca and one of the righteous worshippers. He was trustworthy and precise, noble, having *wara'* and narrated many *aḥādīth*.

He died in the year 187H.

AL-ḤAJJĀJ BIN YUSŪF: Ibn Abū 'Aqīl bin Mas'ūd al-Thaqafī, Abū Muḥammad, known for his spilling of innocent blood. He died in the year 95H.

AL-ḤALLĀJ: Al-Husayn Ibn Manṣūr, initially he was a devout worshipper but then he took to the extreme *Ṣūfīs* ways and left the religion, studying magic and showing people various miraculous feats. The scholars passed the verdict that his blood was lawful and so he was killed in the year 309H.

AL-ḤASAN AL-BAṢRĪ: Al-Ḥasan Ibn Abū al-Ḥasan al-Anṣārī. He was trustworthy and precise, noble and famous. He was a great scholar and narrated many aḥādīth. He died in the year 110H close to the age of ninety.

ḤASSAN IBN THĀBIT: Ḥassan Ibn Thābit Ibn al-Mundhir, the poet of the Prophet (ﷺ) from the Khazraj tribe of the Anṣār, defended Islām through his poetry. His *Diwān* (collection of poems) has been published.

IBN AL-'ARABĪ: Muḥiy al-Dīn Muḥammad Ibn 'Alī Ibn Muḥammad Ibn 'Arabī al-Tā'ī, Abū Bakr, the heretical *Ṣūfīs*. He authored a number of works containing explicit disbelief and many scholars actually called him a disbeliever. He died in the year 638H.

IBRĀHĪM IBN ADHAM: Ibn Manṣūr al-Tamīmī, the famous ascetic who was known for his precision in ḥadīth. He died in the year 161H.

IBRĀHĪM AL-TAIMĪ: Ibn Yazīd Ibn Sharīk, Abū al-A'mash. He was known for his worship and asceticism. Aḥmad said that he

was truthful (*ṣadūq*). He died in the year 92H.

IBLĪS: see *Shayṭān*.

IBN ḤIBBĀN: Abū Ḥātim Muḥammad ibn Ḥibbān al-Tamīmī al-Bustī, the Ḥāfiẓ, Mujtahid and author of the famous *Ṣaḥīḥ ibn Ḥibbān*. He died in the year 354H.

IBN AL-JAWZĪ: ‘Abdul-Raḥmān Ibn ‘Alī Ibn Muḥammad, Abū al-Faraj al-Qurashī al-Tamīmī, the Ḥāfiẓ and Imām. He was a prolific writer and authored around three hundred works. He died in the year 587H.

IBN SĪNĀ: Abū ‘Alī al-Husayn Ibn Sīnā, philosopher and a remarkable physician. He was severely criticised for a great deal of his beliefs due to his delving into philosophy. He died in the year 428H.

ISHĀQ IBN RĀHAWAYAH: al-Ḥanzalī al-Tamīmī al-Marwazī, Abū Ya‘qūb, the scholar of Khurasān of his time and one of the Mujtahid Imāms. He taught Aḥmad, Bukhārī, Muslim, at-Tirmidhī, al-Nasā’ī and others. He died in the year 238H.

JĀBIR IBN ‘ABDULLĀH: Ibn ‘Amr Ibn Ḥarrām al-Anṣārī al-Sulamī, he witnessed the second pledge at ‘*Uqbab* while he was still a child. It is said that he witnessed *Badr* and *Uḥud* and he reported many *aḥādīth* from the Messenger (ﷺ). He died in the year 74H.

AL-JUNAYD: Ibn Muḥammad al-Zujjāj, Abū al-Qāsim. He was a Legal Jurist who followed the school of Abū Thawr and was known for asceticism. He died in the year 297H.

KHĀLID IBN AL-WALĪD: Ibn al-Mughīrah al-Makhzūmī al-



Qurashī Abū Sulaymān. He was a great warrior and military leader and was given the nickname, 'Sword of Allāh.' He died in the year 21H.

KHIDR: He is the companion of Mūsā, it is said that he was a Prophet or a righteous servant—however the majority are of the opinion that he was a Prophet. This is because the realities behind his actions can only be known through revelation and because a person does not learn or follow except one who is above him and it is not possible that a non-prophet be above a Prophet. His name and life are greatly differed over and this difference is detailed by ibn Kathīr. Refer to: '*Tafsīr al-Qurtubī*' [11/16] and '*al-Bidāyah wan Nihāyah*' [1/355].

KHUBAIB IBN 'ADĪ: Ibn Mālik Ibn 'Āmir al-Awsī al-Anṣārī. He witnessed *Badr* and was martyred during the lifetime of the Prophet (ﷺ) when he was captured by the polytheists in Makkah.

AL-LAYTH IBN SA'D: Ibn 'Abdur-Raḥmān al-Fahmī, Abū al-Ḥārith, the Imām of Egypt in ḥadīth, fiqh and language. He was trustworthy and precise and narrated many aḥād"th. Al-Shāfi'ī regarded him to be a better jurist than Mālik. He died in the year 175H.

MĀLIK IBN ANAS: Ibn Mālik Ibn Abū 'Amr al-Asbāhī. The Imām of Madīnah in his time, one of the great Imāms of Islām and author of the famous Muwaṭṭa. His virtues are many and the scholar's praise of him is abundant. He died in the year 179H.

