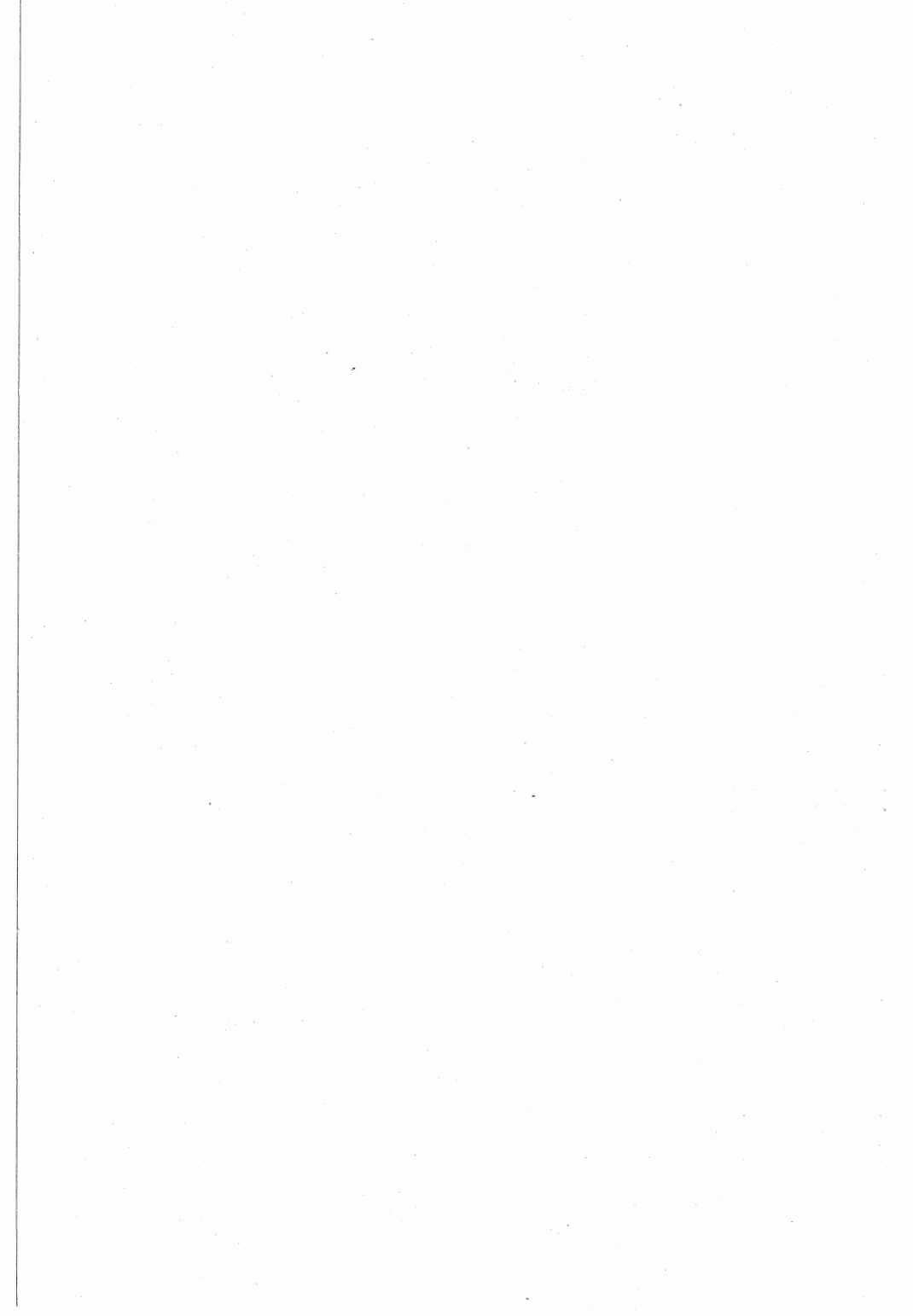




REMEMBRANCE OF THE MOST MERCIFUL

Imām ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (d. 751H)

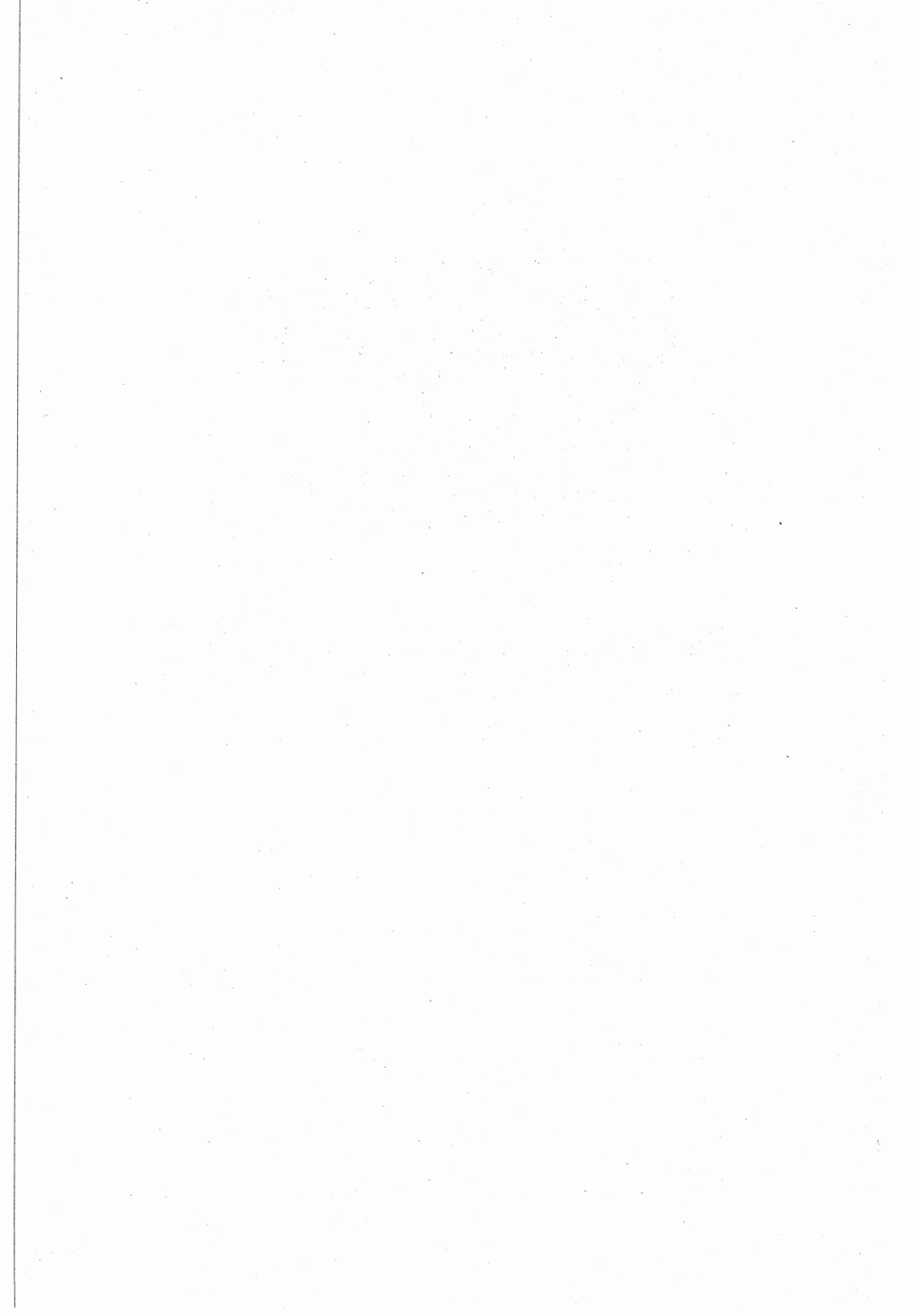
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الْوَأْيُ الصَّيْبُ وَرَفْعُ الْكَلَامِ الطَّيِّبِ

تأليف
الإمام أبي عبد الله محمد بن أبي بكر بن أيوب ابن قيس الجوزية

(٦٩١ - ٧٥١)



al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (d.751H)

Remembrance of THE MOST MERCIFUL

being a translation of his
'al-Wābil al-ṣayyib wa rāfi' al-kalim al-ṭayyib'



Allāh, the Most High, said:

“Remember Me,
I shall remember you.”

[QUR'ĀN 2: 152]

Remembrance of The Most Merciful

by
al-Hāfiẓ Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (d.751H)



Dār as-Sunnah Publishers

B I R M I N G H A M

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E: daar-us-sunnah@mail.com

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الوعظ ١٧

كتاب الكلم الطيب
لابن قيم الجوزية

ابن قيم

٥٢٠

ابن راوند

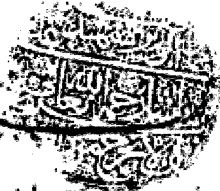
هذا الذي تركه الاوهار جارية وصيها الملك العبد بن زينا

سافر تجد عوصا عن تفارقه وانضمت العيني العيني
المرزبان وترف المايفسك ان صاحب ان لم يجد يلق
والاسد له اوراق القاي افترت والمها من ان العبد لم يلق
والتمس لورقفت في السند واسمها للمها النان من عزم
والبدرو لا اختفانها انظر اليك كل من عزم

الفصل الثالث عشر	الفصل الرابع عشر	الفصل الخامس عشر
في امره	في امره	في امره
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الفصل السادس عشر	الفصل السابع عشر	الفصل الثامن عشر
في امره	في امره	في امره
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صفحة العنوان من النسخة (ت)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ وَبِهِ نَسْتَعِينُ



فقد رثاه فيها شيخنا الامام العالم الحبر العلامة
شيخ الاسلام نعم الدين ابو عبد الله محمد بن ابي بكر ابي
ابن سعد المعروف بابن قيم الجوزية رحمه الله بوجهه الى بعض
اخوانه وسمها الكمال الطيب والفعل الصالح وهي كتابها
قال بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم الله سبحانه المرحوم الاجابة ان
بسلام الدنيا والآخرة وان يسبح عليه نعمة باطنه وظاهره
وان يحل عليه من اذى البع عليه شكر واذا ابتلى صبر واذا اذنب
استغفر فان هذه الامور الثلاثة هي عنوان شجاعة العبد وعلامته
فلاحه ودينه واهله ولا ينقل عبد عنها ابدا فان العبد دائما
سقط من هذه الاطباق الثلاثة نعم من الله تبارك وتعالى فقيهها
الشكر وهو مبني على ثلثة اركان الاعتراف بها ما طنا والتحدث
بها طاهرا وتعرفها في مرضاة وليها ومسد بها فاذا فعل ذلك
فقد شكرها مع تقصيره في سبورها الثاني محسن من الله بتسليمه
بها فقرضه فيها الصبر والتسليم والصبر حبس النفس عن التسخط
بالقدر وحبس اللسان عن الشكوى وحبس الجوارح عن

كاللحم

الصفحة الاولى من النسخة (ت)

THE AUTHOR

Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah

May Allāh have mercy upon him

His Name:

HE IS THE IMĀM, THE ḤĀFIẒ, the exegete, the legal jurist, Shaykh al-Islām: Abū ‘Abdullāh Shamsu-d-Dīn Muḥammad Ibn Abū Bakr—better known as Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah.

His Birth and Education:

He was born into a noble and knowledgeable family on 7th Safar 691H in the village of Zar’, near Damascus, Syria.

From an early age he set about acquiring knowledge of the Islāmic sciences from the scholars of his time. Describing his desire for knowledge, al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Rajab, *Dhayl Ṭabaqāt-l-Ḥanābilah* [4/449] said, ‘He had an intense love for knowledge, for books,

publications and writings.'

Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāyah wa-n-Nihāyah* [14/235] said, 'He acquired from such books what others could not acquire, and he developed a deep understanding of the books of the Salaf and of the Khalaf.'

His Teachers and Shaykhs:

They include Shihāb an-Nāblusī, Qāḍī Taqī ad-Dīn ibn Sulaymān, from whom he studied ḥadīth; Qāḍī Badr ad-Dīn ibn Jamā'ah; Ṣafī ad-Dīn al-Hindī; Ismā'īl ibn Muḥammad al-Ḥarrānī, from whom he studied fiqh and usūl; and also his father, from whom he learnt the laws of inheritance.

However, the most notable of his teachers was Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah, whom he accompanied and studied under for sixteen years. Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr (14/234) said, 'He attained great proficiency in many branches of knowledge; particularly knowledge of tafsīr, ḥadīth, and usūl. When Shaykh Taqī ad-Dīn ibn Taymiyyah returned from Egypt in the year 712H, he stayed with the shaykh until he died; learning a great deal of knowledge from him, along with the knowledge that he had already occupied himself in attaining. So he became a unique scholar in many branches of knowledge.'

His Manners and Worship:

Many of his students and contemporaries have borne witness to his excellent character and his manners of worship. Ibn Rajab (4/450) said,

He - may Allāh have mercy on him - was constant in

worship and performing the night prayer, reaching the limits in lengthening his prayer and devotion. He was constantly in a state of *dhikr* and had an intense love for Allāh. He also had a deep love for turning to Allāh in repentance, humbling himself to Him with a deep sense of humility and helplessness. He would throw himself at the doors of Divine obedience and servitude. Indeed, I have not seen the likes of him with regards to such matters.

Ibn Kathīr (14/234) said,

He was constant in humbly entreating and calling upon his Lord. He recited well and had fine manners. He had a great deal of love and did not harbour any envy or malice towards anyone, nor did he seek to harm or find fault with them. I was one of those who most often kept company with him and was one of the most beloved of people to him. I do not know of anyone in the world in this time, who is a greater worshipper than him. His prayer used to be very lengthy, with prolonged bowing and prostrations. His colleagues would criticise him for this, yet he never retorted back, nor did he abandon this practice. May Allāh bestow His mercy upon him.

His Students and Works:

Amongst his most prominent students were: Ibn Kathīr (d.774H), adh-Dhahabī (d.748H), Ibn Rajab (d.751H) and Ibn ‘Abdu-l-Hādī (d.744H), as well as two of his sons, Ibrāhīm and Sharafu-d-Dīn ‘Abdullāh.

Ibnu-l-Qayyim authored over sixty works. His books and writings are characterised by their touching address to the heart and

soul, as well as their accuracy, precision, strength of argument and depth of research.

In the field of fiqh and usūl, his writings include: *ʿIlmu-l-Muwaqqihīn*; *Turuqu-l-Hukmiyyah*; *Ighāthatu-l-Lahfān*; *Tuhfatu-l-Mawlūd*; *Aḥkām Ablu-l-Dhimmah*; and *al-Furūsiyyah*.

In the field of ḥadīth and sirah they include: *Tahdhīb Sunan Abi Dāwūd*; *al-Manāru-l-Munīf*; *Fawā'id al-Ḥadīthiyyah*; *Jalā'u-l-Aḥbām*; and *Zādu-l-Ma'ād*.

In the field of beliefs: *Ijtimā' al-Juyūsh al-Islāmiyyah*; *as-Ṣawā'iqu-l-Mursalab*; *Shifā'u-l-'Alīl*; *Ḥādīyu-l-Arwāḥ*; *al-Kāfiyatu-sh-Shāfiyyah*; and *Kitāb ar-Rūḥ*.

In the field of akhlāq (morals) and tazkiyah (purification): *Madāriju-s-Sālikīn*; *ad-Da'wa-d-Dawā'*; *al-Wābilu-s-Ṣayyib*; *al-Fawā'id*; *Risālatu-t-Tabūkiyyah*; *Miftāḥ Dār as-Sa'ādah*; and *'Uddatu-s-Ṣābirīn*.

In the sciences of the Qur'ān: *at-Tibyān fī Aqsāmi-l-Qur'ān*; and *Amtḥāl al-Qur'ān*.

In language and miscellaneous issues: *Badā'i al-Fawā'id*.

Two books have also been written collating the exegetical comments of ibn al-Qayyim from his various works: *Tafsīr al-Qayyim* and *Tafsīr al-Munīr*.

A few of his works have also been translated into the English language: the Magnificent Journey; the Invocation of God; Medicine of the Prophet; *Zād al-Ma'ād*.

Statements of the Scholars about him:

Ibn Rajab (4/44) said,

He had deep knowledge concerning tafsīr and the fundamentals of the religion, reaching the highest degree concerning them both. Similar was the case in the field of ḥadīth, with regards to understanding its meanings, subtleties and deducing rulings from them. Likewise was the case in the field of fiqh and its usūl, as well as the Arabic language. He did a great service to these sciences. He was also knowledgeable about rhetoric, grammar, and *sulūk* as well as the subtleties and details that occur in the speech of the people of *tasawwuf*.

Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar, *ad-Duraru-l-Kāminah* (4/21),

He possessed a courageous spirit as well as vast and comprehensive knowledge. He had deep knowledge concerning the differences of opinions of the Scholars and about the ways of the Salaf.

Ibn Ḥajar also said in his commendation to ar-Raddu-l-Wāfir,

And if there were no virtues of Shaykh Taqī ad-Dīn [Ibn Taymiyyah], except for his famous student, shaykh Shamsu-d-Dīn ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah - the author of many works, which both his opponents and supporters benefited from - this would be a sufficient indication of his [Ibn Taymiyyah's] great position.

al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Nāṣir ad-Dimishqī, *ar-Raddu-l-Wāfir* [p. 69] said,

He possessed knowledge of the sciences, especially tafsīr and usūl.

He also said:

Abū Bakr Muḥammad Ibn al-Muhib said, as found in his letter, "I said in front of our Shaykh, al-Mizzī, 'Is Ibnu-l-Qayyim at the same level as Ibn Khuzaymah?' He replied, 'He is in this time, what Ibn Khuzaymah was in his time.'"

As-Suyūṭī, *Bughyatul-Wi'āt* [1/62] said,

His books had no equal and he strove and became one of the great Imāms in [the field of] tafsīr, ḥadīth, the Book, the Sunnah, furū', and the Arabic language.

'Alī al-Qārī, *al-Mirqāt* [8/251],

It will be clear to whoever aspires to read the explanation of *Manāzil-s-Sā'irīn* [i.e. *Madārij as-Sālikīn*], that they [Ibn Taymiyyah and Ibnu-l-Qayyim] are from the great ones of *Aḥlu-s-Sunnah wa-l-Jamā'ah*, and from the *awliyā'* of this Ummah.

Qāḍī Burhān ad-Dīn az-Zur'ā said as quoted from him in *Dhayl Ṭabaqāt al-Hanābilah*,

There is none under the heavens who has greater knowledge than he.

