

The Perfume-Seller & the Blacksmith

Concise Words on Good and Bad Companionships



Shaikh 'Abdur-Raḥmān As-Sa'dī
Shaikh Sālih Al-Fawzān
Shaikh Muḥammad Ibn Hādī
Shaikh Zaid Al-Madkhālī

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From the Speech of:

Shaikh 'Abdur-Raḥmān as-Sa'dī (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ)

Shaikh Zaid bin Hādī al-Madkhalī (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ)

Shaikh Ṣāliḥ bin Fawzān al-Fawzān (حَفِظَهُ اللَّهُ)

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ISBN: 978-1-902727-49-3

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First Edition: June 2017 CE; Ramadan 1438 AH

Published by: Salafi Publications,

Distributed by:

The Salafi Bookstore

472 Coventry Road,

Birmingham,

United Kingdom,

B10 0UG

t. 0121.773.0003

t. 0121.773.0033

f. 0121.773.4882

E-Mail: admin@SPubs.com



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Printed by Mega Printing in Turkey

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Arabic Transliteration System

Throughout the present work, a modified version of the Library of Congress transliteration system has been consistently employed whenever an Arabic expression is quoted. The following table explains the Arabic transliteration system for Arabic consonants and vowels:

Arabic	Transliteration	Arabic	Transliteration
أ	a	ط	t
ء	'	ظ	z
ب	b	ع	'
ت	t	غ	gh
ث	th	ف	f
ج	j	ق	q
ح	h	ك	k
خ	kh	ل	l
د	d	م	m
ذ	dh	ن	n
ر	r	هـ	h

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ز	z	و	w
س	s	ي	y
ش	sh		
ص	ṣ		
ض	ḍ		

Arabic	Transliteration	Arabic	Transliteration
ا	ā	ان	-an
و	ū	ون	-un
ي	ī	ين	-in
أ	a	اون	aw
أ	u	اين	ay
إ	i		

Other Symbols

صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ May Allāh extol and bestow peace and security on him

رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ May Allāh be pleased with him

رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ May Allāh be pleased with them

رَحِمَهُ اللهُ May Allāh have mercy on him

Introduction

All praise is for Allāh, we praise Him, we seek His aid and we ask for His forgiveness. We seek Allāh's refuge from the evils of ourselves and the evils of our actions. Whomsoever Allāh guides then none can misguide him, and whomsoever Allāh misguides then none can guide him.

I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped except Allāh, alone, without any partners; and I bear witness that Muḥammad is His Slave and His Messenger. To proceed:

It is essential in life that a person mixes with and has dealings with other people, some of these people remain nothing short of acquaintances with whom one does not extend except brief encounters, yet besides these it is essential that one takes some of the people as friends and companions. The people however; vary greatly in their mannerisms, dispositions and temperaments, so from them will be the good natured, upright, pious individual, friendship with whom one stands to benefit from in a number of aspects. From them also will be the ill-natured, insolent, wicked individual, friendship with whom one stands to attain nothing but harms from in all its varying forms.

It is due to good companionship that a great many people throughout time were guided and led aright, just as many from them were misguided and led astray and only incurred losses and harms – all due to bad companionship.

Therefore the Book of Allāh and the Sunnah of His Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) unequivocally encourage adhering to righteous companionship – as well as discourage and warn against evil

companionship. Since the goodness which one attains through keeping good companionship is well known – due to that which good companions enjoin, and the negative consequences of keeping bad companionship are clear due to such companions enjoining that which is of detriment.

The importance of keeping good companionship is an affair whose significance can be found in the supplication of the Prophet Ibrahim (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ), who said:

رَبِّ هَبْ لِي حُكْمًا وَأَلْحِقْنِي بِالصَّالِحِينَ

“My Lord, grant me Hukm,¹ and join me with the righteous.”²

Likewise other Prophets (عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ) supplicated and asked to be granted good righteous companionship in the Hereafter;

Yūsuf (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) said:

تَوَفَّنِي مُسْلِمًا وَأَلْحِقْنِي بِالصَّالِحِينَ

“Cause me to die as a Muslim and join me with the righteous.”³

Sulaimān (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) said:

¹ Regarding the meaning of ‘Hukm’ here, then Al-Hāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr (رَحِمَهُ اللهُ) said: “Ibn ‘Abbās said it is ‘*knowledge*’, ‘Ikrimah said it is ‘*intellect/understanding*’, Mujāhid said it is ‘*the Qur’ān*’, and As-Suddī said it is ‘*Prophethood*.’” (See: *Tafsīr Al-Qur’ān Al-‘Adhīm*, vol. 5 p. 304)

Regarding his saying: “**And join me with the righteous.**” Ibn Kathīr said: “Meaning: make me with the righteous in this world, as well as in the Hereafter.” (See: *Tafsīr Al-Qur’ān Al-‘Adhīm*, vol. 5 p. 304)

² Ash-Shu’arā: 83

³ Yūsuf: 101

وَأَدْخِلْنِي بِرَحْمَتِكَ فِي عِبَادِكَ الصَّالِحِينَ

“And admit me by Your Mercy among Your righteous servants.”⁴

Therefore the affair of companionship is not one to be taken lightly, since good righteous companionship can lead to a number of blessings and favours from Allāh, not just for an individual, or even for a community; but for the entire Ummah as a whole – as was the case with the companionship which existed between the Caliph: Sulaimān bin ‘Abdil-Malik and: Rajā bin Haywah,⁵

⁴ An-Naml: 19

⁵ They were: Sulaimān bin ‘Abdil-Malik bin Marwān al-Qurashī al-Umawī – Amīrul Mu‘minīn, the Umayyad Caliph, and: Rajā bin Haywah; the noble Tābi‘ī, the just and upright Minister – advisor to the Caliphs of Banī Umayyah and loyal friend and close companion of both Sulaimān bin ‘Abdil-Malik and ‘Umar bin ‘Abdil-‘Azīz. Adh-Dhahabī said: “Rajā had a great station with Sulaimān bin ‘Abdil-Malik as well as with ‘Umar bin ‘Abdil-‘Azīz; and Allāh put good things into effect at his hands.” (*Siyar A‘lām an-Nubalā* vol 4 p.560)

Sulaimān bin ‘Abdil-Malik likewise kept ‘Umar bin ‘Abdil-‘Azīz as a Minister and sought his advice, and thus many good things were effectuated by Sulaimān, and he would listen to ‘Umar bin ‘Abdil-‘Azīz regarding them. (*Tarīkh Dimashq* vol 23 p.292)

Sa‘īd bin ‘Abdil-‘Azīz said: “The Caliphate of Sulaimān bin ‘Abdil-Malik was as though it was the Caliphate of ‘Umar bin ‘Abdil-‘Azīz, since if he intended something; he would say to him (‘Umar): ‘*What do you say O Abā Hafs?*’ Thus he commissioned rulership to ‘Umar bin ‘Abdil-‘Azīz after him.” (*Tarīkh Dimashq* vol 47 p.112)

something which was reiterated by Sufyān bin ‘Uyainah (رضي الله عنه) who said: “Look to Sulaimān bin ‘Abdil-Malik; who had

A close friendship existed between Rajā bin Haywah and ‘Umar bin ‘Abdil-‘Azīz, as was indicated by Ibrahīm bin Yazīd who said: “I arrived with some suits of clothes from ‘Urwah bin Muḥammad bin ‘Atiyyah as-Sa’dī for ‘Umar bin ‘Abdil-‘Azīz, so he set aside a suit from them and said: *‘This is for my close friend Rajā bin Haywah.’*” (*Tahdhīb al-Kamāl* vol 9 p.155)

Adh-Dhahabī said: “And Rajā – it is he who endorsed taking the Khilāfah to ‘Umar bin ‘Abdil-‘Azīz, and he was like a Minister to Sulaimān bin ‘Abdil-Malik – and his virtues are many.” (*Ta’rikh al-Islām* vol 3 p.236)

This was as mentioned by Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr who said: Ibn Jarīr (At-Tabarī) reports from Rajā bin Haywah – and he was an honest and truthful Minister to Banī Umayyah, he said: “Sulaimān bin ‘Abdil-Malik sought my advice whilst he was unwell, in order to appoint his small son (as successor) – who had not yet attained puberty. So I said: ‘Indeed; from that which will safeguard the Caliph in his grave is that he appoints over the Muslims after himself a righteous man.’ Then he consulted me regarding the succession of his son Dawūd, so I said to him: ‘He is away from you at Constantinople, and you do not know if he is alive or has died.’