MA'RŪF AL-KARKHĪ: Ibn Fairoz, Abū Ma'fūz, one of the shaykhs famous for asceticism and one whose supplication would be answered. He died in the year 200H.

**MU'ĀDH IBN JABAL:** Ibn 'Amr Ibn Aws al-Anṣārī al-Khazrajī, Abū 'Abdul-Raḥmān, one of the foremost Companions known for his knowledge of legal rulings and the Qur'ān. He was present at the pledge of *'Uqbah* and witnessed *Badr* and the following battles and was martyred due to a plague in the year 17H or 18H.

**MU'ĀWIYAH:** Ibn Abū Sufyān Ibn Ṣakhr Ibn Ḥarb Ibn Umayyah Ibn 'Abd Shams al-Qurashī al-Amawī. He accepted Islām in the year of the Conquest and witnessed *Hunain* and *al-Yamāmah*. He was one of the scribes who would write the revelation and died in the year 60H.

**MUSLIM:** Ibn al-Ḥajjāj Ibn Muslim al-Qushayrī Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Naysābūrī, the Ḥāfiẓ and one of the great Imāms of this nation. He is the author of the *Ṣaḥīḥ* which is the most authentic book of ḥadīth after Bukhārī. He died in the year 261H.

**MUṬARRAF IBN 'ABDULLĀH:** Ibn al-Shakhayyir, he was born during the time of the Prophet (ﷺ) and was known for his worship, asceticism and keen intellect. He was trustworthy and precise and died in the year 87H.

**NU'MĀN IBN BASHĪR:** Ibn Sa'd al-Anṣārī al-Khazrajī Abū 'Abdullāh. He was a poet and lecturer and died in the year 65H.

**QATĀDAH:** Ibn al-Nu'mān Ibn Zayd al-Anṣārī al-Awsī, Abū 'Amr, he witnessed the pledge of *'Uqbah*, *Badr* and every other battle that the Prophet (ﷺ) fought. He died in the year 23H.

**AL-QUSHAYRĪ:** 'Abdul-Karīm Ibn Hawīzin al-Qushayrī, a disciple of Abu 'Alī al-Daqqāq (d. 405/1014) in *Ṣufism*, is famous for his *al-Risālah*, which is the most authentic and comprehensive intro-

duction to *Sufis* practices, experiences and concepts as developed by the early *Sufis*.

SA'ĪD IBN AL-MUSAYYAB: Ibn Ḥazn, Abū Muḥammad. He excelled in ḥadīth and *fiqh*, and was known for his worship and asceticism. He was one of the 'Seven Legal Jurists' of Madīnah and Imām Aḥmad regarded him to be the most virtuous of the Successors. He was trustworthy and precise and narrated many aḥādīth. He died in the year 94H.

SA'D IBN ABĪ WAQQĀS: Sa'd Ibn Mālik Ibn Aḥīb Ibn 'Abd Munāf al-Qurashī al-Zuhrī Abū Ishāq Ibn Abī Waqqās. One of the ten who were promised Paradise and one whose supplications were answered. He was the last of the ten to pass away in the year 55H.

SHADDĀD IBN AWS: Ibn Thābit al-Anṣārī al-Khazrajī, Abū Ya'la. He was famous for his knowledge and wisdom and died in the year 58H.

AL-SHĀFI'Ī: Muḥammad Ibn Idrees Ibn al-'Abbās Ibn Shāfi'ī al-Hāshimī al-Qurashī, Abū 'Abdullāh, the Mujaddid of his era and one of the great Imāms of this nation. He died in the year 204H.

SHAYṬĀN: Also called Iblīs. He is a Jinn and the enemy of mankind, devoted to leading them astray in any way that he can. The word Shayṭān is derived from the verb *shaṭana* which means to be distant, and indeed Shayṭān is distant from all good.

AL-SHA'BĪ: 'Āmir Ibn Sharāḥīl al-Sha'bī al-Ḥumayrī, Abu 'Amr, the Ḥāfiẓ, Legal Jurist and poet. He died in the year 103H.

SUFYĀN AL-THAWRĪ: bin Sa'īd Ibn Masrūq, Abū 'Abdullāh al-Thawrī, one of the great Imāms and worshippers of this nation. He was titled '*The Leader of Believers in Hadīth*' and was well versed in *tafsīr*. He was the teacher of Abū Ḥanīfah and Mālik amongst others and died in the year 161H.

ṬALḤAH: Ibn 'Ubaydullāh Ibn 'Uthmān Ibn 'Amr al-Qurashī, Abū Muḥammad, one of the ten promised Paradise. He witnessed *Uḥud* and the following battles. He died in the year 36H.

AL-TIRMIDHĪ: Muḥammad Ibn 'Īsā Ibn Sawrah Ibn Mūsā Ibn al-Ḍaḥḥāk al-Sulamī al-Tirmidhī, the Imām, Ḥāfiẓ and the author of the famous Sunan. He was trustworthy and precise and one of the students of Bukhārī. He died in the year 279H.

'UMAR IBN AL-KHAṬṬĀB: Abū Ḥafs 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb Ibn Nufayl al-Qurashī al-'Adawī, the second Rightly Guided *Khalīfah* and one of the ten promised Paradise. He accepted Islām five years before the *Hijrah* and his acceptance was a great victory for the Muslims. He witnessed every battle that the Prophet (ﷺ) witnessed. He was martyred in the year 23H.

