

كَيْفَ الْكُتُبَانَا

فِي وَصْفِ حَالِ أَهْلِ الْغُرْبَةِ

RELIEVING THE DISTRESS

BY DESCRIBING THE STATE OF THE STRANGERS

لَاِبْنِ رَجَبِ الْحَنْبَلِيِّ
(٧٣٦ - ٧٩٥ هـ)

BY IBN RAJAB AL-ḤANBALĪ

(D. 736 - 795 H)

MAY ALLĀH HAVE MERCY ON HIM



-AL-KUTTĀB AS-SALAFĪ-

الْكِتَابُ السَّلَافِيُّ

CULTIVATION UPON THE WAY OF AS-SALAF AS-SAALIH

AL-KUTTĀB MEDIA

TRANSLATIONS

-1447-



AL-KUTTAAB AS-SALAFY
CULTIVATION UPON THE WAY OF AS-SALAF AS-SAALIH

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وبه نستعين

الحمد لله رب العالمين حمدًا كثيرًا طيبًا مباركًا فيه، كما يحب ربنا ويرضى، وكما ينبغي لكرم وجهه وعز جلاله، وصلى الله على سيدنا محمد وآله وصحبه وسلم تسليمًا كثيرًا.

All praise and thanks are due to Allāh, the Lord of all creation, praise that is abundant, pure, and blessed, as our Lord loves and is pleased with, and as befits the nobility of His Face and the grandeur of His Majesty. And may Allāh send His blessings and peace upon our leader Muḥammad, and upon his family and companions.

خرج مسلم في "صحيحه" من حديث أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه عن النبي ﷺ قال: «بدأ الإسلام غريبًا وسيعود غريبًا كما بدأ، فطوبى للغرباء».

Muslim reported in his Ṣaḥīḥ from the Ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah عنه رضي الله عنه that the Prophet ﷺ said: “**Islām began as something strange, and it will return to being strange as it began, so glad tidings to the strangers.**”

ومن حديث ابن عمر رضي الله عنهما عن النبي ﷺ قال: «إن الإسلام بدأ غريبًا وسيعود غريبًا كما بدأ».

And from the Ḥadīth of Ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما that the Prophet ﷺ said: “**Indeed, Islām began as something strange, and it will return to being strange as it began.**”

وخرجه الإمام أحمد وابن ماجه من حديث ابن مسعود بزيادة في آخره: قيل: يا رسول الله! ومن الغرباء؟ قال: «التزاع من القبائل».

Imām Aḥmad and Ibn Mājah reported it from the Ḥadīth of Ibn Mas‘ūd, with an additional wording at the end: “It was said: O Messenger of Allāh! Who are the strangers?” He said, “**Those who withdraw from the tribes.**”

وخرجه أبو بكر الآجري وعنده: قيل: ومن هم يا رسول الله؟ قال: «الذين يصلحون إذا فسد الناس».

Abū Bakr al-Ājurrī reported it, and in his narration: “It was said: Who are they, O Messenger of Allāh?” He said: “**Those who are upright when the people are corrupted.**”

وخرجه غيره وعنده: قال: «الذين يفرون بدينهم من الفتن».

Others reported it, and in their narration, He said: **“Those who flee with their Religion from the trials.”**

وخرجه الترمذي من حديث كثير بن عبد الله المزني عن أبيه عن جده عن النبي ﷺ: «إن الدين بدأ غريباً، ويرجع غريباً، فطوبى للغرباء الذين يصلحون ما أفسد الناس بعدي من سنتي».

Al-Tirmidhī reported it from the Ḥadīth of Kathīr ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-Muzanī, from his father, from his grandfather, from the Prophet ﷺ: **“Indeed, the Religion began as something strange, and it will return to being strange. So glad tidings to the strangers, those who rectify what the people have corrupted of my Sunnah.”**

وخرجه الطبراني من حديث جابر عن النبي ﷺ، وفي حديثه: قيل: ومن هم يا رسول الله؟ قال: «الذين يصلحون حين يفسد الناس». وخرجه أيضاً من حديث سهل بن سعد بنحوه.

Al-Ṭabarānī reported it from the Ḥadīth of Jābir from the Prophet ﷺ, and in his narration: “It was said: Who are they, O Messenger of Allāh?” He said, **“Those who are upright when the people are corrupted.”** He also reported it from the Ḥadīth of Sahl ibn Sa’d with a similar wording.

وخرجه الإمام أحمد من حديث سعد بن أبي وقاص عن النبي ﷺ وفي حديثه: «فطوبى يومئذ للغرباء إذا فسد الناس».

Imām Aḥmad reported it from the Ḥadīth of Sa’d ibn Abī Waqqāṣ from the Prophet ﷺ, and in his narration: **“So glad tidings on that day to the strangers when the people have become corrupt.”**

وخرج الإمام أحمد والطبراني من حديث عبد الله بن عمرو عن النبي ﷺ قال: «طوبى للغرباء». قلنا: وما الغرباء؟ قال: «قوم صالحون قليل، في ناس سوء كثير، من يعصيهم أكثر ممن يطيعهم».

Imām Aḥmad and al-Ṭabarānī reported it from the Ḥadīth of ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Amr that the Prophet ﷺ said: **“Glad tidings to the strangers.”** We said, “Who are the strangers?” He said, **“A small group of righteous people among many evil people; those who disobey them are more than those who obey them.”**

وروي عن عبد الله بن عمرو مرفوعاً وموقوفاً في هذا الحديث: قيل: ومن الغرباء؟ قال: «الفرارون بدينهم يعثهم الله تعالى مع عيسى ابن مريم عليه السلام».

It is also narrated from ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Amr, both marfū‘ and mawqūf regarding this Ḥadīth: “It was said: Who are the strangers?” He said: **“Those who flee with their Religion; Allāh will resurrect them with ‘Isā ibn Maryam عليه السلام.”**

فقوله ﷺ: «بدأ الإسلام غريباً» يريد به أن الناس كانوا قبل مبعثه على ضلالة عامة، كما قال النبي ﷺ في حديث عياض بن حمار الذي خرجه مسلم: «إن الله نظر إلى أهل الأرض فمقتهم، عربهم وعجمهم إلا بقايا من أهل الكتاب».

His statement ﷺ: **“Islām began as something strange”** He means by it that the people, before being sent (with Prophethood), were upon general misguidance, as the Prophet ﷺ said in the Ḥadīth of ‘Iyād ibn Ḥimār, reported by Muslim: **“Indeed, Allāh looked at the people of the earth and detested them—Arabs and non-Arabs—except a few remnants from the People of the Book.”**

فلما بعث النبي ﷺ ودعا إلى الإسلام لم يستجب له في أول الأمر إلا الواحد بعد الواحد من كل قبيلة، وكان المستجيب له خائفاً من عشيرته وقبيلته، يؤذى غاية الأذى، وينال منه وهو صابر على ذلك في الله عز وجل، وكان المسلمون إذ ذاك مستضعفين، يطردون يشردون كل مشرد ويهربون بدينهم إلى البلاد النائية، كما هاجروا إلى الحبشة مرتين، ثم هاجروا إلى المدينة. وكان منهم من يعذب في الله ومنهم من يقتل. فكان الداخلون في الإسلام حينئذ غرباء.

When the Prophet ﷺ was sent and called to Islām, none responded to him at first except individuals, one after another, from each tribe. Whoever responded feared his own clan and tribe, suffering severe harm and injury, yet remaining patient for the sake of Allāh the Mighty and Majestic. At that time, the Muslims were weak, driven away and scattered, fleeing with their Religion to distant lands, just as they migrated twice to Abyssinia, then later migrated to Madinah. Some of them were tortured in the Path of Allāh, and some were killed. Thus, those who entered Islām in those early days were strangers.

ثم ظهر الإسلام بعد الهجرة إلى المدينة وعز وصار أهله ظاهرين كل الظهور، ودخل الناس بعد ذلك في دين الله أفواجا، وأكمل الله لهم الدين وأتم عليهم النعمة.

Then Islām emerged after the Hijrah to Madinah and grew strong, with its people prevailing completely. After that, people began entering Allāh’s Religion in multitudes, and Allāh completed the Religion for them and perfected His favor upon them.

وتوفي رسول الله ﷺ والأمر على ذلك، وأهل الإسلام على غاية من الاستقامة في دينهم، وهم متعاضدون متناصرين، وكانوا على ذلك في زمن أبي بكر وعمر رضي الله عنهما.

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ passed away while matters remained in that state, and the people of Islām were upon the highest level of uprightness in their Religion, united, supporting one another. They remained upon this during the times of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar, may Allāh be pleased with them both.