So he said: ‘Who then do you see?’ So I said: ‘the proposal is yours O Amirul Mu’minin.’ He said: ‘How do you see regarding ‘Umar bin ‘Abdil-‘Azīz?’ So I said: ‘I know him by Allāh, to be good, outstanding, a Muslim.’ He said: ‘He is by Allāh as such, however – I fear that my brothers will not be pleased with that.’” So Rajā suggested that he could appoint Yazīd bin ‘Abdil-Malik as successor (heir apparent) after ‘Umar bin ‘Abdil-‘Azīz, in order to please Banī Marwān with that. So Sulaimān wrote out his decree appointing ‘Umar bin ‘Abdil-‘Azīz as Khalīfah after himself. (*Al-Bidāyah wan-Nihāyah* vol 12 p.650-651)

companionship with Rajā bin Haywah, thus he directed him aright and rectified him.”⁶

The result of this good righteous companionship radiates in the legacy for which Sulaimān’s reign would become known for; as stated by Muḥammad bin Sīrīn who said: “Allāh have mercy on Sulaimān, he opened his Caliphate by reviving the prayer (in its correct time), and he ended it with his appointing ‘Umar as successor.”⁷

Ibn Hibbān (رحمته الله) said: “The intelligent one adheres to companionship with the very best and leaves off companionship of the wicked. Since love of the best (of people) is quick in its connectivity, slow in its severance, whilst love of the wicked is quick in its severance; slow in its connectivity, and companionship with the wicked brings about bad suspicion of the

⁶ *Kitāb al-‘Uzlah* p.141

⁷ *Siyar A’lām an-Nubalā* vol 5 p.112. Issuing the instructions for the prayer to be conducted in its correct time (after some shortcomings in this regard had previously set in) – along with other virtuous directives – was through the influence and advice of ‘Umar bin ‘Abdil-‘Azīz as is stated by Adh-Dhahabī in *Siyar* (vol 5 p.125). As for conferring the Caliphate to ‘Umar bin ‘Abdil-‘Azīz; then virtually all historical accounts – despite differing slightly over the exact wordings of the discussion which took place between Sulaimān and Rajā, with some sources stating that Rajā himself proposed ‘Umar’s name and others citing that he consciously waited for Sulaimān to suggest ‘Umar and then endorsed him – they all cite the influence of Rajā bin Haywah in the final decision which heralded the virtuous reign of ‘Umar bin ‘Abdil-‘Azīz over the Ummah.

best (of people), and whoever befriends the wicked; then he will not be safeguarded from entering into their contingent.”⁸

Bad companionship leads to the exact opposite and ultimately leads to a bad outcome, bad companionship can lead to a range of evils, not just for an individual, or even for a community; but for the entire Ummah as a whole – as was the case with the companionship which existed between another Caliph: ‘Abdullāh bin Hārūn ar-Rashīd better known as: Al-Ma’mūn, and: Bishr al-Marīsī as well as Ahmad bin Abī Du’ād⁹ something which was

⁸ *Rawdatul ‘Uqalā wa Nuzhatul Fuḍalā* p.80

⁹ They were: Abul-‘Abbās ‘Abdullāh bin Hārūn ar-Rashīd bin Muḥammad al-Mahdī al-Ma’mūn al-Abbāsī –the Abbasid Caliph, and: Bishr bin Ghayāth al-Marīsī – one of the heads of the Jahmiyyah in his time; regarding whom Adh-Dhahabī (رحمة الله) said: “The astray innovator, he should not be narrated from – and no respect. He mastered theology and then he assailed the saying that the Qur’ān is created and debated over it. He did not come across Al-Jahm bin Ṣafwān but instead took his sayings and used them to afford arguments and relied upon them and called to them.” He said also: “He was a Jahmī; he had standing with the State.” (See: *Mizān al-‘Itidāl* vol 1 p.322 and *Siyar A’lām an-Nubalā* vol 10 p.201 and p.272-273) Ahmad bin Abī Du’ād – the odious Jahmī, the enemy of Imām Ahmad and was a caller to the saying that the Qur’ān is created, he was recommended by Al-Ma’mūn to his brother Al-Mu’taṣim who entrusted him with the Judiciary and would not go through with an issue without consulting him – thus he was distinguished with him. He induced the Sulṭān to test the people with the issue that the Qur’ān is created. (See: *Al-Bidāyah wan-Nihāyah* vol 14 p.362-363 and *Siyar A’lām an-Nubalā* vol 11 p.169-170) These two individuals were from the heads of the Jahmiyyah of their time, they were from amongst the Jahmiyyah who influenced and corrupted the ideology of the Rulers, as Shaikh ul

reiterated by Al-Hāfiẓ ibn Kathīr (رحمته الله) who said regarding Bishr that he was: “One of those that misguided Al-Ma’mūn.”¹⁰

He said likewise: “As for his (Al-Ma’mūn’s) being upon the Madhab of the Mu’tazilah; then he had gathered together with a group – from them was Bishr bin Ghayāth al-Marīsī, and thus he took from them this Madhab of falsehood.¹¹ He used to love knowledge, however he had no effective insight in it, and so that which penetrated had entered upon him due to that, and falsehood was propagandized with him, and so he called to it and forcibly induced the people upon it.”¹²

The result of this bad companionship remains a stark reminder of the legacy for which Al-Ma’mūn’s reign would become known for¹³ as stated by Shaikh ul Islām Ibn Taymiyyah (رحمته الله) who said:

Islām Ibn Taymiyyah said: “They corrupted those that they corrupted from the Rulers during the rule of Abil-‘Abbās known by the title of: Al-Ma’mūn and his brother Abī Ishāq Al-Mu’taṣim and Al-Wāthiq.” (*Bayān Tilbīs al-Jahmiyyah* vol 3 p.516-517)

¹⁰ *Al-Bidāyah wan-Nihāyah* vol 14 p.234

¹¹ Ibn Kathīr said: “Al-Ma’mūn; there had gathered around him – as well as his having become overwhelmed by a group from the Mu’tazilah, so they digressed him from the path of truth to that of falsehood, and adorned for him the saying that the Qur’ān was created – as well as negating the Attributes from Allāh, The Mighty and Majestic.” (*Al-Bidāyah wan-Nihāyah* vol 14 p.396)

¹² *Al-Bidāyah wan-Nihāyah* vol 14 p.217-218

¹³ This is testament to what happens when keeping company with the people of innovation and those who possess deviant ideologies, these being from the worst forms of bad companionships and associations

“At the time the Jahmiyyah manifested their initial saying; and put the Imāms of Islām such as Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal and other than him under trial, the origin of the saying of these inwardly closet infidels had become manifest, and that was during the rulership of Al-Ma’mūn then Mu’tasim. And so it regenerated after that the colossal events which occurred in Islām – during the fourth century – the expounding of which would be lengthy, from that which would rock the regions of the Islamic lands due to it.”¹⁴

Ibn Taymiyyah (رحمته الله) said likewise when speaking about the tribulations of that time: “So this is the story of the trial of the people of the east, wherein it unfolded and was facilitated, then it proceeded in the lands, and so Ibn Abī Du’ād and Bishr bin Ghayāth arose for it.”¹⁵ So they both filled the world with severe

which a person can have, and the likes of which had found their way into the court of the Caliph of the era, and from which he became influenced, as Ibn al-Qayyim (رحمته الله) pointed out when he said: “...‘Abdullāh al-Ma’mūn came to rule over the people, and he loved an array of sciences, and yet his gatherings were abundant with a variety of Theologians of the sciences. So a love of the intellectual things (things perceived by the intellect) overcame him...” Then he said: “So a group from the Jahmiyyah became predominant over his gatherings, from those that his father Ar-Rashīd had kept farthest distant, and had followed them up with imprisonment and execution. So they crammed the innovation of the Jahmi ideology into his ear and his heart – and he accepted it and approved of it, and called the people to it and punished them over it.” (See: *As-Ṣawā’iq al-Mursalāh* vol 3 p.1072)

¹⁴ *Sharh al-Aṣbahāniyyah* p.380

¹⁵ The association between these individuals and the fact that the Caliph Al-Ma’mūn had brought such people into close association is well

trial, and the hearts with tribulations – for a great length of time.”¹⁶

Bad companionship has the potential to destine an individual for the Hell-Fire, as stated by Al-‘Allāmah Muḥammad Amīn ash-Shanqīṭī (رَحِمَهُ اللهُ) who said at the end of his lengthy discussion of the saying of Allāh, The Most High:

وَيَوْمَ بَعْضُ الظَّالِمِ عَلَى يَدَيْهِ يَقُولُ يَا لَيْتَنِي اتَّخَذْتُ مَعَ الرَّسُولِ سَبِيلًا ○ يَا وَيْلَتَى لَيْتَنِي لَمْ
أَتَّخِذْ فَلَانًا حَلِيلًا ○ لَقَدْ أَضَلَّنِي عَنِ الذِّكْرِ بَعْدَ إِذْ جَاءَنِي ۗ وَكَانَ الشَّيْطَانُ لِلْإِنْسَانِ
حَدُولًا

documented in historical accounts. From such accounts is that which is mentioned by Ja’far bin Muḥammad al-Anmatī who stated that when Al-Ma’mūn entered Baghdad: “He ordered that a group from the Jurists and the Theologians and the people of knowledge should enter upon him so he could select them for his sittings (of social interaction) and for his discussions....and Aḥmad bin Abi Du’ād was one of them – as was Bishr al-Marīsī.” (*Bishr al-Marīsī wa Arā-ahu al-I’tiqādiyyah Ta’athuran wa Ta’tthirā* p.43, the origin of the reference can be found in *Kitāb Baghdād* p.36)

¹⁶ *Bayān Tilbīs al-Jahmiyyah* vol 2 p.232-233. The trial instigated by the Jahmiyyah over their claim that the Qur’ān was created continued under three successive Caliphs, those being: Al-Ma’mūn, Al-Mu’taṣim and Al-Wāthiq, with their focus in particular upon Imām Aḥmad bin Hanbal who remained firm throughout upholding the correct beliefs of the people of the Sunnah in such issues. It was lifted when Al-Mutawakil came to rule, as mentioned by Al-Hāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr who said: “And so the affair of the Sunnah was elevated – immensely – during the days of Al-Mutawakil (May Allāh Forgive him), and he would not appoint anyone except after consulting Imām Aḥmad bin Hanbal.” (*Al-Bidāyah wan-Nihāyah* vol 14 p.350)

“And the Day the wrongdoer will bite at his hands – he will say; Oh, Would that I had taken a path with the Messenger. Oh, woe to me! Would that I had not taken so-and-so as a friend. He indeed led me astray from the Reminder after it had come to me. And Satan is ever a deserter to man.”¹⁷

“This noble āyah proves that the bad companion can enter his companion into the Fire, and the warning against bad companionship is renowned and well known. He, The Majestic and Most High, has explained in Sūrah as-Ṣāffāt; that a man from the people of Paradise swore by Allāh that his companion almost ruined him – meaning: destroyed him with the punishment of the Fire. However; Allāh was Benevolent towards him, and so He overtook him with His Mercy and His Benefaction – and so guided him and saved him from the Fire, and that is in His saying, The Most High;

قَالَ قَائِلٌ مِّنْهُمْ إِنِّي كَانَ لِي قَرِينٌ ○ يَقُولُ أَأِنَّكَ لَمِنَ الْمُصَدِّقِينَ

“A speaker among them will say; “Indeed, I had a companion. Who used to say: ‘Are you from among those who attest.’”