UMM SULAYM: Her name is differed over, she was the daughter of Mil'ān al-Anṣārī. She was initially married to Mālik and when he died she married Abū Ṭalḥah. She used to accompany the Messenger (ﷺ) on his military expeditions. She died in the year 30H.

URWAH: Ibn al-Zubayr Ibn al-'Awām al-Asadī, Abū 'Abdullāh. He was trustworthy and precise, a Legal Jurist, a scholar, and he narrated many aḥādīth. He died in the year 94H.

'UTHMĀN IBN 'AFFĀN: *Dbu'l-Nurayn* 'Uthmān Ibn 'Affān Ibn

Abū'l-'Ās Ibn Umayyah al-Qurashī al-Amawī, the third Rightly Guided *Khalīfah* and one of the ten promised Paradise. He was known for his generosity and freely giving in the Way of Allāh. He was married to two daughters of the Prophet (ﷺ), Ruqayyah and after her death, Umm Kulthūm. He was martyred in the year 35H.

AL-ZUBAYR: Ibn al-Awām Ibn Khuwaylid Ibn Asad al-Qurashī al-Asadī, Abū 'Abdullāh. He migrated to Abyssinia on both the migrations there and accompanied the Messenger on all his military expeditions. He was one of the ten promised Paradise and died in the year 36H.

AL-ZUHRĪ: Muḥammad Ibn Muslim Ibn 'Ubaydullāh al-Qurasahī, Abū Bakr, one of the Imāms of this nation. He was one of the most knowledgeable people of his time of ḥadīth and the Qur'ān. He was trustworthy and precise and narrated many aḥādīth. He died in the year 124H.

## INDEX OF PLACE NAMES

'ARAFAH: a plain 12 miles south-west of Makkah, a little beyond Muzdalifa. It is one of the culminating stations of *Hajj*.

ARDABĪL: A city in north-west Iran.

AL-AHWĀZ: A city situated on the outskirts of Iran.

BADR: Situated 90 miles south of Madīnah.

BAGHDĀD: Capital of Iraq, situated on the river Tigris.

BATŪN NAKHLA: A place falling between Makkah and Ṭā'if.

DOME OF THE ROCK: shrine in Jerusalem. The dome stands over the rock on the temple Mount. The rock is 18 metres by 14 metres.

HARRĀN: An old city within the Arabian Peninsula between Syria and Iraq.

HIJĀZ: the area from the Red Sea coast of Arabia, from south of Makkah, north beyond Yenbo and inland as far as Madīnah.

HIRĀ': cave at the summit of mount Hirā', a few miles from Makkah.

HUDAYBIYYAH: on the road from Jeddah to Makkah, just a few miles outside the *Haram*.

MADINAH: Situated in western Saudi Arabia, 330km north of Makkah.

AL-MARWA: Hill in Makkah, near the Ka'bah and included in one of the rites of *'Umrah* and *Hajj*.

MAKKAH: Situated in Saudi Arabia, 80km from the Red Sea coast and founded upon the well of *Zamzam*.

MOUNT LEBANON: This is a range of mountains stretching from Hijāz to Syria. The part in Palestine is called Mount *al-Haml*, the part in Jordan is called Mount *al-Khalil*, the part in Damascus is called Mount *Sinir* and the part in Aleppo and Homs is called Mount Lebanon. This range also crosses Antakya (southern Turkey) where it is called Mount *Lukām*.

MUZDALIFAH: Situated between Mina and Arafah.

ŞAFĀ: Hill in Makkah, near the Ka'bah and included in one of the rites of *'Umrah* and *Hajj*. It is 394 metres from al-Marwā.

ŞUFFAH: An area in the northern part of the Prophet's Mosque, in which the poor or homeless Muslims resided.

ṬĀ'IF: City in eastern Saudi Arabia situated on a plateau and slightly east of Makkah, famous for its grapes.

UHUD: a volcanic hill on the western outskirts of Madīnah.

## INDEX OF SECTS

**AHLU'L-KALĀM:** Adherents to speculative theology, people seeking to explain the articles and premises of belief and to give evidences for them based on philosophy and logic.

**ASH'ARĪ:** A sect founded in the third century of *hijri*. From their beliefs is that *īmān* is only belief (i.e., actions are not part of *īmān*); that *īmān* does not increase or decrease; that *tawḥīd* is restricted to affirming the perfect nature of Allāh (i.e., *Rubūbiyyah*); and that most of the Attributes of Allāh are metaphorical.

**BĀṬINIYYAH:** A sect of the Shī'a, the followers of Ismā'īl ibn Ja'far. They were of the belief that the legal texts were merely superficial expressions carrying inner meanings that oppose what is outwardly understood of them, examples lie with their explanations of Paradise, Hell and the Last Day.

**FALĀSIFA:** Those philosophers who promoted the '*wisdom*' of the Greeks, the Greek philosophers who did not believe in the Resurrection as it is mentioned in the Book and Sunnah, nor did they affirm the Names and Attributes of Allāh. From amongst their leaders was Aristotle, the student of Plato and from amongst their latter proponents was al-Fārābī and ibn Sīnā.



**HASHWIYYAH:** A term frequently used by the innovators to refer to *Ablu'l-Sunnah*, the *Abl'l-Hadith*, those who affirmed the Attributes of Allāh. The first to use this term was 'Amr ibn 'Ubayd al-Mu'tazilī who said that 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar ibn al-Khattāb (*radīy Allāhu 'anhuma*) was a Hashwī.

