

# PURIFY My HEART

*Compiled from the works of*  
IMAM IBN TAYMIYYAH  
IMAM IBN AL-QAYYIM  
& SHAYKH ABU ISLAM

PURIFY  
*My*  
HEART

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Translated by Tālib Ibn Tyson al-Britānī



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

**That day money will be of no benefit,  
neither offspring, except one who  
comes to Allāh with a sound heart.**

{ash-Shu'arā (26): 89}

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## INTRODUCTION

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Indeed all praises are due to Allāh. We praise Him and seek His help and forgiveness. We seek refuge with Allāh from our evil souls and our wrong doings. He whom Allāh guides, no one can misguide and He whom He misguides, no one can guide.

We bear witness that there is no true god except Allāh, alone without any partners. And we bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger.

﴿ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ ءَامَنُوْا اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهٖ وَلَا تَمُوْنُوْا اِلَّا وَاَنْتُمْ مُّسْلِمُوْنَ ﴾

“O you who believe! Fear Allāh as He should be feared and die not except in a state of submission.” {*Āli-Imrān* (3): 102}

﴿ يٰٓاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِيْ خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَّاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيْرًا وَّنِسَاءً ۗ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ الَّذِيْ تَسْأَلُوْنَ بِهٖ وَاَلْاَرْحَامَ ۗ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ عَلٰیكُمْ رَقِيْبًا ۙ ﴾

“O mankind! Be dutiful to Your Lord Who created you from a single soul and from him created its mate, and from them both He created many men and women; and fear Allāh through Whom you demand your mutual rights and do not sever the relations of the wombs. Indeed Allāh is Ever an All-Watcher over you.” {*An-Nisā* (4):1}

﴿ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ ءَامَنُوْا اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَقُوْلُوْا قَوْلًا سَدِيْدًا ۗ يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ اَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوْبَكُمْ ۗ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللّٰهَ وَرَسُوْلَهٗ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيْمًا ۙ ﴾



“O you who believe! Fear Allāh and say just words. He will direct you to do good deeds and forgive you your sins. He who obeys Allāh and His Messenger has certainly achieved a great victory.” {*Al-Ahzāb* (33): 70-71}

Verily, the best speech is Allāh's Speech and the best of guidance is Muhammad's guidance and the worst matters (in creed or worship) are those innovated (by the people), for every innovated matter is a bid'ah (prohibited innovation), and every bid'ah is an act of misguidance that (whoever initiated it) will reside in the fire.<sup>1</sup>

This book contains a compilation of three treatises which will aid the believer, by Allah's permission, to purify his/her soul and remain firm on the religion of Islam. The book is divided into three parts:

1. How to rectify the heart
2. Obstacles of repentance
3. Renouncing worldly pleasures to gain nearness to Allāh

We ask Allah the Exalted to make this be a benefit to all our brothers and sisters. Indeed He has the power to do all things.

**Darussalam**

**UK**

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<sup>1</sup> Recorded by Muslim. A full discussion of the various reports of this sermon is provided by Shaykh Al-Albānī in his booklet, *Khutbat ul-Hājah* (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islāmī).

PART 1

# كيف تصح قلبك

HOW TO RECTIFY YOUR HEART

Based on a Lecture delivered by the Noble Shaykh  
Abū Islām Sālih 'AbdulWahid

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The Shaykh's name is Sālih Ibn Tāhā 'AbdulWāhid. He is well known as "Abū Islām" and was born in Egypt. There he studied with Shaykh 'Abdul'Adhīm Badawī, the author of the book *al-Wajīz* and a graduate of Azhar University in Egypt. Shaykh 'Abdul'Adhīm used to teach in the Masjid of a small village. It was here that Shaykh Abū Islām met him and benefited greatly from him in hadīth, fiqh and its Usūl and Arabic.

Twenty years later both of them migrated to Jordan, where Shaykh Abū Islām still resides. It was here they both met Imām al-Albānī and benefited from his wealth of knowledge for over twenty-nine until he died ﷺ.

Abū Islām is now the Imām (leader) and the khatīb (speaker) of Masjid Ibrāhīm in the district of al-Hājj Hasan. He also conducts regular weekly classes in *fiqh*, *'aqidah* and *tafsīr*. He is also the author of many books. The most well known one is *al-'Aqīdatu Awallan, Low Kānū Ya'lamūn* [Creed First, if They Only Knew]. Shaykh Abū Islām travels to the Emirates regularly for the purpose of *da'wah*.

## HOW TO RECTIFY YOUR HEART

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We praise Allāh who has graced us and gathered us here at one of the Masājid of Allāh and this blessing is indeed from Allāh. We ask Allāh to make us all unite, as He united us in this masjid and also to unite us in the highest place in paradise.

We ask Allāh for success and *ikhhlās* (sincerity) in speech with what we learn. Our intended topic today is entitled '*How to Rectify your Heart*'. Brothers and sisters, we are living in strange times in which I swear the way to rectify things is by firstly rectifying the heart from hatred, envy and from division amongst ourselves. As a result of these vices our enemies have overpowered us. Why? Because they see that we have become very weak and disunited.

One of the reasons for us being in such a state is because our hearts have become sick, either because of the sickness of desire or uncertainty. Allāh speaks about the sickness of desires when He says,

﴿ فَلَا تَخْضَعَنَّ بِالْقَوْلِ فَيَطْمَعَ الَّذِي فِي قَلْبِهِ

مَرَضٌ ﴾

“Be not soft in speech, lest he in whose heart is a disease (of hypocrisy or evil desire for adultery) should be moved with desire.” {*al-Ahzāb* (33): 32}

Sick desires have caused us to leave our prayers as well as our *Deen* (religion), because our hearts have become possessed with accumulating wealth so as to spend on worldly possessions that are so desirous. Look at us, all we are concerned with is money to help satisfy our desires. The other sickness is that of uncertainty. Because of lack of *’ilm* (knowledge), we experience doubts in our hearts. As a result of this we are divided into groups, swords have been drawn upon our rulers, disbelief is pronounced upon one another even to the point that one would pronounce disbelief upon his own parents, and prayer is abandoned in the Masjid (place of prayer). Allāh mentions about this sickness of uncertainty in His statement,

﴿ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ فَزَادَهُمُ اللَّهُ مَرَضًا ﴾

**“In their hearts is a disease (of doubt and hypocrisy) and Allāh has increased their disease.” {*al-Baqarah* (2): 10}**

If a student of *ʿilm* (knowledge) should sit with someone of such descriptions, he would easily notice the sicknesses of division, hatred and envy.

Our present state and pitiful situation have caused our enemies to conquer, defeat and disgrace us. They have capitalized on our weaknesses and as such have spent relentlessly to increase us in our doubts, confusion and division amongst ourselves. They achieve this by presenting us with fanciful desires such as the television, satellite, money and women. These have added to our weaknesses and as a result they have gained the upper hand over us.

Brothers and sisters the issue of the heart is not a trivial affair. If we all paid attention in its rectification then the Ummah (Muslim nation) would be rectified through it.

The result of an un-rectified heart can be seen in those who speak about jihad while living next door to the Masjid and not performing their prayers. I say to such a person: “O you speaking of jihad, where were

you at fajr (early morning prayer)?” We have not seen you in the circles of *’ilm* (knowledge) or the gatherings where the Qur’ān is being learnt. Why? Because your heart has become corrupted.

It is necessary for us to understand the importance of the heart, so each one of us places his own heart before his very eyes and work night and day in rectifying it.

**The first issue** as it concerns the heart is that it is an organ in the body that controls the flow of blood and if it were to stop then the body would automatically die. The heart is one of the reasons for happiness in this life and the next. At the same time it is a reason for a regretful and pitiful life. The Messenger ﷺ said,

ألا وإن في الجسد مضغة إذا صلحت صلح الجسد

كله وإذا فسدت فسد الجسد كله ألا وهي القلب

*“There is a morsel of flesh in the body which, if it be whole, the entire body is whole, and if it is diseased, all of it would be diseased, truly it is the heart!”<sup>1</sup>*

The body, whose heart possesses *imān* and correct *’aqeedah*, will obtain much benefit in his life. This will

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<sup>1</sup> Bukhārī and Muslim.

lead such an individual to perform obedient actions such as lowering his gaze in the streets, listening to what only pleases Allāh and speaking that which is good. His entire life therefore, becomes one that is pleasing to his Lord.

The similitude of a heart that is pure and strong can be likened to that of an upright commander who produces upright soldiers. From this it is evident that an upright heart would only produce upright actions. On the other hand, if the heart is diseased so too will be the entire body. Such a heart would be inclined to things of desire such as music, smoking and all other forms of sins.

**The second issue** in relation to the heart is that it is a means of obtaining *'ilm* (knowledge). This knowledge can be achieved through listening, observing and confirming with the heart.

All of us came in this world not knowing anything. Let us not think anyone was born an *ālim* (scholar) but rather one has to strive to obtain *'ilm* (knowledge). We strive with all our energies in obtaining a secular education so as to earn a degree or a doctorate, which in Allāh's sight is insignificant. When it comes however to



learning about this beautiful religion then we exert little effort, Allāh says:

﴿ وَاللَّهُ أَخْرَجَكُمْ مِنْ بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ شَيْئًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَرَ وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴾

“We brought you out of your mothers womb not knowing anything and we made for you hearing, sight and hearts that you might give thanks.” {*an-Nahl* (16): 78}

This is why Allāh gave us hearing, sight and a heart. Yet on the contrary, we do not use them for seeking ilm (knowledge) and by this we fall into sins, which is a crime. These are all bounties from Allāh by which no doubt we will be questioned about on the Day of Judgment. So the heart is a means to ponder over and understand this great Deen (religion).