Until His saying, The Most High:

فَاطَّلَعَ فَرَآهُ فِي سَوَاءِ الْجَحِيمِ ○ قَالَ تَاللَّهِ إِن كِدْتُ لَأَتْرِدِينَ ○ وَلَوْلَا نِعْمَةُ رَبِّي لَكُنْتُ مِنَ الْمُحْضَرِينَ

“So he looked and saw him in the midst of the Fire. He said: “By Allāh, you almost ruined me. And had it not been for the favour of my Lord; I would have been of those brought forth [to Hell].”^{18 / 19}

¹⁷ Al-Furqān: 27-29

¹⁸ As-Ṣāffāt: 51-57

Ibn Hibbān (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) said: “The intelligent one does not make companionship with the wicked, because companionship with a foul companion is a portion of the Fire, it ensues malice, its love does not stand straight, and it does not fulfill its commitments. Indeed from the bliss of an individual are four qualities: that his wife is conformable, and his children are reverent, and his brethren are righteous, and that his sustenance is to be found within his homeland.”²⁰

So gathered before you O reader, in this book are four speeches which demonstrate good and bad companionships, their impact upon a person’s life as well as their outcomes.

Finally I say:

رَبَّنَا فَاعْفُرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَكَفِّرْ عَنَّا سَيِّئَاتِنَا وَتَوَفَّنَا مَعَ الْأَبْرَارِ

“Our Lord; forgive us our sins and remit from us our misdeeds and cause us to die with the righteous.”²¹

In solidarity with the words of Imām at-Ṭabarī (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) who said regarding His saying, The Most High:

وَتَوَفَّنَا مَعَ الْأَبْرَارِ

“And cause us to die with the righteous.”

*“And take us (at death) unto Yourself when You take us back to Yourself, to be from amongst the righteous, and gather us in their place of assembly – and along with them.”*²² *Allāhumma Āmin*

¹⁹ *Adwā al-Bayān* vol 6 p.316

²⁰ *Rawdatul ‘Uqalā wa Nuzhatul Fudalā* p.81

²¹ *Āl-‘Imrān*: 193

Shaikh ‘Abdur-Rahmān As-Sa’dī

Shaikh ‘Abdur-Rahmān as-Sa’dī (رحمة الله) said:²³

On the authority of Abī Mūsā al-Ash’arī (رضي الله عنه) who said that the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said:

“The example of the righteous companion and the evil companion is like that of the bearer of musk and the blower of the [blacksmiths] bellows. So the bearer of musk; either he will give you some, or you will buy some from him or you will find a pleasant smell from him. And the blower of the [blacksmiths] bellows; either he will burn your clothes, or you will find a noxious smell from him.”²⁴

This hadith comprises the encouragement of choosing righteous companions, and a warning against their opposite. The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) gave an example with these two illustrations, making clear that the righteous companion; is that in all of your situations with him you are in a state of enrichment and good. Such as the bearer of musk from whom you benefit by way of due to that which is with him from musk – either due to a gift or by an equivalent and the very least of that: is the duration of your sitting with him and you are contented in soul due to the fragrance of the musk.

²² *Jāmi’ al-Bayān* vol 7 p.482

²³ Taken from the book: *Buhjatu Qulūb al-Abrār* p.163 in explanation of hadith number 68.

²⁴ Reported by Al-Bukhārī (no.5214) and Muslim (no.2628)

So the good which affects the servant from his righteous companion is more emphatic and better than the most excellent musk. For he will either teach you that which benefits you in your religion and your worldly affairs, or that he will confer for you an advice, or that he warns you against continuing upon that which would harm you. So he encourages you upon the obedience of Allāh and of obedience to the parents and of maintaining the ties of kinship. He likewise enlightens you to your own shortcomings and calls you to noble mannerisms and its merits by way of his statement and his action and his circumstance. For indeed; the individual has a natural propensity for following his companion and the one whom he sits with as well as with regard to character – and the souls are conscripted soldiers; some of them lead others towards good – or to its opposite.

The least that you benefit from the righteous companion – and it is a benefit which should not be underestimated – is that because of him; you abstain from misdeeds and sins, out of consideration for the companionship and out of mutually competing in goodness and being high above committing any evil. Likewise that he seeks to guard you in your presence as well as in your absence, and his love and his supplication benefits you in the state of your life – as well as after your death, and that he defends you due to his connection with you and his love of you.

Those are affairs which you yourself do not commence in its defence, just as he may connect you with people and actions from whom you benefit from due to your connection with them.

So the benefits of righteous companions cannot be counted nor enumerated, and it suffices to say that a person is to be deemed

by way of his associate, and that he is upon the religion of his friend.

As for the companionship of evil; then it is the opposite of everything we have mentioned, and they are detrimental from every aspect for those who accompany them, and are evil upon those that mix with them. For how many a people have perished due to them, and how many led their companions to perils from where they perceived – as well as from where they could not have perceived.

It is due to this that it is from the greatest blessings of Allāh upon the believing servant; that he grants him the ability towards companionship with the most righteous. Likewise from His punishment upon his servant; is that He puts him to trial him by way of companionship with the evil ones.

Companionship of the finest leads a person to the highest level, and companionship of the evil (worst ones) leads him to the lowest of the low.

Companionship of the finest necessitates for him the attainment of beneficial sciences, and eminent manners and righteous actions. Whilst companionship of the evil ones forbids him from that entirely:

وَيَوْمَ يَعْصُ الظَّالِمُ عَلَى يَدَيْهِ يَقُولُ يَا لَيْتَنِي اتَّخَذْتُ مَعَ الرَّسُولِ سَبِيلًا ۝ يَا وَيْلَتَى لَيْتَنِي لَمْ
 أَتَّخِذْ فَلَانًا خَلِيلًا ۝ لَقَدْ أَضَلَّنِي عَنِ الذِّكْرِ بَعْدَ إِذْ جَاءَنِي ۝ وَكَانَ الشَّيْطَانُ لِلْإِنْسَانِ
 خَدُولًا

“And the Day the wrongdoer will bite at his hands – he will say; Oh, Would that I had taken a path with the Messenger. Oh, woe to me! Would that I had not taken so-and-so as a friend. He

indeed led me astray from the Reminder after it had come to me. And Satan is ever a deserter to man.”²⁵

²⁵ Al-Furqān: 27-29

Shaikh Zaid bin Hādī al-Madkhalī

Shaikh Zaid bin Hādī al-Madkhalī (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) said:²⁶

Good sittings are many and of varying types; I shall mention something of them in that which follows:

1: The gatherings in the mosques, since they are the best sites on the earth, and because they are the houses of Allāh which have been permitted to be raised and in which His Name is to be remembered, and Allāh, The Most High, has necessitated upon us enjoining the Friday as well as the congregational prayer within them. Except if there is a legislated excuse such as sickness or rain and the like of that which are considered acceptable excuses in the Islamic legislation.

In this necessitation is a clear proof that they are the best sites, and that sitting within them for the remembrance of Allāh and in obedience to Him are from the best of sittings, and from that which affirms their goodness is that Allāh has praised their maintainers and visitors and has commended them and described them with having reverential fear and guidance and Ēmān, when He, The Mighty and Majestic, said:

إِنَّمَا يَعْزُرُ مَسَاجِدَ اللَّهِ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَى الزَّكَاةَ وَلَمْ يَخْشَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ ۗ فَعَسَىٰ أُولَٰئِكَ أَن يَكُونُوا مِنَ الْمُهْتَدِينَ

²⁶ The speech of the Shaikh was taken from the book: *Al-Ajwibah as-Sadidah 'anil As-ilah ar-Rashidah* vol 1 p.70-76. May Allāh reward the brother who forwarded this extract, and from which the idea for the compilation of this book came about.

“Indeed; the Mosques of Allāh shall be maintained [and visited] only by those who believe in Allāh and the Last Day; and establish the prayer, and give the Zakāt and fear none except Allāh. It is they who are expected to be of the [rightly] guided.”²⁷

There occurs in the authentic hadith from the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) that he said:

“No people gather together in a house from the houses of Allāh, reciting the Book of Allāh and studying it amongst themselves, except that tranquility descends upon them, and mercy envelops them, and the Angels surround them, and Allāh makes a mention of them with those that are with Him.”²⁸

I say: sufficient is this as a noble station and a virtue for the maintainers (and visitors) of the Mosques with the remembrance of Allāh and for obedience to Him and to recite His Book which has been described by The One who revealed it with: excellence and goodness and perfection, He said:

اللَّهُ نَزَلَ أَحْسَنَ الْحَدِيثِ كِتَابًا مُتَشَابِهًا مَثَانِي تَقْشَعِرُّ مِنْهُ جُلُودُ الَّذِينَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ ثُمَّ
تَلَيْنَ جُلُودَهُمْ وَقُلُوبُهُمْ إِلَى ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ

“Allāh has sent down the most excellent of speech; a Book consimilar [self-resembling], oft-repeated. The skins of those who fear their Lord shiver from it [due to what it contains].

²⁷ At-Tawbah: 18

²⁸ Reported by Muslim (no.2699)

Then their skins and their hearts soften to the remembrance of Allāh.”²⁹

Yes; sufficient is this as a virtue and a blessing as well as a beneficent favour to them, in that these qualities which they have been honourably bestowed with – is done so whilst they are in the Houses of Allāh. They cannot be attained in other than them from the gatherings of the dunya in which affairs related to the other actions from the objects of life are mutually discussed within them.

O for the sake of Allāh; how beautiful are the gatherings of remembrance (of Allāh), and how the Muslims have all the more reason for its habituation, in order for them to be subjected to the breezes of their Lord. For indeed; He has breezes during the day as well as during the night, and from these breezes is tranquility which descends upon the hearts and so it illuminates them brightly with Ēmān and thus polishes them from the dirt of errors and sins. Such that it becomes like a mirror in terms of lighting and clarity, it is at that moment that the light flows out from it to all of the limbs, and so they persist upon being submissive to the command of their Lord, hence they traverse upright upon a straight path.