His Death:

Imām Ibnu-l-Qayyim passed away at the age of sixty, on the 13th night of Rajab, 751H, may Allāh shower His Mercy upon him.

Some of his fine works have been translated and published in English under the Dār as-Sunnah Ibn Qayyim series:

- Trials and Tribulations
- Characteristics of the Hypocrites
- Paragons of the Qur'ān
- Inner Dimensions of the Prayer
- Heartfelt Advice to a Friend
- Newborn Baby Guide

INTRODUCTION

With the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the Most Merciful

Indeed, all praise is for Allāh, alone. We praise Him, seek His aid, beg for His forgiveness and seek refuge in Him from the evil of our souls and the evil of our actions. Indeed, whomsoever Allāh guides, none can misguide and whomsoever Allāh misguides none can guide. I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship save Allāh alone, with no partner. I bear witness that Muḥammad (ﷺ) is His servant and His final Messenger.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا
زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ
بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا ۝١

“O mankind! fear your Lord, who created you from a single soul and created its mate from it and then disseminated many men and women from the two of them. And fear Allāh in whose name you make demands on one another, and also in respect of your families. Indeed Allāh watches over you continually.”

[*al-Nisā'* (4): 1]

Allāh, the Most High says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا ۝٦٧ يُصْلِحْ
لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ
فَقَدْ فَوْزَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا ۝٦٨

“O you who have believed! Fear Allāh and speak words of appropriate justice. He will [then] put your actions right for you and forgive you of your sins. And whoever obeys Allāh and His Messenger has certainly attained a mighty victory.”

[*al-Aḥzāb* (33): 70-71]

Indeed the most truthful speech is the Book of Allāh. The best guidance, is the guidance of Muḥammad (ﷺ), and the worst of affairs are the newly invented matters. Every newly invented matter [in the religion] is an innovation, every innovation is a misguidance and every misguidance is in the fire. To proceed:

Indeed, Allāh says in His clear revelation:

إِنَّ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ
وَالْقَانِتِينَ وَالْقَانِتَاتِ وَالصَّادِقِينَ وَالصَّادِقَاتِ وَالصَّابِرِينَ
وَالصَّابِرَاتِ وَالْخَاشِعِينَ وَالْخَاشِعَاتِ وَالْمُتَصَدِّقِينَ
وَالْمُتَصَدِّقَاتِ وَالصَّائِمِينَ وَالصَّائِمَاتِ وَالْحَافِظِينَ
فُرُوجَهُمْ وَالْحَافِظَاتِ وَالذَّاكِرِينَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا
وَالذَّاكِرَاتِ أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٧٥﴾

“Indeed, men and women who are Muslims. The obedient men and women, the truthful men and women, the patient men and women, the humble men and women, the charitable men and women, the fasting men and women, the men and women who guard their private parts, and the men and women who remember Allāh much—for them Allāh has prepared forgiveness and a great reward.”

[*al-Aḥzāb* (33): 35]

And Allāh, the Most High, says:

وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

“Remember Allāh abundantly so that hopefully you will be successful.”

[*al-Anfāl* (8): 45]

In the Noble Qur’ān there is more than one verse which shows the importance of remembrance and the virtue of those that remember Allāh, the Most High. As Allāh says in a narration on the tongue of the Prophet (ﷺ): “I am just as my servant thinks of Me. I am with him when he remembers Me. If he remembers Me in himself, I too, remember him in Myself. If he mentions Me in a group of people, I mention him in an assembly better than that. If he comes close to Me one hand-span, I bring him near to Me one cubit. If he draws close to Me by one cubit, I bring him close to Me a distance of fathom. And if he comes to Me walking, I go to him at speed.”¹

In Muslim, on the authority of ‘A’ishah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhā*) that the Messenger (ﷺ) use to remember Allāh at all times. Also in Muslim, on the authority of Abū Musā (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) from the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The similitude of a house in which Allāh is remembered in and a house in which Allāh is not remembered, is like that of the living and the dead.”

¹ Bukhārī, #7405, Muslim, #2675, and others.

FOREWORD

In the Name of Allāh, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

Dear reader, before you is a great and valuable text penned by Imām Ibn Qayyim—may Allāh have mercy on him. Ibn Qayyim is known for his writing style and its touching nature, that moves the hearts in way a that will leave a lasting impression on the reader, by the permission of Allāh. This text is one of those works that will not only refresh the believer but also create an impulse and desire to increase in doing good works.

Whatever our condition may be, we all are in great need of Allāh. Without His aid and support we would be lost and in ruin. No matter what our circumstances are, we can never forget the immense blessings Allāh has showered upon us, for this we can never thank Allāh enough. Part of being a thankful servant is to be devoted in His remembrance, for all those who are devoted He will increase them in blessings and happiness.

Remembrance holds an important position in the religion of al-Islām, which the author has done a tremendous job in listing it's benefits, virtues and spiritual dimensions. However what is important to note is that remembrance of Allāh has to be done in accordance to the Sunnah of our beloved Prophet (ﷺ), for he was the best worshipper of Allāh and the one upon whom revelation came down upon. Anything away from his Sunnah is an innovation in the religion and a cause of being distance from Allāh, the Most High. It is compulsory upon every Muslim to learn how the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) and his noble companions used

²Taken from his commentary of *Riyadh al-Sālihin* for the same narrations.

to remember Allāh.

What is compulsory for every Muslim is to learn how the Messenger (ﷺ) used to remember Allāh, and Ibn al Qayyim—may Allāh have mercy on his soul—has facilitated this knowledge in this book in front of you called—*al-Wābil al-ṣayyib wa rāfi' al-kalim al-tayyib*—of how the Messenger (ﷺ) use to remember his Lord, and the status of those who remember Allāh. It is a highly beneficial book and of great worth. In this edition the reader will gain further benefit from words of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-'Azīz Ibn Bāz and Shaikh Muḥammad Ibn Sāliḥ al-'Uthaymīn—may Allāh have mercy on them both.²

Also it has been enhanced with the checking of all the narrations, which are not mentioned in either Bukhārī or Muslim, that have been added from the works of the great scholar of ḥadīth Imām Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī—may Allāh have mercy on his soul. All narrations have been referenced, from their original sources, as well as the use of more than one manuscript, in order to facilitate this work for the reader.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the translator S. Nawaz and the rest of the Dār as-Sunnah team for their great efforts so that this work can see the light of day. We ask Allāh the Pure and Elevated that He increases our reward, to grant us good and shield us from all evil. Indeed, He is Generous and the Most Honourable. May Allāh accept this deed from us all, forgive us of our short comings and add this to the scale of our good deeds. *Āmīn*

Abū Muḥammad Tasaddaq
9th February 2022
8th Rajab 1443H

CHAPTER ONE

Path to Happiness

In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the Most Merciful. There is neither might nor power save in Allāh, the Almighty, the most Elevated - Glory be to Him. We beseech Allāh and in Him do we place our hope that our prayers are answered, that He watches over you in this life and the next. That He showers you with His favours, inwardly (*bāṭin*) and outwardly (*ẓāhir*), and to make you from those that: when bestowed with favours, you give thanks, and when put to trial, you persevere, and when sinful, you seek forgiveness. Indeed these three conditions are the epitome of happiness for the servant (*sa'adat al-'abd*), and a sign of his success (*'alāmat al-falāḥ*) in this life and the next. The servant can never be separated from these, always fluctuating between these three levels.

Section One:

Thankfulness (*shukr*) and Being Tried (*ibtilā'*)

First: The favours (*nī'am*) come to the servant from Allāh, they follow one after the other and they are bound down by thankfulness (*shukr*). Thankfulness is based on three supporting pillars (*arkān*), recognition (*i'tirāf*) of the blessings inwardly (*bāṭin*), mentioning them outwardly (*ẓāhir*), and using it in a manner that

is pleasing to the One who bestowed it. Whoever does that then he has shown thankfulness albeit with his falling short of doing so properly.

Second: Trials that Allāh test the servant through, should be met with patience (*sabr*) and forbearance: to control oneself from being angry with what has been decreed; to restraining the tongue from complaining (*shakwah*), and restraining the limbs from committing sins (*ma'siyah*) such as striking oneself [in grief], tearing one's garments, pulling out one's hair and the likes.

So patience revolves around these three pillars, and if a servant (*'abd*) established this properly then every trial he is inflicted with would turn to a source of help, and the calamity would turn to a gift, and something disliked would turn into something beloved (*mahbūb*). For indeed Allāh does not put to task a servant in order to destroy him. Instead, He does so to test his patience (*sabr*) and his servitude (*'ubudiyyah*). For indeed to Allāh belongs the servitude of His servant in times of adversity (*darrā'*) just as it is in times of prosperity (*sarā'*). Also in those things he dislikes as well as those things which he loves. Most of creation offer their [acts of] worship (*'ibadah*) in things which they love, but the real test is to offer Him [acts of] worship in things that are disliked. It is due to this, the levels of the people are recognised, and according to it they will have their station (*manāzil*) determined with Allāh, the Most High.

Ablution with cold water when it is extremely hot is a type of faithfulness. Having relationship with one's beautiful spouse whom a person loves is an act of faithfulness. Spending money on her, his family and upon himself is also an act of faithfulness. It is faithfulness that leads to making ablution with cold water in severe cold weather, abstaining from sin which a person's self is

highly motivated into doing without the fear of people is an act of faithfulness, and spending wealth during times of hardship is an act of faithfulness. However there is a great difference between these two types of faithfulness.

He who is a servant to Allāh in both states, fulfilling His right in both comfort and adversity, is included in the verse:

أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِكَافٍ عَبْدَهُ

“Is Allāh not enough for His slave (*abd*)?”

[*al-Zumar* (39): 36]

In another reading: “*ubbad*” and they both are the same, because a singular noun attached to a noun contains generality of meaning includes the plural form, so complete sufficiency comes with complete servitude to Allāh. And any deficiency likewise, comes with similar shortcoming. So whoever finds good (*khayr*) then let him praise Allāh, and whoever finds other than that then let him blame no one else but himself.

These are the true slaves that Allāh’s enemy has no control over, as Allāh says:

إِنَّ عِبَادِي لَيْسَ لَكَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَانٌ

“Indeed, you have no authority over any of My slaves.”

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

When the enemy of Allāh Iblīs learned that Allāh would not surrender His servants over to him, or give him authority over them, he said:

قَالَ فَبِعِزَّتِكَ

لَأُغْوِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٨٢﴾ إِلَّا عِبَادَكَ مِنْهُمُ الْمُخَلَّصِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾

“[Iblīs] said, ‘By Your might, I will surely mislead all of them. Except for Your sincere slaves among them.’”

[*Sa’d* (38): 82-83]

And Allāh said:

وَلَقَدْ صَدَقَ عَلَيْهِمْ إِبْلِيسُ ظَنَّهُ فَاتَّبَعُوهُ إِلَّا
فَرِيقًا مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾ وَمَا كَانَ لَهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ سُلْطَانٍ
إِلَّا لَنَعْلَمَ مَنْ يُوْثِقُ بِالْآخِرَةِ مِمَّنْ هُوَ مِنْهَا فِي شَكٍّ

“And Iblīs was correct in his calculation of them, for they followed him, save for a group of true believers. And he had no authority over them except that We might know the ones who believe in the Hereafter from those who are in doubt it.”

[*Sabā’* (34): 20-21]

Allāh never allows His enemy to have control (*sultān*) over his believing servants. Indeed they are under His guardianship, trust and protective care. It maybe that the enemy steals from one of them like a thief would steal from a person that is unaware, this is something unavoidable, for a servant can be tried with heedlessness (*ghafla*), desires (*shahwa*) and anger (*ghadab*). Shayṭān enters into the servant through one of these three doors. Even if he protects himself as much as possible, being heedless is inescapable, or falling into desires or becoming enraged. Ādam the father of mankind—peace be upon him—was from the most forbearing of the creation, the most intelligent and stable of minds, despite

all that the enemy of Allāh [Iblīs] did not give up until he made him fall into what he fell into. So a person's forbearance compared with Ādam is like spit of saliva compared to a whole sea [of water]. The enemy of Allāh is not sincere to the believer and waits for him to be careless or heedless in order to strike. So when he causes him to fall into sin, the servant may think that Allāh will not accept him after [committing] it, and that sin has destroyed him. However Allāh's Grace, Mercy, Clemency and Forgiveness are greater than all of that.

Section Two:

The Good Deed and the Bad Deed

When Allāh intends some good for his servant, He opens for him the doors to: repentance (*tawbah*), remorse (*nadm*), abasement (*inkisār*), humility (*dull*), neediness (*iftiqār*), seeking Allāh's help (*isti'anah*), seeking His true protection (*sidq al-laja'a*), perpetual humility (*dawām al-taddaru'*), supplication (*du'ā*) and drawing closer to him (*taqarrab ilaihi*) by means of performing good deeds (*hasanāt*), or avoiding sins (*sayy'āt*) which can be a means to Allāh's mercy (*rahma*), until the enemy of Allāh says: 'O I wish I had left him without causing him to fall!'

This is what was meant by the statement of some of the Salaf: 'Indeed a servant may commit a sin by which he enters Paradise, and he may perform a good deed by which he enters Fire.' They asked: 'How?' He replied: 'He commits a sin and continues to see it in front of him all the time, being afraid from it, crying out of regret and shameful in front of his Lord, lowering his head and broken hearted.³ So the sin is more beneficial to him than many good deeds due to all the things that come about as a result of

³ Ahmad in his *al-Zuhd*, #277, Ibn Mubārāk in his *al-Zuhd*, #164 and others.

that sin, which is then a cause of happiness (*sa'ādah*) for the servant and success (*ḡalāḥ*), until that one sin is the cause for him to enter Paradise.'

Meanwhile a servant may perform a good deed, and he begins to count it as a favour upon his Lord, feeling arrogant, amazed at himself, stretching it out saying: 'I did this and I did that.' So that good deed leads him to having arrogance (*kibr*), self-amazement (*'ujb*) and pride (*kibr*) until it becomes the cause of his destruction.

When Allāh intends good for this needy servant He tests him with something that breaks him, which makes him humble, and reduces his self-importance. If however He wishes for his servant other than that, He leaves him to his arrogance and self-amazement, and this is the kind of abandoning that leads to his ruin.

The people of knowledge all agree unanimously that Divine Accord (*taṭfiq*) is from Allāh, and that Allāh does not leave you to rely on yourself, and abandonment is that Allāh leaves you to rely on yourself. So if Allāh intends good [for a servant] He opens up the door to humility and lowliness, perpetually seeking for refuge and dependence upon Him, and feeling in need of Him and the constant watching of his [own] faults, ignorance and transgression; whereas, at the same time he observes the bounty, kindness, mercy of his Lord upon him and His generosity, benevolence and praise.

So the servant travels to Allāh with these two wings (*janāḥayn*), which would not be possible without either of the two, consciousness of his own sins and recognition of Allah's mercy and if at any time he loses either one of them he would be like a bird that's missing one of its wings.

Shaikh al-Islām [Ibn Taymiyyah]—may Allāh have mercy on his soul—said: ‘The servant travels to Allāh between recognising Allāh’s favours (*mina*) upon him, and constantly searching for his own faults (*‘ayb*) in himself or his actions.’

Section Three:

The Best Way to seek Allāh’s forgiveness

This is the meaning of the statement of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) in the authentic narration from the ḥadīth of Buraydah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhā*): The leader of forgiveness (*istighfār*)⁴ is that a servant says:

اللَّهُمَّ أَنْتَ رَبِّي، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ، خَلَقْتَنِي وَأَنَا عَبْدُكَ، وَأَنَا عَلَى عَهْدِكَ
وَوَعْدِكَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُ، أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا صَنَعْتُ، أَبُوءُ لَكَ بِنِعْمَتِكَ
عَلَيَّ وَأَبُوءُ لَكَ بِذَنْبِي، فَاغْفِرْ لِي، فَإِنَّهُ لَا يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ.

“Allāhumma Anta Rabbī, lā-ilāha illā Anta, khalaqtanee”
wa ana ‘abduk, wa anā ‘ala ‘ahdika wa wa’dika mas-
tata’tu, A’ūdhu bika min shari mā-ṣan’at. Abū’u laka
bini’amateka ‘aliyā, wa abū’u laka bi-dhanbī, faghfir lee”
fa-innahu lā yaghfiru al-dhunūba illā Anta.”

“O Allāh, You are my Lord! None has the right to be worshipped but you. You created me and I am Your slave, and I am faithful to my covenant and my promise [to You] as much as I can.⁵ I seek refuge with You from

⁴ Shaikh Ibn al-‘Uthaymīn—may Allāh have mercy on his soul—said: ‘*Leader*’ means the most noble and most virtuous, whoever says it when he wakes up then dies on that day will enter Paradise. Whoever says it in the evening with certainty then dies will enter Paradise.

⁵ Shaikh Ibn al-‘Uthaymīn said: ‘You acknowledge that Allāh has created you. He is the one that has created you from nothing, and that you will keep your pledge and covenant as much as you can.’

all the evil I have done. I acknowledge before You all the blessings You have bestowed upon me, and I confess to You all my sins.⁶ So I implore You to forgive me, for nobody can forgive except You.”^{7, 8}

So the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) gathered in the statement: “*I acknowledge before You all the blessings You have bestowed upon me, and I confess to You all my sins.*” between the recognition of Divine grace upon him, with awareness of the defects of his soul and his actions.

The recognition of Allāh’s grace brings about love (*maḥabab*), praise (*ḥamd*) and thankfulness (*shukr*) towards the One that grants these favours (*niʿma*) and shows kindness (*aḥsān*), and awareness of the defects of his soul brings about humility (*dull*), dependence (*inkisār*) and repentance (*tawbah*) at every moment. It also brings about the servant seeing himself as impoverished (*mufliṣ*) and the closest door for the servant to enter upon Allāh is through the door of sheer need (*bab al-ijlās*). In which he sees in himself no state (*ḥāl*) or station (*maqām*), or reason (*sabāb*) to which he could become attached, or any means (*wasilah*) with which he might be

⁶ Shaikh Ibn al-ʿUthaymīn said: ‘I acknowledge your great and many blessing upon me that are numerous, and I admit to You my sins so forgive them for me.’

⁷ Bukhārī, #6306 and #6323. “Whoever says it during the day with firm faith in it and dies on the same day before the evening, he would be from the people of Paradise, and whoever recites it at night with firm faith in it and dies before the morning, he will be from the people of Paradise.”