**Thirdly**, the heart is the place of intentions. The Messenger said:

إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ

“All actions are by intention...”<sup>1</sup>

From this I ask you: where do intentions originate? Is it not from the heart? If our intentions which emanate from our hearts are pure and only seeking the pleasure of Allāh, then He will accept our actions on the Day of Judgment. This can be illustrated by a hadeeth collected by al-Bukhārī and Muslim in which three men were stuck in a cave, they all pleaded to Allāh with their righteous deeds and Allāh saved them from death. Why? Because their *ikhhlās* (sincerity) was for Allāh, which shows the importance of righteous deeds and how it can save a person in this life and the next. If the deeds however are performed for other than Allāh then they will be rejected by Him on the Day of Judgment. A hadeeth, again collected by al-Bukhārī and Muslim, informs us of three people the fire will consume firstly on the Day of Judgment:

إن أول الناس يقضي يوم القيامة عليه، رجل استشهد  
فيا تي به فعرفه نعمه فعرفها، قال: فما علمت فيها؟  
قال: قاتلت فيك حتى استشهدت، قال: كذبت،

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<sup>1</sup> Recorded by Bukhārī and Muslim.

ولكنك قاتلت ليقال جريء، فقد قيل، ثم أمر به  
فحسب على وجهه حتى ألقى في النار، ورجل تعلم  
العلم وعلمه، وقرأ القرآن، فآتى به، فعرفه نعمه  
فعرفها، قال: فما علمت فيها؟ قال: تعلمت العلم  
وعلمته وقرأت فيك القرآن، قال: كذبت، ولكنك  
تعلمت العلم، ليقال: عالم، وقرأت القرآن ليقال هو  
قارئ، فقد قيل، ثم أمر به فسحب على وجهه حتى  
ألقى في النار، ورجل وسع الله عليه وأعطاه من  
أصناف المال كله، فآتى به فعرفه نعمه فعرفها، قال:  
فما عملت فيها؟ قال: ما تركت في سبيل تحب أن  
ينفق فيها إلا أنفقت فيها لك، قال: كذبت، ولكن  
فعلت ليقال هو جواد، فقد قيل، ثم أمر به فسحب  
على وجهه، ثم ألقى في النار

...the first man sought ilm (knowledge) and gave  
fatāwa (religious verdicts) so that it would be said  
'so-and-so is a knowledgeable scholar' and it would

*be said to him, 'why did you seek ilm (knowledge) and teach it and give out rulings'? He will say, 'I did it for Your pleasure'. So it would be said, 'you lied'. And he would be ordered to be dragged and thrown in the fire. The second man was the one who fought in Allāh's cause, so that it would be said he was a brave warrior, so again to him it would be said, 'O so-and-so, why did you fight'? He will answer, 'I fought for Allāh's pleasure, seeking by it only the face of Allāh'. So it would be said, 'you lied, you only fought so it would be said you were a warrior'. So he will be dragged and thrown in the fire. The third man gave charity for Allāh's sake, so again it would be said, 'O so-and-so, why did you give charity'? He would reply 'yes, I did so for Allāh's sake'. It would be said, 'no, rather you gave it so it would be said you are generous'. So he will be ordered to be dragged and thrown in to the fire.<sup>1</sup>*

As can be seen, all the actions were rejected because of a lack of *ikhhlās* (sincerity). Those who perform actions for other than Allāh will be of the foremost people that will

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<sup>1</sup> For the exact wording of the hadeeth you can look in Bukhārī and Muslim.

burn in the Fire, as will be the case of these three mentioned in the hadeeth. On the contrary, the other three in the cave were all saved because Allāh accepted their deeds. A person will be held accountable on the basis of his intention. If he intended to do an evil action but is prevented from doing so (i.e. not of his own choice), the Messenger ﷺ said:

إذا توجه المسلمان بسيفهما فالقاتل والمقتول في النار. قال فقلت: يا رسول الله هذا القاتل فما بال المقتول؟ قال: إنه كان حريصا على قتل صاحبه

*'When two Muslims meet, or fight one another or are engaged in a combat against each other, with their swords, both are doomed to hell'. So it was said, 'O Messenger of Allāh, as for the one that kills it is understandable why he is in the fire, but why the slain one?' He replied, 'he was eager to kill his opponent.'*<sup>1</sup>

The slain man mentioned in the hadeeth had the intention of killing his opponent but he was prevented in doing so.

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<sup>1</sup> Recorded by Bukhārī and Muslim.

The fourth issue concerning the heart is that it is the place of the Qur'an, the proof for this is found in Allāh's statement,

﴿ وَإِنَّهُ لَتَنْزِيلُ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿۱۹۳﴾ نَزَلَ بِهِ الرُّوحُ

الْأَمِينُ ﴿۱۹۴﴾ عَلَى قَلْبِكَ لِتَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُنذِرِينَ

“And indeed it is a revelation from the Lords of the worlds, which the trustworthy Rūh (Gabriel) has brought down; upon your heart (O Muhammad) that you may be of the warners.” {*ash-Shu'arā* (26): 192-194}

We often ask ourselves why can't we memorise? Why is it so difficult? Because our hearts have become sick. So if the heart day and night only listens to music, sinful speech and is corrupted with the evils of this *dunya* (life of this world), how can we memorise the Qur'an? If you fill up a cup with water then try to pour tea, milk or more water, where will it go? Brothers and sisters, the heart is the place of the Qur'an and it is important to keep it pure from all forms of corruption if we truly want to memorise the Qur'an.

Fifthly, the heart is the place Allāh looks at. He does not look at our appearance or our clothes. The Messenger ﷺ said:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَنْظُرُ إِلَىٰ أَجْسَامِكُمْ وَلَا إِلَىٰ صُورِكُمْ وَإِنَّمَا  
يَنْظُرُ إِلَىٰ قُلُوبِكُمْ وَأَعْمَالِكُمْ

*'Allāh does not look at your physical appearances, but He looks at your hearts and actions.'*<sup>1</sup>

Allāh does not like to see in our hearts hatred, *shirk*, envy, and all the other poisons of the heart. But rather He loves to see our hearts clean, pure, full of *taqwā* (piety) and love. He looks at our hearts and actions, if they are in accordance with the Sunnah of the Messenger ﷺ. Allāh says:

﴿يَبْنِيْٓ اٰدَمَ قَدْ اَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ لِبَاسًا يُورِي  
سَوْءَاتِكُمْ وَرِيشًا ۗ وَلِبَاسُ التَّقْوٰى ذٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ﴾

“O children of Adam! We have bestowed raiment upon you to cover yourselves and as an adornment, and the raiment of righteousness, that is better.” {*al-Arāf* (7): 26}

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<sup>1</sup> Recorded by Muslim.

With much regret however, we pay special attention to our outward appearance but as for the inner self, meaning the heart, then we take no care in keeping it pure for Allāh.

**Sixthly**, the heart is the seat of *taqwā*. We are always told by people who say: ‘...but Shaykh, *īmān* (faith) is in the heart.’ For them the beard, prayers and the hijāb are not important. The most important thing for them is what is in the heart. The Messenger ﷺ explained in a narration what exactly is in the heart. The Messenger pointed to his heart and said,

التقوى ها هنا، التقوى ها هنا، هنا التقوى ها هنا

*‘Taqwā is here, taqwā is here, taqwā is here.’<sup>1</sup>*

Allāh describes the *Muttaqun* (God fearing) as those who give, their hearts are fearful and they compete with each other to do good deeds. ‘Ā’ishah said: ‘O Messenger! Are they who make *zina* (adultery) and drink alcohol?’ The Messenger said,

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<sup>1</sup> Recorded by Bukhārī and Muslim.



لا يا بنت الصديق ولكنهم الذين يصومون ويصلون  
ويتصدقون وهم يخافون ألا يقبل منهم

*'No, O daughter of Siddeeq, they are those who give and fear Allāh, for them Allāh will accept their deeds.'*<sup>1</sup>

Because *taqwā* (piety) stems from the heart, this demonstrates the importance that has to be placed on it.

Seventhly, the heart is a blessing from Allāh and He will question us about it on the Day of Judgment. Allāh says in the Qur'an:

﴿ وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ  
وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْئُولًا ﴾

“Indeed the hearing, and seeing, and the hearts, all of these will be questioned.” *{al-Isrā (17): 36}*

O Muslim, it is evident from this verse that Allāh will and is sure to question you about your heart.

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<sup>1</sup> Recorded by Bukhārī and Muslim.

**Eighthly**, the heart is the place for sicknesses. Allāh says,

﴿ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ فَزَادَهُمُ اللَّهُ مَرَضًا ﴾

“In their hearts is a sickness, and Allāh has increased their sickness.” {*al-Baqarah* (2): 10}

The sickness of the heart mentioned in the above verse is that of doubt and hypocrisy. Allāh also says:

﴿ فَلَا تَخْضَعْنَ بِالْقَوْلِ فَيَطْمَعَ الَّذِي فِي قَلْبِهِ مَرَضٌ وَقُلْنَ قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا ﴾

“Don’t beautify your voices (O women folks) lest the one whose heart is a disease of hypocrisy or evil desire for adultery, should be moved with desire, but speak in an honorable manner.” {*al-Ahzāb* (33): 32}

If the heart becomes sick and eventually dies, such a person will go astray.

**Ninthly**, the heart changes and turns. This is why it is named ‘Qalb’ [the heart] because it turns [‘Qalaba’] and

keeps changing its state. If for example, someone who sits in front of the television and listens to the news, he forgets to pray and worship Allāh, such a person immediately changes from a state of belief to disbelief. It is compulsory upon us O Muslim brothers and sisters when we acknowledge the non Muslim plotting, raging war and gathering against us, to stand firmer upon our Deen (religion), increase in our īmān (faith) and have faith that Allāh will open a way for us.