From it is mercy which descends from The Oft-Forgiving, The Bestower of Mercy, and how severe in need are the creation for the Mercy of Allāh which encompasses all things, and is prevalent in every region. In particular; the mercy which He, The Glorified, has written for those who are fearful (of Him) and they give the

²⁹ Sūrah Az-Zumar: 23

zakāt – and those who believe in His signs, those that follow The Messenger, the unlettered Prophet who believes in Allāh and His Words.

From them are the noble Angels that travel throughout the land, they follow up the gatherings of remembrance, so if they find a gathering in which Allāh, The Glorified, is remembered; they call out to each other: “come onwards to your need” and so they encompass that gathering from all sides – until they reach the loftiest regions of the Heavens.

From it is the good commendation of Allāh and of His graceful mention; this is for whosoever remembers Him from His creation. For indeed; He mentions him amongst a creation that is pure, that do not disobey Allāh in that which He commands them with, and they do as they are commanded. They make the Tasbīḥ night and day and do not slacken.

Indeed; the companions of the Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) realized the value of these virtues and bestowed favours; as did those that proceeded upon their methodology. Hence they would be ardent upon studying the Noble Qur’ān together in the mosques as well as commissioning the circles in which they would be instructed in and taught the legislated sciences in regards to their worship and mutual dealings and in their mannerisms and their conduct. This was until they reached in the quest for Dhikr; a highest degree that proves the extent of their understanding of its nobility and virtue.

For indeed it has been related from them that they would meet in the marketplaces and some of them would say to others: “come with us; let us believe for a moment.”³⁰

– What is this?

It is eagerness upon the love of Allāh and in the strengthening of the connection with Him. It is a desire in taking advantage of time so that it should not go by neglectfully with regard to Allāh. It is an awakening which fights off false desires and Satan and so defeats it in the battle grounds of this life. So O Allāh; aid us upon remembrance of You, and of giving thanks to You and in worshipping You in a fine manner. For Indeed You are The Best of those that are asked, and The Greatest of those that help.

2: The gatherings of the people of beneficial knowledge and righteous actions and Zuhd and piety, those that aid you if you remember, and remind you when you forget. They endeavour to expend advice for you if you seek good counsel, and so you acquire fine mannerisms from them as well as elevated and lofty etiquette:

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ ۖ فَبِهِدَاهُمُ افْتَدَىٰ

“They are those whom Allāh has guided, so by way of their guidance; follow [their way].”³¹

³⁰ This has been mentioned from Mu’adh bin Jabal and ‘Abdullāh bin Rawāḥah and other than them. See: *Fatḥh ul Bārī* (1/45) and *Al-Muṣannaf Ibn Abī Shaibah* (30943, 30878, 30877).

³¹ Al-An’ām: 90

3: Gathering with a people who are in need of your knowledge, and to attain correct comprehension of the religion of Allāh at your hands, and they accept your valuable counsel as well as your beneficial admonitions and your directives which commit to a definite purpose – those that effect spiritual nutrition for them. It causes the ailment of ignorance to go away from them, and so you successfully attain the reward due to teaching them; and due to your directing them upon the straight path, since:

“Whoever guides [others] to goodness, then for him shall be an equivalence of the reward of the one who practices it.”³²

– As has been authentically reported in that regard in a ḥadīth from the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم).

4: A sitting with a book from which you quench your thirst; those (books) which have been put down in writing from the legislated Islamic sciences – in their varying types. Or the sciences of true illustrious history, comprising of the stories of the Prophets and the Messengers with their nations, and comprising of the mention of a people that dedicated themselves for Allāh and so embarked upon the battles in Jihād in the path of Allāh in order for the word of Allāh to be uppermost (manifest) and the word of those that disbelieve to be lowermost. In order for the honour and victory to be for Allāh and His Messenger and the righteous ones from His servants.

In particular; the books which had the history of the Muḥammadi call recorded within them, that which incorporates the successfully enabled expeditions in which the banners of truth

³² Reported by Muslim (no.4876)

were launched at the hands of the brave ones from this Ummah from among its extraordinary people – its Mujāhidīn; from the Muhājirīn and the Anṣār regarding whom Allāh praised and was pleased with, when He, The Glorified, said:

وَالسَّابِقُونَ الْأَوَّلُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ
وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ۚ ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ

“And the earliest and foremost [to accept Islām] from the Muhājirīn [those who migrated to Al-Madīnah] and the Anṣār [those who lived in Al-Madīnah and aided them after migration] and those who follow them in goodness, Allāh is Pleased with them and they are pleased with Him. And He has prepared for them gardens beneath which rivers flow, to dwell therein forever. That is the tremendous success.”³³

He said likewise:

لَقَدْ تَابَ اللَّهُ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ وَالْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُ فِي سَاعَةِ الْعُسْرَةِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا كَادَ
يَزِيغُ قُلُوبَ فَرِيقٍ مِّنْهُمْ ثُمَّ تَابَ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ إِنَّهُ بِهِمْ رَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ

“Allāh has conferred forgiveness upon the Prophet, and the Muhājirīn and the Anṣār – who followed him in the time of difficulty, after the hearts of a group of them had nearly swerved. Then He accepted their repentance, indeed; He is unto them Kind [and Compassionate], Most Merciful.”³⁴

He, The Mighty and Majestic said likewise:

لَقَدْ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ يُبَايِعُونَكَ تَحْتَ الشَّجَرَةِ فَعَلِمَ مَا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ فَأَنْزَلَ السَّكِينَةَ
عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَتَانَهُمْ فَتْحًا قَرِيبًا

³³ At-Tawbah: 100

³⁴ At-Tawbah: 117

“Indeed Allāh was pleased with the believers when they gave the pledge to you [O Muḥammad] under the tree. He knew what was in their hearts, so He sent down tranquility upon them and rewarded them with a victory close at hand.”³⁵

Likewise, that which has come in the meaning of that from the āyāt in which the beautiful and good commendation has been recorded regarding those choicest elite; whom their Lord had chosen and guided to a straight path.

O Allāh, make us of those about whom You informed in Your deciding statement:

وَالَّذِينَ جَاءُوا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ
فِي قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ رَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ

“And those who came after them say, ‘Our Lord! Forgive us and our brothers who have preceded us in Faith, and put not in our hearts any hatred against those who have believed. Our Lord! Indeed You are Kind [and Compassionate], Most Merciful.’”³⁶

As for the evil gatherings, then they can be summarized in that which follows:

1: The gatherings of negligence of the remembrance of Allāh and being busied with gossip, and violating the honours (of other people) as well as finding enjoyment at the mention of the shortcomings of others whether they be from the living or the dead. From those about whom it is impermissible to backbite nor to have bad suspicion of them, for indeed all of that necessitates

³⁵ Al-Fath: 18

³⁶ Al-Hashr: 10

the anger of Allāh Who has Ghairah (an honourable sense of dignity) when His prohibitions and inviolabilities are violated. Indeed in a warning against negligence there has come from Him, The Glorified, an address to the Prophet (ﷺ) and his nation who follow him in that:

وَلَا تَكُن مِّنَ الْعَافِيِينَ

“And do not be of those who are neglectful.”³⁷

It has been established in a hadith from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said:

“A people do not sit in a gathering; and so get up without making any remembrance [of Allāh] except that they would be getting up from the likes of a carcass of a donkey, and that gathering will be a cause of grief to them on the Day of Resurrection.”

This is the wording of Aḥmad (no.10680) and its chain of narration is Ṣaḥīḥ (authentic).

His saying (ﷺ) has also been established:

“All of the Muslim is inviolable to another Muslim: his blood, and his honour, and his wealth.”³⁸

As for gossiping, then Allāh dislikes it for His servants, as has come in its regard from Abi Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) who said that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said:

³⁷ Al-A'raf: 205

³⁸ Reported by Muslim (no.2564)

“Indeed, Allāh is pleased with three things for you and He dislikes three things for you. He is pleased for you that you should worship Him [alone] and that you do not associate anything else with Him, and that you hold tight altogether to the rope of Allāh and that you do not be divided; and that you advise the one that Allāh places in charge over your affair. And He dislikes three things for you; gossiping [spreading rumours]; and excessive questioning [devoid of benefit] and the wasting of wealth.”³⁹

2: The gatherings of the evil ones who incite the perpetration of sins and hinder away from obedience, for indeed; the Prophet (ﷺ) struck (in their regard) the worst example, as a deterrence from their gatherings, he said:

“The example of the evil companion is like the blower of the [blacksmiths] bellows, either he will burn your clothes, or you will find a foul smell from him.”⁴⁰

– Or as he (ﷺ) said.

3: The gatherings of those that engage in the use of instruments of amusements and musical instruments and entertainment –

³⁹ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (no.1715)

⁴⁰ Reported by Al-Bukhārī (no.5534) and Muslim (no.2628).

The wording of the ḥadīth is: “The example of the righteous companion and the evil companion is like that of the bearer of musk and the blower of the [blacksmiths] bellows. So the bearer of musk; either he will give you some, or you will buy some from him or you will find a pleasant smell from him. And the blower of the [blacksmiths] bellows; either he will burn your clothes, or you will find a noxious smell from him.”

regardless of their varying forms, from that which in this time of ours is known as the art of singing (musical arts).

Likewise being occupied with playing backgammon and chess and Baloot (a card game) and its like, all of that is from the traits of the people of ignorance and wretchedness and misguidance.

As for the one that becomes certain of and has the conviction of the fact that time is a blessing from Allāh; and that it has been bestowed upon the servant in order for one to utilize it by way of obedience to his Lord. Hence a time should not pass him by except that he should be ardent to put forth for himself an accumulated credit from righteous actions into the box of deeds that he presents forth to Allāh out of nearness on The Day he meets Him, and so He will reward him with the most complete reward, and thus has the prosperity of attaining His Paradise and attaining His Pleasure.