ثم أعمل الشيطان مكائده على المسلمين وألقى بأسهم بينهم، وأفشى بينهم فتنة الشبهات والشهوات، ولم تزل هاتان الفتنان تتزايدان شيئا فشيئا حتى استحكمت مكيدة الشيطان وأطاعه أكثر الخلق. فمنهم من دخل في طاعته في فتنة الشبهات، ومنهم من دخل في فتنة الشهوات، ومنهم من جمع بينهما، وكل ذلك مما أخبر النبي ﷺ بوقوعه.

Then the devil set his schemes to work against the Muslims. He cast enmity among them and spread among them the trial of doubts and desires. These two trials continued to increase little by little until the devil's plot became firmly established, and the majority of the people obeyed him. Some entered into his obedience through the trial of doubts, some through the trial of desires, and some combined the two. All of this is among what the Prophet ﷺ informed would occur.

فأما فتنة الشبهات: فقد روي عن النبي ﷺ من غير وجه أن أئمة ستفترق على أزيد من سبعين فرقة على اختلاف في الروايات في عدد الزائد على السبعين، وأن جميع تلك الفرق في النار إلا فرقة واحدة، وهي من كانت على ما هو عليه وأصحابه ﷺ.

As for the trial of doubts, it has been narrated from the Prophet ﷺ through multiple chains that his Ummah will split into more than seventy sects, with variation in the exact number mentioned beyond seventy. All of these sects will be in the Fire except one: those who are upon what he and his Companions were upon ﷺ.

وأما فتنة الشهوات: ففي "صحيح مسلم" عن عبد الله بن عمرو عن النبي ﷺ قال: «كيف أنتم إذا فتحت عليكم خزائن فارس والروم. أي قوم أنتم؟» قال عبد الرحمن بن عوف: نقول كما أمرنا الله. قال: «أو غير ذلك؟ تتنافسون، ثم تتحاسدون، ثم تتدابرون، ثم تتباغضون».

As for the trial of desires, then in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, from 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Amr, from the Prophet ﷺ, who said, **"How will you be when the treasures of Persia and Rome are opened for you? What kind of people will you be then?"** 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn 'Awf said: "We will say what Allāh has commanded us." He said: **"Or something else: you will compete with one another, then envy one another, then turn your backs on one another, and then despise one another."**

وفي "صحيح البخاري" عن عمرو بن عوف عن النبي ﷺ قال: «والله ما الفقر أخشى عليكم، ولكن أخشى أن تبسط عليكم الدنيا كما بسطت على من كان قبلكم، فتتنافسوها كما تنافسوها، فتهلككم كما أهلكتهم». وفي "الصحيحين" من حديث عقبة بن عامر عن النبي ﷺ معناه أيضا.

And in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, from 'Amr ibn 'Awf, from the Prophet ﷺ, who said: **"By Allāh, it is not poverty that I fear for you. Rather, I fear that the world will be spread out for you as it was spread out for those before you, and that you will compete for it as they competed for it, and it will destroy you as it destroyed them."** And in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs from the Ḥadīth of 'Uqbah ibn 'Āmir is a narration with the same meaning.

ولما فتحت كنوز كسرى على عمر بن الخطاب رضي الله عنه بكى وقال: "إن هذا لم يفتح على قوم قط إلا جعل الله بأسهم بينهم." أو كما قال.

When the treasures of Kisrā were brought to ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb رضي الله عنه upon their conquest, he wept and said: “Nothing of this was ever opened upon a people except that Allāh placed enmity among them,” or as he said.

وكان النبي ﷺ يخشى على أمته هاتين الفتنتين كما في "مسند الإمام أحمد بن حنبل" عن أبي برزة عن النبي ﷺ قال: «إنما أخشى عليكم شهوات الغي في بطونكم وفروجكم ومضلات الفتن». وفي رواية: «ومضلات الهوى».

The Prophet ﷺ feared these two trials for his Ummah, as found in the Musnad of Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, from Abū Barzah, from the Prophet ﷺ, who said: “**What I fear most for you are the sinful desires of your bellies and your private parts, and the misguided trials.**” And in another narration: “**and the misguided desires.**”

فلما دخل أكثر الناس في هاتين الفتنتين أو إحداهما أصبحوا متقاطعين متباغضين بعد أن كانوا إخوانا متحابين متواصلين. فإن فتنة الشهوات عمت غالب الخلق فافْتُنُّوا بالدنيا وزهرتها وصارت غاية قصدهم، لها يطلبون، وبها يرضون، ولها يغضبون، ولها يوالون، وعليها يعادون، فقطعوا لذلك أرحامهم وسفكوا دماءهم وارتكبوا معاصي الله بسبب ذلك.

When most people entered into these two trials, or into one of them, they became cut off from one another and filled with mutual hatred after having been brothers who loved one another and maintained ties. The trial of desires overtook the majority of the people; they were tempted by the world and its adornment, and it became the ultimate objective of their striving. It is for it that they work, by it they are pleased, for it they become angry, for it they show loyalty, and because of it they have enmity. Thus, they severed their family ties, shed blood, and committed acts of disobedience to Allāh because of that.

وأما فتنة الشبهات والأهواء المضلة فبسببها تفرق أهل القبلة وصاروا شيعة وكفر بعضهم بعضا، وأصبحوا أعداءً وفرقا وأحزابا بعد أن كانوا إخوانا قلوبهم على قلب رجل واحد. فلم ينج من هذه الفرق إلا الفرقة الواحدة الناجية، وهم المذكورون في قوله ﷺ: «لا تزال طائفة من أمتي ظاهرين على الحق، لا يضرهم من خذلهم ولا من خالفهم حتى يأتي أمر الله وهم على ذلك».

As for the trial of doubts and misguided desires, it caused the people of the Qiblah to split, and they became sects. Some declared others disbelievers, and they became enemies, factions, and parties after having been brothers whose hearts were united as if upon the heart of a single man. None of these sects were saved except the one saved group mentioned in his ﷺ statement: “**A group of my Ummah will continue to remain manifest upon the truth; those who forsake them or oppose them will not harm them until Allāh’s command comes while they are upon that.**”

وهم في آخر الزمان الغرباء المذكورون في هذه الأحاديث: «الذين يصلحون إذا فسد الناس»، وهم «الذين يُصلحون ما أفسد الناس من السنة»، وهم «الذين يفرون بدينهم من الفتن»، وهم «النزاع من القبائل»، لأنهم قلوا، فلا يوجد في كل قبيلة منهم إلا الواحد والاثنان، وقد لا يوجد في بعض القبائل منهم أحدٌ كما كان الداخولون إلى الإسلام في أول الأمر كذلك، وبهذا فسر الأئمة هذا الحديث.

These, in the end of times, are the strangers mentioned in these narrations: **“Those who are upright when the people are corrupted,” “Those who rectify what the people have corrupted of the Sunnah,” “Those who flee with their Religion from the trials,”** and **“The isolated individuals from the tribes,”** for they have become few, so that in each tribe you may find only one or two of them, and in some tribes none at all, just like those who entered Islām in the earliest days. This is how the scholars have explained this Ḥadīth.

قال الأوزاعي في قوله ﷺ: «بدأ الإسلام غريبا وسيعود غريبا كما بدأ»: «أما إنه ما يذهب الإسلام، ولكن يذهب أهل السنة حتى ما يبقى في البلد منهم إلا رجل واحد.»

Al-Awzāī said regarding the statement of the Prophet ﷺ, **“Islām began as something strange, and it will return to being strange as it began.”** “It is not that Islām itself will vanish, but rather that the people of the Sunnah will vanish, until there remains in a town no one from them except a single man.”

ولهذا المعنى يوجد في كلام السلف كثيرا مدح السنة ووصفها بالغرابة ووصف أهلها بالقلّة، فكان الحسن - رحمه الله - يقول لأصحابه: «يا أهل السنة! ترفقوا - رحمكم الله - فإنكم من أقلّ الناس.»

Because of this meaning, it is frequently found in the speech of the early generations that they praised the Sunnah, described it as something strange, and described its adherents as being few. Al-Ḥasan رحمه الله would say to his companions: “O people of the Sunnah, be gentle—may Allāh have mercy on you—for you are the fewest of the people.”

وقال يونس بن عبيد: «ليس شيء أغرب من السنة، وأغرب منها من يعرفها.»

Yūnus ibn ‘Ubayd said: “There is nothing more strange than the Sunnah, and even stranger is the one who knows it.”

وروي عنه أنه قال: «أصبح من إذا عُرِفَ السنة فَعَرَفَهَا غريبا وأغرب منه من يُعَرَّفُهَا.»