**JABARIYYAH:** Followers of the school of Jahm ibn Ṣafwān in his belief that all actions are decreed by Allāh and man has no control over them at all, instead he is forced to do what he does.

**JAHMIYYAH:** Followers of Jahm ibn Ṣafwān in his denial of the Names and Attributes of Allāh. The student of al-Ja'd ibn Dirham, both of whom were executed for their apostasy in the time of the lesser *tābi'in*. Among their beliefs is that they deny the Attributes of Allāh and declare that the Qur'ān is created.

**KARRĀMIYYAH:** Followers of Muḥammad ibn Karrām (d. 255H), they divided into many sub-sects and were famous for their likening of Allāh to His creation (*tashbīh*).

**KHAWĀRIJ:** Those who rebelled against 'Alī (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*), declaring him to be a disbeliever and those who rebel against and fight the Muslim rulers. They hold that Muslims who have committed major sins are disbelievers and are doomed to Hell-Fire forever.

**MU'ATṬILAH:** Those who fall into *ta'ṭīl*; to deny all or some of the Attributes of Allāh.

**MUSHABBIHAH:** (or *Mujassimah*): Those who declare that Allāh is like His creation and that the Attributes of Allāh are like the attributes of the creation. This was first propagated by Maqātil ibn Sulaymān al-Khurāsānī, during the era of the *tābi'in*.

**MURJI'AH:** They uphold the belief of *Irjā'* (to hold that sins, major or minor, do not affect *īmān* (faith) and that *īmān* neither increases nor decreases). The first to call to this belief was Ghilān ibn Abī Ghilān, the *qadari*. He was executed in 105H. They claim that actions are not part of *īmān*, that people do not vary in *īmān*, that *īmān* does not increase and decrease and that one should declare himself a Believer without saying 'If *Allāh* wills.' The Murji'ah are divided into three groups, as Shaikh ul-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah has mentioned: (i) Those who claim that *īmān* is a condition of the heart only. (ii) Those who claim that *īmān* is merely verbal affirmation (i.e. the *Karrāmiyyah*). (iii) Those who claim that *īmān* is only affirmation with the heart and tongue, but that action is necessary in addition to it.

**MUTAKALLIMŪN:** Speculative Theologians, adherents to *kalām*.

**MU'TAZILAH:** Followers of Wāṣil ibn 'Aṭā' al-Ghazzāl who abandoned the circles of Ḥasan al-Baṣrī. They negated the Attributes of Allāh for fear of likening Him to His creation, yet affirmed His Names. From amongst their beliefs was that a person who committed a major sin was neither a believer nor a disbeliever, rather of a station between the two stations, but he would be consigned to Hellfire forever. They were from the rank and file of the *Mutakallimūn* and gave precedence to their intellects over the divine texts.

**NĀSIBĪ:** One who has hatred towards 'Alī (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) and the family of the Prophet (ﷺ).

**QADARIYYAH:** Those who held the belief that man has complete free will in all that he does and that Allāh has no control over him.

**QARĀMIṬA:** A sect holding the same belief as the Bāṭiniyyah and

followers of Maymūn ibn Daysān.

**RĀFIDĪS:** Also well-known as the Shī'ah, who call themselves the *Ithnā Ash'ariyyah* (The Twelvers) of Ja'farīs. This sect was founded by 'Abdullāh ibn Saba', a Jew, who appeared in the time of the *Khilāfah* of 'Uthmān. He claimed love for 'Alī and *Ahl ul-Bayt* (the family of the Prophet (ﷺ)). They curse the Companions declare them disbelievers, in particular Abū Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmān and the wives of the Prophet (ﷺ). They also believe the Qur'ān to be incomplete.

**ṢŪFĪ:** An adherent of *Ṣūfism*, a mystical interpretation of Islām that stresses the primary importance of remembrance of Allāh as well as the necessity of submitting one's will to a spiritual guide in order to progress spiritually. Latter-day *Ṣūfī* doctrines such as *wahdat al-wujūd* (the unity of being) and *ḥulūl* (incarnation) owe more to Buddhism and Hinduism than they do to Islām.

## INDEX OF ARABIC TERMS

*Āla*: apparatus.

*Ārif*: The one possessing knowledge. *Ṣūfi*: the one who knows Allāh and the true realities.

*‘Ashūrā’*: 10<sup>th</sup> Muḥarram, the 1<sup>st</sup> month of the Islāmic calender.

*Āyah*: pl. *āyāt*. Sign, miracle, example, lesson, verse.

*‘Abd*: pl. *‘ebād*. slave, servant, worshipper.

*Al-‘Abdāt*: sing: badal. *Ṣūfi*: the Substitutes.

*Abrār*: righteous.

*Adhān*: *fiqb*: the call to prayer.

*Awliyā’*: plural of walī; friend, ally, loyal companion. From the word wilāyah meaning loyalty and closeness, the opposite of enmity.

*Barẓakh*: barrier, obstruction, an isthmus. *fiqb*: a barrier placed between a person who has deceased and this worldly life.