By Allāh, The Ever living; if we O community of Muslims were to begin directing our attention and in regard to our perceptions and our hearts the statement of our noble Prophet (may the very best of extolment of his Lord be upon him and the most complete peace and security):

“The two feet of a servant will not move on the Day of Resurrection until he is questioned about four (things): regarding his life-span – in how he spent it, and regarding his youth – in how he dissipated it, and regarding his knowledge – as to what he

practiced in accordance to it, and regarding his wealth – from where he acquired it and upon what he spent it on.”⁴¹

If we were to reflect upon this true and fearful station with the reflection of the intelligent ones; and the reflection of the pious, the reflection of the apprehensive fearful ones:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ هُمْ مِّنْ خَشْيَةِ رَبِّهِمْ مُّشْفِقُونَ ○ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ يُؤْمِنُونَ ○ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ
بِرَبِّهِمْ لَا يُشْرِكُونَ ○ وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْتُونَ مَا آتَوْا وَقُلُوبُهُمْ وَجِلَةٌ أَنَّهُمْ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ رَاجِعُونَ ○

“Indeed, they who are apprehensive from fear of their Lord, and they who believe in the signs of their Lord, and they who do not associate anything (in worship) with their Lord, and they who give what they give while their hearts are fearful that to their Lord they must return.”⁴²

– There would be for us in respect to ourselves momentous affairs that would be pleasing to Allāh.

⁴¹ Reported by At-Tirmidhī (no.2417) from the hadīth of Abī Barzah al-Aslamī and At-Tirmidhī said the hadīth is Ḥasan Ṣaḥīḥ. Regarding it see: Silsilah al-Aḥādīth As-Ṣaḥīḥah (no.946).

The wording of the hadīth as it appears in At-Tirmidhi is: “The two feet of a servant will not move on the Day of Resurrection until he is questioned regarding his life-span – in how he spent it, and regarding his knowledge – as to what he practiced, and regarding his wealth – from where he acquired it and upon what he spent it on, and regarding his body – as to how he wore it out.”

The hadīth was declared Ṣaḥīḥ (authentic) by Shaikh al-Albānī in his Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan At-Tirmidhī (no.2417).

⁴² Al-Mu’minūn: 57-60

Yes; if we were to reflect with the reflection of those outstanding people, we would be fearful of Allāh in our means of access/entry and in our outlet/place of exit and in our statements and our actions and in all of our dealings as well as in all of our modes of behaviour in the life of this world.

However; the hearts have been raided with incursions by their enemy and so have become hardened, and the souls have been raided with incursions and hence they have been bleated out to; and thus they have answered to it. So they have become frittered away in distraction and are negligent, and soon it shall come to know of that which it put forth as well as that which it held back.

The limbs too have been raided with incursions – all of them; and so it runs (its effect) within them along with the blood which flows through the veins; and so they have lagged behind from fulfilling their tasks, and have become weighed down in sluggishness, and they are as though they have not heard the outcry of the trustworthy advisor, the Messenger of the Lord of the whole of creation – when he stated out of caution and warning:

“By Allāh; if you knew that which I know, then you would weep much and you would laugh but a little, and you would not take pleasure with the women upon the beds, and you would go out to the open spaces⁴³ beseeching Allāh, The Most High.”⁴⁴

⁴³ It has been said that this refers to the open space in the courtyard of a home before the door of a house along which the people pass. It has also been said that it refers to the open country and deserts. (See: *Tuhfatul Ahwadhī be-sharh Jāmi’ at-Tirmidhī* vol 6 p.602)

I do not see except that the opposite has occurred, for indeed laughter is plentiful and weeping has dwindled away, and the people are busied in all types of enjoyments, and they have preferred the life of this world. Fear (of Allāh) has decreased and negligence is widespread and expectation has become drawn out, and desires have been followed. It is as if they are unaware that the Hereafter with Allāh is better and more lasting.

This is the state of the people and their actuality today – except for the one whom your Lord has His Mercy upon from amongst them – and how few they are. So to Allāh; not to any other than Him is the complaint.

⁴⁴ Reported by Aḥmad (no.21516) and At-Tirmidhī (no.2414) and Ibn Mājah (no.4190) from the ḥadith of Abi Dharr, and it was declared *Ḥasan* (sound) by At-Tirmidhī and Al-Ḥākim declared it to be *Ṣaḥīḥ* (authentic) in *Al-Mustadrak* (vol 2 p.510-511) as did Shaikh al-Albānī in *As-Ṣaḥīḥah* (no.1722).

Shaikh Ṣāliḥ bin Fawzān al-Fawzān

Shaikh Ṣāliḥ bin Fawzān al-Fawzān (حَفِظَهُ اللهُ) said:⁴⁵

All praise is for Allāh Who commanded with the companionship of the good ones and forbade companionship with the evil ones, thus He said:

وَاصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْعَدَاةِ وَالْعَيْشِ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ ۗ وَلَا تَعْدُ عَيْنَاكَ
عَنْهُمْ تُرِيدُ زِينَةَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ۗ وَلَا تُطِعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُ عَن ذِكْرِنَا وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ وَكَانَ أَمْرُهُ
فُرْطَا

“And keep yourself patient [by being] with those who call upon their Lord in the morning and the evening, seeking His countenance. And let not your eyes overlook them, desiring adornments of the worldly life, and do not obey one whose heart We have made heedless of Our remembrance and who follows his desire and whose affair has been lost.”⁴⁶

I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped except Allāh alone without any partners for Him, He made clear for His servants the paths to good – in order that they should traverse them. He likewise made clear for them the paths to evil – in order that they should abstain from them.

I bear witness also that Muḥammad is His servant and Messenger; who encouraged choosing righteous companionship and warned

⁴⁵ The sermon is taken from the book: *Al-Khuṭab al-Minbariyyah fī Munāsabāt al-‘Aṣriyyah* vol 2 p.148

⁴⁶ Al-Kahf: 28

against evil companionship – may Allāh extol him and his family and his companions and those that traverse upon his methodology and hold steadfast to his Sunnah until the Day of Recompense, as well as His Salutations – many salutations.

As for what follows;

Servants of Allāh; fear Allāh and know that a person in the life of this world cannot abide by himself in complete isolation away from the people, for he has a need of mixing with them and sitting with them. It is a must that this mixing has for it effects which are virtuous or ugly in accordance to the type of people one sits with and those that one mixes with. It is from here that the texts of the Book and the Sunnah are closely connected over the encouragement of choosing righteous companionship; as well as staying away from evil companionship. He, The Most High, said:

وَاصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْعَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ

“And keep yourself patient [by being] with those who call upon their Lord in the morning and the evening, seeking His countenance.”⁴⁷

He, The Most High, said likewise:

وَإِذَا رَأَيْتَ الَّذِينَ يَخُوضُونَ فِي آيَاتِنَا فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ حَتَّى يَخُوضُوا فِي حَدِيثٍ غَيْرِهِ ۗ وَإِمَّا يُنسِيتَكَ الشَّيْطَانُ فَلَا تَقْعُدْ بَعْدَ الذِّكْرِىٰ مَعَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ

“And when you see those who engage in false discourse concerning Our verses, then turn away from them until they enter into a discourse other than it. And if Satan should cause

⁴⁷ Al-Kahf: 28

you to forget, then do not sit after the reminder with the people of wrongdoing.”⁴⁸

He (ﷺ) said:

“The example of the righteous companion and the evil companion is like that of the bearer of musk and the blower of the [blacksmiths] bellows. So the bearer of musk; either he will give you some, or you will buy some from him or you will find a pleasant smell from him. And the blower of the [blacksmiths] bellows; either he will burn your clothes, or you will find a noxious smell from him.” – Agreed upon.

O Muslim; ensure that this noble hadith is always upon your mind when you mix with the people in the market places and in the gatherings and in the homes and the schools and in the offices and the public administrations. Likewise in all of the spheres in which you mix with the people, choose for your companionship and for your sittings and your collaborations in the engagements of any action – choose the righteous from amongst the people so that they should be for you companions in sittings and compatriots and partakers and entourage and advisors.

This noble hadith denotes that the righteous companionship should be in all of a person’s friendships with him in goodness and blessing and benefit as well as gain. The like of the musk seller from whom you benefit due to that which is with him either by way of a gift or through purchase or at the very least the duration of your sitting with him will be a happy/tranquil one and cheerful/rejoiced due to the fragrance of the musk.

⁴⁸ Al-An’ām: 68

Your righteous companionship will command you with good; and forbid you from evil, and will cause you to hear beneficial knowledge and a word of truth and far-reaching wisdom. He will acquaint you with your own shortcomings and will busy you against that which does not concern you. He will strive to educate you and to make you understand and to undertake your rectitude and to your reformation. If you become negligent – he will remind you, if you become careless or you were to be wearied; he would give you tidings as well as warn you. He will protect your honour in your absence as well as in your presence.

They are the people regarding whom the one that sits with them will not be wretchedly unhappy. Mercy descends upon them and so you also partake with them in that, and the very least that you benefit from righteous companionship – and it is a benefit which one should not make light of concerning: is that due to it that you abstain from bad deeds and sins out of consideration of companionship and competing in goodness as well as to be above committing evil.

So the benefits of righteous companions cannot be counted nor can they be enumerated – and it is sufficient for a person that he should be deemed by way of his associate; and that he should be upon the religion of his friend.

Righteous companionship is something which is benefitted from – even the animals do so, as occurred with the dog who was with the companions of the cave. For indeed; their blessing was inclusive of him and so there transpired upon him that which transpired upon them by way of sleep in that strange circumstance, and so there emerged for him a mention; and a report; and a significance.