Having knowledge of the importance of the heart will assist us in rectifying it. But what is preventing us from doing so? Why don't we stop smoking O brothers? Because of the sickness of the heart. Why are we not praying fajr in the Masjid? Why do we shave the beards? Why do our women leave the house not properly covered? Why do we spend the whole night sleeping not even praying the night prayer? What is stopping us from paying our zakāt (charity)? What is stopping us from closing our shops at the time of prayer in order that we pray? What is stopping us from memorising the Book of Allāh and making amends with a brother or sister we severed relations with for the past ten years? What is stopping us from behaving well to our parents?

The undeniable answer to all these questions is that our hearts have become sick. Everyone who knows of his or her faults or shortcomings must begin to rectify it and if this were achieved then their entire life would change. We must rectify our eyes, our heart, minds, and hands and then we will notice our hearts being or becoming rectified, clean, and pure, as the Messenger said in a narration:

ألا وإن في الجسد مضغة إذا صلحت صلح الجسد

كله وإذا فسدت فسد الجسد كله ألا وهي القلب

*'In the son Adam there is a morsel of flesh if it is sound, the actions are sound, and if it is corrupted the action is corrupted, truly it is the heart.'*<sup>1</sup>

So brothers and sisters, can we see the great importance of our hearts? One should put his heart before his very eyes, and rectify it day and night. O Muslim how is the heart to be rectified? How does each one of us rectify his or her heart? Rectification of the heart can be realised by **firstly**, fleeing back to Allāh for aid and support. It is from Allāh that all help and assistance originates. We must call upon Him through our Du'ā

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<sup>1</sup> Bukhārī and Muslim.

(supplication), which regrettably many of us have become negligent of. Allāh says:

﴿ وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمْ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ ﴾

“Call upon me and I will answer you!”

{*Ghāfir* (40): 60}

Allāh also says:

﴿ وَسْأَلُوا اللَّهَ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ ﴾

“Ask Allāh from His bounty.”

{*an-Nisā* (4): 32}

I swear to you if you went to your friend and he said to you: ‘just ask anything from me and I will give it to you.’ He continues making this offer until you accept. After sometime, this begins to get burdensome until eventually he stops granting you your requests. With Allāh, Who owns all that is in the heavens and the earth, this is not so. When He says: “call on Me, ask of Me from My blessings I will answer you”, then this is unrestricted. The Messenger has also said about *du’ā*,

إن الدعاء ينفع مما نزل ومما لم ينزل

*'Du'ā benefits what is sent down and what is not sent down.'*<sup>1</sup>

Those who do not speak from their desires, do they not acknowledge that *du'ā* (supplication) helps. For this reason we should make much *du'ā*. If you are in need of a wife then ask of Allāh. If you are poor ask for wealth. If you are sick ask of Allāh to cure you. There are many verses in the Qur'ān which mention that the Prophets of Allāh made *du'ā* (supplication) to Him and He answered them. For instance, Prophet Ayyūb who was sick made *du'ā* and Allāh answered him. Zakariyyah, who was unable to have children, made *du'ā* and again Allāh answered his prayers. Yūnus, who was in the whale's belly asked of Allāh and He answered him. Every Muslim must make regular supplication and more specifically for his heart. The believers supplicate to Allāh, as He has taught us in the Qur'ān,

﴿ رَبَّنَا لَا تُزِغْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا وَهَبْ لَنَا مِنْ

لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ ﴾

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<sup>1</sup> Hadith Hasan, see Imām al-Albānī in *Sabeeh al-Jāmi'*, hadeeth no. 3409.

"O Allāh do not make our hearts go astray after You have guided us and make loved to us our offspring indeed You are the Beloved." {*al-Imrān* (3): 8}

We must constantly ask of Allāh that He protect our hearts from going astray. How much Muslims today have memorised this verse? We must always be mindful of the fact that the hearts of the sons of Adam are between the fingers of Allāh and He turns them as He pleases. For this reason the Messenger ﷺ would often supplicate:

يا مصرف القلوب صرف قلوبنا إلى طاعتك

*'O turner of the hearts, make my heart be firm upon obedience to You!'*<sup>1</sup>

Also another narration, 'The Messenger ﷺ said:

يا مقلب القلوب ثبت قلوبنا على دينك

*'O turner of the hearts make my heart be firm upon Your Deen.'*<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Hadith Saheeh, see al-Albānī in *Saheeh al-Jāmi'*, hadeeth no.7988.

<sup>2</sup> Hadith Hasan, see al-Albānī in at-Tirmidhī.

Today the Muslims are in great need of these *du'ā* because of the various *fitnan* (trials) around us. In another *du'ā* the Messenger ﷺ would make the following supplication:

اللهم... أن تجعل القرآن ربيع قلبي، ونور صدري،  
وجلاء حزني، وذهاب همي...

*'O Allah!... make my heart be pleased with the Qur'ān and make it a light in my chest and a means to take away my hurt!'*<sup>1</sup>

Also the Messenger ﷺ would say:

اللهم أغسل عني خطاياي بماء الثلج والبرد  
ونقي قلبي من الخطايا كما نقيت الثوب الأبيض  
من الدنس وباعد بيني وبين خطاياي كما  
باعدت بين المشرق والمغرب.

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<sup>1</sup> *Al-Kalām ut-Tayyib*, p. 73, see Imām al-Albānī's edition.



*'O Allāh wash my heart with cold ice water, and wash away the sins of my heart, like one who makes a dirty thobe white after washing it.'*<sup>1</sup>

O Muslims when will we memorise those above-mentioned *du'ā'*? When will we take heed and when will our hearts be affected? Is it not strange to see many people blessed with *'ilm* (knowledge) yet they are arrogant? This is because their hearts have become sick. Who really benefits from their *'ilm* (knowledge)? Knowledge, if it is not implemented it becomes a proof against us on the Day of Judgment.

**Secondly**, we can rectify our hearts by seeking Allāh's help in every affair. The Messenger ﷺ would seek Allāh's help from being involved in evil, listening to evil, looking at evil, speaking evil words and possessing an evil heart. As for the meaning of evil hearing, then it means that if one is not using his hearing for pleasing Allāh, like using it for listening to the Qur'ān, then it will be used for listening to music and backbiting. As for seeing, then it means if one does not use it to ponder over the creation and to read the Qur'ān, then

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<sup>1</sup> Recorded by Bukhārī and Muslim.

he will use it only in a way to stare at men and women in the streets. The evil of the tongue means that if one does not use his tongue for reading the noble Qur'ān, then he will use it for singing, backbiting and so on. As for the evil of the heart, then it means if this heart does not fear Allāh and be full of the correct *tawheed* and *'aqeedah*, then this heart will only be full of every form of sin. The Messenger would seek Allāh's help by supplicating:

اللهم إني أعوذ بك من قلب لا يخشع ، وعلم لا  
ينفع ، وعين لا تدمع ، ودعوة لا يستجاب لها .

*'O Allāh I seek refuge with You from a heart that does not fear You, from a soul that is not contented, from a supplication that is not answered and from knowledge that is not beneficial.'*<sup>1</sup>

**Thirdly**, having knowledge of the different categories of the heart will help in its rectification. This will also assist a person in knowing the state of his heart. These categories are three in number

1. The healthy heart
2. The sick heart

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<sup>1</sup> Muslim.

### 3. The dead heart

The healthy heart in brief is that which is free from every desire, doubt and does not contradict what Allāh and His Messenger have ordered. It worships and submits to Allāh and its only concern is obtaining His pleasure. O owner of such a heart, are you of those who only love, hate, give and withhold for the sake of Allāh? If this person wants to get closer to Allāh, then he should ask himself two questions before performing any action. The first of which is: why am I going to do this action and secondly, how will I perform it? As for the former question the answer lies in performing it for the pleasure of Allāh, desiring nothing except getting close to Him through it. The latter however involves following the Prophet in how he performed that particular action. So in brief, the first answer is based upon *ikhhlās* (sincerity) and the second is truthfulness in following the Messenger. From this it is understood no actions will be accepted on the Day of Judgment except they fulfill both these conditions. A person who does so will ultimately be saved on this great Day. Allāh has mentioned in this regard,

﴿يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ مَالٌ وَلَا بَنُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾ إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَى اللَّهَ

بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ ﴿٢٧﴾﴾

“That day money will be of no benefit, neither offspring, except one who comes to Allāh with a sound heart.” {*ash-Shu'arā* (26): 89}

The hearts that will be rejoicing on the Day of Judgment are those that will be saved. Such a heart is a healthy one! Listening to the recitation of the verses of the Qur'ān will continue to keep it in that condition. Allāh says in this regard:

﴿كَتَبْنَا نُزْلَ الْإِنشَارِ إِلَيْكَ فَلَا يَكُن فِي صَدْرِكَ حَرَجٌ مِّنْهُ

لِتُنذِرَ بِهِ ۚ وَذَكَرَىٰ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾﴾

“Indeed the mu'minun are those who when Allāh is mentioned their hearts tremble and when His verses are read to them, it increases their īmān.” {*al-Anfāl* (7):2}

Our state of affairs today is the opposite, you will find the Qur'ān is being played in taxis, the driver is eager to change it and replace it with music. On the other hand

you may find a person listening to the Qur'ān for the purpose of falling asleep. Such persons do not benefit from the Qur'ān. Allāh says,

﴿ وَإِذَا مَا أَنْزَلَتْ سُورَةٌ فَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ يَقُولُ أَيُّكُمْ زَادَتْهُ هَذِهِ إِيمَانًا فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا فَزَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَهُمْ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ ﴾