*Bayān*: Speech, clarification, discourse. It is of two types: the first whereby the intended meaning is expressed clearly, whatever language it may be in, this category is not regarded as magic; the second whereby the intended meaning is expressed in eloquent, cleverly doctored phrases based upon specific rules such that one listening takes pleasure in hearing the words and they affect his very heart. This category is what has been likened to magic as it captivates and beguiles the heart and overcomes the soul to the point that the face of reality could be transformed to illusion and the one captivated perceive only that which the speaker wants

him to perceive. This category can be used in a commendable fashion and in a blameworthy fashion. As for the commendable form, it is to direct the person towards the truth and use these methods to aid the truth. As for the blameworthy form, it is to direct the person towards falsehood or envelop him in confusion such that the truth is seen as falsehood and falsehood as truth. This is completely blameworthy and has been likened to that which is completely blameworthy—magic

*Bid'ah*: innovation, *fiqh*: that which is newly introduced into the religion of Allāh.

*Da'if*: weak. A ḥadīth that has failed to meet the criteria of authenticity.

*Dīn*: religion, way of life.

*Dhawq*: taste, *Ṣūfī*: direct experience of the truth.

*Dhikr*: remembrance, *fiqh*: making mention of Allāh.

*Du'ā*: supplication, invocation, it is an action of worship that may only be directed to Allāh. It is of two types, supplication through worship (*du'ā 'ibādah*) and supplication of request (*du'ā mas'alah*). The first type of *du'ā* can be understood when one understands that every act of worship is done with the unstated plea that Allāh accept that action of worship and the desire to draw closer to him; and hence attain His pleasure. Hence every action of worship is a type of request to Allāh. The second type of *du'ā* is whereby one explicitly asks his Lord of something such as 'O Allāh! Grant me good in this world and the Hereafter.' The second type includes the first type and the first type necessitates the second type.

*Fanā'*: oblivion, absorption, extinction. *Ṣūfī*: to die before dying, annihilation in Allāh, death of the ego, to die in this world and subsist (*baqā'*) in Allāh.

*Faqīh*: pl. *fuqahā'*. *fiqh*: an expert in Islāmic law, a Legal Jurist.

*Faqīr*: poor, needy person. *Ṣūfī*: initiate in a *Ṣūfī* order, the graduate from such an order is called a *Ṣūfī*.

*Faqr*: poverty, need.

*Fard*: see *wājib*.

*Fasād*: corruption, decay, and invalidity.

*Fatwā*: *fiqh*: legal ruling.

*Fiqh*: understanding and comprehension. *fiqh*: of the rulings and legislation of Islām.

*Fisq*: pl. *fusūq*. Immorality, transgression, wickedness.

*Fitnah*: pl. *fitan*. Trial, tribulation, civil strife.

*Ghayb*: the Unseen, those matters beyond our senses.

*Ghubṭa*: envy, referring to the permissible form of envy where the envier wishes to have the same blessings as the envied but without desiring to see them removed from the envied. This is opposed to *ḥasad*, the blameworthy form of envy where the envier wishes to see the blessings removed from the envied.

*Ḥāfiẓ*: pl. *ḥuffāẓ*. Ḥadīth Master, commonly referred to one who has memorised at least 100 000 *ahādīth*.

*Ḥāl*: pl. *ahwāl*, state or condition. *Ṣūfī*: spiritual state, a spiritual realisation that is fleeting or temporary.

*Ḥadīth*: pl. *ahādīth*, a text attributed to the Prophet (ﷺ) describing his actions, words, descriptions and tacit approvals. It consists of two portions, the body of the text (*matn*) and the *isnād*. Rarely the term is also used to refer to a text attributed to a Companion or a Ṭābiʿī.

*Ḥajj*: *fiqh*: pilgrimage, one of the pillars of Islām.

*Ḥalāl*: released. *fiqh*: permissible.

*Ḥanīf*: pl. *Ḥunafāʾ*. Upright and Devout. One who leaves the false religions and beliefs for the truth and does not swerve from it. His outward rectitude reflects what is inside him.

*Ḥaqīqah*: truth, reality, state of things as they are. *ṣufee*: a route to Allāh, for his elite that is beyond the *Sharīʿah*.

*Ḥarām*: forbidden, sacred, restricted. *fiqh*: unlawful, that which the legally responsible person is rewarded for leaving and sinful for doing.

*Ḥasad*: see *Ghubṭa*.

*Ḥasan*: good, fair. A ḥadīth whose *isnād* is continuously linked of just, morally upright narrators but whose precision (*dabt*) falls short of the requirements of the ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth; containing no irregularity (*shādh*) and no hidden defect (*'illah*). A ḥadīth can be ḥasan in and of itself, or contain a defect but still be ruled to be so due to supporting evidences.

*Hawā'*: base desires.

*Hawḍ*: the Fount.

*Ḥayā'*: modesty, derived from the word *ḥayāt*, or life because it is through modesty that the heart is granted life and it is through the absence of modesty that it dies. It is a state that arises through the servant being aware that Allāh is watching him, having love, fear and awe of Him and thinking little of himself. Al-Junayd said, '*al-Ḥayā'* is to recognise the bounties of Allāh and then to recognise ones own shortcomings. Through this a state is engendered which is termed *al-Ḥayā'*, the reality of which is that it is a mannerism that prevents one from committing vile actions and from being lax in fulfilling the rights of Allāh.'

*Hudūd*: limits, boundaries. *fiqh*: limits ordained by Allāh, prescribed punishments.

*Hulūl*: settling, descent. *phik*: settling of a superior faculty upon a support, incarnation.

*Ijtihād*: striving and exerting. *fiqh*: striving to attain the Islāmic ruling on an issue, after certain preconditions have been met by the person.

*Ilhād*: deviation, atheism.