And it is narrated from him that he said: “The one who, when the Sunnah is made known to him and he recognizes it, has become a stranger; and even more strange is the one who makes it known to others.”

وعن سفيان الثوري قال: "استوصوا بأهل السنة فإنهم غرباء."

Sufyān al-Thawrī said: "Take care of the people of the Sunnah, for they are strangers."

ومراد هؤلاء الأئمة بالسنة: طريقة النبي ﷺ التي كان عليها هو وأصحابه السالمة من الشبهات والشهوات.

What these Imāms meant by "the Sunnah" is the way of the Prophet ﷺ, the way upon which he and his Companions were, free from the trials of doubts and desires.

ولهذا كان الفضيل بن عياض يقول: "أهل السنة من عرف ما يدخل في بطنه من حلال."

For this reason, al-Fuḍayl ibn 'Iyād used to say: "The people of the Sunnah are those who know what enters their stomachs of what is lawful."

وذلك لأن أكل الحلال من أعظم خصائل السنة التي كان عليها النبي ﷺ وأصحابه رضي الله عنهم.

This is because consuming what is lawful is among the greatest characteristics of the Sunnah that the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions رضي الله عنهم were upon.

ثم صار في عُرف كثير من العلماء المتأخرين من أهل الحديث وغيرهم، السنة عبارة عما سَلِمَ من الشبهات في الاعتقادات، خاصة في مسائل الإيمان بالله وملائكته وكتبه ورسله واليوم الآخر، وكذلك مسائل القدر وفضائل الصحابة.

Later, in the terminology of many of the later scholars, among the people of Ḥadīth and others, the term "Sunnah" came to refer specifically to what is free from doubts in matters of Creed: particularly in issues of Belief in Allāh, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day, as well as issues of the Divine Decree and the virtues of the Companions.

وصنفوا في هذا العلم تصانيف سمّوها كتب السنة، وإنما خصّوا هذا العلم باسم السنة؛ لأن خطره عظيم والمخالف فيه على شفا هلكة.

They authored works in this field and named them "Books of Sunnah." They gave this science the specific title "Sunnah" because of its tremendous importance, for the one who opposes it stands upon the brink of destruction.

وأما السنة الكاملة، فهي الطريق السالمة من الشبهات والشهوات ، كما قال الحسن ويونس بن عبيد وسفيان والفضيل وغيرهم. ولهذا وُصِفَ أهلها بالغرابة في آخر الزمان لقلَّتْهم وعزَّتْهم فيه.

As for the complete Sunnah, it is the way that is free from doubts and desires, as al-Ḥasan, Yūnus ibn ‘Ubayd, Sufyān, al-Fuḍayl, and others said. For this reason, its followers are described as strangers at the end of time, due to their fewness and rarity.

ولهذا ورد في بعض الروايات كما سبق في تفسير الغرابة: «قوم صالحون قليل في قوم سوء كثير، من يعصيهم أكثر ممن يطيعهم» وفي هذا إشارة إلى قلة عددهم وقلة المستجيبين لهم، والقابلين منهم وكثرة المخالفين لهم والعاصين لهم.

Thus, it has come in some narrations, as mentioned previously in the explanation of the strangers: “**A righteous people who are few among many evil people; those who disobey them are more than those who obey them.**” This indicates their small number, the few who respond to them and accept from them, and the many who oppose them and disobey them.

ولهذا جاء في أحاديث متعددة مدح المتمسك بدينه في آخر الزمان، وأنه كالقابض على الجمر، وأن للعامل منهم أجر خمسين ممن قبلهم، لأنهم لا يجدون أعوانا على الخير.

For this reason, numerous aḥādīth have come praising the one who holds fast to his Religion in the end of times, saying that he will be like one who grasps a burning coal, and that the worker (in obedience) among them will have the reward of fifty of those before them, because they will find no helpers in doing good.

وهؤلاء الغرابة قسمان: أحدهما: من يُصلح نفسه عند فساد الناس.

These strangers are of two categories: **The First:** Those who rectify themselves when the people are corrupted.

والثاني: من يُصلح ما أفسد الناس من السنة وهو أعلى القسامين وأفضلهما.

The Second: Those who rectify what the people have corrupted, and they are the higher and better of the two categories.

وقد خرج الطبراني وغيره بإسناد فيه نظر من حديث أبي أمامة عن النبي ﷺ: «إن لكل شيء إقبالا وإدبارا، وإن من إدبار هذا الدين ما كنتم عليه من العمى والجهالة ومخالفة ما بعثني الله به، وإن من إقبال هذا الدين أن تفقه القبيلة بأسرها حتى لا يوجد فيها إلا الفاسق والفاسقان، فهما مقهوران ذليلان، إن تكلمتا قُمِعَا وقَهِرَا واضطهدا. ألا وإن من إدبار هذا الدين، أن تجفو القبيلة بأسرها حتى لا يُرى فيها إلا الفقيه والفقهاء، وهما مقهوران ذليلان، إن تكلمتا فأمرتا بالمعروف ونهيا عن المنكر قُمِعَا وقَهِرَا واضطهدا، فهما مقهوران ذليلان لا يجدان على ذلك أعوانا ولا أنصارا».

Al-Ṭabarānī and others reported, with a chain that requires scrutiny, from the Ḥadīth of Abū Umāmah, from the Prophet ﷺ: **“Indeed, for everything there is an advance and a retreat. From the retreat of this Religion is what you were upon of blindness and ignorance, and opposition to what Allāh sent me with. And from the advance of this Religion is that an entire tribe will have understanding, such that none will be found among them except one or two wicked individuals, and they will be subdued and humiliated. If they speak, they will be suppressed, overpowered, and persecuted. And from the retreat of this Religion is that an entire tribe turns away (from knowledge and Religion) until none will be seen among them except one or two jurists, and they will be subdued and humiliated. If they speak, commanding good and forbidding evil, they will be suppressed and persecuted, subdued and humiliated, unable to find any helpers or supporters.”**

فُوصف في هذا الحديث المؤمن العالم بالسنة، الفقيه في الدين بأنه يكون في آخر الزمان عند فسادة مقهورا ذليلا لا يجد أعوانا ولا أنصارا.

Thus, in this Ḥadīth, the believing, knowledgeable person, firm upon the Sunnah and understanding of the Religion, is described as being, in the last days of corruption, subdued and humiliated, finding no helpers or supporters.

وخرج الطبراني أيضا بإسناد فيه ضعف عن ابن مسعود عن النبي ﷺ في حديث طويل في ذكر أشرط الساعة قال: «وإن من أشرطها أن يكون المؤمن في القبيلة أذل من التَّقْد». والنقد: هم الغنم الصغار.

Al-Ṭabarānī reported, with a weak chain, from Ibn Mas‘ūd, from the Prophet ﷺ, in a long Ḥadīth mentioning the signs of the Hour: **“Among its signs is that the believer, within his own tribe, will be more humiliated than a young sheep.”** Al-naqd refers to the small sheep.

وفي "مسند الإمام أحمد" عن عبادة بن الصامت أنه قال لرجلٍ من أصحابه: "يوشك إن طالت بك حياة أن ترى الرجل قد قرأ القرآن على لسان محمد ﷺ أو على من قرأه على لسان محمد ﷺ، فأعاده وأبدأه وأحل حلاله وحرم حرامه ونزل عند منزله لا يحور فيكم إلا كما يحور رأس الحمار الميت."

In the Musnad of Imām Aḥmad, from ‘Ubādah ibn al-Ṣāmit, that he said to one of his companions: “Soon, if your life is prolonged, you will see a man who has recited the Qur’ān upon the tongue of Muḥammad ﷺ, or upon the tongue of one who recited it upon the tongue of Muḥammad ﷺ, and he recites it repeatedly, beginning and ending it, declaring its lawful as lawful and its unlawful as unlawful, and applying it in its proper places, yet he will return among them with no honor, no respect, and no influence, like the head of a dead donkey (that no one pays attention to).”

ومثله قول ابن مسعود: "يأتي على الناس زمان يكون المؤمن فيه أذل من الأمة."

Similar is the saying of Ibn Mas‘ūd: “A time will come upon the people when the believer among them will be more humiliated than a slave-girl.”

وإنما ذل المؤمن آخر الزمان لغرته بين أهل الفساد من أهل الشبهات والشهوات. فكلهم يكرهه ويؤذيه لمخالفة طريقته لطريقتهم ومقصوده لمقصودهم ومباينته لهم فيما هم عليه.