“Whenever a Sūrah is revealed there are those who say, who of us has had his īmān increased and as for those who believe, it increase their īmān, and they become joyful.” {at-Tawbah (9): 124}

So who of us benefits from this Qur'ān? The one who has a sound heart? Allāh says:

﴿ هَذَا مَا تُوْعَدُونَ لِكُلِّ أَوَّابٍ حَفِيظٍ ﴿٣٢﴾ مِّنْ خَشِيَ الرَّحْمَنَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَجَاءَ بِقَلْبٍ مُّنِيبٍ ﴿٣٣﴾ ﴾

“And the righteous will go to heaven, this is what you were promised, for the good doing, and who feared Ar-Rahmān and had a sound heart.” {Qāf (50): 32-33}

What are the signs of a sound heart? It is the one when it sins it repents and does not persist in sinning. The one who dies having such a heart will go to Paradise. Brothers and sisters how can our hearts be sound when all we ever do is sin. We love to follow our desires so much so when we give, we do so for our desires. When we withhold, we withhold for our desires. When we love, we love for our desires and when we hate, we hate because of our desires. Allāh dispraises one fitting such descriptions as He says,

﴿ أَرَأَيْتَ مَنْ أَخَذَ إِلَهَهُ هَوْنَهُ ﴾

“Do you not see the one who takes his desires as his god?” {*al-Furqān* (25): 43}

So a heart that sins day and night will become hard as well as lifeless and dead. Allāh says:

﴿ فَوَيْلٌ لِلْقَاسِيَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ مِّنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ ﴾

“And woe to those with hard hearts, who turn away from the Remembrance of Allāh!” {*az-Zumar* (39): 22}

So a dead heart O Muslims only leads to the fire, and again a sound heart only leads to paradise.

The second category deals with the sick heart. Such a heart is also alive which means it has hope for recovery and becoming healthy. This will occur if one nourishes it with repentance and acts of obedience. In this case, the healthy heart triumphs as it overcomes its sickness. If the heart however, increases in its sickness it will eventually become dead. This can be likened to a patient who receives medicine which if administered he will become healthy, inshā'Allāh. If however, he does not take it his sickness will only become worse.

## THINGS THAT MAKE THE HEART SICK

Sins are the major contributory factor to this and eventually it kills the heart. The Messenger ﷺ said:

تعرض الفتن على القلوب عرض الحصر فأى قلب  
أنكرها نكتت فيه نكتة بيضاء وأى قلب اشربها  
نكتت فيه نكتة سوداء حتى يصير القلب على قلبين  
ايض .

*“The heart is exposed to fitnah (trials) so whichever heart sins, black spots are made upon it and whichever repels these trials, then his heart will remain white.”<sup>1</sup>*

Whosoever loves to look at naked women in the streets, if you restrained yourself and lowered your gaze, you will notice your heart being firmer or becoming stronger and stronger. If you try you will notice how it works. The more you sin the more your heart becomes blacker and blacker until it dies. After having knowledge of the importance of your heart, strive to safeguard it by

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<sup>1</sup> Recorded by Muslim.



keeping it pure and clean. You will find it is so easy to lower your gaze, stop backbiting and in general, stop yourself from sinning. Your heart will thus remain white, pure, clean and healthy. All types of *fitan* (trials) will be exposed to the heart - of these will be the *fitan* (trials) of the women. The Messenger ﷺ said:

ما تركت بعدي فتنة أضر على الرجال من النساء.

*"I am not leaving more of a trial after me for men, than the trial of women."*<sup>1</sup>

The Messenger has spoken the truth, as this has become one of the major trials for our youngsters today; in addition to this, the wealth and children we possess. Allāh says in this regard,

﴿ إِنَّمَا أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَأَوْلَادُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ ﴾

**"Indeed your wealth and your children are only a trial."** {at-Taghabun (64): 15}

If we were to ask them, why have you abandoned your prayers? They will reply because of our children, our shops and other worldly things.

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<sup>1</sup> Recorded by Bukhārī and Musim.

Another sickness of the heart is ignorance whose cure is knowledge of this great religion. It is narrated in a hadeeth that,

خرجنا في سفر فأصاب رجلا منا حجر فشجه في رأسه ثم احتلم ، فسأل أصحابه هل تجدون لي رخصة في التيمم ؟ فقالوا : ما نجد لك رخصة وأنت تقدر على الماء فاغتسل فمات ، فلما قدمنا على النبي ﷺ أخبر بذلك فقال : قتلوه قتلهم الله .

*“Once when the companions were traveling one of them became junub (in a state of major ritual impurity) and asked the other companions if there was a rukhsah (concession) for him to make tayyamum (purification with earth, sand or dust) because it was very cold. They told him he had to make ghusl (a complete bath from head to feet due to major impurities), he did so and it caused him to die. When this reached the Messenger, he said: “they killed him, may Allāh kill them.”<sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> Recorded in *Saheeh at-Tirmidhī*, hadeeth no.3225.

From this we learn that asking those with knowledge is a means of eradicating ignorance.

Listening to music also is another reason why hearts have become sick. This puts *nifāq* (hypocrisy) in ones heart just as one would pour water in a cup.

## THE CURE

**Firstly** having knowledge of the cures for the above-mentioned sicknesses are a necessity. The first of which is to have correct *'aqeedah* (beliefs). Allāh says,

﴿ وَمَنْ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ يَهْدِ قَلْبَهُ ﴾

“Whoever believes in Allāh, Allāh will guide his heart.” {*at-Taghābun* (64): 11}

The second cure, lies in accepting the Qur’ān as a source of guidance. Allāh says:

﴿ وَنُنزِلُ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ مَا هُوَ شِفَاءٌ وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴾

“We send down from the Qur’ān that which is a healing and a mercy to the believers.” {*al-Isrā* (17): 82}

Also Allāh says:

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ مَوْعِظَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ

﴿ وَشِفَاءٌ لِّمَا فِي الصُّدُورِ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴾

“Oh mankind indeed an admonition has come to you from your Lord, and a healing for what is in your chests, a guidance and a mercy for the believers.” {*Yūnus* (10): 57}

Thirdly, adhering to the path of the Salaf (predecessors) will cure the heart of its sickness. If for instance you were lost on a path or a street then you noticed in front of you a man whom you knew to be truthful and upright and he said to you ‘follow me’, wouldn’t you follow him? Of course you would. This is the same as following the companions of the Prophet. Allāh praises them in His Book by saying:

﴿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 first to embrace Islām of the Muhājīroon (those who migrated from Makkah to Madinah) and the Ansār (the citizens of Madeenah who helped and aided the

Muhājirūn) and also those who followed them exactly (in faith). Allāh is well pleased with them, and they are well pleased with Him. He has prepared for them gardens under which rivers flow to dwell therein forever.” {at-Taubah (9): 100}

The fourth cure is found in the remembrance of Allāh.

The fifth one is the visitation of the graves. This is something which we have neglected except for those whom Allāh has bestowed His Mercy on. The Messenger ﷺ said:

إني كُنتُ نهيتكم عن زيارة القبور فزوروها...

*“I use to prohibit you from visiting the graves, but now visit them.”<sup>1</sup>*

And in another narration:

فإنها تُرِقُ القلب...

*“And visit them for it will make your hearts soft!”<sup>2</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> Muslim, at-Tirmidhī, Sunan Abū Dāwud, an-Nasā’ī.

<sup>2</sup> Authenticated by Imām al-Albānī in Sunan at-Tirmidhī, hadith no. 1054.

By performing this action our hearts become soft as well as it reminding you of the next life. By remembering your lost-ones, such as your mother, father, uncle, aunt and children, this will make you reflect upon death.

[Sixthly,] Excessive repentance and doing many righteous deeds remedy the heart from its sicknesses.

*O Allāh, I ask You to purify our hearts*

PART 2

# عوائق في طريق التوبة

OBSTACLES OF REPENTENCE

Extracted from the Book of Repentance by  
Shaykh ul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

He is Ahmad bin 'Abdul-Halim bin 'Abdus-Salām bin 'Abdullah bin Abu Qāsīm Ibn Taymiyyah al-Harranī Taqī'uddīn Abu'l-'Abbās bin Shihābuddīn. He was born in Harran, an old city in the Arabian Peninsula between Syria and Iraq in the year 661H. He and his family later moved to Damascus.

He amazed his teachers with his knowledge from an early age, so much so that he was allowed to start giving out fatawa at the tender age of nineteen, and began teaching at the age of twenty-two. His teachers included forty-one male scholars and four female Scholars. The total number of Scholars from whom he took his knowledge from exceeded two hundred.

Ibn Taymiyyah died while imprisoned in the year 728H for a legal verdict he issued, prohibiting making journeys for the sole purpose of visiting graves.

Many great scholars praised him. Hāfidh Ibn Hajar said about him in his biography of him:

He surpassed his contemporaries in every science. You would not see one like him and his own eyes did not see one like himself.