⁸ See the commentary to this invocation: ‘*The Greatest Invocation for Forgiveness*’ by ‘Abdu’l-Razzāq Ibn ‘Abdu’l-Muḥsin al-Badr. Published by Dār as-Sunnah Publishers, Birmingham, U.K, 1st ed., 2016. It is a small contemporary work explaining the immense benefits of this great supplication of forgiveness.

favoured. Instead he enters upon Allāh from the door of complete beggary (*bab al-iftiqār*), adversity and pure poverty (*al-iflās al-mahd*). He enters as one who has had his heart broken by poverty (*faqr*) and destitution (*maskana*) until his inner depths is shattered into pieces. Torn in every way, and he testifies his utter need to his Lord, with complete reliance (*kamala al-fāqa*), and every atom of his body's outer and hidden shows his need for Him. He knows that if Allāh was to leave him for a blink of an eye he would be utterly lost irrevocably until and unless he returned back to Allāh trying to regain His Mercy. There is no path closer to Allāh except the path of servitude (*'ubudiyya*), and no partition (*hijāb*) [between a person and Allāh] thicker than false pretence.

Servitude therefore revolves around two principles which are its essence (*aṣl*): Complete love (*ḥubb kamāl*), and complete humility (*dull ṭām*). These are formed by the two core fundamentals previously mentioned—recognition of [Allāh's] blessings which bring about love (*maḥabab*) and awareness of the faults of the soul which bring about humility (*dull*)—So if a servant bases his journey (*sulūk*) towards Allāh on these two foundations, he will never be overpowered by his enemies except if he catches him absent-minded (*ghirra*) or negligent (*ghafla*). Even then Allāh will come to him swiftly in mending him and compensate him with His [immense] kindness.

CHAPTER TWO

The Rectification of the Heart and Limbs

This [what has been mentioned previously] will not be sound for a servant unless his heart (*qalb*) and limbs (*jawāriḥ*) are rectified. The heart is rectified by two things:

The first of them is that the love of Allāh takes precedence over every other love. So if the love of Allāh and the love of something else manifest, the love of Allāh takes precedence, and one's actions would follow in this regard. How easy it is to speak such words like this, yet how difficult it is to implement. Through these tests [and trials] a person is either honoured or humiliated.

How often a servant puts forward his own love and it brings him down, or the love of his elder, his leader, his teacher (*shaiḫ*), or his family above the love of Allāh. For such a person, the love of Allāh does not have priority over the love of others in his heart. The love of Allāh, does not rule his heart, then it is Allāh's way (*sunnah*) to turn the object of his love and all that relates to it into a source of sorrow and grief [for him]. A just reward for preferring their desires and the desires of those they hold in high esteem from the creation, or loving them over the love of Allāh.

When Allāh has decreed a matter, it cannot be repelled or changed, whoever loves something besides Him, He will punish him with it, and there is no escape from that. [Likewise] whoever fears other than Allāh, He will empower that thing over him, and whoever is occupied by something to the exclusion of Allāh will find it a source of grief. Whoever prefers something else besides Allāh, Allāh will not bless him in it, and whoever pleases someone other than Allāh, at the expense of displeasing Allāh, Allāh will, without fail make that thing displeased with him and His anger will be upon the servant.

The second issue by which the heart can be rectified is to venerate the commands and prohibitions of Divine Laws (*ta'zīm al-amr wa'l-nahī*) as it is an extension of venerating the One who has given the commands and set the prohibitions. Indeed, Allāh has dispraised those that do not venerate His commands and prohibitions. He says:

مَا لَكُمْ لَا تَرْجُونَ لِلَّهِ وَقَارًا ۖ

“What is the matter with you that you do not fear of the greatness of Allāh?”

[*Nūh* (71): 13]

They said regarding the interpretation to mean: ‘What is wrong with you that you do not fear Allāh, the Most High, in His Majesty (*‘azma*).

Nothing is better than what Shaikh al-Islām [Ibn Taymmiyah]—may Allāh have mercy on his soul—said concerning veneration of the commands and prohibitions [of Allāh]: “There should not oppose it by either being extremely negligent, or to go beyond bounds and [fall into] excessiveness, nor to explain it away with

reasoning that diminishes compliance with it.”⁹

The meaning of this statement is that the first level leading to respecting Allāh is to respect His commands and prohibitions. This is because the believer is aware of his Lord through the message He sent with the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) to the whole of creation, which requires that we comply with his commands and prohibitions. That will only happen by venerating the command of Allāh and staying away from His prohibitions. This veneration of the believer shows the honour the believer has for Allāh, and according to this honouring he will be among the righteous for whom his faith (*īmān*) is testified to, and the correctness of his belief (*ṣiḥat al-‘aqidah*), and he is free of major hypocrisy (*nifāq al-akbar*).

Indeed a man may fulfil the commands in front of people seeking status and position with them, and he fears the prohibitions out of fear of losing the respect of people, and fearing worldly consequences such as the punishment set by the legislator [the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ)] for falling into the prohibitions [as a result neither venerating Allāh nor His Law].

So a sign of this veneration for the commands is being vigilant of their times and limits, and being attentive to those elements that are essential, necessary or recommended. And being vigilant to complete them at their proper times, rushing towards [fulfilling] them when they are due, being sad and disappointed if the time for one of the rites is missed such as missing the congregational prayer. Knowing that even if his praying alone is accepted then he has missed twenty seven times the reward. Surely, if a merchant missed a single deal, in his own place of residence without having to travel anywhere or suffer any hardship, worth twenty-seven

⁹ See Ibn al-Qayyim’s *Madārīj al-Sālikīn*, 9/2.

dinars he would bite his own hands in regret and sorrow, so how about all the extra multiplying [of reward] of the congregational prayer which is thousands of times better and as much as Allāh wills. If then a servant misses this profit, then he has truly incurred a great loss—many scholars even believe that his prayer is not accepted—and his heart will be cold (*bārid*), feeling an empty void, panic stricken due to that calamity. This is all due to having lack of veneration for Allāh in his heart.

Another example is when someone misses the first part of the prayer, which is Allāh's pleasure (*ridwān*), or he misses out on standing in the first row on the right side, upon which Allāh and the angels shower blessings upon, and if a servant knew the excellence of it he would fight for it even picking lots. Also another example is missing out on the large congregation which increases the reward, and the bigger the gathering the more beloved it is to Allāh, and the more steps that are taken towards the prayer [to complete the distance] for each step a sin (*khata'a*) is erased away and the other raises one in rank (*daraja*).

Section one:

Humility and Reverence in the Prayer¹⁰

Likewise another example is the lack of humility and reverence (*khushū'*) in the prayer and not having presence of the heart (*ḥaḍūr al-qalb*) and mind in front of the Lord, to lack these is to lack the

¹⁰ See 'Humility in Prayer' by Imām Ibn Rajab al-Hanbali. Published by Dār as-Sunnah Publishers, Birmingham, United Kingdom, 1st ed., 2007. It is a small treatise deals with the correct and accurate meaning of humility as well as three extremely beneficial appendices by Shaikh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah and Ibn al-Qayyim. It is perhaps the best work available on humility and reverence in the prayer in the English language.

very spirit (*ruh*) and essence (*lubb*) of the prayer, for a prayer devoid (*khaliya*) of humility or presence of the heart is like a dead body without a spirit. Should a person not be ashamed that he offers a dead servant as a gift to the creation like himself? What would that servant think if that [dead] gift was presented to a king or leader? In the same way the prayer devoid of humility, without presence of heart and soul, not gathering all his aspiration (*himma*) for Allāh, then that prayer is like that dead gift which he wants to present to a king. Therefore Allāh will not accept it from him, even if he has fulfilled the obligation in terms of earthly obligations, he will not be rewarded for it.

The servant will not get anything from his prayer except that of which he is cognizant, as is mentioned in the narration from the *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad and others that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “A servant may perform the prayer and yet have recorded for him only half [of the reward] written for him, or a third, a quarter, a fifth even up to a tenth.”¹¹

You should know that all actions follow this pattern, so actions in the sight of Allāh are on various levels of superiority according to what is in the heart in terms of faith (*īmān*), sincerity (*ikhlās*) and love. Accordingly sins are expiated, and anything less will be reflected in how much sins are expiated.

¹¹ Abū Dāwūd, #796 and Aḥmad, #18415, It is declared sahih by al-Albānī in his *Ṣifāt al-Ṣalāt*, p.36, 99. See the English translation: ‘*The Description of the Prophet’s Prayer*’ by al-Albānī, published by Dār as-Sunnah Publishers, Birmingham, United Kingdom, 1st ed., 2013.

Section Two: Good Deeds Expiate Wrongs

There are two principles which remove much confusion and they are: That actions are superior based on the superiority of what is in the heart in terms of strong faith, and sins are expiated based on their completeness or imperfection, so the confusion is removed, which often arises regarding the ḥadīth such as: “Indeed the fast of the day of ‘Arafah expiates two years [of sins], and the fast of the day of ‘Āshūrā’ expiates a year [of sins].”¹²

They asked: “If someone is habitual in fasting the day of ‘Arafah and the day of ‘Āshūrā’, how can that person have three years of sins expiated every year?”

Some of them replied: Whatever is surplus after expiation of sins is used to raise a person’s level. So how amazing this is, if a servant brought all of these means of expiation and had his sins expiated, then the expiation would be conditional according to its conditions, and would be prevented until certain hurdles were removed. So if a servant knew that he fulfilled the conditions, and he removed all the hurdles then at that point expiation will occur.

As for any action which is entirely or mostly surrounded in heedlessness (*ghafla*), lacking in sincerity (*ihklās*), which is its very spirit (*rūḥ*) and core (*lubb*), and he does not fulfil its requirements, and does not pay attention to it as he should, then what can this type of action expiate?

If a servant is confident that his action was done fulfilling all

¹² Muslim, #1162, Abū Dāwūd, #2425, Tirmidhī, #752 and Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 5/296, 297, 308, 310 and 311.

its rights as appropriate, both outwardly and inwardly. Not being prevented by other things, neither doing an action which would make his deed futile with feelings of self-amazement (*'ujb*), ostentation (*riyā'*) or expecting something in return, or to remind others of his favours towards them or to seek respect from people, or to honour those to who recognise him [due to that action], or to be hostile towards the one who does not show him respect. Then which right has he fulfilled of his deeds? Rather there so many things which invalidate such deeds—if that being the case then how can he hope such deeds will expiate [his sins].

Section Three: Things that Nullify actions

The things that nullify good actions and spoil them are too many to count. It is not merely doing a good action by itself that counts, rather how to preserve actions from being corrupted and nullified which is the important part such as ostentation (*riyā'*), even slightly, will nullify actions, and it has many forms. The action not being in accordance with the Sunnah will also render it void. Considering your action as a favour (*mann*) upon Allāh with your heart corrupts your actions. Likewise boasting to others of your charity (*sadaqah*), good (*ma'rūf*), kindness (*birr*), generosity (*aḥsan*) and keeping the ties of kinship all can ruin your actions, as Allāh says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا لَا تَبْطُلُوا صَدَقَاتِكُمْ بِالْمَنِّ وَالْأَذَى

“O You who believe! do not nullify your charities by reminders of your generosity or by insulting words”

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

Most people are not aware of sins that can nullify good deeds. Allāh says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَرْفَعُوا أَصْوَاتَكُمْ
فَوْقَ صَوْتِ النَّبِيِّ وَلَا تَجْهَرُوا لَهُ بِالْقَوْلِ كَجَهْرِ بَعْضِكُمْ
لِبَعْضٍ أَن تَحْبَطَ أَعْمَالُكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٢﴾

“O You who believe! raise not your voices above the voice of the Prophet, nor shout when speaking to him as you shout to one another, lest your deeds be rendered fruitless while you are unaware.”

[*al-Hujurat* (49): 2]

So He has warned the believers from not nullifying their actions by raising their voices with the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) as they do with each other. This is not apostasy, rather a sin which nullifies good actions while the person does not realise. So what do you think of someone who puts a statement, guidance and way of someone else over and above statement (*qawl*) of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ), his guidance (*bidayah*) and his way (*tariq*)? Is not this person's actions nullified while he does not realise? An example of this is the statement of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ): “Whoever leaves the ‘*asr* prayer has annulled his [good] deeds.”¹³

Also the statement of ‘A’ishah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhā*) who said to Zaid Ibn Arqam (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhū*) when he sold something with a type of interest (*‘inah*): “Indeed it has nullified his combat with the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) unless he repents.”¹⁴

¹³ Bukhārī, #553, #594, Ibn Mājah, #694, Nasā’ī, 1/91 and Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 5/349.

¹⁴ ‘Abdu’l-Razzāq in his *al-Muṣannaf*, #14812, #14813 and others

Dealing with this type of interest is not apostasy, instead it is a sinful act. In fact, to know what corrupts and nullifies good actions when carrying it out and after it has been done is one of the most important things a servant should search for. Strive to avoid all those things which can invalidate good deeds and take precautions. There is a well known narration: "A servant does an action in secret that no one is aware of it except Allāh. Then he talks about it until it comes out in the open. If he spoke about it for the sake of fame (*sum'a*) or to gain rank of status among people instead of with Allāh, then his action is nullified as if he had done it for those reasons in the first place."¹⁵

If it is asked: 'If he repents will his reward return?'

It is said: 'If his intention was for other than Allāh and he did the action based on that, then that action will not turn into a good deed with repentance. Rather, based on the repentance, it will remove the punishment for that action, so it will neither be for him or against him. As for the action that was done for the sake of Allāh sincerely (*khālīs*), then he became amazed at himself or that he wanted it to be known by people, or that he spoke about it then, when he repents and feels regret, then in this case the reward will be reinstated and not be nullified. It has also been said by others that even in this case the reward will not be reinstated rather he resumes to repeat the good deed thereafter.'¹⁶

The issue is based on a principle: Does the act of apostasy itself nullify all actions, or is it only if a person dies as an apostate? The scholars have two well-known opinions regarding this and those

¹⁵ Bayhaqī in his *al-Shu'ab*, #6394 on the authority of Abū'l-Dardā' (*raḍiy Allāhu 'anhu*), however, it has a weak chain.

¹⁶ See *al-Kāfi*, 4/100-160 and *al-Durr al-Mukhtār*, 4/246.

are the two narrations from Imām Aḥmad.

So if we were to say: 'It nullifies the good actions by itself. So whenever he becomes a Muslim he resumes his actions again, and all actions beforehand are rendered void.'

If we were to say [on the other hand]: 'His actions are not nullified unless he dies as an apostate. So whenever he returns to the fold of Islām, the reward for his actions is reinstated. In the same way the servant does a good deed then commits a sin which nullifies the good deed. Then he repents from that bad deed, does this mean that the reward for the good deed he did before the bad deed is restored? This is an issue that is still with me.'

I however have not yet come to a definitive answer on this issue, and I have not stopped trying to reach the correct opinion, as I have not yet found anything which is conclusive. So what is clear, and Allāh knows best and His help is sought, and there is no might or power except His, that good deeds and bad deeds are constantly fending off each other, so whichever one is more in number will have the ascendancy so much so that the other will be vanquished and almost cease to exist. So if a servant has more good deeds they will do away with bad deeds. If the servant repents then as a result he will receive even more good deeds that will increase and grow those good deeds that were nullified because of the bad deed. So if he resolves to repent, and it is correct and it comes from the heart, it removes all bad deeds that have preceded until he does not have any left—because the one who repents is like the one who has no sin.

Therefore, when Ḥakīm Ibn Hizām (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) asked the Prophet (ﷺ) whether he would have any reward for having freed slaves, treated relatives well and observed righteousness while he

was polytheist, so the Prophet (ﷺ) replied: “You have entered Islām upon with what good you did previously.”¹⁷

This necessitates that Islām returns the reward of those good deeds that were futile because they were done with polytheism (*shirk*). So whoever repents from *shirk* then the reward of previous good deeds return to him, in the same way if a person repents sincerely then it removes all previous sins and the reward of the good deeds reverts to him.

Section Four: Transgressions and Sins

This shows that transgressions and sins are diseases of the heart, as are fever or aches and pains diseases of the body, and when the sick person is cured of his illness completely his full strength returns back to him or even better as if he was never weakened by it. The previous strength is like the previous good deeds, and the sickness like sins, and good health is like repentance. As some sick people never return back to their full strength due to the weakness of their health, others return back to their original health so they can resist the causes and fend them away, while others return back to health better and stronger than it was originally due to the strength of the means to good health and their ability to overcome any weakness, and at times the very sickness itself is the cause of his [return to better] health, as the poet says:

It maybe that your admonishment has praiseworthy outcomes,
And it maybe that bodies are brought to good health
because of illnesses.¹⁸

¹⁷ Bukhārī, #1436, #2220, #5992, #6441, Muslim, #123 and Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 3/402-434.

¹⁸ See Ibn al-Qayyim's *al-Fawā'id*, p.67.

Likewise the servant falls into one of these three categories after repenting. Allāh is the one who gives ability and there is no deity or lord besides Him.

CHAPTER THREE

Signs of Veneration (*ta'ẓīm*) for those things that are Prohibited (*manāḥī*)

As for signs of veneration for those things that have been forbidden: Striving to stay away from the places that forbidden things occur, or the causes that lead to or call to them, or abstaining from any channels that lead to them. Like the person that flees from places that have tempting images out of fear of being tested by them, or leaving what is acceptable out of fear that it may lead to something reprehensible. Or avoiding excesses of permissible (*mubāḥāt*) things for fear it might lead to things which are undesirable (*mukrūḥāt*). It includes avoiding those that openly boast about committing forbidden actions, or hold it to be permissible, or call to it, or belittle it, not caring about falling into them. Indeed mixing with such a person invites the anger and displeasure of Allāh. Only the person who has no veneration of Allāh and his prohibitions mixes with such a person.

Another sign of veneration for Allāh: is for a servant to feel anger for the sake of Allāh when the prohibitions of Allāh are violated. Also to feel sadness (*ḥuẓn*) and loneliness (*kasra*) in his heart when Allāh is being disobeyed on His earth, and when His rules and

commandments are not kept—even though the servant can not do anything to change it.

Also from the sign of veneration for Divine Laws: is not to fall into excess with respects to those things which are permissible to the point that it conflicts with the middle path.

For instance: the Sunnah has allowed the midday prayer (*ṣuḥr*) to be delayed until it is cooler during times of severe heat.¹⁹ To go in excess would be to wait to the point that the time for the prayer finishes or almost finishes therefore taking this allowance into extreme, whereas the wisdom of this allowance (*ruqṣa*) is that praying in severe heat prevents the person from attaining humility (*khushūʿ*) and presence (*ḥaḍūr*) in the prayer, so he does so out of dislike and annoyance. So the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) out of wisdom made an allowance to delay the prayer until the severity of the heat subsides so that the servant can pray with presence of heart. The purpose of the prayer is to turn with humility and devotion to Allāh.