*Iḥsān*: beneficence, excellence. To worship Allāh as if one is seeing Him, and knowing that even though one sees Him not, He sees the servant.

*Ikhlās*: sincerity, to strip oneself of worshipping any besides Allāh such that everything one does is performed only to draw closer to Him and for His pleasure. It is to purify ones actions from any but the Creator having a share in them, from any defect or self-

desire. The one who has true *ikhlās* (*mukhlis*) will be free of *riyā'*.

*Imām*: model, exemplar. *fiqh*: religious leader, one who leads the congregational prayer or leads a community.

*Īmān*: The firm belief, complete acknowledgement and acceptance of all that Allāh and His Messenger have commanded to have faith in, submitting to it both inwardly and outwardly. It is the acceptance and belief of the heart that includes the actions of the heart and body, therefore it encompasses the establishment of the whole religion. This is why the Imāms and Salaf used to say, 'Faith is the statement of the heart and tongue, action of the heart, tongue and limbs.' Hence it comprises statement, action and belief, it increases through obedience and decreases through disobedience. It includes the beliefs of faith, its morals and manners and the actions demanded by it.

*ʿIrfān*: *Ṣūfī*: esoteric knowledge.

*ʿIshq*: passionate love.

*Isnād*: chain of narration.

*Ittiḥād*: *ḥik*: unification.

*Jābiliyyah*: Pre-Islāmic Ignorance. Technically this refers to the condition of a people before the guidance of Allāh reaches them, or the state of a people that prevents them from accepting the guidance of Allāh.

*Janābah*: *fiqh*: state of major impurity.

*Janāzab*: *fiqh*: funeral prayer, funeral procession.

*Jihād*: striving in the Way of Allāh to make His Word supreme.

*Jinn*: another creation besides mankind who are invisible to us. They are also subject to the laws of Islām and will be judged in the Hereafter according to how they lived in this life.

*Kāfir*: a rejecter of faith, disbeliever.

*Kalām*: speech, discourse. *ḥik*: dialectics, scholastic theology.

*Karāmah*: pl. *karāmāt*. Miracles performed by those not Prophets.

*Khalīfah*: pl. *khulafā'*. Successor, representative. *fiqh*: of the Prophet (ﷺ), head of the Islāmic state. Also called *Amīr al-Mu'minin* or



Leader of the Believers.

*Khawf*: fear.

*Khutbah*: sermon, lecture. *fiqh*: Friday sermon.

*Kufr*: denial, rejection, hiding, technically referring to disbelief. It can be major (removing a person from the fold of Islām) or minor (not removing a person from the fold of Islām).

*Makrūh*: *fiqh*: disliked, reprehensible, that which the legally responsible person is rewarded for leaving but not punished for doing.

*Maqāmāt*: sing: *maqām*, station. *ṣūfī*: spiritual stations, a permanent spiritual realisation.

*Maʿrifah*: gnosis. Knowledge that is acted upon by the one who knows, the Gnostic of Allāh is one who has knowledge of Allāh, the path that leads to Allāh and the pitfalls of that path. He is one who knows Allāh, His Names, Attributes and Actions and then displays *ṣidq* and *ikhlās* towards Allāh in all things. He works towards removing all despicable morals and mannerisms and has *ṣabr* in all of this.

*Matrūk*: abandoned. This refers to a narrator of a ḥadīth who is abandoned due to being accused of lying.

*Mawduʿ*: fabricated ḥadīth. That ḥadīth which is a lie against the Prophet (ﷺ).

*Muhājir*: pl. *Muhājirūn*. One who perform *hijrah*. *fiqh*: the Companions who migrated from Makkah to Madīnah.

*Muhaddith*: pl. *muhaddithūn*. Scholar of Ḥadīth.

*Mujtabid*: one who performs *ijtihad*. *fiqh*: that level of scholar who can deduce independent verdicts directly from the primary Islāmic sources.

*Mukāshafah*: *ṣūfī*: unveiling of hidden realities—the *ṣūfī* attaining knowledge through extraordinary means.

*Mushāhadah*: *ṣūfī*: vision of hidden realities—the *ṣūfī* seeing things via extraordinary means.

*Murāqabah*: self-inspection. The servant having the sure knowledge that Allāh sees him in all circumstances and knows all that he is

doing, as such he does his utmost not to fall into the prohibited matters and to correct his own failings.

*Munāfiq*: hypocrite. *fiqh*: one who outwardly displays Islām but inwardly conceals disbelief. This is the worst type of hypocrisy and its possessor is the worst type of disbeliever, there are other lesser types.

*Murīd*: one who wants, desires, aims for something. *ṣūfī*: a devotee to a *ṣūfī shaykh*.

*Mursak*: a ḥadīth whose *isnād* has the name of the Companion missing, i.e. a Successor reports directly from the Prophet (ﷺ). In the eyes of the majority of scholars such a ḥadīth is a sub-category of the *da'if* ḥadīth.

*Mutashābih*: unclear and ambiguous. *fiqh*: an *āyah* of the Qur'ān that is not clear and conclusive in meaning from the wording of the text itself.

*Qadā*: see *qadar*.

*Qadar*: Allāh's decree of all matters in accordance with His prior knowledge and as dictated by His wisdom.

*Qiblah*: *fiqh*: direction to which the Muslims pray, towards the *ka'bah*.