## OBSTACLES THAT PREVENT ONE FROM MAKING REPENTANCE

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### DISREGARDING ONES SINS<sup>1</sup>

From the things that prevent one from making tawbah (repentance) is paying little concern to the sins one commits, and belittling the sins one falls into; (i.e.) thinking that one does not have to make repentance from them and considering them carrying a light punishment. This is a sign of one being led astray and we ask Allāh for health and strength. Anas رضي الله عنه said:

You indulge in (bad) actions which are no more significant to you than a hair, while we considered them in the time of the Messenger to be great destroying sins.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymīn said:

Some matters that protect a person from sins, help the person to remain distant from them and not to fall into them are: (1) Knowledge of their (the sins) dangers, (2) what they give rise to, (3) their evil consequences and (4) their extreme harms. (Fat'h al-Bariyyah, p.65)

<sup>2</sup> Bukhārī 6492. Our noble Shaykh Saleem al-Hilālī also says in his explanation of *Riyād us-Sālihīn* about Anas' statement:

Consequently, it is not befitting for the one who has belief in Allāh and His Messenger (ﷺ) to underestimate the sins that he commits, but rather he should consider

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When an individual embarks upon a sin, it is an indication of his lack of fear of Allāh. It is also a sign that, the slave is underrating his sins and it also shows his lack of awareness of Allāh, as Ibn Mas'ud (another great Companion of the Prophet) said in al-Bukhari:

‘Indeed, the firm believer considers his sins to be like a mountain ready to fall on him, but the weak sinner looks at his sins as though they were a fly on his nose, and he just waves them off with his hand.’

For this reason we see the Prophets of Allāh are the least likely to commit sins due to the overwhelming awe and fear they had for Allāh the Exalted. The Prophets would consider what the people consider to be minor, as great destroying sins. (*Sharh Riyād us-Sālihīn*, vol.1, p.137)

Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymīn said:

Anas ibn Malik (رضي الله عنه) lived 90 years after the Prophets death, and the people's condition changed greatly. The Muslims became weaker and started looking down on many hateful deeds that once the Companions of the Prophet considered to be great destroying sins such as: leaving congregational prayer in the Masjid, cheating and lying and so on. So the more the Muslims became weak, the more they considered their sins to be insignificant, the more they became slacker in their obligatory deeds because of the weakness of *Eemān* (faith). (*Sharh Riyād us-Sālihīn*, vol.1, p.338)

them to be great. This will enable him to make tawbah (repentance) and become remorseful over whatever sin he commits.

Al-Awzā'ī used to say:

The major sins<sup>1</sup> are the sins one commits then considers them to be insignificant and underrates them.

And he also used to say:

A man persisting upon a sin is a sign that he considers it to be a small sin.<sup>2</sup>

Ibn 'Abbās said:

Any sin a person persists upon is a big sin, and the sin a person repents from is not a big sin.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The major sins are the sins that: (1) someone will be punished for in this worldly life, like fornication, stealing, accusing an innocent person of *Zina* (fornication or adultery). (2) Every sin that the Prophet said that a person will be punished for in the Hereafter.

See the introduction of *al-Kabā'ir* by the great Imām adh-Dhahabi with the explanation and checking of our noble Shaykh Mashhūr Hasan, Maktabat ul-Furqān.

<sup>2</sup> Al-Bayhaqī in *al-Jāmi' li Shu'b il-Īmān*, vol.9 p.350 - its chain of narration is good and narrators are trustworthy

Ka'ab said:

The slave commits a small sin and belittles it, feeling neither remorse nor repenting from it. This becomes something considered great in Allāh's sight, and the slave can commit a sin and show great remorse for it, repents greatly from it and in Allāh's sight it is deemed to be small and by which He forgives him for it.<sup>2</sup>

Fudayl ibn 'Iyād said:

Depending on how much one underestimates a sin will depend on how great it is with Allāh, and any sin one deems to be a great destroying sin, will be deemed in Allāh's sight a small sin.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Bayhaqī in *al-Jāmi' li Shu'b il-Īmān*, vol.9, p.349 - all narrators in the chain are trustworthy.

<sup>2</sup> Al-Bayhaqī in *al-Jāmi' li Shu'b il-Īmān*, vol.9, p.349 its chain is *Da'if Jiddan* (very weak). Refer to *al-Kāmil fi'd-Du'afā*, vol.5, p.1966 & *al-Jarh wa't-Ta'dīl*, vol.6, p.55 by Ibn Abī Hātim ar-Rāzī.

<sup>3</sup> Al-Bayhaqī in *al-Jāmi' li 'Shu'ab il-Īmān*, vol.5, p.428 - its chain of narration is good.

## REASONS THAT LEAD TO ONE UNDERESTIMATING HIS SINS

- Weak understanding of Allāh's Great Power and Lordship
- Being Heedless of Allāh and His Punishment<sup>1</sup>
- Weak *īmān* (faith) and lack of *taqwa* (consciousness) of Allāh
- Having a sick and corrupt heart
- Forgetting one's sins and lack of *tawbah* (Repentance)

As'sari said:

True *tawbah* (repentance) is not to forget your sins and one of the ways that leads to destruction is that one forgets his sins.<sup>2</sup>

Bilāl Ibn Sa'id said:

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn 'Abbās said that the forgetting of Allāh while you are committing the sin, is bigger than the sin itself! How can you forget Allāh, while He is the One that created you?

*al-Jawāb ul-Kāfi* by Ibn ul-Qayyim.

<sup>2</sup> Al-Bayhaqī in *al-Jāmi' li'Shu'bil-Īmān*, vol.9, p.407 - its chain of narration is good.

Do not look at any sin as being insignificant; rather look at the greatness of the One you disobeyed.<sup>1</sup>

And this is the difference between a true believer and a weak sinner, the true believer looks at his sins, as though they were a mountain about to fall on top of him. But the weak sinner looks at his sins as though they were a fly on his nose, and he just waves them off with his hand.<sup>2</sup>

Therefore if the slave underrates his sins and belittles them, he will never have remorse over the sins he commits. For a person to recognise the greatness of his sin, three contemplations must occur:

- Firstly, he must acknowledge the greatness of the affair.
- Secondly, knowing the greatness of the One Who lays down the order and Who he is disobeying.

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Bayhaqī in *al-Jāmi' li'Shu'bil-Īmān*, vol.9, p.352 - its chain of narration is good.

<sup>2</sup> Bukhārī, also see Ibn ul-Qayyim's book *al-Jawābul-Kāfi*.

- And thirdly, having the belief in one being held accountable for what one does whether good or bad.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn ul-Qayyim in *Madārijus Sālikīn*, vol.1, p.203.



## HAVING MANY EXPECTATIONS<sup>1</sup>

Yahya Ibn Mu'adh said:

Of the things that prevent the people from making Tawbah (Repentance) is (too) many expectations.<sup>2</sup>

Shaytān (the devil) always strives to discourage the believer by saying to him: 'take your time with regards to this, what is the rush? You have all the time in the world.' As a result Shaytān deceives and makes the person procrastinate and the slave dies while sinning.<sup>3</sup>

Allāh the Most High says in the Qur'an:

﴿يُنَادُوهُمْ أَلَمْ نَكُنْ مَعَكُمْ<sup>ط</sup> قَالُوا بَلَىٰ وَلَكِنَّكُمْ  
فَتَنْتُمْ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَتَرَبَّصْتُمْ وَارْتَبْتُمْ وَغَرَّتْكُمُ الْأَمَانِيُّ  
حَتَّىٰ جَاءَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ وَغَرَّكُمْ بِاللَّهِ الْغُرُورُ﴾

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<sup>1</sup> Having (to) many hopes that will make one think he will have ample time to make Tawbah and do righteous deeds.

<sup>2</sup> The Dispraise of *al-Hawā* (desires) by Ibn ul-Qayyim, vol.1, pp.216-217.

<sup>3</sup> *Talbis Iblis*, p.486 by Ibn Jawzi

The Hypocrites will call to the believers: “Were we not with you?” The believers will reply: “Yes! But you led yourselves in to temptations; you looked forward for our destruction; you doubted (in Faith); and you were deceived by false desires till the Command of Allāh came to pass. And the chief deceiver (Shaytān) deceived you in respect of Allāh.” {*Hadīd* (57): 14}

Ibn 'Abbās ؓ said regarding this verse:

**“But you led yourselves in to temptations”**

This means with your desires. Allāh says with regards to tawbah, **“And you were deceived by false desires”**: meaning, you procrastinated with regards to righteous deeds. **“Till the Command of Allāh comes to pass,”** this means till Death over took you. **“And the chief deceiver (Shaytān) deceived you in respect of Allāh”**  
Meaning Shaytān.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Bayhaqī in *al-Jāmi' li Shu'b il-Īmān*, v9, p419. This narration of Ibn Abbās is *Da'if Jiddan* (very weak). See Ibn Hibbān's *Kitāb uth-Thiqāt*, vol.8, p.98 and *al-Jarh wa'r-Ta'dīl*, vol.3, p.1 by Ibn Abī Hātim ar-Rāzi.

[Therefore the steadfast upright believer should make good use of his time and not procrastinate and turn away from living a life of longing, hoping and expecting so much in the future. Some of the Salaf used to say:

Be weary of procrastinating and always putting off things, for indeed it is some thing from Shaytān (the devil) and his forces.

Therefore, this is the example of the steadfast believer who lives a life minimizing his expectations and hopes. His example is that of a group of travellers upon their travels and they arrive at a town preparing to settle, acquiring (only) what they need and then moving on to their next destination. This is the true description of the (real) believer in this world. He is only passing through, so he only takes from it what he will need for his journey and has no time to do too much procrastinating and delaying every opportunity that passes his way.]<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Talbees Iblīs*, p.486 by Ibn Jawzi.