The believer is humiliated in the end of times only because of his Ghurbah (Strangeness) among the people of corruption, those engulfed in doubts and desires. All of them dislike him and harm him because his path contradicts theirs, his aim differs from their aims, and he stands in complete opposition to what they are upon.

ولما مات داود الطائي قال ابن السماك: إن داود نظر بقلبه إلى ما بين يديه فأغشى بصر قلبه بصر العيون، فكأنه لم ينظر إلى ما أنتم إليه تنظرون، وكأنكم لا تنظرون إلى ما إليه ينظر. فأنتم منه تعجبون، وهو منكم يعجب، استوحش منكم أنه كان حيناً وسط موتي.

When Dāwūd al-Ṭā’ī died, Ibn al-Sammāk said: “Dāwūd looked with his heart at what lay before him, so the sight of his heart overwhelmed the sight of his eyes. It is as if he did not look at what you are looking at, and as if you do not look at what he is looking at. You are amazed by him, but he is amazed by you. He felt estranged from you, truly, he was a living man among the dead.”

ومنهم من كان يكرهه أهله وولده لاستنكار حاله. سمع عمر بن عبد العزيز امرأته مرة تقول: "أراحنا الله منك." فقال: "آمين."

Among them were those whose own families and children disliked them because they disapproved of their state. ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz once heard his wife say: “May Allāh relieve us of you.” He replied: “Āmīn.”

وقد كان السلف قديما يصفون المؤمن بالغبية في زمانهم ، كما سبق مثله عن الحسن والأوزاعي وسفيان وغيرهم.

The early generations would describe the believer as being a stranger even in their time, just as was mentioned from al-Ḥasan, al-Awzā'ī, Sufyān, and others.

ومن كلام أحمد بن عاصم الأنطاكي - وكان من كبار العارفين في زمان أبي سليمان الداراني - : "إني أدركت من الأزمنة زمانا عاد فيه الإسلام غريبا كما بدأ، وعاد وصف الحق فيه غريبا كما بدأ، إن ترغبت فيه إلى عالم وجدته مفتونا بحب الدنيا، يُحب التعظيم والرئاسة، وإن ترغبت فيه إلى عابد وجدته جاهلا في عبادته مخدوعا صريع عدوه إبليس، وقد صعد به إلى أعلى درجة من العبادة وهو جاهل بأدناها، فكيف له بأعلاها؟ وسائر ذلك من الرعاع، قبيح أعوج وذئاب مختلصة، وسباع ضارية وتعالب صائلة، هذا وصف عيون أهل زمانك من حملة العلم والقرآن ودعاة الحكمة." خرجه أبو نعيم في "الحلية".

From the words of Aḥmad ibn 'Aṣim al-Anṭākī—who was one of the great knowers of Allāh in the time of Abū Sulaymān al-Dārānī—he said: “I lived to see a time in which Islām had returned to being strange as it began, and the description of the truth had returned to being strange as it began. If you turned to a scholar, you would find him captivated by the love of the world, loving status, and leadership. And if you turned to a worshipper, you would find him ignorant in his worship, deceived, felled by the treachery of the devil. The devil has raised him to the highest degree of worship while he is ignorant of its lowest level, so how could he know its highest? As for the rest of the people, they are rabble, crooked riffraff, snatching wolves, predatory beasts, wild foxes. This is the description of the elite of your time from among the carriers of knowledge and Qur'ān and the callers to wisdom.” This was recorded by Abū Nu'aym in al-Ḥilyah.

فهذا وصف أهل زمانه، فكيف بما حدث بعده من العظائم والدواهي التي لم تخطر بباله ولم تدر في خياله؟

This is his description of the people of his time, so what then of the tremendous calamities and disasters that occurred after him, which never crossed his mind nor entered his imagination?

وخرج الطبراني من حديث أبي هريرة عن النبي ﷺ: «التمسك بسنتي عند فساد أمتي له أجر شهيد».

Al-Ṭabarānī reported from the Ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said: “**The one who holds fast to my Sunnah at the time of the corruption of my Ummah will have the reward of a martyr.**”

وخرج أبو الشيخ الأصبهاني بإسناده عن الحسن قال: "لو أن رجلا من الصدر الأول بُعثَ اليوم، ما عرف من الإسلام شيئا إلا هذه الصلاة." ثم قال: "أما والله، لئن عاش على هذه النكرات، فرأى صاحب بدعة يدعو إلى بدعته أو صاحب دنيا يدعو إلى دنياه، فعصمه الله عز وجل وقلبه يحنّ إلى ذلك السلف الصالح فيتبع آثارهم ويستن بسنتهم ويتبع سبيلهم، كان له أجر عظيم."

Abū al-Shaykh al-Aṣḥbahānī reported with his chain from al-Ḥasan (al-Baṣrī) who said: "If a man from the earliest generation were to be resurrected today, he would not recognize anything of Islām except this prayer." Then he said: 'By Allāh, if he were to live on until he saw the widespread evils, seeing a person of innovation calling to his innovation, or a worldly man calling to his worldly pursuits, yet Allāh protected him, and his heart yearned for that righteous early generation, so he followed their steps, adhered to their Sunnah, and walked upon their path, then indeed, he would have a tremendous reward.'

وروى المبارك ابن الفضالة عن الحسن أنه ذكر الغني المُتْرَف، الذي له سلطان يأخذ المال ويدعي أنه لا عقاب فيه، وذكر المبتدع الضالّ الذي خرج بسيفه على المسلمين، وتأول ما أنزله الله في الكفّار على المسلمين ثم قال: "ستكمم والذي لا إله إلا هو بينهما بين الغالي والجافي والمترف والجاهل، فاصبروا عليها، فإن أهل السنة كانوا أقلّ الناس، الذين لم يأخذوا من أهل الإتراف في إترافهم، ولا مع أهل البدع أهواءهم، وصبروا على سنتهم حتى أتوا ربهم، فكذلك إن شاء الله فكونوا." ثم قال: "والله، لو أن رجلا أدرك هذه النكرات يقول هذا: هلمّ إليّ، ويقول هذا: هلمّ إليّ، فيقول: لا أريد إلا سنة محمد ﷺ يطلبها ويسأل عنها، إن هذا ليفرض له أجر عظيم، فكذلك إن شاء الله، فكونوا."

Al-Mubārak ibn al-Faḍālah narrated from al-Ḥasan (al-Baṣrī) that he mentioned the affluent, indulgent rich man who possesses authority and seizes wealth, claiming that there is no punishment for doing so. He mentioned the misguided innovator who unsheathed his sword against the Muslims and interpreted what Allah revealed concerning the disbelievers as applying to the Muslims. Then he said: "Your Sunnah, by the One other than whom there is no deity worthy of worship, lies between these two: between the extremist and the negligent, between the indulged wealthy man and the ignorant one. So remain patient upon it, for the people of the Sunnah were the fewest of people, those who did not take part in the indulgence of the affluent, nor followed the desires of the people of innovation. They persevered upon their Sunnah until they met their Lord. So be like them, if Allah wills." Then he said: "By Allah, if a man were to witness these present-day evils, with one saying to him, 'Come to me,' and another saying, 'Come to me', yet he says, 'I only want the Sunnah of Muḥammad ﷺ,' seeking it and asking about it, indeed such a person would be granted a tremendous reward. So be like that, if Allah wills."

ومن هذا المعنى ما رواه أبو نعيم وغيره عن كميل بن زياد عن علي بن أبي طالب رضي الله عنه أنه قال: "الناس ثلاثة: فعالم رباني، ومتعلم على سبيل نجاته، وهمج زعاع، أتباع كل ناعق، يميلون مع كل ريح، لم يستضيئوا بنور العلم، ولم يلجئوا إلى ركن وثيق."

From this meaning is what Abū Nu‘aym and others narrated from Kumayl ibn Ziyād, from ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رضي الله عنه, that he said: “People are of three types: a Rabbānī Scholar, a student upon the path of salvation, and riffraff rabble who follow every caller. They sway with every wind, they have not been illuminated by the light of knowledge, nor have they taken refuge in a firm support.”

ثم ذكر كلاما في فضل العلم إلى أن قال: "آه، إن هاهنا - وأشار إلى صدره - علما، لو أصبت له حملة، بل أصبته لِقْنًا غير مأمون عليه يستعمل آلة الدين للدنيا، ويستظهر بحجج الله على كتابه، وبنعمته على عباده أو منقادا لأهل الحق لا بصيرة في أحنائه، ينقذ الشك في قلبه لأول عارض من شبهة، لا ذا ولا ذا.