*Qur'ān*: The actual Word of Allāh revealed to the Prophet (ﷺ) in the Arabic language through the medium of the Angel Gabriel and the greatest miracle bestowed him. It consists of 114 chapters commencing with al-Fātiḥah and ending with an-Nās.

*Al-Qutb*: *ṣūfī*: the Axis, the greatest of the *Awliyā'*.

*Raghabah*: fervent desire.

*Rabbah*: dread.

*Rajā'*: reverential hope.

*Ramādān*: ninth month of the Islāmic calendar.

*Ridā*: contentment and pleasure.

*Riyā'*: showing off, ostentation, an example of which lies in person beautifying actions of worship because he knows people are watching.

*Ruqyā*: recitation used to cure an illness or disease. It can only be done

in the Arabic tongue, in words whose meaning is understood, using verses of the Qur'ān or supplications of the Prophet combined with the belief that it is only Allāh who in reality gives the cure.

*Ṣabr*: patience, steadfastness.

*Ṣaḥīḥ*: healthy, sound, authentic, correct. A ḥadīth that has met the criteria of authenticity and can be used as a legal proof.

*Ṣalāh*: *fiqh*: the second pillar of Islām, the prayer.

*Salaf*: predecessors, commonly employed to refer to the first three generations of Muslims.

*Sawm*: *fiqh*: fasting, one of the pillars of Islām.

*Ṣidq*: truthfulness, the conformity of the inner to the outer such that the deeds and statements of the person do not belie his beliefs and vice-versa. *Ṣidq* is the foundation of faith and results in peace of mind, lying is the foundation of hypocrisy and results in doubt and suspicion, and this is why the two can never co-exist without being at odds with each other. al-Junayd was asked as to whether *ṣidq* and *ikhlāṣ* were the same or different and he replied, 'They are different, *ṣidq* is the root and *ikhlāṣ* is the branch. *Ṣidq* is the foundation of everything and *ikhlāṣ* only comes into play once one commences an action. Actions are only acceptable when they combine both.' The one who has true *ṣidq* will be free of self-conceit.

*Shaghāfab*: crazed passion.

*Shahādah*: testification, witness. The declaration that none has the right to be worshipped save Allāh and that Muḥammad (ﷺ) is the Messenger of Allāh.

*Shahwā*: carnal lusts.

*Sharī'ah*: divine Islāmic law as ordained by Allāh.

*Sharīk*: partner, associate.

*Shaykh*: old man. *fiqh*: learned person, scholar. *ṣūfi*: a guide along the spiritual path.

*Shayṭān*: Satan, Iblīs, a devil.

*Shirk*: association, technically referring to directing a right that is due to Allāh Alone to another object of creation, either completely or partially. It can be major (removing a person from the fold of Islām) or minor (not removing a person from the fold of Islām).

*Sunan*: a compilation of *aḥādīth*.

*Sunnah*: way, path. The actions, words, descriptions, commands, prohibitions and tacit approvals of the Prophet (ﷺ).

*Sūrah*: chapter of the Qur'ān.

*Tābi'ūn*: The generation following that of the Companions.

*Tab' Tābi'ūn*: The generation following that of the *Tābi'ūn*.

*Ṭāghūt*: all that is falsely worshipped besides Allāh.

*Tafsīr*: elucidation, clarification, explanation. *fiqh*: of the Qur'ān..

*Taqwā*: the basic meaning of which is setting a barrier between two things. This is why it is said that one *ittaqā* with his shield, i.e. he set it as a barrier between him and the one who wished him evil. Therefore it is as if the one who has *taqwa* (*muttaqī*) has used his following the commands of Allāh and avoiding His prohibitions as a barrier between himself and the Punishment. Hence he has preserved and fortified himself against the punishment of Allāh through his obeying Him.

*Tarīqah*: path, *ṣūfī*: spiritual path.

*Tawāf*: circumambulation of the Ka'bah

*Tawakkul*: trust and absolute reliance.

*Tawḥīd*: unification, monotheism, the belief in the absolute Oneness of Allāh. It is to believe that Allāh Alone is the creator, nourisher, and sustainer of the worlds; it is to believe that Allāh Alone deserves to be worshipped; and it is to believe that He has unique and perfect Names and Attributes that far transcend anything that one can imagine.

*Ummah*: nation, the Muslim nation.

*Urf. fiqh*: Customary Usage.

*Wājib. fiqh*: obligatory, that which a legally responsible person is rewarded for doing and sinful for leaving. In the eyes of the

majority *wājib* has the same meaning as *fard*.

*Wahdatu-l-Wujūd*: The unity of existence, the heretical belief that Allāh is everywhere and everything.

*Wajd*: strong emotion, technically referring to spiritual ecstasy. The heart experiencing sudden surges of intense love, desire, awe and glorification of Allāh.

*Wara'*: pious caution, scrupulousness. A mannerism through which the heart is purified of all that would sully it and has been excellently summarised in the saying of the Prophet (ﷺ), "From the excellence of ones Islām is his leaving that which does not concern him." It is to leave all that causes one doubt, all that does not concern him, to continuously bring oneself to account and to devote oneself to Allāh. Some of the Salaf said, 'None attains the reality of *taqwā* until he leaves that which is harmless for fear of falling into that which is harmful.'

*Walīy*: pl. *Awliyā'*. Friends, Allies, Saints—those who have faith and *taqwā*.

*Wuḍu'*: *fiqh*: ritual ablution.