## ALWAYS RELYING UPON THE MERCY OF ALLĀH

Abu Ali Ru'thabāni said:

One of the things many are misled by is relying solely upon the mercy of Allāh. By doing so, they leave off making Tawbah due to the fact that they believe Allāh will always have mercy upon them.<sup>1</sup>

So the worst of the people are those who consider their sins not to be great and they are misled by this, believing that Allāh will forgive them whether they repent or not. Umar Ibn Thar'ra said:

O people who wrong themselves by disobeying their Lord, do not be misled into believing Allāh will always be merciful to you; be weary of such a delusion because Allāh says:

﴿ فَلَمَّا ءَاسَفُونَا اَنْتَقَمْنَا مِنْهُمْ فَآَغْرَقْنَاهُمْ

﴿ اَجْمَعِينَ

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<sup>1</sup> The Dispraise of *al-Hawā* (desires) by Ibn ul-Jawzi, vol.1, p187

**“So when they angered Us, We punished them,  
and drowned them all.” {Zukhruf (43): 55}<sup>1</sup>**

So do not think you cannot go to the Hell-Fire for just one sin you commit because Allāh says:

﴿وَلَا تَخَافُ عُقْبَتَهَا﴾

**“So he feared not the consequences thereof...”**

{Shams (91): 15}

Did not a woman go to the Hell-Fire because of how she treated her cat? It is narrated that the Messenger ﷺ said:

A woman was punished in Hell because of the cat which she had confined until it died. She did not give it food to eat or water to drink while it was

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn ul-Qayyim said:

O you who are misled into believing that Allāh is always merciful! Shaytān (the devil) was cursed forever and expelled from that which he was in because of a simple order to prostrate. What was Adam’s sin? Was it not a small sin? Was it a big sin? By his sin was not Adam expelled to earth from the garden? Was it not because of a small morsel of food? Does it not show that a small sin can destroy one forever? As was the case with Iblees (the devil)! (*Al-Fawā'id*, p.90 by Ibn ul-Qayyim)

not confined, nor did she free it so that it might eat the vermin of the earth.<sup>1</sup>

A man might say a single word, and by it be thrown deep into the Hell-Fire.

A person utters a word thoughtlessly (i.e. without thinking about its being good or not) and, as a result of this, he will fall down into the Fire of the Hell deeper than the distance between the east and the west.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Bukhari 6-254 and Muslim 2242. Shaykh Ibn Uthaymīn says regarding this *Hadith*:

It is proof that if someone wants to keep a pet it is allowed, but with the condition that one feeds it and maintains it properly. This (*hadith*) also shows that it is a major sin to be cruel to animals and that a sin that one might consider to be small, could be the cause for one to enter the Hell-Fire. This *hadith* also shows that if this woman was punished for ill treatment of the small cat what would be the case if one was always cruel and oppressive to human beings. (*Riyād us-Sālihīn*, *hadith* no. 1600, vol.4, pp.224-225)

Our noble Shaykh Salīm al-Hilālī says about this *Hadith*:

A person can be severely punished (in the Hell-Fire) for a sin he considers to be insignificant.

<sup>2</sup> Bukhārī 11-265/266 and Muslim 2988. Shaykh Ibn Uthaymīn said regarding this *Hadith*:

## HEEDLESSNESS<sup>1</sup>

One of the greatest reasons why one falls into sins is due to carelessness, being heedless of Allāh and being heedless of Allāh's Punishment.

One being preoccupied in these two affairs will live a life of misery and destruction. The only way one can free himself from being heedless of Allāh, is to be reminded, as Allāh says in the Qur'ān:

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(That it shows) that it is obligatory upon an individual to ascertain whatever information he hears about someone, so as to not hear misleading information and also, so as to not convey misleading information. And if the person did do such an act he could be liable to fall into the Hell-Fire deeper than the distance between the east and the west, which is very far indeed. This hadith also points out that it is a must upon one who wants to speak to first think before he speaks. (*Riyād us-Sālihīn, hadith no. 1514, vol. 4, pp.86-87*).

Our noble Shaykh Salīm al-Hilālī says about this hadith:

This hadith is a clear proof that that the slave should always think, consider and ponder over what he will speak about and if there is benefit in what he will speak about then let him speak, and if there is no benefit then let him refrain. (*Sharh Riyād us-Sālihīn, hadith no. 1514, vol.3, p.10*)

<sup>1</sup> Remembering Allāh very little, always being Heedless of Him the Most High.

﴿ وَذِكْرٌ فَإِنَّ الذِّكْرَى تَنْفَعُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴾

“Therefore remind (man) in case the reminder profits (them).” {*Adh-Dhariyāt (56): 55*}

Muhammad Ibn Yunus said:

We were with Za’hīr Albāni, when a man said to him: “Advise us O Abu AbdurRahmān!” He replied to them: “Be weary about which state you die upon, and that you do not die in a state of negligence.”<sup>1</sup>

## THINKING THAT ALLĀH WILL NOT ACCEPT ONES TAWBAH<sup>2</sup>

Allāh the Most High says in the Qur’ān:

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Bayhaqī in *Shu’b ul-Īmān*, vol.5, p.448 - its chain of narration is good.

<sup>2</sup> Our noble Shaykh Husayn al-Awāyishah said:

There is no doubt that seeking forgiveness (from Allāh) has a great effect in purifying and polishing the heart, as well as increasing the soul in strength and firmness. The more truthful a person is in seeking forgiveness, the more Khushū (humility) one feels and the more ones heart softens. (Refer to the English version of the book *Weeping out of fear of Allāh*, al-Hidāyah, p.46)



﴿ قُلْ يٰعِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ اسْرَفُوا عَلٰٓى اَنْفُسِهِمْ لَا  
تَقْنَطُوْا مِنْ رَّحْمَةِ اللّٰهِ ۚ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوْبَ جَمِيْعًا  
اِنَّهٗ هُوَ الْغَفُوْرُ الرَّحِيْمُ ﴾

O (My Slaves) who transgressed against themselves (By committing evil deeds and sins)! Despair not of the Mercy of Allāh, verily Allāh forgives all sins. Truly He is Most Forgiving Most Merciful.” {Az-Zumar (39): 53}

Therefore it is not befitting that a true believer distances himself from *tawbah*. Do not despair and think that Allāh will not accept your *tawbah*. This is not a sign of a true believer, and this leads to destruction. Indeed, Allāh is the Most Merciful, who always forgives his repenting slaves and none despairs from the Mercy of Allāh except the disbelieving people. What one is ordered to do is have a good opinion of Allāh in all his affairs, even in the last moments of his life.\* It is narrated from Nu'mān ibn Bashīr, who said regarding the Statement of Allāh:

﴿ وَلَا تُلْقُوا بِأَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَى التَّهْلُكَةِ ﴾

**“And do not throw yourselves into destruction.”**

{*Baqarah (2): 195*}

If any of you sins he should not throw himself into destruction by saying ‘Allāh will not forgive me,’ rather he should ask Allāh for forgiveness as Allāh forgives all sins.

A man once asked Barā’ Ibn Hazm: “O Abu Ammār, the statement of Allāh:

﴿ وَلَا تُلْقُوا بِأَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَى التَّهْلُكَةِ ﴾

**‘And do not throw your hands into destruction’**

{*Baqarah (2): 190*}

Is this referring to a man, who throws himself into destruction by meeting and fighting with his enemies until they kill him?” Nu’mān replied:

No this is not what is meant. Rather what is meant is that a man commits a sin and then says Allāh will not forgive me.<sup>1</sup>

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\* For further reference on having a good opinion of Allāh, see Ibn Abi Dunya’s book *Ihsān uth-Thun Billāh*.

## THINKING ONE IS SAVED DUE TO HIS MANY DEEDS

The slave is misled into believing that due to the fact he has many righteous deeds he will be saved regardless of whatever sins he commits. So he understands from the statement of Allāh the Most High:

﴿ إِنِّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبْنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ ﴾

“Verily, the good deeds remove the evil deeds.”

{Hūd (11): 114}

Therefore he gives up making *Tawbah* altogether. Ibn 'Awn said:

Do not rely just on your many deeds, because you do not know whether Allāh will accept them or not. Do not feel you are saved by the mere fact that you have made *Tawbah* because is there a guarantee that Allāh will accept your *tawbah*? Your actions are concealed from you and you do not know what Allāh does with them, maybe one

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Bayhaqi in *Shu'b ul-Īmān*, vol.5, p.407 this narration by Barā' Ibn Hazm has an unknown narrator in its chain (so it is considered as *Da'if* (weak). For further reference see *al-Jāmi' li Shu'b il-Īmān*, vol.9, pp.305-306.

could be recorded amongst the successful or maybe they could be recorded amongst the losers doomed to the fire.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Bayhaqī in *al-Jāmi' li Shu'bil-Īmān*, vol.9, p.428 this narration by Ibn 'Awn is *Da'if* (a weak chain of narration).

*Purify My Heart*

PART 3

الزهد

RENOUNCING WORLDLY PLEASURES TO  
GAIN NEARNESS TO ALLĀH

Extracted from the Book 'Madarij us-Salikin'  
Imam Ibn Al-Qayyim Al-Jawziyyah

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

His name is: Shamsuddīn, Abu 'Abdullāh, Muhammad, Ibn ul-Qayyim; commonly known as Ibn ul-Qayyim Jawziyyah. He was born in the year 691H (1292-1350 CE) and was raised in a house of knowledge and excellence, at a time when knowledge flourished. He studied under many Scholars of his time.

Renowned for having been a hugely significant Scholar of the Qur'an, *hadith*, Arabic language, *Fiqh* and its *Usūl* (foundations), Ibn ul-Qayyim with the aid of Allāh, produced exceptionally inspiring writings.

Born in Damascus, he studied with his teacher Ibn Taymiyyah for sixteen years, which had an immense impact upon him. He later became his (Ibn Taymiyyah's) most distinguished student and he authored over sixty books in different sciences.

Ibn ul-Qayyim had many well known students such as: Ibn Kathīr, Ibn Rajab, Shamsuddīn Abu 'Abdillāh Muhammad Ibn Abdil Qādir, Imām adh-Dhahabi, Taqiyyddīn as-Subkī and Ibn 'AbdulHādi among others.