Then he mentioned some words about the virtue of knowledge until he said: “Ah! Indeed here,” and he pointed with his hand to his chest, “Is knowledge. If only I could find someone fit to carry it! Rather, what I find is either a sly person who is not to be trusted with it, one who uses the status of the Religion for worldly gain, strengthens himself against the Book of Allah with Allah’s own proofs, and uses His blessings as an argument against His servants, or a person who follows the people of truth without having insight within himself, such that doubt sparks in his heart at the very first appearance of a Shubhah (misleading ambiguity/doubt). Not this one, and not that one.

أو منهوما باللذات، سلس الانقياد للشهوات، أو مُعْرِى بجمع المال والادخار، وليسوا من دعاة الدين، وأقرب شبهًا لهم الأنعام السارحة، كذلك يموت العلم بموت حامله، اللهم بلى، لن تخلو الأرض عن قائم لله بحجة لكيلا تبطل حجج الله وبيناته. أولئك هم الأقلون عددا والأعظمون عند الله قدرا، بهم يدفع الله عن حججه حتى يؤدوها إلى نظرائهم ويزرعوها في قلوب أشباههم. هَجَمَ بهم العلم على حقيقة الأمر، فاستلنا ما استؤعر منه المترفون، وأنسوا بما استوحش منه الجاهلون، وصحبوا الدنيا بأبدانٍ أرواحها متعلقة بالمنظر الأعلى، أولئك خلفاء الله في بلاده ودعااته إلى دينه، ها ها، شوقا إلى رؤيتهم."

Or one who is obsessed with pleasures, easily led by desires, or one infatuated with collecting and hoarding wealth, none of these are callers to the Religion. They resemble grazing cattle more than people of knowledge. And thus knowledge dies with the death of those who carry it. Yet indeed, the earth is never without someone who stands for Allah with His proof, so that the proofs of Allah and His clear signs do not perish. They are the fewest in number but the greatest in rank with Allah. Through them Allah preserves His proofs until they deliver them to others like themselves and plant them in the hearts of those who resemble them. Knowledge advanced on their hearts with the reality of affairs; so they find easy what the people of luxury find hard, and they feel intimate with what the ignorant find alien. They accompany the world with bodies whose spirits are attached to the Highest Realm. They are the vicegerents of Allah in His land and His callers to His Religion. Ah! How great is my longing to see them.”

فقسّم أمير المؤمنين - رضي الله عنه - حملة العلم إلى ثلاثة أقسام: قسم هم أهل الشبهات، وهم من لا بصيرة له من حملة العلم، بل ينقدح الشك في قلبه بأول عارض من شبهة، فتأخذه الشبهة فيقع في الحيرة والشكوك، ويخرج من ذلك إلى البدع والضلالات.

The Commander of the Believers رضي الله عنه divided the carriers of knowledge into three categories: those afflicted with doubts. They are the ones who have no insight among the carriers of knowledge. A doubt flares in their hearts at the first appearance of a misconception, and the doubt seizes them. They fall into confusion and uncertainty, and from that, they fall into innovations and misguidance.

وقسم هم أهل الشهوات، وجعلهم نوعين: أحدهما من يطلب الدنيا بنفس العلم، فيجعل العلم آلة ليكسب الدنيا. والثاني من يطلب الدنيا بغير العلم، وهذا النوع ضربان: أحدهما من همته من الدنيا لذاتها وشهواتها، فهو منهوم بذلك، سريع الانقياد إليه. والثاني من همته جمع الدنيا واكتنازها وادخارها. وكل هؤلاء ليسوا من دعاة الدين، وإنما هم كالأنعام. ولهذا شبه الله تعالى من حُمّل التوراة ثم لم يحملها بالحمار الذي يحمل أسفاراً. وشبه عالم السوء الذي انسلخ من آيات الله وأخلد إلى الأرض واتبع هواه بالكلب. والكلب والحمار أخس الأنعام وأضل سبيلاً.

He then divided the second group, the people of desires, and made them two categories: the first, those who seek worldly gain through Religious knowledge, making knowledge an instrument by which they earn and pursue worldly benefits. The second: Those who seek the world without using knowledge, and this category itself is of two types: the first: those whose sole concern is the pleasures and sensual desires of the world. They are consumed by them and quickly give in to them. The second: those whose concern is amassing wealth, accumulating it, and storing it up. All of these categories are not callers to the Religion, nor are they from its people; rather, they are like grazing cattle. For this reason, Allah the Exalted compared the one who was entrusted with the Torah but failed to carry it (i.e., failed to act upon it) to a donkey carrying books. And He compared the evil scholar who abandons the signs of Allah, clings to the earth, and follows his desires to a dog. And the dog and the donkey are the vilest of animals and the most misguided in their way.

والقسم الثالث من حملة العلم هم أهله وحملته ورعائه والقائمون بحجج الله وبياناته. وذكر أنهم الأقلون عدداً، الأعظمون عند الله قدراً، إشارة إلى قلّة هذا القسم وعزّته في حملة العلم وغرّيته بينهم.

And the third category of those who carry knowledge are its true people, its bearers, its guardians, and those who uphold the proofs and clear signs of Allah. He mentioned that they are few in number yet great in rank with Allah, indicating the scarcity and rareness of this category among the carriers of knowledge, and the strangeness of their condition amidst the rest.

وقد قسم الحسن البصري رحمه الله ، حملة القرآن إلى قريب من هذا التقسيم الذي قسمه علي رضي الله عنه لحملة القرآن.

Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣṭī رحمه الله divided the carriers of the Qur'ān into categories similar to the division that 'Alī رضي الله عنه mentioned regarding the carriers of knowledge.

قال الحسن: "قراء القرآن ثلاثة أصناف: صنف اتخذوه بضاعة يتأكلون به.

Al-Ḥasan said: "The reciters of the Qur'ān are of three types: A group who take it as merchandise, seeking to earn worldly gain through it.

وصنف أقاموا حروفه وضيعوا حدوده واستطالوا به على أهل بلادهم واستندوا به لطلب الولاية. كثر هذا الضرب من حملة القرآن لا كثرتهم الله.

A group that establishes its letters but neglects its limits, who use it to elevate themselves over the people of their lands and rely upon it in seeking leadership. There are many of this category among the carriers of the Qur'ān, may Allāh not increase their number.

وضربٌ عمدوا إلى دواء القرآن فوضعه على داء قلوبهم فركدوا به في محاربيهم وَحَنُوا به في برانسهم واستشعروا الخوف، وارتدوا الحزن، فأولئك الذين يسقي الله بهم الغيث وينصر بهم على الأعداء. والله، لهؤلاء الضرب في حملة القرآن أعزّ من الكبريت الأحمر."

And a group who turned to the cure of the Qur'ān, applying it to the disease in their hearts. So they settled with it in their prayer-niches, and moistened their cloaks with it, and clothed themselves with fear, and wrapped themselves in sorrow. These are the ones through whom Allah sends down rain, and through whom victory is granted over the enemies. By Allah, this type among the carriers of the Qur'ān is rarer than red sulphur.

فأخبر أن هذه القسم - وهم الذين قرؤوا القرآن لله وجعلوه دواء لقلوبهم، فأثمر لهم الخوف والحزن - أعزّ من الكبريت الأحمر بين قراء القرآن.

Thus, he informs that this category—those who recite the Qur'ān for Allah, using it as a cure for their hearts, so that it yields fear and sorrow (i.e., humility and awe)—is rarer than red sulphur among those who recite the Qur'ān.

ووصف أمير المؤمنين علي - رضي الله عنه - هذا القسم من حملة العلم بصفاتٍ، منها أنه هجم بهم العلم على حقيقة البصيرة، ومعنى ذلك أن العلم دلهم على المقصود الأعظم وهو معرفة الله تعالى، فخافوه وأحبوه حتى سهل بذلك عليهم كل ما تعسر على غيرهم ممن لم يصل إلى ما وصلوا إليه، ممن وقف مع الدنيا وزينتها وزهرتها واغترّ بها ولم يباشر قلبه معرفة الله وعظمته وإجلاله.

And the Commander of the Believers 'Alī رضي الله عنه described this category of the carriers of knowledge with certain qualities, among them that knowledge has driven them upon the reality of insight. This means that knowledge led them to the greatest objective, the knowledge of Allah, the Exalted. Thus, they feared Him and loved Him, and through that, everything difficult for others became easy for them. Those who did not reach what they reached, who remained attached to the world, its adornment, and its glitter, were deceived by it, and those whose hearts never tasted the direct experience of knowing Allah, His greatness, and His majesty.