As for companionship with the evil ones; then indeed it is deadly venom; and an evident affliction. For they encourage the performance of sins and abominations and are desirous in it and they open up the doors to evil to whosoever sits with them and mixes with them, they facilitate the paths to sinfulness for him. Hence the bad associate – even if it be that you do not partake with him in his wrongdoing; you will still take your ample share in being pleased with what he did, as well as being silent over his evil. He is therefore like the one that blows the bellows working over stained charcoal – and you are his associate in close proximity to him; he burns your body and your clothes and fills your nose with disagreeable odours.

It is in the gatherings of evil in which backbiting, spreading gossip (rumour mongering), lies, vilification and depraved speech occur, as occurs idle pastime and amusement and the collaboration of the wicked in being engrossed upon falsehood. For it is harmful from every aspect for the one that accompanies them; and is an evil upon whosoever mixes with them, how many nations have perished due to them? And how many led their companions to destruction from where they perceived – and from where they could not perceive?

For you are two unpleasant incidents which occurred due to accompanying the evil people:

The First Incident: it has been mentioned that ‘Uqbah bin Abī Mu’it would sit with the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) in Makkah; yet he would not harm him. Whilst the rest of the Quraish; if they sat with him then they would harm him (عليه الصلاة والسلام). Ibn Abī Mu’it had a disbelieving close friend who was absent in Ash-Shām, so the Quraish thought that Ibn Abī Mu’it had accepted Islām. So

when his close friend returned from Ash-Shām and that reached him he became incensed with him and refused to speak to him unless he harmed the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم).

So he carried out that which his disbelieving close friend had requested from him; and so he harmed the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), and thus his end was that he was killed on the day of Badr as a disbeliever.⁴⁹ So Allāh, The Most High, revealed regarding him His saying:

⁴⁹ Ibn Hishām (رحمه الله) stated in his *Sirah an-Nabi*: “Ubayy bin Khalaf bin Wahb bin Hudhāfah bin Jumh and ‘Uqbah bin Abī Mu’it were best friends, pleasant in that which was between them. So ‘Uqbah had sat with the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and had heard from him, so that reached Ubayy, and so he came to ‘Uqbah and said to him: ‘Has it not reached me that you have sat with Muḥammad and heard from him?’ then he said: ‘My face is forbidden from your face that I should speak to you.’ So he made a ruthless oath against him that: ‘Either you sit with him or hear from him or that you do not come to him, instead you spit in his face.’ So the enemy of Allāh ‘Uqbah bin Abī Mu’it did that – may Allāh curse him – so Allāh, The Most High, revealed regarding them both:

“And the Day the wrongdoer will bite at his hands – he will say; Oh, Would that I had taken a path with the Messenger. Oh, woe to me! Would that I had not taken so-and-so as a friend. He indeed led me astray from the Reminder after it had come to me. And Satan is ever a deserter to man.” (Al-Furqān: 27-29)

Sirah an-Nabī (صلى الله عليه وسلم) (vol 1 p.385). Al-Qurtubī (رحمه الله) said: “Ad-Dahāk said: ‘When ‘Uqbah spat in the face of the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم), his own spit returned back into his face and roasted his face and his lips until it produced an effect on his face and burnt both of his cheeks. So the

وَيَوْمَ يَعَضُّ الظَّالِمُ عَلَى يَدَيْهِ يَقُولُ يَا لَيْتَنِي اتَّخَذْتُ مَعَ الرَّسُولِ سَبِيلًا ○ يَا وَيْلَتَى لَيْتَنِي لَمْ
 أَتَّخِذْ فُلَانًا خَلِيلًا ○ لَقَدْ أَضَلَّنِي عَنِ الذِّكْرِ بَعْدَ إِذْ جَاءَنِي ۗ وَكَانَ الشَّيْطَانُ لِلْإِنْسَانِ
 خَدُولًا ○

“And the Day the wrongdoer will bite at his hands – he will say; Oh, Would that I had taken a path with the Messenger. Oh, woe to me! Would that I had not taken so-and-so as a friend. He indeed led me astray from the Reminder after it had come to me. And Satan is ever a deserter to man.”⁵⁰

It is general concerning everyone who accompanies the transgressors and so they misguide him away from the path of Allāh, for he will indeed be regretful on the Day of Resurrection of his companionship with them and upon turning away from the path of guidance which the Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) came with.

The Second Incident: Al-Bukhārī⁵¹ and Muslim⁵² report from Sa’id bin Al-Musayyib from his father who said that when Abū Ṭālib was on his death bed, the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) came to him, while with him was ‘Abdullāh bin Abī Umayyah and Abū Jahl. So he said to him:

signs of that did not cease to remain upon his face until he was killed.”⁵³
 (See: *Al-Jāmi’ le-Ahkām al-Qur’ān* vol 15 p.402)

⁵⁰ Al-Furqān: 27-29

⁵¹ As hadīth number 1360 and 3884 – with slight variations in wording to that which is found above.

⁵² As hadīth number 24

“O uncle! Say: None has the right to be worshipped except Allāh, a statement with which I will testify for you [on your behalf] before Allāh.”

So he (one of the two) said to him: “Do you turn away from the religion of ‘Abdul-Muṭṭalib?” So the Prophet (ﷺ) repeated it upon him – yet they both likewise repeated themselves. So that the last thing he said (before he died) was that he was on the religion of ‘Abdul-Muṭṭalib. He refused to say *lā ilāha illallāh*.⁵³ Then the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

⁵³ Shaikh ul Islām Ibn Taymiyyah (رحمته الله) said: “Abū Tālib, even if it be that he knew that Muḥammad was the Messenger of Allāh, and was beloved to him; however his love for him was not out of him loving him for Allāh. Rather; he loved him because he was the son of his brother, and so he loved him due to kinship, and if he loved his prominence; then it was because of that which he would attain due to that in terms of nobility and leadership. Hence the source of what was beloved to him was leadership, due to this; when the two statements of faith were presented to him at the point of death, he saw that acknowledging them would mean the cessation of his religion which he loved. Hence his religion was more beloved to him than the son of his brother – and so he did not acknowledge them (two statements of faith). Had he loved him because he was the Messenger of Allāh; just as Abū Bakr loved him and just as the rest of the believers loved him such as ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān and ‘Alī and other than them; then he would have unquestionably uttered the two statements of faith.” (Abridged from *Majmū’ Fatāwā* vol 10 p.273)

Shaikh ul Islām said likewise: “Rather; Abū Tālib and other than him used to love the Prophet (ﷺ) and loved the elevation of his word, and they had no envy for him and they knew of his truthfulness. However; they knew that in following him was the parting from the

“I will ask for Forgiveness for you – for as long as I am not forbidden in your regard.”

Then Allāh, The Mighty and Majestic revealed:

مَا كَانَ لِلنَّبِيِّ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنْ يَسْتَغْفِرُوا لِلْمُشْرِكِينَ وَلَوْ كَانُوا أُولِي قُرْبَىٰ

“It is not for the Prophet and those who believe to ask forgiveness for the polytheists – even though they be of kin.”⁵⁴

Likewise Allāh revealed in regard to Abī ṭālib:

إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۗ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ

“Indeed, you do not guide whom you like, but Allāh guides whom He wills. And He knows best those who are the guided.”⁵⁵

So in this incident there is a severe warning concerning accompanying evil people and bad companions with whom a person sits with, it will be on the Day of Resurrection that the associate will say to his associate of this type:

يَا لَيْتَ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكَ بُعْدَ الْمَشْرِقَيْنِ فَيَتَسَّ الْقَرِينُ

““Oh, would that between me and you were the distance of the two easts [the east and the west]” A wretched companion.”⁵⁶

religion of their forefathers – as well as a rebuke from the Quraish towards them. Hence their souls could not bear leaving that custom – as well as bearing this rebuke.” (*Majmū’ Fatāwā* vol 7 p.192-193)

⁵⁴ At-Tawbah: 113

⁵⁵ Al-Qaṣaṣ: 56

⁵⁶ Az-Zukhruf: 38

So be careful with regard to yourselves O servants of Allāh, and sit with the people of righteousness and piety, and mix with the people of rectitude and steadfastness and keep away and keep your children away from mixing with the evil people and the companionship with the wretched. In this time in particular in which the righteous are such few and the waves of tribulation collide – for indeed the danger is immense.

Hence the one that holds on to his religion is a stranger amongst the people, and that which the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) informed of has come into being in his saying:

“Islām began as something strange, and will return to being something strange – as it had begun; so Ṭūbā for the strangers.” It was said: “Who are the strangers O Messenger of Allāh?” he said: “Those who rectify [affairs] when the people become corrupt.”

– Reported by Muslim and Abū Bakr al-Ājurī,⁵⁷ and in a narration: “[Those who] rectify what the people have corrupted.”⁵⁸

⁵⁷ The first part of the ḥadīth: “*Islām began as something strange...*” is reported by Muslim (no.370), the second part of the ḥadīth from the saying: It was said: “Who are the strangers O Messenger of Allāh?” until the end of the narration is part of a ḥadīth reported by ‘Abdullāh bin Aḥmad in his *Zawā'id of the Musnad* (no.16690) and Abū ‘Amr Ad-Dānī in *As-Sunan al-Wāridah fil Fitan* (1/25) and Al-Ājurī in *Al-Ghurabā* (1/2) Shaikh al-Albānī declared its chain of narration as *Ṣaḥīḥ* (authentic) in *Silsilatul Ahādith As-Ṣaḥīḥah* vol 3 p.267 ḥadīth 1273.

⁵⁸ Part of a ḥadīth reported by At-Tirmidhī (no.2630) and Ibn ‘Adī in *Al-Kāmil* (vol 7 p.190). It was declared *Da’if Jiddan* (very weak) by Shaikh al-Albānī in his *Da’if Sunan At-Tirmidhī* (no.2630).

And in a narration: “Those who have withdrawn/departed from the tribes.”⁵⁹

So pay attention to that may Allāh grant you all ability.