For similar reasons the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) forbade praying when food has been served, or when a person feels the need to relieve himself.²⁰ This is due to fact that the heart is distracted from the purpose of the prayer and unable to achieve it. So it is from the understanding of a person to complete his work, and then clear out his heart [of any distractions] for the prayer, so that he can stand with a clear heart and devote himself wholeheartedly. Two units of such a prayer can lead to the person being forgiven for all his previous sins.²¹

¹⁹ Bukhārī, #533, #534, #536, Muslim, #183 and Abū Dāwūd, #402.

²⁰ Muslim, #560, Abū Dāwūd, #89 and Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 6/43-54

²¹ See Abū 'Abdu'l-Raḥmān Fawāz Aḥmad Zumārī's '*Kayfa nakehsba' fi'l-Ṣalāt*' p.92.

So the point is that the person does not go to extreme with this discretion (*ruqṣa*).

Another instance of this is the allowance for the traveller to combine two prayers together: When there is reason, and praying each prayer on time is not possible due to travelling, and stopping is not an option. So if the traveller stays in one place for two or three days or even one day, and joins two prayers when there is no necessity because he is able to pray each prayer in its proper time, then joining is not a Sunnah as many travellers believe that joining during travel is Sunnah whether there is an excuse or not. Rather, joining is an allowance, whereas shortening the prayer is an enforced Sunnah to shorten a four unit prayer into two unit whether there is a reason or not, as for joining then there has to be a need as well as the [the circumstance for the] allowance [during travel].

Another instance is eating till a person is full: This is allowed and not prohibited. But it does not mean that a person eats to the point of indigestion and completely fills [his stomach], so that he requires constantly relieving himself and all he thinks about is his stomach before and after eating. Instead, a servant when hungry should eat to fulfil his appetite, but he should refuse food when he simply just craves for it. The middle course is the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ): “One third for his food, one third for his drink and one third for his breath.”²² All three parts are not just for food.

The opposite to this is to allow oneself to persistently go to extremes, like the one who hears whispers during ablution, he is so caught up in trying to do it properly so much so that he misses

²² Tirmidhī, #3280, Ibn Mājah, #3349, Nasāʾī, #6770 and Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 4/132. It is declared ṣaḥīḥ by Al-Albānī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Tirmidhī* 4/590.

the time [of the prayer], or he repeats the first *takbīr* so many times that he misses the Imām's recitation of *al-Fātiḥah*, almost missing the first unit (*rak'ah*) of the prayer. Or that he exaggerates in piety so much so that he does not eat anything from the general Muslims for fear of falling into doubts concerning [whether its lawful (*halāl*) or unlawful (*ḥarām*)].

Such corrupt piety was adopted by some worshippers who were deficient in knowledge (*ilm*) and they went as far as not eating anything from the land of the Muslims, instead eating food that they had carried from the lands of the Christians, going there for that very purpose, so they fell into extreme ignorance and unreasonable excessiveness in their bad suspicion of the Muslims, and their good suspicion of the Christians, and we seek refuge in Allāh from such treachery!

Section One:

The Reality of having Reverence for the Commands and Prohibitions

The servant should not fall into any extreme, rather what is sought from him is to remain on the straight path which will lead the one who traverses it to Allāh. However Allāh does not command us with an order except the devil has two prods [makes evil suggestions], either to fall short and be negligent, or going beyond bounds and be extreme.

You should know that the devil is not concerned with which mistake he gets the servant to fall into from these two. So he comes to the heart of a servant targeting it simultaneously. If he finds the servant lacking concern or slackness then he will take this line [of attack] to defeat and cripple him. Striking him with laziness,

procrastination and apathy. He then opens the door of explaining away inactivity to the point where the servant stops doing all good actions, until he may even leave the command altogether.

If the devil finds him aware and sees seriousness from the servant and preparedness, he gives up hope in getting him from this door. Instead he uses the other door to get him through by whispering to him saying 'try harder you have not done enough. Your ambition is much more and you must do more than others. Do not rest when others rest. Do not break your fast when others break theirs and do not get tired when others do. So when one of them washes his hands three times, you will do so seven times. If he makes ablution for the prayer, you have a complete bath and so on.'

Making the servant transgress from the straight path by both negligent and extreme behaviour so that he never comes close to it. With the first type of person he tries to make him fall short, but in both cases making a person astray from the straight path by not letting him get near it nor to allow it to draw closer to Him. All of this due to transgression which many people have fallen victim to, save those with firmly grounded knowledge and a strong will to resist them and stay on the middle path can hope to be saved, and Allāh's help is sought.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Signs of having Veneration for the Commands and Prohibitions: Submission to Allāh's Commandments and His Rules

Among the signs of respect for the commands and prohibitions of Allāh is to not explain them away with reasoning that diminishes compliance (*inqiyād*) and submission (*taslīm*). Rather to submit to the rules of Allāh and His [superior] wisdom (*hikmah*), whether the wisdom is clear or not. If the wisdom of His legislation in the commands and prohibitions does become apparent then that should only increase him in compliance and submission. It should not lead him to leave off any of it, as did many of the heretics (*ḡanādiqa al-fuqarā'*) and those affiliated with the Šūfis had done.

Indeed Allāh has legislated the five prayers in order to establish His remembrance using the heart (*qalb*), limbs (*jawāriḥ*) and the tongue (*lisān*) in devotion to Him. Giving each part [of his body] its correct measure of worship, so that the prayer is placed in the most complete levels of servitude (*marātib al-'ubudīyyah*). Allāh has created man and chose him above the rest of creation, and made his heart the place of His treasures (*maḥal*

kunūz) like faith (*īmān*), oneness (*tawhīd*), sincerity (*ikhlās*), love (*maḥabbah*), shyness (*ḥayāʾ*) veneration (*taʿẓīm*) and self-examination (*muraqaba*).

Those who come close to Allāh, He has a great reward in store for them, which is the most complete and virtuous which is to see the Face of Allāh, winning His Divine pleasure, and living near Him in His Paradise. But first the servant was tested through desires (*shahwa*), anger (*ghadab*) and heedlessness (*ghafla*). The servant was tested through his enemy the devil, who would not tire [trying to misguide him] entering upon him from every door which leads to his soul and his very nature. So his soul leans towards it, because it is what he likes so it agrees with his soul. Natural inclination, desires and his bodily limbs: all three things join forces to overpower him and his limbs fulfil his desires, and the limbs are simply obedient tools. Thus it is not possible except when ignited with this combination of desires and natural inclination, this is the nature of these three things, and the limbs simply obey when commanded.

This is the state of the servant, however the mercy of Allāh also necessitates helping His servant against his enemies, and supporting him to resist the powers who are bent upon his destruction. By sending His Messenger, revealing His book, and aiding him with a noble angel to confront his enemy the devil. So when the devil orders him with something, the angel also orders him with a command of his Lord, making clear that obeying the enemy is a cause of destruction. So at times one persists and overcomes him, and at times the other persists and overcomes the other. The victorious one is he who Allāh grants victory to, and the protected is the one who Allāh protects.

Section One:

The Soul that enjoins Evil, and the Soul that is Tranquil

To oppose the soul which inclines towards evil, Allāh makes the soul tranquil. When the evil inclining soul (*nafs al-amāra*) urges the person towards evil (*sū*), Allāh prevents the soul from the sin. When the soul seeks to prevent the servant from good deeds, Allāh commands him to do the good deed. So there are times where the person sometimes follows one, and at times he follows the other. It may even be the case where one takes control over one other, or even be controlled by one altogether.

Section Two:

Insight and Guidance

To counteract desires, which leads a person to obey the shayṭān, and the soul that inclines towards evil, Allāh places light (*nūr*), insight (*baṣīrah*) and intellect (*‘aql*), which repel the person from following every desire. So each time he wants to follow his desires, his intellect and insight call him: ‘Be careful, this is the path of destruction and ruin is in your hands! If you get behind this guide, the thieves and highway robbers will be targeting you! Will you not listen to a sincere advisor who will show you uprightness and sincere advice?’ If [however] you get behind a guide of desires, the path will be cut off, and your wealth will be taken and your clothes stolen. He will say [to himself]: Where did they come from? What is strange is that he knows, the path the robbers are on, but he refuses to take any other path [out of weakness] because his desires have taken hold of him and have overpowered him. If he fights back his desires by opposing them, they call him, and fight back trying to get hold of him but are not able to. However, if

the servant himself empowered his desires, this is when he gives up, and he is like the one who places his hand in the hand of the enemy who punishes him with the worst kind of punishment. He calls out for help but no help arrives. Thus the devil, his desires and the evil [part of] his soul take control of him, and even if he wants to be free from them he is unable to do so.

So when the servant is afflicted with whatever he has been afflicted with, he is helped by an army of large numbers and armoury, and it is said: Fight your enemy and strive, this is your armour take from them what you want. These are your fortresses so reinforce yourself. Guard your position until death overtakes you, for the affair is close, and the time left to defend is short.

If you were with a great king that has sent you Messengers to take you back to his kingdom and free you of this struggle and separate you from your enemies. He sets you free in a place of honour allowing you to move around freely. But He detains and imprisons your enemies in the most difficult of confinements while you watch. The very same prison that your enemies were hoping to capture you in, instead they have been detained and the doors have been locked, losing all hope of freedom. While you are in a place of pure joy and all that your heart desires due to the patience you had during that very short time, and your patrolling the frontier. It was like an hour that passed by so quickly, it is as if the hardship never existed. However if the soul becomes weak from noticing that the time is short and it will pass by very quickly let it reflect the statement [of Allāh]:

كَأَنَّهُمْ يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَ مَا يُوعَدُونَ لَمْ يَلْبِسُوا إِلَّا
سَاعَةً مِّنْ نَّهَارٍ

“On the Day they see that they were promised—as though they had not remained [in the world] except an hour of a single day.”

[*al-Ahqāf* (46): 35]

And the statement of Allāh:

كَانَ يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَهَا لَمْ يَلْبِسُوا إِلَّا عَشِيَّةً أَوْ صُبْحًا ﴿٤٦﴾

“On the Day they see it, as though they had not remained [in the world] except for an afternoon or a morning of a single day.”

[*al-Nāzi‘āt* (79): 46]

And the statement of Allāh:

قَالَ
كَمْ لَبِثْتُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ عَدَدَ سِنِينَ ﴿١١٢﴾ قَالُوا الْبَيْنَا يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضُ
يَوْمٍ فَسْأَلُ الْعَادِينَ ﴿١١٣﴾ فَقُلْ إِنْ لَبِثْتُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا لَوْ أَنَّكُمْ
كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١١٤﴾

“[Allāh] will ask: ‘How long did you remain on earth by number of years?’ They will say: ‘We remained a day or part of a day; ask those who are able to count!’ He will say to them: ‘You stayed not but a little—if only you had known!’”

[*al-Mu‘minūn* (23): 112-114]

And the statement of Allāh:

يَوْمَ يُفْخَخُ
فِي الصُّورِ وَنَحْشُرُ الْمُجْرِمِينَ يَوْمَئِذٍ زُرْقًا ﴿١٠٩﴾ يَخْخَفُوتُ

يَسْتَمِعُونَ أَنْ لَبِثْتُمْ إِلَّا عَشْرًا ﴿١٠٣﴾ نَحْنُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَقُولُونَ إِذْ يَقُولُ
أَمْثَلُهُمْ طَرِيقَةً إِنْ لَبِثْتُمْ إِلَّا يَوْمًا ﴿١٠٤﴾

On the Day when the Trumpet is blown, and We will gather the criminals, that Day, blue-eyed [sightless]. They will whisper secretly to one another: 'You stayed only for ten [days in the world].' We are best aware of what they will say, when the most correct of them will say: 'You only stayed one day.'"

[*Tāha* (20):102-104]

One day, the Prophet (ﷺ) addressed his companions when the sun, was almost setting just above the mountains, and he said: "Compared to what has passed by, there is as little time left in the world as there is in this day."²³

Let the intelligent sincere one (*al-‘āqil al-nāsiḥ*) ponder for himself upon this narration. Let him know that if he gains in this time that remains, the whole world and everything in it, that it is only a distraction, and that he has sold the eternal happiness (*sa‘ādah al-abad*) and everlasting bliss (*al-na‘im al-muqīm*) for a lowly portion that equates to nothing. If however he were to seek from Allāh the hereafter, Allāh would give him a complete and pleasant portion, as is reported in some narrations from the Salaf: 'Son of Ādam sell your world for the hereafter and you will gain profit in both, and do not sell your hereafter for the world or you will lose out in them both.'²⁴

Some of the Salaf said: 'Son of Ādam you are in desperate need

²³ Tirmidhī, #2191; however it has been declared weak by al-Albānī, see *Ṣaḥīḥ Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī*, 4/483.

²⁴ Abū Nu‘aym in his *al-Hilyah*, 2/143 and 7/35 and *Tadhīm al-Kamāl*, 6/116-117.

of your portion of the world, but for your portion of the hereafter you are in even more need. So if you begin with your portion of the world you will have wasted your portion of the hereafter and your portion of the world will be at risk. And if you start with your portion of the hereafter then you have won your portion of the world and secured them both.’²⁵

‘Umar Ibn ‘Abdu’l-‘Azīz—may Allāh have mercy on his soul—used to say in his sermons: ‘O people indeed Allāh has not created you for idle purpose and has not left you without purpose. You have a place of return which Allāh will gather you all in, there will be your judgment, and separation. The servant that Allāh removes from His mercy - that encompasses everything, will lose and be wretched, and be outside His Paradise, which is as wide as the heavens and the earth. However safety will be for those that fear Allāh and are conscious of Him, he who has traded a little of [this world] for what is plentiful [of the hereafter], something destined to perish for something eternal, from difficulty to that which brings happiness.

Do you not see that you are in the midst of those who will perish, and others will take your place, you shall be replaced by those that are left behind? Do you not see that when you follow the funeral processions day and night they are returning back to Allāh having completed their life, all their hope has been cut off, you place him in a small space inside the earth without it being laid out in comfort or luxury, the means [to do anything] have been removed and the beloved ones have parted away and he now is confronted by the reckoning that lies ahead?’²⁶

²⁵ See Ibn Abī Shaybah in his *al-Muṣannaf*, 7/125-126

²⁶ See Ibn Abī Hātim in his *Tafsīr*, 8/2512-2513 and Abū Nu‘aym in his *al-Hilyah*, 5/266, 278, 279-295

The intended meaning behind this is that Allāh helps the servant ('abd) in this temporary stay with armies (*junūd*), numbers ('adad) and support (*imdād*) and He has explained what servant the needs to do to protect himself from his enemy and how to free himself if he is captured.

Section 3:

Hadīth of Yaḥyā Ibn Zakariyyā (may Allāh's peace and blessings be upon them both)

Imām Aḥmad and Tirmidhī have collected the narration of Al-Ḥārith Al-Ash'arī (*raḍiy Allāhu 'anhu*) who reported that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: "Indeed Allāh commanded Yaḥyā Ibn Zakariyyā with five commandments to act upon and to enjoin upon the Children of Israel to act upon; but he was slow in doing so. Then 'Isā (*'alayhi as-salām*) said: 'Indeed Allāh commanded you with five commandments to act upon and to enjoin upon the Children of Israel to act upon. Either you command them, or I shall command them.' So Yaḥyā said: 'I fear that if you precede me in this, then the earth may swallow me, or I shall be punished.'

So then he gathered the people together in Jerusalem, and they filled the *masjid*. Then he sat upon a balcony wall and said: 'Indeed Allāh has commanded me with five commandments to act upon, and to call you to act upon.'

The first of them is that you worship Allāh alone and associate none with Him. The parable (*mithl*) of the one who associates others with Allāh is that of a man who buys a servant with his own wealth, be it gold or silver, then he says to him: 'This is my home and this is my business so take care of it and give me the profits.' So he does the work but gives the profits to someone other than his master.

Which of you would be pleased with such a servant?

[Second] *And Allāh enjoins prayer (ṣalāt) upon you.* When you pray, then do not turn away, for Allāh faces His servant ('abd) when he is performing the prayer as long as he does not turn away.

[Third] *And Allāh enjoins upon you with fasting (ṣiyām).* Indeed, the parable of fasting person is that of a man in a group of people with a pouch containing musk. All of them enjoy its fragrance. Indeed the breath of the fasting person is more pleasant to Allāh than the scent of musk.

[Fourth] *And Allāh enjoins upon you with charity (ṣadaqah).* Indeed, the parable of that is a man captured by his enemies, tying his hands to his neck, and they come to him to slay his neck. Then he says: 'I can ransom myself from you with a little or a lot, so he ransoms himself from them.'

[Fifth] *And He enjoins upon you the remembrance of Allāh, the Most High.* Indeed, the parable of that is a man whose enemy quickly tracks him and is fast approaching until he reaches an impermeable fortress (*ḥiṣn ḥasayn*) in which he protects himself from them. This is how the servant is, he does not protect himself from Shayṭān except by the remembrance of Allāh.'

The Prophet (ﷺ) said: "And I, too, enjoin upon you with five which Allāh has enjoined upon me: hearing (*ṣam'*), obeying (*ta'at*), striving (*jihād*), migration (*hijrah*), and the community (*jamā'ah*). Indeed, whoever separates himself from the community (*jamā'ah*) even by hand-span, then he has cut off the harness of Islām from his neck, unless he returns. And whoever calls with the call of ignorance (*jabiliyyah*) then he is from among the inhabitants of

Hell.” Then a man said: ‘O Messenger of Allāh! Even if he prays and fasts?’ So he (ﷺ) replied: “Even if he prays and fasts and claims to be Muslim. So call with the call of Allāh, who named you Muslims, believers, worshipers of Allāh.”²⁷

Tirmidhī said this narration is good and authentic. The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) mentioned in this narration something very important which every Muslim should memorise, [reflect over], and implement —this will save a person from the plots of Shayṭān and lead to success and salvation in this life and the next.

²⁷ Tirmidhī, #2863, and Aḥmad, 16/718, 17/334, it is declared ṣaḥīḥ by al-Albānī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī*, #1724.

CHAPTER FIVE

Polytheism (*shirk*)

Section One:

The Parable of the Monotheist (*muwabbid*) and the Polytheist (*mushrik*)

The parable of the monotheist (muwabbid): is like the one who works for his master in his house and then performs [duties and tasks] for his master for whatever he requires him to carry out.