فلذلك قال: استلنا ما استوعر منه المُتَرَفُونَ، فإن المترف الواقف مع شهوات الدنيا ولدّاتها يصعب عليه ترك لذّاتها وشهواتها، لأنه لا عوض عنده من لذّات الدنيا إذا تركها، فهو لا يبصر على تركها. وهؤلاء في قلوبهم العوض الأكبر بما وصلوا إليه من لذّة معرفة الله ومحبته وإجلاله، كما كان الحسن يقول: "إن أحبّاء الله هم الذين ورثوا طيب الحياة وذاقوا نعيمها بما وصلوا إليه من مناجاة حبيبهم، وبما وجدوا من لذة حبه في قلوبهم." في كلامٍ يطول ذكره هاهنا في هذا المعنى.

He also said that they found easy what the indulgent found difficult, for the person drowned in worldly desires and pleasures finds it extremely difficult to give up those pleasures. He has no substitute when abandoning the delights of this world, and thus he cannot bear to part with them. But these people possess in their hearts the greatest substitute, the delight of knowing Allāh, loving Him, and glorifying Him. As al-Ḥasan used to say: "Indeed, Allāh's beloved ones are those who inherited the sweetness of life and tasted its true delight through what they attained of intimate discourse with their Beloved, and through what they found in their hearts of the sweetness of His love..." and he continued with words whose mention would be lengthy here.

وإنما أنس هؤلاء بما استوحش منه الجاهلون لأن الجاهلين بالله يستوحشون من ترك الدنيا وشهواتها، لأنهم لا يعرفون سواها، فهي أنسهم. وهؤلاء يستوحشون من ذلك ويستأنسون بالله وبذكره ومعرفته ومحبته وتلاوة كتابه. والجاهلون بالله يستوحشون من ذلك ولا يجدون الأنس به.

These people found comfort in what the ignorant found lonesome, because the ignorant, those who do not know Allāh, find estrangement in abandoning the world and its desires, since they know nothing else; the world is their only comfort. But these people feel estrangement from the world and find comfort with Allāh, His remembrance, His knowledge, His love, and the recitation of His Book. The ignorant feel no comfort in these things and find them strange.

ومن صفاتهم التي وصفهم بها أمير المؤمنين علي - رضي الله عنه - أنهم صحبوا الدنيا بأبدان أرواحها معلقة بالمنظر الأعلى . وهذا إشارة إلى أنهم لم يتخذوا الدنيا وطناً، ولا رضوا بها إقامة ومسكناً. إنما اتخذوها ممراً ولم يجعلوها مستقراً، وجميع الكتب والرسول أوصت بهذا. وقد أخبر الله تعالى في كتابه عن مؤمن آل فرعون أنه قال لقومه في وعظه لهم: ﴿يَا قَوْمِ إِنَّمَا هَذِهِ الدُّنْيَا مَتَاعٌ وَإِنَّ الآخِرَةَ هِيَ دَارُ الْقَرَارِ﴾ [غافر: ٣٩]

Among the qualities that the Commander of the Believers ‘Alī رضي الله عنه mentioned regarding them is: “They accompanied the world with their bodies while their souls were attached to the highest abode.” This indicates that they did not take the world as a homeland, nor were they pleased to settle in it or make it their residence. Rather, they treated it as a passage, not a dwelling place. All the Scriptures and all the Messengers gave this same counsel. Allāh Almighty informed, in His Book, that the believer from Pharaoh’s family said to his people while admonishing them: “**O my people! Truly, this life of the world is nothing but a (quick passing) enjoyment, and verily, the Hereafter that is the home that will remain forever.**” [Ghāfir 39]

وقال النبي ﷺ لابن عمر: «كن في الدنيا كأنك غريب أو عابر سبيل.» وفي رواية: «وعد نفسك في أهل القبور.»

And the Prophet ﷺ said to Ibn ‘Umar: “**Be in this world as though you are a stranger or a traveler passing along the road.**” In another narration: “**And count yourself among the people of the graves.**”

ومن وصايا المسيح المروية عنه عليه السلام أنه قال لأصحابه: "اعبروها ولا تعمروها." وعنه عليه السلام أنه قال: "من الذي بيني على موج البحر داراً؟! تلك الدنيا فلا تتخذوها قراراً." فالمؤمن في الدنيا كالغريب المجتاز ببلدة غير مستوطن فيها، فهو يشق إلى بلده وهمه الرجوع إليه والتزود بما يوصله في طريقه إلى وطنه. ولا يُنافس أهل ذلك البلد المستوطنين فيه في عزهم، ولا يجزع مما أصابه عندهم من الذلّ.

Among the reported counsels of the Messiah عليه السلام to his disciples is that he said: “Pass through it and do not build it.” And he عليه السلام also said: “Who builds a house upon the waves of the sea?! That is this world, so do not take it as a place of residence.” Thus, the believer in this world is like a stranger passing through a town without settling in it. He longs for his homeland, and his concern is to return to it and to prepare provisions that will assist him on his journey back to his home. He does not compete with the residents of that town for their honor, nor does he grieve over whatever humiliation he suffers among them.

قال الفضيل بن عياض: "المؤمن في الدنيا مهموم حزين، همه مرمة جهازه."

Al-Fuḍayl ibn ‘Iyāḍ said: “The believer in this world is distressed and sorrowful; his concern is preparing his provisions.”

وقال الحسن: "المؤمن في الدنيا كالغريب لا يجزع من ذلها، ولا ينافس في عزّها، له شأن وللناس شأن."

And al-Ḥasan said: "The believer in this world is like a stranger: he does not grieve over its humiliation, nor compete for its honor. He has his own affair, and the people have theirs."

وفي الحقيقة فالمؤمن في الدنيا غريب لأن أباه لما كان في دار البقاء ثم أُخرج منها فهمه الرجوع إلى مسكنه الأول، فهو أبداً يحنّ إلى وطنه الذي أُخرج منه كما يقال: "حب الوطن من الإيمان." وكما قيل:

In reality, the believer is a stranger in this world because his father was once in the Abode of Permanence, then was taken out of it. His true concern is returning to his first dwelling. His heart continually yearns for the homeland from which he was expelled, just as it is said: "Love of homeland is part of faith." As the poet said:

"كم منزل في الأرض يألّفه الفتى ... وحينئذ أبداً لأوّل منزل"

"Though a youth becomes familiar with many dwellings on earth,
his longing is always for his first home."

ولبعض شيوخنا في هذا المعنى:

And one of our Shaykhs said in this meaning:

فحي على جنات عدن فإنها ... منازلك الأولى وفيهم المخيم
ولكننا سبي العدو فهل ترى ... نعود إلى أوطاننا ونسلم
وقد زعموا أن الغريب إذا نأى ... وشطت به أوطانه فهو مغرم
فأي اغتراب فوق غربتنا التي ... لها أضحت الأعداء فينا تحكّم

"Come then to the Gardens of Eden, for they
are your first homes, and there is your encampment.

But we are captives of the enemy—do you think
we shall return to our homelands and be safe?"

And they claim that when the stranger travels far
and his homelands become distant from him, he becomes infatuated with longing.

So what estrangement is greater than our estrangement—
an estrangement in which even our enemies have come to rule over us?

والمؤمنون في هذا القسم أقسام: منهم من قلبه معلق بالجنة، ومنهم من قلبه معلق عند خالقه وهم العارفون، ولعل أمير المؤمنين إنما أشار إلى هذا القسم. فالعارفون أبدانهم في الدنيا وقلوبهم عند المولى.

And the believers within this category are of various types: Among them are those whose hearts are attached to Paradise, and among them are those whose hearts are attached to their Creator, and these are the insightful (al-‘ārifūn). And perhaps the Commander of the Believers رضي الله عنه was referring specifically to this category. For the insightful, their bodies are in this world, but their hearts are with the Master.

وفي مراسيل الحسن عن النبي ﷺ يرويه عن ربه تعالى قال: «علامة الطهر أن يكون قلب العبد عندي معلقا، فإذا كان كذلك لم يُنْسِنِي على حال. وإن كان كذلك مننت عليه بالاشتغال بي كي لا ينساني. فإذا لم يُنْسِنِي حركت قلبه، فإن تكلم تكلم لي، وإن سكت سكت لي. فذلك الذي تأتيه المعونة من عندي».

In the mursal narrations of al-Ḥasan, from the Prophet ﷺ, reporting from his Lord the Most High, Who said: **“The sign of purity is that the servant’s heart becomes attached to Me. When it is so, he does not forget Me in any state. And when he is like that, I bestow upon him concern with Me so that he does not forget Me. When he does not forget Me, I move his heart; so if he speaks, he speaks for Me; and if he remains silent, he remains silent for Me. Such a one receives assistance from Me.”**

وأهل هذا الشأن هم غرباء الغرباء، غربتهم أعزّ الغربة، فإن الغربة عند أهل الطريقة غربتان: ظاهرة وباطنة.