⁵⁹ Part of a ḥadīth reported by Ahmad (no.3784) and Ibn Mājah (no.3238) and At-Tabarānī in *Mu’jam al-Kabīr* (no.10081) and Al-Baghawī in *Sharḥ as-Sunnah* (1/10/2) and others. The ḥadīth was declared *Ṣaḥīḥ* (authentic) by Al-Baghawī, however; Shaikh al-Albānī made a distinction between the first and second part of this ḥadīth citing the latter as an addition, the first part of the ḥadīth being: **“Indeed, Islām began as something strange, and will return to being something strange – as it had begun; so Tūbā for the strangers.”** The Shaikh declared this first portion to be *Ṣaḥīḥ* (authentic), however the second portion of the ḥadīth wherein: it was asked “and who are the strangers?” so he said: **“Those who have withdrawn/departed from the tribes”**. Then Shaikh al-Albānī refrained from declaring it authentic due to a possible defect in its chain of transmission. (See: *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan Ibn Mājah* (no.3238), and for a more detailed discussion refer to: *Silsilatul Ahādīth As-Ṣaḥīḥah* vol 3 p.269-270 under ḥadīth number 1273)

Note: Ibn al-Athīr stated the meaning of this term mentioned in the ḥadīth when he said: “Those that withdraw themselves from the tribes, *an-nuzzā’* – the plural of *nāzi’* and *nazi’*: the stranger who withdraws from his family and his relatives, meaning: he distanced and left. Its meaning is: Tūbā for those migrants who left their homelands for the sake of Allāh, The Most High.” (See: *An-Nihāyah fī Gharīb al-Ḥadīth* vol 5 p.41)

Shaikh al-Fawzān mentions in his *Sharḥ Risālah Fadlul Islām* (p.103): “The *nuzzā’* – the plural of *nazi’* (those who depart or extract themselves) – and it is the stranger who moves away from his family and close relatives, meaning: those who depart from the homelands in order to establish the Sunan of the religion.”

I seek refuge with Allāh from Satan – the rejected:

هَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا السَّاعَةَ أَنْ تَأْتِيَهُمْ بَغْتَةً وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ○ الْأَجَلَاءُ يَوْمَئِذٍ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ
عَدُوٌّ إِلَّا الْمُتَّقِينَ ○ يَا عِبَادِ لَا حَوْفَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْيَوْمَ وَلَا أَنْتُمْ تَحْزَنُونَ ○ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
بِآيَاتِنَا وَكَانُوا مُسْلِمِينَ ○ ادْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ أَنْتُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُكُمْ تُحْبَرُونَ ○ يُطَافُ عَلَيْهِمْ
بِصِحَافٍ مِّنْ ذَهَبٍ وَأَكْوَابٍ ۖ وَفِيهَا مَا نَشْتَهِيهِ الْأَنْفُسُ وَتَلَذُّ الْأَعْيُنُ ۗ وَأَنْتُمْ فِيهَا
خَالِدُونَ ○ وَتِلْكَ الْجَنَّةُ الَّتِي أُورِثْتُمُوهَا بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ○ لَكُمْ فِيهَا فَاكِهَةٌ كَثِيرَةٌ مِّنْهَا
تَأْكُلُونَ ○

“Are they waiting except for the Hour to come upon them suddenly – while they do not perceive? Close friends on that Day will be enemies one to another, except the Muttaqīn [pious, fearful ones]. [It will be said:] O My servants; no fear shall be on you this Day, and nor shall you grieve. [You] who believed in Our Ayāt [signs, verses] and were Muslims. Enter Paradise, you and your wives, in happiness. Platters of gold and cups will be passed around them, and therein is whatever the souls desire and [what] delights the eyes, and you will abide therein forever. And that is the Paradise which you have been made to inherit for what you used to do. For you therein will be an abundance of fruit, from which you shall eat.”⁶⁰

⁶⁰ Az-Zukhruf: 66-73

Shaikh Muḥammad bin Hādī al-Madkhalī

Shaikh Muḥammad bin Hādī al-Madkhalī (حَفِظَهُ اللهُ) said:⁶¹

O gathering of beloved ones; it has been determined from the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) in the Ṣaḥīḥ from the ḥadīth of Abī Mūsā al-Ash’arī (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) and with Abī Dawūd and Ibn Hibbān and other than them from the ḥadīth of Anas (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) from the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) that he said:

“The example of the righteous companion is like that of the bearer of musk; either he will give you some, or you will buy some from him or you will find a pleasant smell from him. And the example of the evil companion is like that of the blower of the [blacksmiths] bellows – or like the companion of the bellows. Either he will burn your clothes, or you will find a noxious smell from him.”⁶²

⁶¹ The speech of the Shaikh is taken from an audio lecture entitled: “*Ṣāḥib wa Jalīs Ṣāliḥ wa Ṣāḥib wa Jalīs Sū*”

⁶² The ḥadīth may have been cited here in meaning since its actual wording as is found in the *Ṣaḥīḥayn* is: “The example of the righteous companion and the evil companion is like that of the bearer of musk and the blower of the [blacksmiths] bellows. So the bearer of musk; either he will give you some, or you will buy some from him or you will find a pleasant smell from him. And the blower of the [blacksmiths] bellows; either he will burn your clothes, or you will find a noxious smell from him.”

These two hadīth were reported by these two companions – and their text is one, and if the reporters are numerous from the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ); then as you heard; the scholars count this as two hadīth, and it is with Abī Dawūd and Ibn Hibbān in the last hadīth, since there is an addition in the report of Anas:

“The example of the believer who reads the Qur’ān”

To the end of it – hence they are two hadīth.

These two hadīth as you heard; the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) clarified within them the state of the companion of the gatherings, and so he divided the people into two types:

- A companion and associate who one sits with that is righteous.
- And a companion and associate who one sits with that is evil.

The intent from this is understood, since the purpose of these two hadīth – even though they have both appeared in wording (context) which is informing and striking an example, however the intent within them both is clear, and it is the command of accompanying and sitting with the righteous; and those whom by way of their sitting – one benefits from, as well as a warning from sitting with evil associates and those that one is harmed due to sitting with them and companionship with them.

So the first type: the Prophet (ﷺ) said concerning it that which you heard in resembling it/him to the bearer of musk, and the word ‘Hāmīl’ (bearer) is more general than ‘Bā’i’ (seller). For indeed the seller is the owner of something, whilst the bearer may be the owner of something and he may be its valet, such as the shop owner, the owner of a business (or store) – this is the owner

of musk. So he may send it to you by way of his valet or his assistant or his young child or his employee. So the bearer may be more general than the seller, an owner of perfume – and thus he gives you some from it, he grants you some, and the intent is that he gives you without a price, or that you purchase from him, or that you find a good smell.

Such is the companion of religion and steadfastness and the Sunnah, either he gives you knowledge from the onset, and so he directs you to that which benefits you in your religion and your worldly affairs, so this one – his example is the example of the one that gives you perfume – musk for free, or that you make a purchase from him, so if he is a scholar you ask him, and if he is righteous you take him as an example. Or that you find a pleasant fragrance from him, the pleasant fragrance is the very last level, it is not lost due to your sitting next to a person of pleasant fragrance and so you become affably accustomed to this perfume, and your soul is delighted and it pleases your heart, and you are happy with this pleasant fragrance.

Such is the companionship of the righteous, for you will indeed be attributed to them and so it will be said: so and so the companion of that scholar or so and so is the one that sits with that scholar or so and so the student of that scholar or so and so the companion of that righteous worshipper, and like such. That is the companion of that Sunnī Atharī Salafī, hence you are attributed to him, and consequently there transpires for you the good scent of reputation, just as there transpired for you the goodness in fragrance – and the opposite (of that) is with the opposite.

The evil companion – you are harmed through his sittings in your religion as well as in your worldly affairs, that is because the

companion is an engaging pull, and the disposition is a stealer and companionship is influential, as the Salaf said.

‘The companion is an engaging pull, and companionship is a stealer, and the disposition is influential.’

[AS STATED IN SOME LINES OF POETRY]:

Of a person – ask not – but ask of his associate,

For every comrade emulates the associate,

If you are amidst a people then accompany the best of them,

Do not accompany the fallen; lest you should perish along with the destroyed.

That which is obligatory upon you O Muslim is that you do not accompany except the one whose religion and trustworthiness pleases you, and so your companionship with him becomes habituated with benefit in your worldly affairs and your Hereafter.

Select your comrade and choose him through contended superiority (by reason of qualities),

For indeed the comrade is ascribed to the associate,

Beware of the companionship with the ignoble, for indeed it causes infection;

Just as the sound one is infected by the mangle.

The sound sheep and the sound she-camel, if it walks with the mangy (diseased) sheep and the mangy she-camel; then it too becomes affected with mangle (scab), however the mangy one is not sound, due to this it was said as you heard mentioned:

Beware of the companionship with the ignoble, for indeed it causes infection;

Just as the sound one is infected by the mangle.

A person is correlated with the person who is his companion and is one with whom he sits:

Of a person – ask not – but observe instead his comrade,

For every comrade emulates the associate,

So if you see an evil person; and you see someone from the people beside him; you will not then affiliate him except with him, nor is it possible for you to think good of him, nothing is thought of him except evil. This is because companionship of the people of evil is a mark of accusation. Amīr ul Mu'minīn 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) said:

“Whoever places himself in the locations of insinuations; then let him not blame the one that has bad suspicion of him.”

Thus if you walk with the innovator, what then do you want from the people? That they should think of you in that you are a supporter of the Sunnah? No by Allāh! It will not be thought of you except that you are like unto him

The counterpart of something inclines towards it,

And with their opposites do things become distinctive.

It is due to this that our Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said:

“A person is upon the religion of his close friend, so let each of you look at whom he befriends.”⁶³

Thus if a bad person accompanies an individual; we deduce by it that the other one too is bad, and if a bad person accompanies a person that we do not know; then we deduce from his companionship of the bad person that he too is bad – because he is affiliated through association.

‘Of a person ask after not – but observe his comrade’

It is not possible to receive and give hospitality to him except that he is conformable with him, for indeed the hearts – if they meet together in ascription; then the bodies draw close in companionship.