The parable of the polytheist (mushrik): is like the one who works in the house of his master, he does the work required of him, but gives the produce [of his duties and tasks] to other than his master. Likewise the polytheist does actions for other than Allāh [even though he lives in the house of Allāh], thus he draws near to the enemy of Allāh's, using the blessings of Allāh bestowed upon him to serve the enemy of Allāh.

It is known that the servant is from the sons of Ādam and if his own servant behaved in a similar way he would be the most hated of his servants. This is something which would anger him terribly, and subsequently leading him to dismissing him [from his duties]. If this is the case while he himself is created like him [his

servant] and both of them are in blessings of another. Then what about the Lord of the Worlds, the One who no servant can do without [being immersed in] His blessings, from Him alone with no partners. The person has no one that can bring him any goodness except Allāh, and no one can prevent any evil away from him except Allāh. He alone uniquely created His servant, surrounded him in His Mercy, taking care of his affairs, provided him with sustenance, giving him good health and fulfilling his needs. Then how is it befitting to love (*maḥababah*), to have fear (*kawf*), to hope in (*rajā'*), to make vows (*nadh'r*) and dealings (*mu'āmala*) with another!

So how can he love others besides Allāh the same as he loves his Lord or even more, and has hope and fear in others more than his Lord. His state of affairs testify, rather his speech and actions, speak for him that he loves Allāh's rivals above Allāh, whether dead or alive. He fears them more than Allāh, he has hope in them more than Allāh, interacts with them, seeks their pleasure and flees from their displeasure more than Allāh. This is the polytheism (*shirk*) which Allāh will never forgive. Allāh says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ
ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ

“Indeed Allāh will never forgive that partners be attributed to Him, but He forgives the sins of whomever else He wills [for anything other than that].”

[*al-Nisā'* (4): 48]

The injustice (*ẓulm*) before Allāh on the Day of Judgement will be of three types:

[The first] type is which He will not forgive at all, that is, *shirk*—“Indeed Allāh will never forgive that partners be attributed

to Him.”

[The second] type is which Allāh will not leave alone any part of it, which is—the injustice (*ẓulm*) that the servants (*‘ibād*) commit upon each other, Allāh will return the right of everyone.

[The third] type is which Allāh does not consider important at all, that is—the injustice that a person commits upon himself, which is between himself and his Lord. This is the lightest of the three injustices and the quickest to be wiped away. It can be wiped away with repentance, seeking forgiveness (*istighfār*), good deeds which wipe out bad deeds (*ḥasanāt*), and calamities (*maṣā’ib*) which expiate [sins]. This is different from the first type of injustice of *shirk*, which can only be wiped away with *Tawḥīd*. The second type of injustice which is committed against others can only be solved by returning the rights to their rightful owners, or them overlooking it.

Section Two:

Tawḥīd is the Key to Paradise

Shirk is the most severe of these three types [of injustice], Allāh has forbidden Paradise to those who commit *shirk*. None that commits *shirk* will enter Paradise. [Only] the people of *tawḥīd* will enter Paradise. *Tawḥīd* is the key to the door [of Paradise] so whoever does not have the key will not enter. If you come with the key but the key is without teeth, you will also not be able to open the door. The teeth of this key are: the prayer (*ṣalāh*), fasting (*ṣiyām*), alms (*ṣakāt*), pilgrimage (*ḥajj*), striving in the way of Allāh (*jihād*), enjoining the good and forbidding the evil (*al-amr bi’l-ma’rūf wa’l-nahī ‘an al-munkar*), speaking the truth (*ṣidq al-ḥadīth*), fulfilling the trust (*adā’ al-amāna*), keeping the ties of kinship (*ṣilah al-raḥm*) and obedience to parents (*birr al-walaydain*).

Any servant who acquires the right key in this life, the key of *tawhid*, and he has built upon it teeth from the obligations [he has fulfilled], will come on the Day of Judgment to the door of Paradise with the only key that will open the door and there is no hurdle stopping him from entering. Unless he has sins, errors and obligations remaining with him and their effects have not gone away in this world with repentance (*tawbah*) or seeking forgiveness (*istighfār*), then he will be held back from Paradise until he is purified.

If he is not purified by the standing [on the Day of Judgment], and the terror and distress that comes with it, he will have to enter the Hellfire until he is purified, so that the impurities leave him and he is purified of violations. Only then can he come out and then enter Paradise. Paradise is the abode of the pure, and none shall enter it except the pure. Allāh says:

الَّذِينَ نُوفِقُهُمُ
الْمَلَائِكَةُ طَيِّبِينَ يَقُولُوتَ سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ أَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ

“The ones whom the angels take in death, [being] good and pure. The angels will say: ‘Peace be upon you! Enter Paradise for what you used to do.’”

[*al-Nahl* (16): 32]

And Allāh says:

وَسِيقَ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا رَبَّهُمْ إِلَى
الْجَنَّةِ زُمَرًا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءُوهَا وَفُتِحَتْ أَبْوَابُهَا وَقَالَ لَهُمْ
خَزَنَتُهَا سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ طِبْتُمْ فَادْخُلُوهَا خَالِدِينَ ﴿٧٣﴾

“And those who feared their Lord will be driven to Paradise in groups and when they arrive there, find-

ing its gates opened and its keepers will say to them,
'Peace be upon you! You have become pure, so enter
it to abide therein eternally.'

[*al-Zumar* (39): 73]

So the letter '*fā*' is used before they enter Paradise which shows that they are given permission due to them being purified.

As for the Hellfire, then it is the abode of impurities in speech, actions, food and drink. An abode of evil people.

لِيَمِيزَ اللَّهُ الْخَيْرَ مِنَ الطَّيِّبِ وَيَجْعَلَ
الْخَيْرَ بَعْضُهُ عَلَى بَعْضٍ فَيَرْكُمُهُمْ جَمِيعًا فَيَجْعَلُهُمْ
فِي جَهَنَّمَ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ ﴿٧٧﴾

"[It is] so that Allāh may sift the wicked out from the good, and pile the wicked on top of one another, heaping them all together, and tip them into Hell. They are the losers."

[*al-Anfāl* (8): 37]

Allāh will gather the wicked, [corrupt and evil] altogether until they are accumulated together. Then they are stacked high, one on top of another including their impurities, and then He tips them all into the Hellfire. So there will be nothing therein except what is corrupt.

The people are of three types, the pure (*al-tayyib*) who are not tarnished with impurities, the impure (*al-khabīth*) who are without any purity and others that are mixed they have both [of good and bad]. In the same respect there are three residence [for these three types of people]—a place for only the pure, a place for only the impure, and these both place are eternal, and a place

for those that are both pure and impure. Their place will not last forever and it is the place of the sinful. The sinful amongst the people of *Tawhīd* will not remain forever in the Hellfire. They will be punished accordingly to their corruption [and sins]. Then they will be removed and entered into Paradise [after being purified by the fire]. After that only two places will remain, a place of those who are completely pure and those who were completely wicked.

Section Three: Status of the Prayer

The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said in a narration: “You have been prescribed the prayer, so when you pray do not turn your head. For indeed Allāh faces His servant in his prayer as long as he does not turn his face away.”

Turning away that is prohibited in the prayer is of two aspects:

The first type is turning his heart away (*tafāt al-qalb*) from Allāh to other than Allāh.

The second type is to turn away his eyesight (*tafāt al-baṣr*)—and both are prohibited.

Allāh does not cease to turn towards His servant as long as His servant is devout in his prayer. However if he turns away with his heart or eyes then Allāh turns away from him. The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) was asked about a person turning away in the prayer so he said: “It is theft that the Shayṭān steals from the [reward] of the prayer of the servant.”²⁸

²⁸ Bukhārī, #751, Abū Dāwūd, #910 and Tirmidhī, #590, on the authority of ‘A’ishah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhā*).

And in another narration Allāh says: “Do you turn towards something better than Me? Do you turn towards something better than Me?”²⁹

The example of someone turning away in the prayer with his eyes or heart is like the one that is summoned by the king and he makes him stand in front of him. Then he begins to address him and talk to him. Meanwhile he turns away from the king looking left and right, his heart is no longer engaged with the king [with what he is saying], nor does he understand what is being said to him because his heart is not present. What do you think the king will do with such a person? The least that will happen is that he [is ordered to] leave the presence of the king, dismissed and having fallen [in status] in the eyes of the king. The servant who prays is not the same as the one whose heart is present, he is devout towards Allāh in his prayer, and feels in his heart the greatness of the One in front of Whom he is standing. So his heart is filled with awe of Him, and his neck is lowered out of humility of Him, and he is shy to turn to other than Allāh or turn away from Him.

Ḥassān Ibn ‘Aṭīyah—may Allāh have mercy on his soul—explained the two types of prayers: “Two men in the same prayer may pray and the difference between their two prayers is like the difference between the sky and the earth in virtue (*fadl*).”³⁰

That is due to the fact that one of them is attentive with his heart towards Allāh while the other is inattentive and careless. So when a servant turns toward another of the creation like himself, and

²⁹ Bazzār, 1/267, ‘Abdu’l-Razzāq in his *al-Muṣannaf*, 2/257 and Ibn Abī Shaybah in his *al-Muṣannaf*, 1/395, on the authority of Jabir (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*); however it has a weak narration, see al-Albānī in his *Silsalah al-Da‘īfah*, #2694.

³⁰ Ibn Mubārak in his *al-Zuhd*, #24

between them is a barrier there would not be any attentiveness or drawing closer, then how about the Creator!?

So when you turn towards the Creator (*al-Khāliq*) and between you and Him are the barriers of desires (*shahawāt*), whispers (*wasāwis*) [of Shayṭān], filled with passion for other things, then how will the attentiveness be when the whispers (*wasāwis*) and thoughts (*ifqār*) which have distracted him and occupied his mind?

When the servant stands in prayer, Shayṭān is envious of him because he is in the most honourable state. This is most enraging to Shayṭān and severest upon him. He is relentless in trying to make him not establish the prayer. Making false promises, false hopes, making him forget, enticing him with his horses and foot soldiers until the servant feels the prayer to be unimportant to be worth consideration, and leaves the prayer altogether.

However if Shayṭān failed in his attempts and servant counters his attacks and goes forth to stand for the prayer. Then the enemy of Allāh will come towards him and between him and his heart to remind him of something which he was not aware of before the prayer. This is until he remembers something he needed and had no hope in remembering it. The Shayṭān reminds him of it while he is in the prayer, so that he can preoccupy his heart with it and take him away from Allāh. So he stands in the prayer heedless and does not attain from Allāh any attention nor honour nor closeness, had he been attentive with his heart in his prayer. So he leaves the prayer in the same state he entered it, with the same sins (*dhunub*) and burdens (*athqāl*) nothing of which being reduced with the prayer.

Indeed the prayer expiates sins of the one who prays properly with complete humility and stands before Allāh wholeheartedly. The one who gives it its due right finishes from the prayer lightened in himself and feels his burdens have been lifted from him. He feels active (*nashāt*), relaxed (*rāḥa*) and inspired (*ruwḥ*), to the point he wishes that he had not finished from the prayer. Because the prayer has become the coolness of his eyes (*qurra 'ayn*),³¹ the bliss (*na'im*) of his heart, a place of rest (*mutarā*) in this world. When away from the prayer the servant feels as if he is imprisoned (*sijn*) and restricted (*diq*), but when he prays again he feels relaxed within it and not away from it.

The people that love [Allāh] say: 'We pray and find rest in it,' just as their Imām, their role model, their Prophet (ﷺ) had said: "O Bilāl give us rest with the prayer."³² He never said 'give us rest from it.'

The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) also said: "The prayer has been made as the coolness of my eyes (*qurra 'ayni*)."³³

Whoever has the prayer as the coolness of his eyes, how can they find it in anything else besides it? How can he last without it?

So the prayer of the one who has presence of heart and mind, becomes a source of coolness of his eyes while in the prayer, it is raised with a light and a proof until he meets Allāh. The prayer will then say: "May Allāh guard you as you guarded me."³⁴

³¹ Translator's note: The phrase: 'The coolness of the eyes' refers to the utmost feeling of enjoyment; tranquillity and peace with one's self, and all sorrow and anxiety dwindling away.

³² Abū Dāwūd, #4946, Aḥmad, 7/653, it has sahih chain; see al-Albānī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan Abū Dāwūd*, 4/296.

³³ Nasā'ī, #3949, Aḥmad, 4/330 and others on the authority of Anas (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*), It is declared sahih by al-Albānī in his *Jāmi' al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, #3098.

³⁴ This narration is very weak see al-Albānī in his *al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, #301.

As for the prayer of the careless one who does not perform it properly or with due humility (*khushū*) then it is damaged like a worn out cloth, which is folded up and flung back in his face. His prayer says to him: "May Allāh waste you like you wasted me."³⁵

It has been narrated in a *marfū* ḥadīth from Bakr Ibn Bishr on the authority of Saʿīd Ibn Sanān, from Abū'l-Zāhirīyah, from Abū Shajarah from 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar (*radīy Allāhu 'anhumā*) said: "There is no believer who completes ablution (*wuḍū*) properly, then stands for prayer at the correct time and performs it for Allāh, without cutting short the time [spent] or the bowing and prostration or its pillars except that it is raised up to Allāh white and shining, its light illuminating what is between the east to the west until it reaches Allāh. Whoever stands in prayer, but does not complete the ablution, delays it from its correct time, and steals from his bowing and prostration [not do it properly] and its pillars, then it are raised as dark black, not going beyond the hair on his head saying: 'May Allāh do away with you the way you have done away with me. May He do away with you as you have done away with me.'"³⁶

So the accepted prayer (*al-ṣalāt al-maqbūla*) and accepted action (*al-ʿamal al-maqbūl*) is: that the servant prays the prayer that is befitting his Lord, so if the prayer is befitting then it will be accepted.

Allāh's acceptance is of two kinds:

The first is when a servant prays, and does all actions and forms

³⁵ *ibid*

³⁶ Ṭayālīsī in his *Musnad*, #585, Bazzār in his *Musnad*, 7/140 and other; however it has a weak chain.

of worship with his heart attached to Allāh, remembering Him consistently. Then the actions of the servant will be presented to Allāh until it stands in front of Him so He may look at them. When He looks at them He sees them as being sincerely for His face, from a heart that is sound and sincere with love for Allāh, drawing close to Him. He loves them and is pleased with them and accepts them.

The second is when a servant does actions out of habit and carelessness. He intends to do the acts of obedience in order to get closer to Allāh, so while his limbs are busy with obedience, his heart is distracted from the remembrance of Allāh. So when these acts of devotion are raised up to Allāh they do not stand in front of Him nor does He look at them. Instead they are placed with the rest of the actions that are recorded, until they are presented to him on the day of judgment and are separated.

Then the person is rewarded according to the actions that were for Allāh and what which was not for the face of Allāh is rejected. So the acceptance of his action is rewarded with something Allāh has created; palaces, food and drink, and wide-eyed women [of Paradise]. The reward for the first kind is being pleased with the action for Himself and being pleased with those that interact such devotional deeds, He brings him closer, raising his rank and status. This person will be given without measure. So the two kinds are very different [in reward].

Section Four:

People are of Five Levels regarding the Prayer

There are five levels of people, with respect to prayer:

The first level is he who is oppressive to himself and neglectful. He is the one that is deficient in ablution, careless of the prayer-times, restricts the prayer and does not fulfil its pillars.

The second level is he who guards the times, limits, outward pillars and the ablution. However he fails to strive against himself from whispers [of the Shayṭān] so his mind wanders off, preoccupied with whispers and thoughts.

The third level is he who guards the limits and pillars of the prayer, he strives against himself in trying to repel the whispers and thoughts. So he is busy with striving against his enemy, so that he does not steal anything from his prayer. So he is in the prayer and striving at the same time.

The fourth level is he who when standing for the pray he perfects its rites, pillars and limits. His heart is fully engaged in taking care of its limits and rites, so that he does not waste any part of it. All his focus is to establish the prayer as it should be and to perfect and complete it. He is completely submerged in the prayer and in the worship of his Lord.

The fifth level is he who stands for the prayer and does the same as the person in fourth level. Along with that, he takes his heart and places it before Allāh. His heart beholds Allāh, being constantly mindful of Him. He is full of love and veneration of Him. He is so immersed in devotion of Allāh, it is as if, he is seeing Allāh right

before him. All the whispers and thoughts disappear and the veils between him and his Lord are removed. The difference between this type of person in the prayer and all the other types of people in the prayer is like the enormous difference between the sky and the earth, as he is in such devotion in his prayer with his Lord, it becomes the reason for the coolness of his eyes.

The first type will be punished, the second will be taken to account, the third will have his sins expiated, the fourth will be rewarded and the fifth is the one who drawn closer to Allāh, because his joy and pleasure was in the prayer [the coolness of his eyes]. The one whose eyes are made cool by the prayer in this life, then his eyes will be made cool by drawing close to his Lord in this life and next. The eyes that are delighted in Allāh, will in effect delight others. But whoever fails in this regard will leave this world full of regret [unsuccessful].

It has been said that when the servant stands to pray, Allāh says: "Remove the veil between Me and My servant." But when the servant turns away [distracted] from Allāh. Allāh says: "Replace the veil." This turning away has been explained as the turning away of the heart to something else. So when he turns away the veils are brought down between him and his Lord. Shayṭān enters presenting him with affairs of this life like a reflection similar to an image in the mirror. If however he turns his heart to Allāh and does not turn away, then Shayṭān is unable to come in between his heart and Allāh. Shayṭān only enters when the veils are lifted, so when the servant races to Allāh with the presence of his heart, the Shayṭān runs away, and if he turns away Shayṭān is present and this is how he is with his enemy in the prayer.

CHAPTER SIX

The Hearts

The servant can strengthen his presence in the prayer and being occupied in it with his Lord when he is able to conquer his whims and desires. Otherwise his heart will be overtaken by desires and whims, which will captivate him. This is how Shayṭān sneaks in to find a place that he can yield control over him, so how will the servant ever be able to rid himself of these whispers and thoughts?

Section One:

The Hearts are Three Kinds

1) A heart that is empty of faith (*khalīn minal-īmān*) and all goodness (*jamīʿ al-khayr*): This is the dark heart (*qalb muḥlim*). With such a heart Shayṭān rests from whispering to it, because he has already taken this type of heart as a place of [permanent] residence; and is in full control over him and he does as he wishes ruling over it.