The people of this state are the strangers of the strangers, their estrangement being the most rare of all forms of estrangement. For estrangement, according to the people of the path are two types: outward and inward.

فالظاهرة: غُربة أهل الصلاح بين الفساق، وغربة الصادقين بين أهل الرياء والنفاق، وغربة العلماء بين أهل الجهل وسوء الأخلاق، وغربة علماء الآخرة بين علماء الدنيا الذين سلبوا الخشية والإشفاق، وغربة الزاهدين بين الراغبين في كل ما ينفد وليس هو بباقي.

Outward estrangement: the estrangement of the righteous among the wicked, the estrangement of the sincere among the people of hypocrisy and showing-off, the estrangement of the scholars among the ignorant and those of bad character, the estrangement of the scholars of the Hereafter among the scholars of the world, those stripped of fear and humility, the estrangement of the ascetics among those who desire what perishes and does not remain.

وأما الغربة الباطنة: فغربة الهمة، وهي غربة العارف بين الخلق كلهم حتى العلماء والعباد والزهاد، فإن أولئك واقفون مع علمهم وعبادتهم وزهدهم، وهؤلاء واقفون مع معبودهم لا يعرجون بقلوبهم عنه.

Inward estrangement is the estrangement of aspiration (himmah), and this is the estrangement of the insightful ones (‘ārifūn) among all of creation, even among the scholars, the worshippers, and the ascetics. For those (scholars, worshippers, ascetics) stand with their knowledge, their worship, and their renunciation; whereas these (the insightful) stand with their Beloved, and their hearts never turn away from Him.

كان أبو سليمان الداراني يقول في وصفهم: "همتهم غير همة الناس، وإرادتهم الآخرة غير إرادة الناس، ودعاؤهم غير دعاء الناس."

Abū Sulaymān al-Dārānī would describe them, saying: "Their aspirations differ from the aspirations of the people, their desire for the Hereafter differs from the desire of the people, and their supplication differs from the supplication of the people."

وسئل عن أفضل الأعمال فبكى وقال: "أن يطلع على قلبك فلا يراك تريد من الدنيا والآخرة غيره."

He was asked about the best of deeds, and he wept and said: "That He should look upon your heart and not find you desiring, from this world or the next, anything other than Him."

وقال يحيى بن معاذ: "الزاهد غريب الدنيا، والعارف غريب الآخرة." يشير إلى أن الزاهد غريب بين أهل الدنيا، والعارف غريب بين أهل الآخرة، لا يعرفه العباد ولا الزهاد، وإنما يعرفه من هو مثله وهمته كهتمته.

Yahyā ibn Mu‘ādh said: "The ascetic is a stranger in this world, and the insightful one (‘ārif) is a stranger in the Hereafter." He means that the ascetic is strange among the people of the world, and the insightful one (‘ārif) is strange even among the people of the Hereafter; neither the worshippers nor the ascetics truly recognize him. The only ones who know him are those like him, whose aspirations match his.

وربما اجتمعت للعارف هذه الغربات كلها أو كثير منها أو بعضها، فلا تسأل عن غيبته حينئذ. فالعابدون ظاهرون لأهل الدنيا والآخرة. والعارفون مستورون عن أهل الدنيا والآخرة.

The insightful one (‘ārif) may experience all these forms of estrangement, or many of them, or some of them, and if so, the degree of his estrangement cannot be described. For the devoted worshippers are apparent to the people of this world and the next. And the insightful ones (‘ārifūn) are concealed from the people of this world and the next.

قال يحيى بن معاذ: "العابد مشهور والعارف مستور." وربما خفي حال العارف على نفسه لخفاء حالته وإساءة الظن بنفسه.

Yahyā ibn Mu‘ādh said: “The worshipper is well-known, but the insightful one (‘ārif) is concealed.” Sometimes the state of the insightful one (‘ārif) is even hidden from himself due to the subtlety of his condition and his poor opinion of himself.

وقال إبراهيم بن أدهم: "ما أرى هذا الأمر إلا في رجل لا يعرف ذلك من نفسه ولا يعرفه الناس منه."

Ibrāhīm ibn Adham said: “I do not see this state (of sincere spiritual reality) except in a man who does not recognize it in himself, nor do the people recognize it in him.”

وفي حديث سعد عن النبي ﷺ: «إن الله يحب العبد الخفي التقي».

In the Ḥadīth of Sa‘d, from the Prophet ﷺ: **“Indeed, Allāh loves the hidden, pious servant.”**

وفي حديث معاذ عن النبي ﷺ: «إن الله يحب من عباده الأخفياء الأتقياء، الذين إذا حضروا لم يعرفوا، وإذا غابوا لم يفتقدوا، أولئك أئمة الهدى ومصابيح العلم».

And in the Ḥadīth of Mu‘ādh, from the Prophet ﷺ: **“Indeed, Allāh loves from among His servants the hidden, pious ones: those who, when present, are not recognized, and when absent, are not missed. Those are the leaders of guidance and the lamps of knowledge.”**

وعن علي بن أبي طالب رضي الله عنه: "طوبى لكل عبد نُؤمِّه عرف الناس ولم تعرفه الناس، وعرفه الله منه برضوان. أولئك مصابيح الهدى، تجلى عنهم كل فتنة مظلمة."

And from ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رضي الله عنه: “Glad tidings to every servant who is humble and unknown: he knows the people, yet the people do not know him; and Allah knows of him that which earns His pleasure. They are the lamps of guidance; every dark trial becomes cleared away through them.”

وقال ابن مسعود رضي الله عنه: "كونوا جدد القلوب، خلقان الثياب، مصابيح الظلام، تخفون على أهل الأرض وتعرفون في أهل السماء."

Ibn Mas‘ūd رضي الله عنه said: “Be fresh of heart, worn of clothes, lamps in the darkness; hidden from the people of the earth, known among those of the heavens.”

فهؤلاء أخص أهل الغربة، وهم الفرارون بدينهم من الفتن، وهم النزاع من القبائل الذين يُحشرون مع عيسى ابن مريم عليه السلام، وهم بين أهل الآخرة أعز من الكبريت الأحمر، فكيف يكون حالهم بين أهل الدنيا، وتخفى أحوالهم غالباً على الفرقتين كما قال:

These are the most special of the strangers. They are the ones who flee with their Religion from trials. They are the isolated individuals from the tribes; those who will be gathered with 'Īsā, the son of Maryam عليه السلام. They are, even among the people of the Hereafter, rarer than red sulphur; so what then is their state among the people of this world? Their condition is hidden from both groups, as the poet said:

تواريت من دهري بظل جناحه ... فعيني ترى دهري وليس يراني
فلو تسأل الأيام ما اسمي ما درت ... وأين مكاني ما عرفن مكاني

I concealed myself from my age beneath the shade of its wing;
So my eye beholds my time, while my time never beholds me.
And were you to ask the days what my name is, they would not know;
And where my place is, they would never recognize my place.

ومن ظهر منهم للناس فهو بينهم ببدنه، وقلبه معلق بالملاء الأعلى، كما قال أمير المؤمنين رضي الله عنه في وصفهم:

And whoever among them appears to the people is only among them with his body, while his heart remains attached to the Highest Assembly; just as the Commander of the Believers رضي الله عنه said in describing them:

جسمي معي غير أنّ الروح عندكم ... فالجسم في غربة والروح في وطن

“My body is with me, but my soul is with You,
the body is in exile, while the soul is at home.”

وكانت رابعة العدوية - رحمها الله تعالى - تنشد في هذا المعنى:

And Rābi'ah al-'Adawiyah رحمه الله would recite in this meaning:

ولقد جعلتك في الفؤاد محدثي ... وأبحث جسمي من أراد جلوسي
فالجسم مني للحبيب مؤانس ... وحبيب قلبي في الفؤاد أنيسي

“I have placed you in my heart as the one I speak to,
and I have allowed my body to sit with whoever wishes to sit with me.
So my body keeps company with the beloved around me,
but the true beloved of my heart is my intimate companion within my chest.”

وأكثرهم لا يقوى على مخالطة الخلق فهو يفر إلى الخلوة ليستأنس بحبيبه، ولهذا كان أكثرهم يطيل الوحدة.

Most of them cannot endure mixing with people, so they flee to solitude to find intimacy with their Beloved, and for this reason, most of them prolong their seclusion.