Shamsuddīn, Abu 'Abdullāh, Muhammad, Ibn ul-Qayyim passed on to the mercy of His Lord, on the 13th Rajab in the year 751H (1350 CE).

## RENOUNCING WORLDLY PLEASURES TO GAIN NEARNESS TO ALLĀH

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Allāh says in the Qur'ān:

﴿ مَا عِنْدَكُمْ يَنْفَدُ وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ بَاقٍ ۗ ﴾

“Whatever is with you, will be exhausted, and whatever is with Allāh (of good deeds) will remain.” {an-Nahl (16): 96}

Allāh the Exalted also says:

﴿ أَعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَهُوَ وَزِينَةٌ  
وَتَفَاخُرٌ بَيْنَكُمْ وَتَكَاثُرٌ فِي الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَوْلَادِ كَمَثَلِ  
غَيْثٍ أَعْجَبَ الْكُفَّارَ نَبَاتُهُ ثُمَّ يَهِيجُ فَتْرَهُ مُمْصَفًا  
ثُمَّ يَكُونُ حُطَمًا ۗ وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ  
وَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانٌ ۗ وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا  
مَتَاعُ الْغُرُورِ ﴾



“Know that the life of this world is only play and amusement, pomp and mutual boasting among you, and rivalry in respect of wealth and children, as the likeness of vegetation after rain, thereof the growth is pleasing to the tiller; afterwards it dries up and you see it turning yellow; then it becomes straw. But in the Hereafter (there is) a severe torment (for the disbelievers-evil doers), and (there is) Forgiveness from Allāh and (His) Good Pleasure (for the believers-good doers) whereas the life of this world is only a deceiving enjoyment.” {*al-Hadīd* (57): 20}

Allāh also says about this Dunya (life of this world):

﴿ إِنَّمَا مَثَلُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا كَمَاءٍ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ مِنْ  
السَّمَاءِ فَأَخْتَلَطَ بِهِ نَبَاتُ الْأَرْضِ مِمَّا يَأْكُلُ  
النَّاسُ وَالْأَنْعَامُ حَتَّى إِذَا أَخَذَتِ الْأَرْضُ زُخْرُفَهَا  
وَأَزْيَنْتَ وَظَرَ أَهْلُهَا أَنَّهُمْ قَادِرُونَ عَلَيْهَا أَتَاهَا

أَمْرُنَا لَيْلًا أَوْ نَهَارًا فَجَعَلْنَهَا حَصِيدًا كَأَن لَّمْ  
تَغْنَ بِالْأَمْسِ ﴿٢٤﴾

“Verily the likeness of (this) worldly life is as the rain which We send down from the sky, so by it arises the intermingled produce of the earth of which men and cattle eat until when the earth is clad with its adornments and is beautified, and its people think they have all the power of disposal over it, Our Command reaches it by night or day and We make it like a clean-mown harvest, as if it had not flourished yesterday!” {Yunus (10): 24}

Allāh also says:

﴿ وَأَضْرَبَ لَهُمْ مَثَلًا الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا كَمَا إِذْ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ مِنْ  
السَّمَاءِ فَأَخْتَلَطَ بِهِ نَبَاتُ الْأَرْضِ فَأَصْبَحَ  
هَشِيمًا تَذْرُوهُ الرِّيحُ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ  
مُّقْتَدِرًا ﴿٢٥﴾ ۞ الْمَالُ وَالْبَنُونَ زِينَةُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ۗ

وَالْبَقِيَّةُ الصَّالِحَاتُ خَيْرٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ ثَوَابًا وَخَيْرٌ

﴿ أَمَلًا ﴾

“And put forward to them the example of the life of this world, it is like the water (rain) which We send down from the sky, and the vegetation of the earth mingles with it, and becomes fresh and green. But (later) it becomes dry and broken pieces, which the winds scatter. And Allāh is Able to do everything. Wealth and children are the adornment of the life of this world. But the good righteous deeds that last, are better in your Lord’s Sight for rewards and better in respect of hope.” {*al-Kahf* (18): 45-46}

Furthermore, Allāh the Exalted also says:

﴿ قُلْ مَتَعُ الدُّنْيَا قَلِيلٌ وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لِّمَنِ اتَّقَىٰ وَلَا

تُظَلِّمُونَ فَتِيلًا ﴾

“Say: “Short is the enjoyment of this world. The Hereafter is (far) better for him who fears Allāh.” {*an-Nisā’* (4): 77}

Allāh also says:

﴿ بَلْ تُؤَثِّرُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةَ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَى ﴾

“Nay, you prefer the life of this world. Although the Hereafter is better and more lasting.” {*al-A'la* (87): 16-17}

Moreover, Allāh says:

﴿ وَلَا تَمُدَّنَّ عَيْنَيْكَ إِلَىٰ مَا مَتَّعْنَا بِهِ أَزْوَاجًا مِّنْهُمْ

زَهْرَةَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا لِنَفْتِنَهُمْ فِيهِ وَرِزْقُ رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ

وَأَبْقَى ﴾

“And strain not your eyes in longing for the things We have given for enjoyment to various groups of them (polytheist and disbelievers in the Oneness of Allāh), the splendour of the life of this world that We may test them thereby. But the provision (good reward in the Hereafter) of your Lord is better and more lasting.” {*Ta-Ha* (20): 131}

Allāh the Exalted also says:

﴿ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا مَا عَلَى الْأَرْضِ زِينَةً لَهَا لِنَبْلُوهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ  
أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا ﴾ ﴿ وَإِنَّا لَجَاعِلُونَ مَا عَلَيْهَا صَعِيدًا  
جُرُزًا ﴾

“Verily! We have made that which is on the earth as an adornment for it, in order that We may test them (mankind) as to which of them are best in deeds. And Verily! We shall make all that is on (the earth) a bare dry soil (without vegetation or trees etc).” {*al-Kahf* (18): 7-8}

Additionally, Allāh the Exalted says:

﴿ وَلَوْلَا أَن يَكُونَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً لَجَعَلْنَا لِمَن  
يَكْفُرُ بِالرَّحْمَنِ لَبُيُوتِهِمْ سُقْفًا مِّن فِضَّةٍ وَمَعَارِجَ  
عَلَيْهَا يَظْهَرُونَ ﴾ ﴿ وَلِبُيُوتِهِمْ أَبْوَابًا وَسُررًا عَلَيْهَا  
يَتَكُونُونَ ﴾ ﴿ وَزُخْرَفًا ﴾ ﴿ وَإِن كُنتُمْ لَمَّا مَتَّعُ  
الْحَيَوةِ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةَ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴾

“And were it not that all mankind would become of one community (all disbelievers, desiring worldly life only), We would have provided for those who disbelieve in the Most Beneficent (Allāh), silver roofs for their houses, and elevators (and stair-ways etc of silver) whereby to mount. And for their houses, doors (of silver), and thrones (of silver) on which they could recline; and adornments of gold. Yet all this (i.e. the roofs, doors, stairs, elevators, thrones etc of their houses) would have been nothing but an enjoyment of this world. And the Hereafter with your Lord is only for the pious and righteous person.” {*az-Zukhruf* (43): 33-35}

Many places in the Qur’ān encourages one to renounce the life of this world and (the Qur’ān) informs us of its lowness, worthlessness, insignificance and it finally coming to an end. At the same time, He (Allāh) encourages the believers by placing in them an awaking desire for the next life and explaining the pleasures and delights of an everlasting bliss.

So if Allāh wants good for His slave, He shows His slave the reality of this debased and fleeting life. So which of the two should take precedence over the other, this life or the next?

Many have defined the meaning of *Zuhd*.<sup>1</sup> I heard Ibn Taymiyyah say about *Zuhd* and (*Wara'a*):

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<sup>1</sup> The author of *Manāzil us-Sā'irīn* said regarding *Zuhd* (abstinence):  
*Zuhd* means 'completely abstaining' from what one desires. Meaning that if the slaves desires a thing (that does not benefit him in the Hereafter) he refrains (from it), with the exception of matters regarding his Lord. Other than this, one should abstain and should remove the urge from his heart and give up craving for this thing.

As for the (above) meaning '*completely abstaining*,' then this means, he should pay no attention to what he is yearning for, and should not be fascinated by his desires.

*Zuhd* can be divided into three categories:

One: *Zuhd* in the doubtful matters

Two: *Zuhd* in the permissible matters

Three: *Zuhd* in matters of *Zuhd*

The first of the (above) three categories are also divided into three, which are as follows:

Firstly, that the slave will not be able to obtain *Zuhd* until he first avoids doubtful matters, and this will not occur (i.e. *Zuhd*) until he first abstains from the unlawful acts, which he abstains from out of fear of blame (from the people).

Zuhd is to leave alone those things which will not benefit you in the next life. And Wara'a (piety) is to leave the things you fear might harm you in the next life.

And this so far, has been (one of) the best explanations of the meaning of Zuhd and Wara'a. Sufyān ath-Thawrī said about Zuhd:

Zuhd is to have limited amount of expectations (very few hopes); it does not mean eating poor or inadequate foods as many think, or wearing a cheap gown or cloak.

Regarding Zuhd, Allāh the Exalted says in the Qur'ān:

﴿ لِكَيْلَا تَأْسَوْا عَلَىٰ مَا فَاتَكُمْ وَلَا تَفْرَحُوا بِمَا ءَاتَكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ ﴾

**“In order that you may not be sad over matters that you fail to get, nor rejoice because of that**

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Secondly, the slave dislikes that Allāh the Exalted and High will decrease his status (i.e. in the sight of his Lord as well as in the sight of his people).

Thirdly, the slave dislikes, spending his time with the evil, corrupt and sinning folk.