So the bad person; you will either find from him that he burns your garments, the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) likened the burning of the religion to the burning of the clothes; that is because the religion is the finest garment, with it a person is beautified in the life of this world.

يَا بَنِي آدَمَ قَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ لِبَاسًا يُؤَارِي سَوْآتِكُمْ وَرِيشًا ۖ وَلِبَاسٌ مِّنَ التَّقْوَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ

“O children of Ādam, We have bestowed attire upon you to conceal your genitalia and as an adornment, and the attire of Taqwā [dutifulness and piety] - that is better.”⁶⁴

⁶³ Reported by Aḥmad (no.8417), it is likewise reported with the wording: **“A man is upon the religion of his close friend...”** by Abū Dawūd (no.4833) and At-Tirmidhī (no.2378) and others, it was declared *Ḥasan* (sound) by Shaikh al-Albānī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan Abī Dawūd* (no.4833).

⁶⁴ Al-A’rāf; 26

So the religion is a garment with which its companion is adorned in the world; as well as on the Day when the people stand for The Lord of the creation, today: the secrets are hidden; and tomorrow: publicly unfolded – a matter divulged, we ask Allāh for pardon and veiled protection and being excused, for the burning of the garments – the intent of it is; the burning of the religion.

Due to this our Lord, The Majestic and Most High stated when striking this similitude:

وَإِنَّا عَلَّمْنَاهُمْ تَبَأَ الَّذِي آتَيْنَاهُ آيَاتِنَا فَانْسَلَخْنَا مِنْهَا فَأَتْبَعَهُ الشَّيْطَانُ فَكَانَ مِنَ الْعَاوِينَ ○ وَلَوْ
 شِئْنَا لَرَفَعْنَاهُ بِهَا وَلَكِنَّهُ أَخْلَدَ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ ○ فَمَثَلُهُ كَمَثَلِ الْكَلْبِ إِنْ تَحِيلَ عَلَيْهِ
 يَلْهَثُ أَوْ تَتْرُكُهُ يَلْهَثُ ○ ذَلِكَ مَثَلُ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا ○ فَافْضُصْ الْقِصَصَ لَعَلَّهُمْ
 يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

“And recite to them, the news of the one to whom We gave Our signs, so he detached [himself] from them; so Satan followed him up, and he became of those who went astray. And had We willed, we could have elevated him thereby, but he adhered [instead] to the earth and followed his desire. So his example is like that of the dog: if you drive him away; he lolls out [his tongue], or if you leave him alone, he [still] lolls out. That is the example of the people who belie Our signs. So relate the stories, perhaps they may reflect.”⁶⁵

So these ayāt; they beautify you O son of Ādam, and the religion is a beautification for the son of Ādam, so if its companion is approached by the people of wickedness and evil; they burn him. Yet if they do not burn him; there comes to him a foul odour. So the companion [blower] of the bellows will either burn the clothes

⁶⁵ Al-A'rāf: 175-176

or will either come with a putrid smell, and the putrid smell is that it be said that: so and so is the companion of so and so. Consequently his reputation becomes putrid, thus it is said: 'what a foul man he is, if there was any good in him; he would not have accompanied that bad person.' It is due to this that it has been said:

*Accompany not the ignorant brother,
Be you mindful; and mind him,
For how many a fallen ignoramus,
Was mild-tempered when becoming his brother,
A person is correlated with the person,
Since he is that which he walks with.*

If you are seen walking amongst the righteous; you will be considered as being from among them; 'I love the righteous and I am not from them, and I hope to attain intercession due to them.'

The people of rectitude will intercede for their close friends on The Day of Resurrection;

الأخلاء يَوْمَئِذٍ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ إِلَّا الْمُتَّقِينَ ○ يَا عِبَادِ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْكُمُ الْيَوْمَ وَلَا
أَنْتُمْ تَحْزَنُونَ

"Close friends on that Day will be enemies one to another, except the Muttaqin [pious, fearful ones]. [It will be said:] O My servants; no fear shall be on you this Day, and nor shall you grieve."⁶⁶

⁶⁶ Az-Zukhruf: 67-68

Therefore accompanying the bad individual is only bad, he draws you to that which he is engaged in from evil, from innovation or foul lowly manners.

So Allāh; Allāh; O assemblage of beloved ones; in choosing the companion, do not select from the people except those that will aid you in the affairs of your religion and your worldly affairs. Reminding you of Allāh due to seeing him, or that you are directed to Allāh by way of his word. His statements remind you of Allāh, or that you are directed to Allāh due to his state, so beware of accompanying the evil ones from the people of desires and innovation and from the people of wretchedness and wrongdoing. Beware likewise O servant of Allāh, that you are seen with these types, for if you are seen with them, then do not blame the one that has bad suspicion of you, since you your very self are the one that placed yourself in the positions of accusation.

So I ask Allāh, The Glorified and Most High by His Beautiful Names and Lofty Attributes that He grants us and you all beneficial knowledge, and righteous action, and insight into the religion, and understanding within it, and steadfastness upon the truth and guidance until we meet Him. Just as I ask Him, The Majestic and Most High, that he rectifies all of our affairs as well as the affairs of the Muslims, and that He Guides the Muslims who are astray and grants ability to the Rulers of the Muslims in order to act in accordance to His Book and to follow the Sunnah of His Prophet Muḥammad (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), and that He eliminates from the Muslims and the lands of the Muslims that which has descended upon them from tribulations – that which is apparent from them as well as that which is hidden.

Indeed, He is Munificent, Bountiful, and may Allāh extol and send peace and security and blessings upon His servant and His Messenger – our Prophet Muḥammad, and upon his family and his companions and those that follow him upon excellence.

Statements of the Salaf Regarding Companionship

- ‘Abdullāh bin Mas’ūd (رضي الله عنه) said: “There is nothing more conclusive as a proof over something – nor smoke over that of fire than the companion over the companion.”⁶⁷
- Dawūd bin Abī Hind said: “I have sat with the jurists, and so I found my religion to be with them, I have sat with the people of admonitions, and so I found soft feeling in my heart, I have sat with the greater ones from the people, and so I found honourable decorum amongst them, I have sat with the most wicked of people, and so I found that one of them would divorce his wife over something that would not be equivalent to a small hair.”⁶⁸
- Al-Hasan bin ‘Alī al-Khallāl said: some of the wise ones said: “sittings with the people of religion polishes from the hearts the rust of sins, and the sittings with those possessing honourable decorum directs to noble manners, and the sittings with the scholars yields the intelligence of the hearts.”⁶⁹
- Mālik bin Dīnār (رضي الله عنه) said: “Indeed; for you to carry rocks with the righteous would be better than your eating Al-Khabiṣ⁷⁰ with the wickedly corrupt.”⁷¹

⁶⁷ *Adāb ad-Dunyā wa ad-Dīn* p.167

⁶⁸ *Al-Mujālasah wa Jawāhir al-‘Ilm* vol 2 p.303

⁶⁹ *Al-Mujālasah wa Jawāhir al-‘Ilm* vol 7 p.160

⁷⁰ A sweet dish made of dates, cream and starch.

⁷¹ *Rawdatul ‘Uqalā wa Nuzhatul Fudalā* p.80

- Habīb al-Jallāb said: I asked Ibn al-Mubāarak: “what is the best thing a person could be given?” He said: “Innate (natural) intelligence,” I said: “And if he doesn’t have that?”

He said: “Then fine manners.” So I said: “And if he doesn’t have that?”

He replied: “A close brother of his that he may consult in affairs,” so I said: “And if he doesn’t have that?”

He said: “Then prolonged silence.” Then I said: “And if he doesn’t have that?” He said: “Then a quick death.”⁷²

- ‘Abdullāh bin Ṭawūs (رحمة الله) said: my father said to me: “O my son; accompany the intelligent ones; you will be attributed to them – even if you are not from them. Do not accompany the ignorant; such that you are attributed to them – even if you are not from them.”⁷³
- Mālik bin Dinār (رحمة الله) said: “Every brother and associate in sitting and companion from whom you do not benefit from in your religion in terms of good; then discard from yourself his companionship.”⁷⁴
- Sufyān bin ‘Uyainah (رحمة الله) would say: “For you to have a righteous enemy is better than for you to have a corrupt friend, because the righteous enemy – his Ēmān obstructs him from harming you – or that he should impair upon you that which you

⁷² *Siyar A’lām an-Nubalā* vol 8 p.397

⁷³ *Hilyatul Awliyā* vol 4 p.13

⁷⁴ *Hilyatul Awliyā* vol 6 p.248

dislike, whilst the corrupt friend does not care concerning that which is impaired from you.”⁷⁵

- Al-Awzā’ī (رحمة الله) said: “The companion to a companion is like a patch for a garment; if it is not like unto it – it disfeatures it.”⁷⁶
- Shaqīq al-Balkhī (رحمة الله) said: “accompany the people as though you would accompany fire, take its benefit whilst being cautious of it burning you.”⁷⁷

⁷⁵ *Hilyatul Awliyā* vol 7 p.281

⁷⁶ *Buhjatul Majālis* p.150

⁷⁷ *Hilyatul Awliyā* vol 8 p.77

REAR PAGE SYNOPSIS

Al-Hāfiẓ Abū Hātim Muḥammad bin Hibbān Al-Bustī () said:

“Indeed; from the greatest indications upon understanding what it is a person is upon by way of his fluctuations and his dormancy is: taking into consideration who it is that he converses with and loves.

Since a person is upon the religion of his close friend; and the birds of the sky converge on their own likeness.”

(Rawḍatul ‘Uqalā wa Nuzhatul Fuḍalā)

Al-‘Allāmah Muḥammad bin Ṣālih al-‘Uthaimīn () said:

“Strive to keep company with a people who are people of good.

They show you the right way if you err.

They guide you if you are misled.

They remind you if you forget.

They teach you if you do not know.

All of these are from the factors for the increase in Ēmān.”

(Sharh Şahih al-Bukhārī)