وقيل لبعضهم: "ألا تستوحش؟" قال: "كيف أستوحش وهو يقول: أنا جليس من ذكرني؟" وقال آخر: "وهل يستوحش مع الله أحد؟" وعن بعضهم: من استوحش من وحدته فذاك لقلّة أنسه بربه.

Someone asked one of them: "Do you not feel lonely?" He said, "How could I feel lonely when He says, 'I am the companion of the one who remembers Me'?" Another said: "And does anyone feel loneliness while with Allāh?" And it was said by some of them: "Whoever feels loneliness in his solitude, that is only because his intimacy with his Lord is little."

كان يحيى بن معاذ كثير العزلة والانفراد فعاتبه أخوه فقال له: "إن كنت من الناس فلا بد لك من الناس." فقال: يحيى: "إن كنت من الناس فلا بد لك من الله."

Yahyā ibn Mu'ādh often practiced seclusion and solitude. His brother criticized him for this and said, "If you are one of the people, then you must be with the people." Yahyā replied: "If you are truly one of the people, then you must be with Allāh."

وقيل له: "إذا هجرت الخلق مع من تعيش؟" قال: "مع من هجرتهم له."

He was asked, "When you abandon the people, with whom do you live?" He said: "With the One for whose sake I abandoned them."

وأنشد إبراهيم بن أدهم في هذا المعنى:

Ibrāhīm ibn Adham recited in this meaning:

هجرتُ الخلق طرّاً في هواكا ... وأيتمتُ العيالَ لكي أراكا
فلو قطعني في الحبِّ إرباً ... كما حنَّ الفؤادُ إلى سواكا

"I abandoned all people for the sake of Your love,
and I orphaned my family so that I may behold You.
if You were to cut me to pieces in this love,
my heart would never yearn for anyone but You."

وعوتب غزوان على خلوته فقال: "أصبت راحة قلبي في مجالسة من لديه حاجتي."

Ghazwān was reproached for his solitude, and he said: "I found the comfort of my heart in the company of the One with whom lies my need."

ولغريبتهم من الناس ربما نُسب بعضهم إلى الجنون يُعَدُّ حاله من أحوال الناس، كما كان أويس يُقال ذلك عنه. كان أبو مسلم الخولاني كثير اللهج بالذكر لا يفتر لسانه، فقال رجل لجلسائه: "أمجنون صاحبكم؟" وقال: أبو مسلم: "لا يا أخي! ولكن هذا دواء الجنون."

Due to their estrangement from people, some of them were even accused of madness, because their states were far removed from the states of the common people, just as this was said about Uways. Abū Muslim al-Khawlanī was constantly engaged in remembrance, his tongue never resting. A man said to those around him: "Is your companion mad?" Abū Muslim said: "No my brother, this is the cure for madness."

وفي حديث عن النبي ﷺ: «اذكروا الله حتى يقولوا مجنون».

In a Ḥadīth from the Prophet ﷺ: **"Remember Allāh until they say: 'He is mad.'"**

وقال الحسن في وصفهم: "إذا نظر إليهم الجاهل حسبهم مرضى، وما بالقوم من مرض." ويقول: "قد خولطوا وقد خالط القوم أمر عظيم، هيهات، والله، مشغول عن دنياكم."

Al-Ḥasan, describing such people, said: "When the ignorant look at them, they think they are sick, yet they have no sickness. They say, 'They have lost their minds,' but the people have been touched by something tremendous. Far, far from it, by Allāh, they are preoccupied from your world."

وفي هذا المعنى يقول قائل:

In this meaning, one said:

وحرمةُ الوُدِّ ما لي عنكم عِوضٌ ... وليسَ لي في سواكم سادتي غَرَضُ
ومن حديثي بهم قالوا به مَرَضٌ ... فقلتُ: لا زالَ عَنِّي ذلك المرضُ

The sanctity of affection, by Allah, I have no substitute for you,

And I have no desire for anyone but you, my master.

When they heard me speak about you, they said, "He is ill."

I replied: "May that illness never leave me."

وفي حديث أن النبي ﷺ أوصى إلى رجل فقال: «استحي من الله كما تستحي من رجلين من صالحى عشيرتك لا يفارقانك». وفي حديث آخر عنه ﷺ قال: «أفضل الإيمان أن تعلم أن الله معك حيثما كنت». وفي حديث آخر: أنه سئل ﷺ "ما تزكية المرء نفسه؟" قال: «أن يعلم أن الله معه حيث كان». وفي حديث آخر عنه ﷺ قال: «ثلاثة في ظل الله يوم لا ظل إلا ظله»، ذكر منهم: رجلاً «حيث توجه علم أن الله معه».

In a Ḥadīth, the Prophet ﷺ advised a man, saying: “**Be shy before Allāh as you are shy before two righteous men from your own relatives who never leave you.**” And in another Ḥadīth from him ﷺ: “**The best of faith is that you know that Allāh is with you wherever you are.**” In another narration, the Prophet ﷺ was asked, “How does a person purify his soul?” He said, “**That he knows Allah is with him wherever he is.**” And in another Ḥadīth, the Prophet ﷺ said: “**Three will be in the shade of Allah on a day when there is no shade but His,**” and he mentioned among them: “**A man who, wherever he turns, knows that Allah is with him.**”

ولأبي عبادة البُحْتَرِيِّ في هذا المعنى أبياتٌ حسنةٌ، لكنه أساءَ بقولها في مخلوقٍ، وقد أصلحتُ منها كلماتٍ حتى استقامت على الطريقة:

And Abū ‘Ubādah al-Buḥturī has fine verses on this meaning, though he erred by directing them to a created being. I have amended some phrases until they became correct in meaning:

كَأَنَّ رَقِيبًا مِنْكَ يَرَعَى حَوَاطِرِي ... وَأَخَرَ يَرَعَى نَاطِرِي وَلسَانِي
فَمَا أَبْصَرْتَ عَيْنَايَ بَعْدَكَ مَنْظَرًا ... يَسْوُوكَ إِلَّا قُلْتُ قَدْ رَمَعَانِي
وَلَا بَدَرْتَ مِنْ فِيَّ بَعْدَكَ لَفْظَةً ... لِعَيْرِكَ إِلَّا قُلْتُ: قَدْ سَمِعَانِي
وَلَا حَطَرْتَ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ غَيْرِكَ حَطْرَةً ... عَلَى الْقَلْبِ إِنَّا عَرَجْنَا بَعْنَانِي

As if a watcher from You observes my thoughts,
And another watches my glances and my tongue.

My eyes have seen no sight after You,
But I said: “Indeed, He has noticed me.”

Nor has a word escaped my mouth for other than You,
Except that I said: “He has heard me.”

Nor has a thought of anyone besides You passed my heart,
If it arises, my reins turn me back to You.

إِذَا مَا تَسَلَّى الْقَاعِدُونَ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ ... بِذِكْرِ فُلَانٍ أَوْ كَلَامِ فُلَانِي
وَجَدْتُ الَّذِي يُسَلِّي سِوَايَ يَشُوْفُنِي ... إِلَىٰ قُرْبِكُمْ حَتَّىٰ أَمَلَّ مَكَانِي
وَإِخْوَانِ صِدْقِي قَدْ سَيِّمْتُ لِقَاهُمْ ... وَأَعْضَيْتُ طَرْفِي عَنْهُمْ وَلِسَانِي
وَمَا الْبَعْضُ أَسَلَىٰ عَنْهُمْ غَيْرَ أَنِّي ... أَرَاكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ الْجِهَاتِ تَرَانِي

If those who sit idly find comfort from passion,
By mentioning so-and-so or talking about so-and-so,
I find that what comforts others only increases my longing,
For nearness to You, until my place wearies me.
And companions of sincerity, meeting them once pleased me,
But now I lower my gaze from them and restrain my tongue.
Not that the meeting with them became less soothing,
But because I see You reflected in every gathering.

انتهى ما ذكره الشيخ فسح الله في مدتيه من هذا الكلام، والحمد لله وحده، وصلى الله على سيدنا محمد وآله وصحبه وسلّم تسليمًا
كثيرًا.

This concludes what the Shaykh, may Allah extend his life, mentioned in this discourse.
All praise is due to Allah alone, and may Allah send blessings and peace upon our master
Muhammad, his family, and his companions abundantly.

((بَلَّغَ مَقَابَلَةً عَلَىٰ أَصْلٍ مَقْرُوءٍ عَلَىٰ الْمُؤَلَّفِ، وَعَلَيْهِ خَطُّ رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ.))

(Certified against a copy read to the author, and bearing his handwriting, may Allah have
mercy on him.)