**which has been given to you. And Allāh likes not prideful boasters.”** *{al-Hadid (57): 23}*

So Zuhd in the (above) verse is defined as: not being overjoyed with the glitters of the life of this world and not to regret things which have passed you by. Ibn ul-Ja'lāl said:

Zuhd is to know that this life is a temporary one that will pass away; it should not be magnified in ones heart, nor should much focus be placed on it. Rather, one should turn away from it; it is said Zuhd means to refrain from this Dunya (world), without showing off.

Al-Junayd said:

Zuhd means to free the heart from always wanting.

The great Imām, Imām Ahmad said:

Zuhd is not to have too many expectations.

Imām Ahmad also said:

Zuhd in this world is: not to be overjoyed with what one possesses and not to be distressed by turning away from it (i.e. the world).

So he (Imām Ahmad) was asked about a man who had one thousand Dirhams, and if such an individual could be considered a Zāhid (i.e. one who renounces this world). So, Imām Ahmad said:

Yes; but with one condition, which is, if his wealth increases he does not become too joyful and if it decreases he does not become distressed and unhappy.

The venerable Ibn al-Mubāarak said regarding Zuhd:

It is having trust in Allāh, and being content in times of poverty.

'AbdulWāhid Ibn Zaid said:

Zuhd can be practiced by a person, even if he only possesses one dīnar or dirham.

Abū Sulaymān ad-Dā'rānī said:

Zuhd means, to leave those things that distract you from Allāh ﷻ.

Many other Ulama (scholars) have said likewise.

Ruwīmūl Ja'nayd said regarding Zuhd:

It is to belittle the Dunya (this life) and to wipe away its traits from ones heart.

Dhu'n-Nūn al-Misrī said about Zuhd:

Zuhd is controlling ones Nafs (one desires).

Imām Ahmad said that Zuhd can be put into three categories:

The first: In leaving the Harām (impermissible things); this is related to the common people.

The second: Leaving the preferred things even though they may be Halāl (permissible); this is for the specific types of people from the upright and steadfast.

The third: Leaving the things that distract you from Allāh; this is the Zuhd of the knowledgeable ones.

Imām Ahmad's last categorisation (of Zuhd) is the same as what we have mentioned previously by other Ulama (scholars) but he explained it more in detail.

There are six things that if the slave possesses them, he deserves the title of 'Zāhid' (one who renounces the world):

- The first: Moderation in spending ones wealth.
- The second: Lack of desire for leadership.
- The third: Moderation in ones appearance.
- The forth: Not engaging too much with the people.
- The fifth: Learning to control ones Nafs (desires).
- The sixth: Moderation in things not concerning Allāh.

And this does not mean refusing leadership such as being a King and the likes; because Prophet Dāwūd (David) and his son Prophet Sulaymān were of the noblest kings ever to walk the earth, both had renounced this world and at the same time possessed great wealth, women and (other) things of this world.

(Furthermore) Prophet Muhammad ﷺ who also gave up the life of this world, had nine wives.

(Also) Ali Ibn Abī Tālib, 'AbdurRahmān Ibn 'Awf, Zubayr and Uthmān, (companions of the Prophet) were

all noble men recognised for their Zuhd (renouncing this temporary life); yet, at the same time, these men were known to be wealthy.

Hasan ibn Ali was known amongst the companions to be one who gave up this (short) life, regardless of the fact that he loved women and (loved) to marry them.

And Layth ibn Sa'ad was known to be of those who practiced Zuhd, though he possessed great wealth.

That which seems to be the 'most excellent' of the greatest sayings defining the word Zuhd (renouncing the world), is the statement of the great Imām of the Sunnah, Hasan al-Basrī who said:

Zuhd is not that you make the permissible (things) impermissible or by wasting one's money. But, rather Zuhd is that you acknowledge that what Allāh the Exalted has (i.e. prepared for the doers of good) is better than what you have (i.e. what you possess).

The Ulama (scholars) have differed as to whether or not one could practice Zuhd in our age and time. Abu Hafis said regarding Zuhd:

There will not be any Zuhd except in the permissible things (i.e. one being moderate in the

permissible things) and there are no permissible things in this Dunya (life).

Many people (scholars) have differed with this definition by Abu Hafis. Rather, they say that there are permissible things in this Dunya (life), and also a lot of impermissible things. Yusuf Ibn Asbāt said:

If I were informed that so-and-so had reached the level of a Zāhid that Abū Dharr reached, or that they had reached the level of Abū Dardā' in Zuhd, or the level of Sulaymān or Miqdād or the likes of these noble companions of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), then I would regard this individual as being one who practices Zuhd because the Halāl (permissible things) in our times are not clear but if you do Harām, Allāh will punish you.

The scholars have further differed regarding Zuhd; some say that Zuhd can only be in the permissible things<sup>1</sup> (i.e. even though these things are permissible, it

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<sup>1</sup> Regarding Zuhd in abstaining from the permissible matters, then the author of *Manāzil us-Sā'ireen* said:

The Slave of Allāh will 'not' be able to obtain Zuhd unless he:

Firstly, becomes moderate in spending.

Secondly, he spends his spare time in devotion.

Thirdly, he relieves himself from emotional anxiety.

Lastly, he adorns himself with the noble mannerism of the holy Prophets of Allāh and the truthful ones.

As for the slave being moderate in spending, then the slave tries to spend only on what he will be in need of. He does not refrain from the essentials such as: nourishment for his body, clothing, his abode, marriage and the likes.

If the slave becomes so busy in the worldly activities accumulating wealth with all of his time, much of his time will be wasted and he will barely make time for devotion to his Lord and Sustainer.

The slave should take advantage of any time he has and devote himself to his Lord. As it is said, time is like a sword; if you do not cut it, it will cut you. (i.e. if you do not take control of it, it will take control of you, by cutting you).

Secondly, the slave must spend his time in devotion; using all of his time to get closer and closer to his Lord. This Means through his nourishment (his food, his drink and his worldly possessions), marriage, sleep, or through resting, the slave brings himself closer to his Lord, but with the condition that the slave makes his intention to do these things for his Lords sake, hoping to be rewarded for doing them and refraining from doing the things that invoke His (Allāh's) anger upon His slave.

Thirdly, the slave must relieve himself from emotional anxiety. The slave tries to prevent those things that will cause distress and agitation in his heart due to the affairs of this life, be it hope, love, fear, hatred, or his labouring.

The slave will not taste the sweetness of Zuhd unless he relieves himself from anxiety and distress of the heart. Hence, the

is recommended to leave and abstain from these things), as for the impermissible things, then there is no Zuhd because one 'must' (i.e. is obligated to) abstain from these things.<sup>1</sup>

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slave's heart should not be troubling him, and indeed Zuhd relieves the slave's heart from this.

Lastly, the slave adorns himself with the mannerisms of the Prophets and the truthful ones. The slave should try to adorn himself with the way of the best of Allāh's creation, the Prophets, because from amongst all of the people they knew best how to live a life of Zuhd in this Dunya (life).

<sup>1</sup> As for abstaining from the doubtful matters, then the author of *Manāzil us-Sā'ireen* said:

As for abstaining from the doubtful things, then this is the slave abandoning all the doubtful matters which is when the slave is between two stations (questioning himself): is this Halal (lawful) or is this Harām (unlawful)?

This is what comes in the Hadith of the Messenger, when he said:

“That which is lawful is clear and that which is unlawful is clear. Between the two are doubtful matters that few people have knowledge about. Whoever avoids these doubtful matters absolves himself of blame with respect to his religion and his honour. Whoever falls into doubtful things will fall into what is unlawful, just like the shepherd who grazes his flock too close to a private pasture is liable to have some of his flock stray into it. Every king has a private pasture, and Allāh's private pasture is what He has prohibited. Verily, in the body is a small piece of flesh that



Another group of scholars have said that Zuhd is 'only' in avoiding the impermissible things, and as for the permissible things, then these are things which Allāh has bestowed upon His slaves, and that He loves to see His Favours, which He grants to His slaves apparent on them.

He (Allāh) loves to see His slaves thankful and that they use (Allāh's) Favours upon them in ways which will

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if it is healthy, the whole body is healthy and if it is sick, the whole body is sick. This small piece of flesh is the heart".<sup>1</sup>

The doubtful matters are those matters that are between Halal and Harām. Allāh the Exalted with His Hikmah (wisdom) has made everything with a partition (barrier or screen between it) just like He has made a partition between life and death (Al-Barzakh).

Allāh has also made between belief and disbelief a screen or partition; and He has created a screen between Jannah and Nār (Paradise and the Hell-Fire). Furthermore, Allāh the Exalted has made a partition between Mina and Muzdelifa; <sup>1</sup>moreover, He has created a screen (distance) between Mecca and Arafā, <sup>1</sup>and Allāh has also made a separation between Fajr (sunrise) and daybreak, and has placed between the night and day a screen.

So Zuhd is abstaining from impermissible matters. Meaning one leaving doubtful matters and one will not be able to avoid doubtful matters, till he first avoids the impermissible matters. So the slave takes heed of Allāh's admonition. Meaning this could be a reason for the slave to leave doubtful matters. So the slave is warned from turning away from Allāh's guidance.

aid the slave upon obedience to Him, and also for the slave to use them as a means to assist himself getting to Jannah (Paradise.)

## THE CONCLUSION

So if the permissible things distract the slave away from Allāh, then it is preferred for the slave to abstain from them. And if he sees that these permissible acts aid him and strengthen his relationship with Allāh, increasing his thankfulness to Him, then it is better to continue doing them. So if the slave were to refrain from these things, he would be denying the heart, which is in need and want of such nourishment and much good. And Allāh knows best.