*Yaqīn*: certainty. It is to faith (*Īmān*) what the soul is to the body, it is the soul to the actions of the heart which in turn formulate the souls to the actions of the limbs and through it one attains the rank of *Ṣiddīq*. From *yaqīn* does *tawakkul* (absolute reliance in Allāh) sprout and through *yaqīn* is all doubt, suspicion and worry dispelled and the heart filled with love, hope and fear of Allāh. *Yaqīn* is of three levels, that which arises from knowledge (*'ilm al-yaqīn*), seeing (*'ain al-yaqīn*) and actual experience (*ḥaqq al-yaqīn*).

*Zakāh*: *fiqh*: one of the pillars of Islām, an obligatory tax levied on a Muslim wealth subject to certain criteria.

*Zuhd*: asceticism.

THE DECISIVE CRITERION BETWEEN

The Friends of Allāh  
&  
The Friends of Shayṭān

SHAYKHU'L-ISLAM  
AHMAD IBN TAYMIYYAH  
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Translated by  
Shaykh Ahmad ibn Tayyib al-Hafsi al-Mizzi  
with accompanying Arabic text



THE RELIEF FROM  
DISTRESS

An explanation to the beautiful names of Allāh



Shaykhu'l-Islām  
Ibn Taymiyyah  
RAI-128 AHS



Explanation to the Beautiful and Perfect Names of **Allāh**

Shaykh Abū ʿAbūṭālib-Rabīʿah Nisrāh al-Shāfiʿī  
RAI-128 AHS

اللَّهُ الرَّبُّ الْمَلِكُ الْإِلَهُ الَّذِي لَهُ الْمَلَكُوتُ الْوَاحِدُ الْأَحَدُ الْعَزِيدُ الْمُتَعَدِّدُ  
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The  
Spiritual  
Cure

An Explanation to Sūrah al-Fāṭilah

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي هَدَانَا لِهَذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لِنَشْكُرَهُ لَوْلَا دَعْوَةُ الْآبَائِ  
الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مَا كُنَّا لِنَكْفُرَ هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ  
بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي هَدَانَا لِهَذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لِنَشْكُرَهُ لَوْلَا دَعْوَةُ الْآبَائِ  
الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مَا كُنَّا لِنَكْفُرَ هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ

A summary of numerous classical commentaries of the Qurʾān

al-Ḥafīz, al-Muḥaddith al-Fayyūzīyah, Abū Ḥanīfah, al-Muḥaddith al-Fayyūzīyah,  
al-Ḥafīz, al-Muḥaddith al-Fayyūzīyah, Abū Ḥanīfah, al-Muḥaddith al-Fayyūzīyah



كُرَامَاتُ الْقُلُوبِ وَشِفَائُهَا  
DISEASES OF  
THE HEARTS  
& THEIR CURES

by SHAYKHU'L-ISLAM  
IBN TAYMIYYAH



al-Imām al-Sayyid  
Muḥammad ibn ʿAbū al-Qāsim 'Abū al-ʿAswād (d. 1182H)

The Purification of Tawḥīd



Translated by Abū Ruyayyah  
with introductions from other works of the Submitter



Imām  
Muḥammad ibn ʿAbū ʿUbaydī (d. 1200H)

The Foundations of Islām

being a translation of *ʿAqā'id al-Imān* by Abū ʿUbaydī Muḥammad ibn ʿAbū ʿUbaydī



Translated by Abū Ruyayyah  
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# GARDENS OF PURIFICATION

SHAYKHUL-ISLĀM IBN TAYMIYYAH



Allāh the Most High Said: "And hasten to the forgiveness of your Lord and a Paradise as wide as the Heavens and the Earth prepared for those who fear Allāh" [Aali 'Imrān: 133]

Citing his teacher Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah, Ibn Al-Qayyim said that, 'zuhd' is to leave something that has no benefit for one's Hereafter. And 'wara' is to leave something for fear of harming one's Hereafter."

*Zuhd* reflects a lack of want and desire for something, and *wara'* is to abstain from something and guard against potential hazards. Yet both these qualities are nuanced and the correct course to take in assuming asceticism and piety is to abstain from unlawful acts and desires, while being moderate in all forms of worship. It is primarily knowing that adherence to the Sunnah preserves its followers from the blameworthy desirous self and the evil it harvests.

Indeed those who follow paths of religious innovation cannot escape falling into the traps of sins and being shackled by its chains because it is a consequence of following desires. It is for this reason, innovators are called people of desires; and while the path of the Sunnah is paved with knowledge, justice and guidance - the path of innovation is paved with ignorance, oppression, and pursuit of speculation and whatever the desirous self is apt to want.

This English translation of '*Al-Zuhd wal Wara' wal Ibādah*' is from the shorter works penned by Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah. Within it, he signposts profound points on self-purification in thorough detail, presenting a refreshing outline the reader can easily appreciate and administer in his his/her daily life.

The author, Taqī Al-Dīn Abū'l-'Abbās Aḥmad ibn `Abdu'l-Salām ibn Taymiyyah al-Ḥarrānī (d. 728h) was a leading Hanbali scholar and a Mujtahid in his own right. His breadth of learning and depth of understanding was accepted by all of his peers and many of his biographers stated that he clearly surpassed the vast majority, if not all of the scholars of his time. He was a prolific writer and skilled orator. He was deeply religious and unwavering in his adherence to Islām and the Sunnah and repudiating all that opposed it.



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