2) A heart that is illuminated with the light of faith (*istanār binūr al-īmān*). Lanterns are lit within it, however at times the shades of desires (*ḡulma al-shahwāt*) and violent winds of fantasies (*ʿawāsif al-abwīyya*) appear within it. This is a heart that Shayṭān at times finds space within it and at times it is refused entry. Shayṭān tries

to gain control over it [by way of deceiving it], so the fight to gain control rages and is an ongoing battle (the rivalry between the two). This type of heart differs, some times he prevails over the enemy defeating it and at other times the enemy prevails over him for longer periods of time. Sometimes are more even (winning one battle but losing the other).

3) A heart full of faith illuminated with the light of faith, untroubled by the veils of desires (*hujūb al-shahwat*), void of any darkness (*ẓulamāt*). So the light in his chest is radiant and any whispers that come near to it are ignited and set ablaze with the gleaming light [of faith]. It is like the sky that is guarded by the stars and if any devil tries to pass through, it is pelted and burned. The sky is not more sacred than the believer and Allāh's guarding of the believer, is more complete than it is for the sky. The sky is a place of worship for the angels and a constant [passageway] for revelation. It has the rays of the acts of obedience [passing through it], whereas the heart of the believer is a permanent place of *tawhīd*, love (*mahabbah*), knowledge (*ma'rifa*) and faith (*īmān*). It is the place where the light of faith shines on. It is more worthy of guarding and protecting from the plotting of the enemy. So nothing can be obtained from it except in moments of heedlessness and deception.

A good similitude has been given [to further explain this issue of hearts] which is: There are three houses. One of the houses belongs to the king, he has in it his treasures, supplies and jewels. Another house belonging to the servant, he [likewise] has in it his treasures, supplies and jewels, none of which belong to the king. A third house which is completely empty, a thief comes to steal from one of the houses. Which house does he steal from?

If you were to say: From the empty house. Then this is impossible, as there is nothing to steal from it. This is why when it was said to Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*): ‘The Jews claim that there are no whisperings in their prayer.’ He replied: ‘What can the Shayṭān do with an empty heart?’

If you were to say: ‘The thief will steal from the house of the king.’ Then that would be close to impossible, as there would be guards which would make it difficult to even get close, and what if the king himself was on guard too. How would the thief even get close when he is surrounded by guards and soldiers? So there only remains one house that the thief can actually steal from.

Let the intelligent one reflect on this example properly and apply this example to the hearts as there are many parallels. So the heart that is completely empty of any good is the heart of the disbeliever (*kāfir*) and hypocrite (*munāfiq*). This is the house of the Shayṭān. He has taken it as his own, ruling over it, it is his place of permanent residence. What can he steal from it, when it contains his own treasures (*khazā’in*), supplies (*dhakhā’ir*), doubts (*shakūk*), imaginations (*khayālāt*) and whispers (*wasāwis*)?

The heart filled with the greatness (*jalāl*) of Allāh, His Glory (*‘azma*), love (*mahabbah*), observance (*māraqaba*) and shyness (*hayā’*) from Him. Which devil would dare [to steal] from this heart? If a devil wanted to steal what would he steal? His objective is to defeat the heart of the believer and theft that he can only obtain because of the servant’s carelessness which is unavoidable, because he is a human and the laws of nature apply to him: from heedlessness, forgetfulness, confusion, absentmindedness and his natural disposition [from time to time] he gains the upper hand over him.

Wahb Ibn Munabih has mentioned that it has been said in some sacred books: 'I do not dwell in houses, they are not vast enough to contain Me and what can contain Me when the heavens are suppressed by my Footstool (*Kursi*)? But I am in the heart of everyone who has left everything else save Me.'³⁷ This is the same in meaning as another narration: 'My heavens cannot contain Me, nor My earth, but the heart of My believing servant contains Me.'³⁸

The heart contain Allāh's *tawhīd*, knowledge, love, faith, affirming Allāh's promise and threat. The heart also has desires of pride and characteristics that draw them to follow attractions of their whims and natural inclinations. The heart is in between these two motivators. So at times his heart leans towards faith, knowledge, love of Allāh and a yearning to please Him alone, and at other times he leans towards what the Shayṭān calls him to, of desires and animal like instinct.

This is the kind of heart which gives hope to shayṭān, where he pitches his tent and lives in, but Allāh aids whomsoever He wishes:

وَمَا النَّصْرُ إِلَّا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَكِيمِ

"And victory comes from no one but Allāh, the Al-Mighty, the All-Wise."

[*Āl-Imrān* (3): 126]

Shayṭān is not able to have power over this heart except if he finds weapons inside his heart, so when he enters, he finds weapons that he takes and uses to fight with. What are these weapons he uses other than passions, doubts, delusions, false hopes, all of

³⁷ Aḥmad in *al-Zuhd*, p.81 and Ibn Abi 'Āsim in *al-Zuhd*, p.81

³⁸ Al-Albānī said this is baseless narration; see *Silsilah al-Ḍa'īfah*, #5104.

which are already in the heart ready to be used so he attacks the heart. If the servant is prepared with forces of faith then he can resist and overcome and exact revenge from the Shayṭān, otherwise the enemy will seize control and there is no might or power except by Allāh. So if the servant allows the enemy to enter and opens a door to let him in and use the weapons there to fight him, then he is blameworthy.

Blame only yourself and not your riding beast

And die in vain for you have no defence

Section Two: The Status of Fasting

We return to the explanation of the narration of Al-Hārith which mentions how a servant can protect himself from his enemy. The statement of the Prophet (ﷺ): “And Allāh enjoins upon you with fasting (*ṣiyām*). Indeed, the parable of fasting person is that of a man in a group with a pouch containing musk. All of them enjoy its fragrance. Indeed, the breath of the fasting person is more pleasant to Allāh than the scent of musk.”³⁹

The Prophet (ﷺ) has compared a person carrying a pouch with musk in it, because it is something out of sight, hidden under his clothes as is the norm with musk carriers. Likewise the fasting person, his fast is hidden from people and their senses are unable to sense [his fast]. The fasting person his limbs refrain from sins: his tongue from lying, rudeness, false speech and his stomach refrains from food and his private part from sexual intercourse. If he speaks, then he does so without saying anything which will

³⁹ Tirmidhī, #2863, and Aḥmad, 16/718, 17/334, it is declared ṣaḥīḥ by Al-Albānī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī*, #1724.

damage his fast and if he does an action, he does not do anything which will spoil his fast. So all the words he speaks are beneficial and good, so are his actions which are equal to the fragrance the person sitting with the carrier of musk can smell. Whoever sits with a fasting person will benefit from such a sitting. He will be safe from false speech, lying, immorality and oppression. This is the legislated fasting a person should try to achieve and not just withholding food and drink. As mentioned in the authentic ḥadīth: "Whoever does not leave off false speech and acting on it and ignorance, then Allāh is not in need of him leaving his food and drink."⁴⁰ And in another narration: "Perhaps a fasting person's only portion of his fast he receives is hunger and thirst."⁴¹

So fasting is: The limbs abstaining from sins, and the stomach refraining from food and drink. So just as food and drink spoil and break the fast, in the same manner, sins break and spoil the reward of the fast to the extent that it becomes like the one who has not fasted at all.

There has been some dispute regarding the presence of this fragrance emanating from the fasting person whether or not it is in this life or the next. The two main opinions of the scholars: Abū Muḥammad 'Izz al-Dīn Ibn 'Abdu'l-Salām and Abū 'Amr Ibn Ṣalāh have differed on this issue. Abū Muḥammad leaned towards the opinion that this fragrance is specific for the Hereafter, and he authored a treatise about it. Abū 'Amr leaned towards the opinion that the fragrance is in both in this life and the next, he also authored a book in which he replied to Abū Muḥammad. Abū 'Amr followed in the footsteps of Abū Ḥātim Ibn Hibbān who wrote a chapter in his book called: Mention of the explanation of the

⁴⁰ Bukhārī, #1903.

⁴¹ Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 2/373, Ibn Mājah, #1690, and *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Targhib*, #1084.

smell from the mouth of the fasting person is more pleasant to Allāh than musk. Then he presented the narration of al-A'mash, from Abū Ṣālih, on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "All the actions of the son of Ādam are for him except for fasting. Fasting is Mine and it is I who gives reward for it. The change in the breath emanating from the fasting person's mouth is better in Allāh's estimation than the smell of musk."⁴²

Then he explained that the change in the breath emanating from the fasting person's mouth is better in Allāh's estimation than the smell of musk on the Day of Judgement.

Then he brought the narration of Ibn Jurayj from 'Atha, from Abū Ṣālih al-Zayyat that he heard Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) say that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: "All the actions of the son of Ādam are for himself except the fasting. Indeed it is for Me and I will reward him for it. By the one in whose hand is the soul of Muḥammad is in, the change in the breath emanating from the fasting person's mouth is better in Allāh's estimation than the smell of musk. The fasting person has two occasions of happiness: When he breaks his fast he rejoices at this and when he meets Allāh he will rejoice with his fasting."⁴³

Abū Ḥātim said: 'The mark of a believer on the Day of Judgment is a shining light due to the body parts washed by ablution, this is a distinction between them and the rest of creation and their sign on that day will [also] be because of their fasting, a pleasant fragrance emanating from their mouths which will be more pleasant

⁴² Bukhārī, #5927, and Muslim, #1151.

⁴³ Bukhārī, #1904, and Muslim, #1151.

than the smell of musk. So among that gathering of people they will be recognised by this action.' May Allāh make us from those people.

Then he said: 'It has been mentioned that the breath from the mouth of the fasting person will be more pleasant than the smell of musk in this life. Then he brought the narration of Shu'bah, from Sulaymān from Zakwān on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Every good deed done by the son of Ādam [will be rewarded] from ten up to seven hundred times. Allāh says: 'Except fasting, it is for Me and I shall give the reward for it. He leaves his food and drink for my sake, and I will reward him for it. The fasting person has two occasions of rejoicing. One when he breaks his fast and when he meets his Lord. The change in the breath emanating from the mouth of the fasting person when he leaves off food is more pleasant to Allāh than the smell of musk.'"⁴⁵

Abū Muḥammad used as evidence the ḥadīth in which there is a constraint about the pleasant smell being on the Day of Judgment only.

I say: 'This is supported by the agreed upon ḥadīth: "By the one in whose hand is my soul, there is no injured person that is injured in the way of Allāh and Allāh knows best who is injured in His cause, except that he will come on the Day of Judgment and his injury bleeds, the colour is red, but the smell is the fragrance of musk."⁴⁶

So the Prophet (ﷺ) informed us that the smell of the injury of

⁴⁴ *Al-Aḥsān*, 8/211

⁴⁵ Muslim, #1151, and Aḥmad, #7552.

⁴⁶ Bukhārī, #5533, and Muslim, #1876.

the person injured in the way of Allāh will be of musk on the Day of Judgment, which is similar to the smell of the mouth of the fasting person. In the worldly life it is recognised by blood and the other [fasting] by a foul breath, however on the Day of Judgment Allāh will bestow the scent of musk to both.

[However] Abū 'Amr uses what Abū Hātim has mentioned in his book, as evidence to show that it is limited to the time of when he fasts, which proves that it is in the worldly life. So when the predicate is based on the subject which is restricted to a certain state, then the predicate itself is restricted with the same descriptions. This entails that the pleasant smell is correct while the person is fasting.

He also said: 'Al-Ḥassān Ibn Sufyān narrated in his *Musnad* on the authority of Jābir (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "My *ummah* have been given five things." Then he mentioned the rest of the ḥadīth. And from what he said: "as for the second [thing] then they enter upon the evening time and the breath from their mouths is more pleasant with Allāh than the smell of musk."⁴⁷

Then he mentioned the meaning of "*pleasant*" according to the explainers of ḥadīth it is the praise for the fasting person and fulfilment with his action. This is a habit of many of them to explain a word when there is no reason to explain it, as if they are being blessed by doing so or that they have been appointed to do it. What need is there to explain it being "*more pleasant with Allāh than the scent of musk*" with the meaning of praise for the doer, and pleasure with his action, thereby removing the meaning from the reality

⁴⁷ Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 2/292, Bazzār in his *Musnad*, 1/458 and Bayhaqī in his *Shu'ab*, 3/303; however it has a weak chain; see al-Albānī in *Silsilah al-Ḍa'if*, #5082.

of its actual meaning. Many of these people invent a meaning for a word and then they claim that a particular meaning is what was intended for a word in a text without looking at how that word is used and its possible meanings in the language.

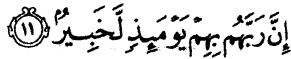
It is known that this necessitates testifying that Allāh and His Messenger (ﷺ) intended such and such a meaning to a particular word. So if a meaning to a particular word is not known or made known by the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) or that it is a standard meaning or that it is used mostly with that meaning or the explanation of it is with that meaning, otherwise it is a false meaning and the least case scenario is that it is giving a testimony without knowledge.

Also what is known is that the most pleasant fragrances among people is the smell of musk. So the Prophet (ﷺ) gave a similitude of this scent from the mouth of a fasting person to Allāh is like the smell of musk is to us or even better. This is relative to how He finds something pleasant, in the same way all of His Attributes (*sifāt*) and Actions (*af'āl*) are relative to Him. For Him finding something pleasant is not the way in which we find something pleasant. Similarly, His pleasure (*ridā*), anger (*ghadab*), happiness (*farḥ*), His dislike (*karāha*), His love (*ḥubb*) and His hatred (*bughd*) are not the same in any way to His creation. Just as His essence does not resemble His creation, His attributes does not resemble the creation,' and His actions do not resemble their actions. So He finds pleasant good words then raises them to Him and the righteous action too. Him finding something pleasant is not like how we find things pleasant.

So his explanation does not remove the complication that these people find with Allāh find something pleasant. This would also mean that they find the same difficulty with the word pleasure. If

he said: This pleasure is not like the pleasure of the creation. Then say: 'When He finds something pleasant is not like the creation do. Based on this all other such actions of Allāh are understood.'

Then he mentioned: 'As for the mention of *'the Day of Judgment'* in the ḥadīth, then it is the Day of Recompense where the superiority of the smell from the mouth of the fasting person on the scales will be heavier than musk, that is used by people to repel bad smells, seeking the pleasure of Allāh. Allāh orders us to avoid bad smells and use pleasant scents, as is the case for the *masajid* during the prayers and other forms of worship. So the Day of Judgment has been mentioned specifically in some narrations in the same way it has been mentioned specifically in the statement of Allāh, the Most High:



"Indeed, on that Day their Lord will be fully informed concerning them."

[*al-ʿAdiyāt* (100): 11]

And in the remaining narrations it has been left general in view of the fact that the virtue is confirmed in both this life and the next.

I say: 'What is strange is that he refutes Abū Muḥammad on this issue even though he himself, and others, do not reject it [the other explanation]. The one, who has explained this "*finding pleasant*" as mentioned previously, as Allāh's praise upon those that fast, and His pleasure of their actions, is something no Muslim denies. Indeed Allāh has praised them in His book, and what the Prophet (ﷺ) conveyed from Him. So if this was meant by "*Finding pleasant*" then Abū Muḥammad has not wrongfully denied it. What

Abū Muḥammad has mentioned is that this scent of musk will become fragrant on the day that the blood of a martyr will also be made into musk, and there is no doubt that this refers to the Day of Judgment. The fasting person will come on that day with his breath more pleasant than musk, as the one who is injured in the way of Allāh, the scent of his blood will also be more pleasant than musk. Especially given the fact that combat (*jihād*) is better than fasting, so if the pleasant scent will be apparent on that day for the martyr, it will likewise be the same for the fasting person.

As for the ḥadīth of Jābir (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), then they [the people fasting] enter the evening time and the breath of their mouth is more pleasant than the smell of musk. This is a sentence that shows the state they are in and not an informative sentence, because the mention of evening as a predicate should not accompany by the letter ‘*wā*’. If it is a circumstantial sentence then Abū Muḥammad should say: ‘It is an implied state and the implied state can be delayed from the time in which the action was done, so it is as if what is being said is: ‘They enter into the evening while the breath from their mouths [due to fasting] is more pleasant than the fragrance of musk on the Day of Judgement. This syntax would not be out of place.’

As for the statement: “The smell of the mouth of a fasting person while it smells” this simply emphasises the fact and shows it is literal in meaning and not metaphorical or figurative. This is like saying: ‘The striving of a believer is while he makes striving, and his prayer is while he prays and Allāh rewards him for on the Day of Judgment and raises him in ranks on that day.’ This is close to the statement of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ): “A fornicator is not believer while he fornicates and nor does he drink alcohol while he is a believer as he drinks it.”⁴⁸

What is not intended is the negation of faith generally while the person commits those actions only, so when the action is completed and is stopped his faith returns to him. Rather, he is still sinful until repentance [is made]. If a person persists, then the negation is applicable, and the term “*fornicator*” is still consequential and the rulings will not go away unless sincere repentance is made and Allāh knows best.

Section Three: The Breath of the Fasting Person

The conclusion to this dispute is to say what Prophet (ﷺ) informed [us] that the pleasant scent will be on the Day of Judgment. That is the time when good actions will be rewarded and it will be manifest clearly which of them were good and which of them were evil. The pleasant fragrance of the fasting persons breath will be apparent to all of creation, as will the blood of an injured person, in the way of Allāh will be more fragrant than musk. All secrets will be laid bare on that day and be noticed on faces of people—coming out into the open.

The dreadful smell of the disbelievers [due to their disbelief] will be obvious and darkness will appear on their faces noticed by all. [The Prophet (ﷺ)] also informed us that when they leave off food and when the time of opening the fast reaches close the breath fasting person will be more pleasant than musk to Allāh and His angels, because all the true effects of any act of worship will come to the fore front, even if that breath is disliked by people. It maybe so that a thing is disliked by people yet it is beloved to Allāh and the opposite is also true. Indeed people dislike those things which go against their human nature, yet Allāh finds it pleasant and loves

⁴⁸ Bukhārī, #2475, and Muslim, #75 and Abū Dāwūd, #4689.

it because it is in accordance to His command, pleasure and love. Hence they are more pleasant to Him than musk is to us. On the Day of Judgment this pleasant fragrance will reach all the servants and be out in the open.

Likewise all the effects of good and evil actions will be out in the open in the Hereafter. Some actions [good or evil] may even become so strong and many in number that its effects become visible on the person in this worldly life. This is something that has been witnessed by both sight and deep understanding.

Ibn 'Abbās (*radīy Allāhu 'anhumā*) said: 'A good deed has a light that illuminates the face, gives light to the heart, strength to the body, expands sustenance (*rizq*) and love of that servant in the hearts of people. A bad deed [on the other hand], casts a shadow over the face, envelop the heart in darkness, weakens the body, reduces sustenance and gives rise to hatred [for that servant] in the hearts of people.'⁴⁹

'Uthmān Ibn 'Affān (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) said: 'No person does a deed except that Allāh will clothes him in its garment [meaning the effects of that deed]. So if the deed is good, with good and if it is evil, then with evil.'⁵⁰

This is something known and shared by those of insight and other than them. You may smell a fragrance from a good righteous man even if he has not touched fragrance, but the pleasant smell of his soul appears on his body and clothes. As for the evil doer

⁴⁹ Ibn Abī Shaybah in his *al-Muṣannaf*, 13/500 as the saying of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī; Abū Nu'aym in his *al-Hilyah*, 3/30 as the saying of Sulayman al-Taymī and 7/330 as the saying of al-Ḥasan Ibn Ṣāliḥ and Allāh knows best.

⁵⁰ Aḥmad in his *al-Zuhd*, p.126 and Abū Dāwūd in his *al-Zuhd*, #106, #107

then the opposite is true, and the one who has a cold or is effected by the illness of the heart is unable to smell anything, perhaps he may deny it altogether [of any fragrances at all].

What we have said thus so far will suffice on this issue. And Allāh knows best with what is most correct.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Status of Charity (*ṣadāqah*)

His Statement [from the ḥadīth of Yahyā Ibn Zakariyyā—may Allāh's peace and blessings be upon them both—mentioned previously]: “*And Allāh enjoins upon you with charity (ṣadaqah).*” Indeed, the parable of that is a man captured by his enemies, tying his hands to his neck, they set about in order to strike his neck. Then the man says: ‘[May] I ransom myself from you with an amount - little or a lot,’ so he frees himself from them.”

This saying in it's self is evidence by its mere existence and its proof is its manifestation. Indeed, charity has an amazing effect on many types of afflictions (*balā'*), even if it is from an evil person (*fājir*) or an oppressor (*ẓālim*), in fact even from a disbeliever (*kāfir*). Allāh repels many types of afflictions because of charity and this is something known and confirmed by everyone as people have experienced it themselves.

Tirmidhī has reported in his collection on the authority of Anas Ibn Mālik (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Indeed, charity extinguishes the anger of the Lord (*ghadab al-Rabb*), and repels an evil death (*mitata al-sū'*).”⁵¹

⁵¹ Tirmidhī, #664, Ibn Ḥibbān, 3309; however it is declared weak by Albānī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī*, 3/52.

So as charity extinguishes the anger of the Lord, it also extinguishes sins, just as water extinguishes fire.

Also in Tirmidhī on the authority of Mu‘ādh Ibn Jabal (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) who said: ‘I was with the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) on a journey, and one day I came near to him as we were travelling, so he said to me: “Should I not guide you to the doors of goodness? Fasting is a shield, and charity extinguishes sins just as water does to fire. Praying in the middle of the night is the sign of the righteous. Then he read [the verse]:

نُتَجَفَىٰ جُنُوبُهُمْ عَنِ الْمَضَاجِعِ
يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا وَيِمَارِزُ قَنَهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

“They arise shunning their beds to call upon their Lord in fear and ardent hope. And spend (benevolently in charity) of what We have bestowed on them.”

[*al-Sajdah* (32): 16]⁵²

In some other narrations: “Hasten to charity, for calamities do not overcome charity.”⁵³

In this similitude, the Prophet (ﷺ) gave the example of the person who was brought forward to have his neck struck, but then man saves his own life with his wealth, this is sufficient [to help us understand]. Charity ransoms a servant from the punishment of Allāh. His sins and mistakes necessitate destruction and then his charity comes and ransoms him from the punishment of Allāh

⁵² Tirmidhī, #2616, Ibn Mājah, #3973, it is declared ṣaḥīḥ by al-Albānī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Tirmidhī*, 5/11.

⁵³ Bayhaqī in his *Sunan*, 4/189, *al-Shu‘ab*, 3/214 and others; however it is weak, see al-Albānī in *Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, #2317.

and frees him from it. In a ḥadīth, it is reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said while addressing women on the Day of Celebration: “O women, give in charity even if it be your jewellery, for indeed I have seen you as the majority of the people in the Hellfire.”⁵⁴ He urged and encouraged them to do that which will free their souls from the fire of Hell.

It is reported in both Bukhārī and Muslim on the authority of ‘Adī Ibn Ḥātim (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: “There is no one among you except that his Lord will speak to him directly without an interpreter. He will look to his right and sees nothing apart from that which he has sent forward. He will look to his left and sees nothing apart from what he has sent forward. He looks in front of him and sees nothing apart from the hellfire blazing towards him. So beware of that fire, even with a half of date.”⁵⁵

[It is reported] in the ḥadīth on the authority of Abū Dharr (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that he said: ‘I asked the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) what will save the servant from the fire?’

He said: “Having faith in Allāh.”

I said: ‘O Prophet of Allāh is there action with faith?’

He said: “That you give in charity what Allāh has given you authority over or to give in charity what Allāh has bestowed on you.”

I said: ‘If he is poor and does not have anything to give?’

He said: “Then let him enjoin good and forbid evil.”

I said: ‘What if he is unable to enjoin good and forbid evil?’

He said: “Then let him help the simple-minded person.”

⁵⁴ Bukhārī, #1462, and Muslim, #80.

⁵⁵ Bukhārī, #8512, and Muslim, #1016.

I said: 'O Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) what if he is unable to help the simple-minded person?'

He said: "Then let him help someone who has been wronged."

I said: 'What if he is weak and unable to help someone who has been wronged?'

He said: "Do you not want to leave your companion any good? Then let him withhold from harming others."

I said: 'O Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) what if he does that will he enter Paradise just by doing this?'

He said: "No believer that has any one of these qualities, except that he will be taken by his hand until he enters him into Paradise."⁵⁶—Al-Bayhaqī also reported this in *Shu'ab al-Īmān*.

And 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) said: 'It was mentioned to me that the deeds will compete one against another in virtue and charity will say: 'I am [more] superior than you all.'⁵⁷

It is reported in both Bukhārī and Muslim on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*), who said: "The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) gave an example of an charitable person and a miser. There example is like two people wearing two iron cloaks from their chests to their collar bones. When the charitable person gives in charity, the cloak becomes spacious till it covers his whole body to such an extent that it hangs on his fingertips and wipe away his ways [i.e. sins been forgiven]. And when the miser [just] thinks about spending [not giving], it [the iron robe] sticks and [its] every ring gets stuck to its place, he tries to widen it, but it does not become wide."

⁵⁶ Bayhaqī in his *al-Shu'ab*, 3/203-204, Ibn Hibbān, 2/96, Ḥākim in his *al-Mustadrak*, 1/63, and others. It is declared ṣaḥīḥ by al-Albānī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Targhib wa'l-Tarhib*, #876.

⁵⁷ Bayhaqī in his *al-Shu'ab*, 3/250, Ḥākim in his *al-Mustadrak*, 1/416 and others; It is declared ṣaḥīḥ by al-Albānī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Targhib wa'l-Tarhib*, #878.

Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) said: 'I saw the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) put his fingers in his cloak and make it as if to loosen a garment that would not loosen.'⁵⁸

Just as the miser is held back from kindness, he is prevented from righteousness and doing good deeds, [as a result] his reward is similar to his actions. His breast is constricted, unable to expand [his chest], feeling small and a lack of joy. He is very sad and depressed almost not able to fulfil a need and not helped in what he seeks.

He is like the person who is wearing an iron cloak that has gathered his hands on to his neck, where he is unable to put them down or even move. Each time he tries to move or remove iron cloak the links bounce back to its place. Such is the miser whenever he wants to give in charity his stinginess prevents him and his heart stays imprisoned as he is. As for the charitable one, then each time he gives charity his heart expands and his chest opens up. This is like the expansion of that iron cloak on him. Every time he gives charity it gets bigger, he becomes happier and his joy increases. If there was on other benefit of giving in charity then this, it would have been sufficient of a reason for the servant to give as much as possible and to give enthusiastically [not to delay in giving]. As Allāh says:

وَمَنْ يُوقِ شَحَنَفِئِهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٩﴾

“Those who are saved from the greed (*shubh*) of their own souls... they are the successful ones.”

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

⁵⁸ Bukhāri, #1443, and Muslim, #1021.

‘Abdu’l-Raḥmān Ibn ‘Awf or Sa’d Ibn Abī Waqqāṣ (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*)—use to go around the Ka’bah repeating only one supplication: ‘O my Lord, save me from my own greed (*shuḥḥ*)! O my Lord, save me from my own greed!’ So it was said to him: ‘Do you not pray for anything else?’ So he replied: ‘If I am saved from my own greed, then I will have succeeded.’⁵⁹

The difference between greed (*shuḥḥ*) and miserliness (*bukhl*) is that greed (*shuḥḥ*) is to be excessive over something, endlessly persisting to obtaining it, an extreme desire and avid greed over it. While miserliness (*bukhl*) is when a person is reluctant to spend after obtaining something, loving it and hoarding it. Therefore, the person is greedy before obtaining it and miserly after obtaining it. So miserliness is the result of greed, as greed leads to miserliness which is deeply rooted instructing the soul. So whoever is miserly has obeyed his greed. Whoever is not miserly has disobeyed it and is saved from its evil and will be counted with those referred to in the following verse:

وَمَنْ يُوقِ شَحَّ نَفْسِهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٩﴾

“Those who are saved from the greed (*shuḥḥ*) of their own souls... they are the successful ones.”

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

The generous one (*sakhī*) is close to Allāh, His creation, His servants, he is close to Paradise and distant from the hellfire. The miser (*bakhīl*) however, is far from His creation, far from Paradise, close to the hellfire. So the generosity of a person even endears him to his adversaries, while miserliness makes a person loathed even by his own children.

⁵⁹ Tabarī in his *Tafsīr*, 28/43, *Tafsīr al-Qurtubī*, 18/30 and *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*, 4/340

A man's miserliness makes his flaws manifest to people,
while his kindness covers his flaws from everyone.

Wear the garments of generosity,
for indeed I see it covers every shortcoming.

The virtue of generosity (*sakḥā'*) is to give whatever is needed at the time of need and to give to those deserving as much as possible [being liberal when giving]. It is not as some who are deficient in knowledge have suggested: to spend whatever you have. If this was the case then wasting and over indulging would increase and the Book has condemned this and the Sunnah has also forbidden it.

Section One:

Generosity (*sakḥā'*)

Generosity (*sakḥā'*) is praiseworthy, and whoever gives the most is named a benevolence person and is deserving of praise. Whoever falls short then he is a miser and deserving of blame. Giving has been mentioned in a verbal tradition that 'Allāh has taken an oath that the miser will never be close to Him.'

Generosity is of two types: The most noble of them is the generosity which makes you not want what other people have and the second type is to spend what is in your hand. A man may be the most generous of people without actually giving them anything, because he does not want what other people have and this is what is meant by the statement of some who say: Generosity is to donate your own wealth and be God-fearing of others' wealth.

I heard Shaikh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah—may Allāh have mercy on his soul—say: 'Allāh revealed to Ibrāhīm (*'alayhi as-salām*) (ask-

ing him) do you know why I have taken you as My close friend?’

He said: ‘No.’

He [Allāh] said: ‘Because I see that giving is more beloved to you than taking.’⁶⁰

This is an attribute (*ṣifāt*) of the Lord, He gives and does not take, He feeds and is not in need of food. He is the most charitable of all those who give in chaity and the most generous of all those who show generosity. Allāh loves those from His creation who have these characteristics that are found in His attribute. He is generous and loves the one who is generous from His creation. He is all knowledgeable and loves the scholars. He is all powerful and He loves the brave. He is beautiful and loves beauty.

Tirmidhī has narrated in his collection that Sa‘īd Ibn al-Musayyab said: ‘Allāh is pure (*ṭayyib*) and loves pure things. He is clean (*naẓīf*) and loves cleanliness, generous (*karīm*) and loves generosity, bountiful (*ḡawād*) and loves those that are bountiful, so purify your selves from debase impulses and do not resemble the Jews.’

He said: ‘I mentioned that to Muhājir Ibn Mismār and he said: “Āmir Ibn Sa‘īd narrated to me the same with the exception of the words “So cleanse yourselves from debase impulses”’.⁶¹ This ḥadīth is strange, Khālīd Ibn Ilyās has been declared weak.

In the Chapter on Virtue—in Tirmidhī—it is reported that: Al-Ḥassān Ibn ‘Urfah narrated that: Sa‘īd Ibn Muḥammad Al-Warrāq narrated from Yahyā Ibn Sa‘īd, who narrated from Al-‘Araj on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that Prophet

⁶⁰ Abū Nu‘aym in his *al-Ḥilyah*, 8/242

⁶¹ Tirmidhī, #2799; however it is declared weak by al-Albānī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī*, 5/111.

(ﷺ) said: "The generous person is close to Allāh, close to Paradise, close to the people and distant from the fire. The stingy person is distant from Allāh, distant from Paradise, distant from people and close to the fire. The ignorant generous person is more beloved to Allāh than the worshipper who is a stingy."⁶²

Section Two:

Allāh is towards His Servant the way His Servant is towards Others

In Bukhārī it has been reported that: "Indeed Allāh is odd [single] (*Witr*) and loves the odd-numbered."⁶³

Allāh is Compassionate (*rahīm*) and he loves those that are compassionate, in fact He has mercy on those who have mercy upon his servants. He is also the one who conceals faults (*sittir*) and loves those that hide the faults of His servants. He pardons (*'afu*) and loves those that pardon others. He is forgiving (*ghafūr*) and loves those who forgive. He is gracious (*latīf*) and loves those who are gracious to his servants. However He hates those who are harsh and hard hearted and callous. He is friendly (*rafiq*) and loves friendship among men. He is gentle (*latīf*) and loves those who are gentle to others. He is forbearing (*halim*) and loves forbearance (*hilm*). He loves good and virtuous deeds - and [all] those who perform them. He is just (*'adh*) and loves justice. He accepts excuses and loves those that excuse His servants. And He re-pays His servant depending on the these qualities, if they present or absent.

So whoever forgives, Allāh forgives him. Whoever overlooks, He

⁶² Tirmidhī, #1961; however it is declared weak by Al-Albānī in *Da'if al-Targhib wa'l-Tarhib*, #1555.

⁶³ Bukhārī, #6410, and Muslim, #2677.

overlooks him. Whoever up holds the right of others, Allāh will up hold his right. Whoever is kind to the servants of Allāh, then Allāh will show him kindness. Whoever shows mercy to Allāh's servants, then Allāh will be merciful to him. Whoever is charitable to the servant of Allāh, then Allāh is charitable towards him. Whoever is generous to them, Allāh is generous to him. Whoever benefits them, Allāh benefits him, and whoever covers them, Allāh covers him. Whoever pardons them, Allāh pardons him.

Whoever looks for faults of the people, Allāh looks at his faults. Whoever exposes them, Allāh will exposes and disgraces him. Whoever prevents them from good, Allāh removes goodness from him. Whoever makes things difficult, Allāh makes things difficult for him. Whoever plots against them, Allāh plots against him. Whoever deceives them, Allāh deceives him. Whoever treats His creation in a certain way, Allāh will treat that person in that exact same way in this life and the next. Allāh is to His servant according to how His servant deals with his men folk.

This is the reason why in a ḥadīth it mentions: "Whoever covers [the faults of] a Muslim, then Allāh will cover him in this life and the next. Whoever relieves a burden of a believer from the burdens of this world, then Allāh will relieve him a burden from the burdens of the hereafter. And whoever causes ease for someone in difficulty, then Allāh will make his reckoning easy. And whoever uplifts someone who is remorseful, Allāh will pardon him, and whoever grants respite to someone finding it difficult to repay a loan or removes it from him, Allāh will shade him under His throne."⁶⁴

⁶⁴ Muslim, #2699; as for the wording: "Whoever uplifts someone who is remorseful" this has been declared weak by al-Albānī in *Ṣaḥīḥ Jāmi' al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, #5464 from the wording: "Grants respite..." then it is reported in Muslim, #3014.

That is because when he made him come under the shade of respite and patience, he saved him from the heat of demanding, and repaying the loan while been in difficult circumstances, Allāh will save that person from the heat of the sun on the Day of Judgement under His throne.

Likewise to this is the ḥadīth in Tirmidhī and others that one day, in a sermon, the Prophet (ﷺ) had said: “O assembly [of people] who believe with their tongues, but faith has not yet entered their hearts, do not harm the Muslims, do not scrutinise their faults, for whoever does so to his brother then Allāh will scrutinise his faults and humiliate him even if he be in the inner most part of his house.”⁶⁵

So as you treat others you shall be treated. Do as you please, for Allāh will treat you as you treat His servants.

When the hypocrites (*munāfiqūn*) appeared as Muslims and yet they concealed disbelief (*kufr*), on the Day of Judgement Allāh will make appear to them a light on the bridge (*al-Ṣirāt*). He will also make it appear to them that they will be able to cross the bridge. But He will hide the fact that the light will be extinguished and that something will come between them and the light shining on the bridge. Just as they disguised [their disbelief] in the world, the same shall become of them at the bridge. Likewise, whoever shows the creation other than what Allāh knows of him and then Allāh will also make it appear to him in this life that they are on their way to success (*asbāb al-falāḥ*) and victory (*najāh*) but conceal from him the total opposite of that. In a narration (it mentions): “Whoever

⁶⁵ Tirmidhī, #2032, Ibn Hibbān, #5763 and others and it is ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ. It is declared ṣaḥīḥ by al-Albānī in *Ṣaḥīḥ Jāmi’ al-Ṣagḥir*, #7984.

acts only to be seen, or boasts only to be heard, Allāh will cause [his true intentions] to be seen or heard.”⁶⁶

So the intended meaning here is that the generous charitable person, is given by Allāh, were as the tight fisted miserly is not given. Allāh compensates his actions, manners, provision, soul and means of livelihood fittingly for what he use to do.

⁶⁶ Muslim, #2987.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Virtue of Remembering Allāh

The statement of the Prophet (ﷺ): *“And He enjoins upon you the remembrance of Allāh, the Most High.”* Indeed, the parable of that is a man whose enemy quickly tracks him down until he reaches a solid fortified fortress (*ḥiṣn ḥaṣayn*) in which he [enters to] protects himself from the enemy. In the same way this is how the servant is, he does not protect himself from Shayṭān except by the remembrance of Allāh.”

If the only benefit to the remembrance of Allāh was this one characteristic then it would be befitting for the slave to not let his tongue tire from the remembrance and continuously be devote to it. For indeed he will not be able to protect himself from his enemy except through the remembrance of Allāh. The enemy can only enter upon him when he is unaware. The enemy awaits to ambush him, when he becomes heedless striking when off guard, he then seizes him and attacks. When servant remembers Allāh the enemy withdraws annoyed and becomes small and squashed until he becomes like a small bird or like a fly. This is the reason he is called “The whisperer who withdraws” meaning he whispers in the hearts of mankind and when Allāh is remembered, he withholds and retreats.

Ibn 'Abbās (*radīy Allāhu 'anhumā*) said: 'The Shayṭān remains on the heart of the son of Ādam, when a man forgets or is heedless. Shayṭān continues whispering to him, untill he remembers Allāh then [the Shayṭān] retreats.'⁶⁷

It has been reported in the *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad on the authority of Mu'ādh Ibn Jabal (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "No human does an action that will save him more from the punishment of Allāh than the remembrance of Allāh—the Mighty and Majestic."⁶⁸

Mu'ādh (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) said: 'The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: "Should I not inform you of the best of your deeds? Those that cleanses you before your Master? Those that raise you to the highest rank? and what which is better for you than giving away gold and silver. Better than you meeting your enemy, you striking their necks, and they strike your necks?" They said: 'Of course! O Messenger of Allāh.' He said: "The remembrance of Allāh, the Most High!"⁶⁹

In Muslim, on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) was travelling along the path leading to Makkah that he happened to pass by a mountain called Jumdan. He said: 'Proceed on, it is Jumdan, the dedicated ones (*mufaridun*) have gone ahead. They said: 'O Messenger of Allāh, who are the dedicated ones?' He said: "They are those males and

⁶⁷ Tabarī, in his *Tafsīr*, 30/355 and Ibn Abī Shaybah in his *al-Muṣannaf*, #34774. It is declared ḥasan by al-Albānī his checking of *Zīlāl*, 1/933.

⁶⁸ Ibn Abī Shaybah in his *al-Muṣannaf*, #29452, Tirmidhī, #3377, Ṭabarānī, #1872 and Ḥākim in his *al-Mustadrak*, 1/394. It is declared ṣaḥīḥ by al-Albānī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi'*, #5644.

⁶⁹ Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, #21064. It is declared ṣaḥīḥ by al-Albānī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi'*, 5/459.

females who remember Allāh much.”⁷⁰

It is also reported in Abū Dāwūd in his *Sunan* on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*raḍīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) who said that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: “People who get up from a gathering concluding without remembering Allāh, will be just as if they had got up from the corpse of a donkey, and their gathering will be a cause of grief to them.”⁷¹

And in Tirmidhī’s version: “No People who get up from an gathering in which they did not remember Allāh nor did they send blessings upon their Prophet except that it will be for them a source of regret. Allāh will either punish them for it or forgive them, if He wills.”⁷²

In Muslim, al-Agharra Abū Muslim said: ‘I bear witness to the fact that both Abū Hurayrah (*raḍīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) and Abū Sa‘īd Khudrī (*raḍīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) were present when the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: “The people do not sit together except that they are surrounded by angels and covered by mercy. Tranquillity descends upon them as they remember Allāh and Allāh makes a mention of them to those who are near Him.”’⁷³

In, Tirmidhī, a man once asked, according to ‘Abdullāh Ibn Bishr (*raḍīy Allāhu ‘anhu*): ‘O Messenger of Allāh, the doorways to goodness are many, but I cannot enter them all. So tell me something I can retain, but do not give me so much that I shall forget.’ Or, in another version: “The rules of Islām have become

⁷⁰ Muslim, #2676.

⁷¹ Abū Dāwūd, #4755 and Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 2/389. It is declared ṣaḥīḥ by al-Albānī in *Sunan Abi Dāwūd*, 4/264.

⁷² Tirmidhī, #3380 and Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 2/484. It is declared ṣaḥīḥ by al-Albānī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ Jāmi‘ Tirmidhī*, 5/461.

⁷³ Muslim, #2700.

too many for me, so inform me of a thing that I should stick to.” He (ﷺ) replied: “Let your tongue be constantly moist with the remembrance of Allāh.”⁷⁴

Also in Tirmidhī on the authority of Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) who narrated that the Messenger of Allāh was asked: ‘Which of the worshippers (*‘ibād*) is superior in rank with Allāh on the Day of Judgement?’ He replied: “All those who remember abundantly.” Then it was asked: ‘O Messenger of Allāh! What about the one who goes to battle for the sake of Allāh?’ He answered: ‘Even if he were to strike with his sword the disbelievers and the polytheists, until his sword breaks, and he [or it] is dyed with blood, the one that remembers Allāh, the Most High is superior in rank.’⁷⁵

In Bukhārī, on the authority of Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The example of the one who remembers his Lord in comparison to the one who does not remember his Lord, is that of a living creature compared to a dead.”⁷⁶

In both Bukhārī and Muslim, on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) who narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Allāh says: ‘I am just as My servant thinks of Me and I am with him if He remembers Me. If he remembers Me in himself, I too, remember him in Myself. If he remembers Me in a group of people, I too remember him in a group that is better than it and if he approaches Me by a handspan, I approach him by an armspan. If he

⁷⁴ Tirmidhī, #2329, #3375, Ibn Mājah, #3793 and Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 4/188. It is declared *ṣaḥīḥ* by al-Albānī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ Jāmi‘ Tirmidhī*, 5/458.

⁷⁵ Tirmidhī, #3376, Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 4/190 and Abū Ya‘lā, 2/530-531 with a weak chain; see al-Albānī in *Jāmi‘ Tirmidhī*, 5/458.

⁷⁶ Bukhārī, #6407, and Muslim, #779.

⁷⁷ Bukhārī, #7405, and Muslim, #2675.

approaches Me by an armspan, I approach him by two armspans. And if he comes to Me walking, I hasten to him.”⁷⁷

And in Tirmidhī, on the authority of Anas Ibn Mālik (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: “When you pass by the gardens of Paradise (*riyāḍ al-jannah*), graze therein!” And they asked: ‘O Messenger of Allāh, what are the gardens of Paradise?’ He said: “The circles of remembrance (*ḥalāq al-dhikr*).”⁷⁸

Also in Tirmidhī, it is reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Indeed, Allāh, the Mighty and Sublime, says: ‘Indeed My worshipper is everyone who remembers Me when he is about to meet his enemy.’”⁷⁹

This ḥadīth clarifies the clearest word in the virtue between the person who remembers (*dhākir*) and in relation to the combatant (*mujaḥid*). The one who remembers Allāh and who engages in combat for Allāh is better than the one who only remembers, or the one who only engages in combat. But someone who only remembers is better than someone who engages in combat but neglects remembrance. So the best of those who remember are those that engage in combat too, and the best of those that engage in combat, are the ones who remember Allāh also. As Allāh, the Most High says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا لَقِيتُمْ فِئَةً
فَاتَّبِعُوا وَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

“O you who have believed! When you meet a company [from the enemy forces], stand firm and remember

⁷⁸ Tirmidhī, #3510, Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 3/150 and others. It is declared ḥasan by al-Albānī in *Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī*, 5/532.

⁷⁹ Tirmidhī, #3580. It is declared weak by Al-Albānī in *Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī*, 5/570.

Allāh much that you may be successful.”

[*al-Anfāl* (8): 45]

So he commanded them with both remembrance [of Him] abundantly and to engage in combat, so they can have hope of success. Allāh says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا ﴿٤٥﴾

“O you who have believed, remember Allāh with much remembrance.”

[*al-Abḥāb* (33): 41]

And Allāh says:

وَالَّذِينَ كَرِهَ اللَّهُ كَثِيرًا وَالَّذِينَ كَرِهَ

“...and the men who remember Allāh often and the women who do so.”

[*al-Abḥāb* (33): 35]

And Allāh says:

فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمْ مَنَاسِكَكُمْ فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَذِكْرِكُمْ
ءَابَاءَكُمْ أَوْ أَشَدَّ ذِكْرًا

“And when you have completed your rites, remember Allāh like your [previous] remembrance of your fathers or with [much] greater remembrance.”

[*al-Baqarah* (2): 200]

So the command is to remember Allāh abundantly and with relentlessness, due to the severe need of the servant and which he can't do without even for a blink of an eye. For any moment

that goes by without the servant remembering Allāh goes against him and not for him. The loss he will suffer will be greater than the benefit he might gain in being neglectful of Allāh.

Some of the people of knowledge said: 'If the servant turns towards Allāh for such and such years, then he turns away for a [single] moment, what misses him will be greater than what he has obtained.'

Bayhaqī mentioned on the authority of 'A'ishah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhā*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "There is not an hour that goes by in which the son of Ādam does not remember Allāh in it except that it will be a source of regret for him on the Day of Judgement."⁸⁰

He also mentioned [in a ḥadīth] on the authority of Mu'ādh Ibn Jabal (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*): "The people of Paradise will not find regret in anything except the hour which passed by and they did not remember Allāh in it."⁸¹

The Prophet's wife, Umm Habībah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhā*) said: "The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: "The son of Ādam's speech is all against him and not for him. Except for enjoining the good, forbidding evil or the remembrance of Allāh."⁸²

Mu'ādh Ibn Jabal (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) said: 'I asked the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) which actions are most beloved to Allāh?' He

⁸⁰ Bayhaqī in his *al-Shu'ab*, 1/392. It declared weak by al-Albānī in *Da'if al-Targhib wa'l-Tarhib*, #913.

⁸¹ Ṭabarānī in his *al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, 20/93. It declared weak by al-Albānī in *Da'if al-Targhib wa'l-Tarhib*, #910.

⁸² Tirmidhī, #2412 and Ibn Mājah, #3974. It declared weak by al-Albānī in *al-Silsilah al-Da'ifah*, #1366.

(ﷺ) answered: "That upon death your tongue is still moist with the remembrance of Allāh."⁸³

Section One: Cleansing the Hearts

Bayhaqī also mentioned a ḥadīth on the authority of 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar (*radīy Allāhu 'anhumā*) from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he used to say: "Everything has a polish (*siqāla*) and the polish of the heart is the remembrance of Allāh. There is nothing that saves [a person] from the punishment of Allāh more than the remembrance of Allāh."

And they asked: 'Not even combat (*jihād*) for the sake of Allāh?'

He answered: "Not even if he struck with his sword until it broke [into two pieces]."⁸⁴

There is no doubt that the heart becomes rusty just as copper, silver and other metals. What makes it clean is the remembrance of Allāh. It continues to be cleansed until it is like a clear mirror. If however he neglects his heart it becomes rusty, when he returns to remembrance, then it will start to shine.

The heart grows rusty due two things: through heedlessness and sins. It is cleansed by way two things: Seeking forgiveness and the remembrance of Allāh. So whoever is heedlessness most of the time then the rust on his heart accumulates and it will rust according to how much he has been neglectful. When the heart become rusty and corrodes the true nature of things are not apparent to

⁸³ Ibn Hibbān, #818, Ṭabarānī in his *al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, 20/93 and others. It declared hasan by al-Albānī in *Ṣaḥīḥ wa Da'if al-Jāmi'*, #165.

⁸⁴ Bayhaqī in his *al-Shu'ab*, 1/396. It declared sahih by al-Albānī in his *Da'if al-Targhib wa'l-Tarhib*, #1495.

it, so he sees falsehood as the truth and the truth as falsehood. This is because as the rust accumulates on his heart, it becomes dark and black so the true reality of things are unclear [distorted]. Thus the hearts perception [and introspection] qualities become [totally] corrupt until his heart will no longer accept the truth nor reject falsehood. This is the worst type of punishment for any heart [that it can no longer recognise good or evil.]

The root cause of this is heedlessness and following desires, as they suppress [or dim] the light of the heart, which blinds its vision, as Allāh says:

وَلَا تُطِيعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُ عَنْ ذِكْرِنَا وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ وَكَانَ
أَمْرُهُ فُرُطًا

“And do not obey someone whose heart We have made heedless of Our remembrance and who follows his own whims and desire and whose life has transgressed all bounds.”

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

So if the servant wants to follow a man then let him look at whether or not he is a person of remembrance (*ahl al-dhikr*) or if he is of those who are neglectful (*ghāfilin*). Is he controlled by his desires (*hawā*) or by revelation (*wahy*)? If he is ruled by his desires then he is from the people of neglect (*ahl al-ghafla*) and his affair is lost, and he should neither be trusted nor followed, for he will lead you to destruction.

Meaning of '*furut*' - *transgressed all bounds*: It has been explained as squandering; meaning the command which is binding upon him and he has to establish it, with it his uprightness and success is wasted and neglected. It has also been explained as '*waste*',

'destruction' or 'opposing the truth', all of which have similar meanings.

What is intended is that Allāh prohibits following someone who has these characteristics. So a person should look to his teacher, role model or the person he follows, and if he finds him like that [neglectful] then he should distance himself from him. If however he finds him to be from the people constantly busy in the remembrance of Allāh, following the Sunnah and he is not neglectful, rather he is firm in his affair then let him hold fast to him. There is no difference between the living and the dead except by the remembrance of Allāh. So the one who remembers his Lord and the one who does not is like the living and the dead.

In a narration found in the *Musnad* [of Imām Aḥmad], attributed to the Prophet (ﷺ): "Increase abundantly in the remembrance of Allāh, the Most High, until it is said [about you], 'he is insane (*majnūn*).'"⁸⁵

⁸⁵ Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 3/68, Ibn Ḥibbān, #817 and others It declared weak by al-Albānī in *al-Silsilah al-Ḍa'ifah*, #517.

CHAPTER NINE

The Benefits of Remembrance (*fawā'id al-dhikr*)

Remembrance of Allāh has over a hundred benefits;

1. Repels the *Shayṭān*, restrains him and breaks him.
2. It pleases Allāh, the Most Merciful (*al-Rahmān*).
3. It removes sadness (*hamm*) and sorrow (*ghamm*) from the heart (*qalb*).
4. It brings happiness (*farḥ*), delight (*surūr*) and relief (*bast*) to the heart.
5. It strengthens both the heart (*qalb*) and the body (*badan*).
6. It illuminates the face (*wajh*) and the heart.
7. It brings about sustenance (*riḥq*).
8. It envelopes the one who practices it with dignity (*mahāba*),

sweetness (*ḥalāwa*) and radiance (*nadrah*).

9. It causes love (*maḥabab*) which is the spirit of Islām (*rūḥ al-Islām*), it is the focal point of religion (*raḥ al-dīn*), dependence of happiness (*madār al-sa'ādah*) and salvation (*najāt*). Allāh has made for everything a cause (*sabab*), and He has made the cause of love (*sabab al-maḥabab*) constancy in remembrance (*dawām al-dhikr*). So whoever wishes to gain the love of Allāh then let him be devout in his remembrance (*dhikr*), for it is both a lesson (*daras*) and a reminder (*mudhākira*) just as it is a part of knowledge (*ilm*). Remembrance is the door to love (*bab al-maḥabab*), its greatest and most upright path.

10. It is a means to observe mindfulness [of Allāh] until it has reformed the person, arriving at the door of spiritual excellence (*bab al-iḥsān*) - he worships Allāh as though he sees Him. There is no other path for the one neglecting remembrance to reach this station of spiritual excellence (*maqām al-iḥsān*), just as the [lazy] sitting person can not reach his home [without action].

11. It causes [the servant] to turn back to Allāh. So when a person turns to Allāh abundantly in remembrance, the heart [naturally] inclines back to Allāh in every circumstance. If the person is afflicted with calamities and tribulations, only Allāh remains to become his sanctuary, his refuge, his safe haven, his shelter, and the direction (*qibla*) of his heart. [He knows only] Allāh [can] releases him from such afflictions and trails.

12. It causes him to draw closer to Allāh. The persons nearness to Allāh is in proportion to his remembrance of Him, his distance (*bu'd*) [from Him] is in proportion to his neglect (*ghaflah*) [of Him].

13. It opens up for him a great door to knowledge, and as his remembrance increases, so too will it increase him in knowledge (*ma'rifaḥ*).

14. It grants him to have fear and awe before his Lord, due to the high rank that remembrance inhabits his heart and his presence with Allāh, the Most High. Contrary to the heedless (*ghāfil*) person, whose heart is veiled from the reverence and awe of his Lord.

15. It graces him with Allāh's own mention of him, as Allāh says:

فَاذْكُرُونِي أَذْكَرْكُم

“Remember Me - I will remember you.”

[*al-Baqarah* (2): 152]

If this was the only benefit [of remembrance] then it would be sufficient as a merit (*faḍl*) and honour (*sharaf*). The Prophet (ﷺ) said that his Lord said: “He who remembers Me in himself, I too, remember him in Myself, and if he remembers Me in a gathering, I shall remember him in a better gathering.”⁸⁶

16. It gives life to the heart (*ḥayā al-qalb*). For I heard Shaikh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah—may Allāh have mercy on him—saying: ‘Remembrance is to the heart like water is to fish. What is the fate of the fish if it left the water!’⁸⁷

17. It is invigorating to the heart (*qalb*) and soul (*rūḥ*). If the servant is deprived of it, it is like the body which has been deprived of [nutritious] food.

I was once present when Shaikh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah prayed the Fajr prayer, then he sat down to remember Allāh until the

⁸⁶ Bukhārī, #7405.

⁸⁷ Shaikh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah has similar words in *Majmū' al-Fatāwa*, 10/85.

middle of the day. Then he turned to me and said: 'This is my morning breakfast. If I do not take my morning breakfast, I shall lose my strength,' or words to that effect.

Another time he said to me: 'I will not leave a remembrance except to be ready and relaxed for another type of remembrance,' or words to that effect.

18. It removes impurities from the heart to become pure from the rust and corrosion, as it has preceded in the previous ḥadīth. Everything eventually becomes rusty [or dull, deteriorates or becomes discoloured], and the heart does so through heedlessness (*ghafla*) and desires (*hawā*). It becomes pure and radiant through remembrance (*dhikr*), repentance (*taubah*) and seeking forgiveness (*istighfār*). This meaning has preceded.

19. It wipes away sins and wards them off. It is from the greatest forms of good deeds (*a'ḥsana al-ḥasanāt*) and all good deeds wipe away bad deeds (*sayyi'āt*).

20. It removes the strangeness between the servant (*'abd*) and his Lord (*rabb*). Between the heedless person and His Lord is strangeness and it cannot be removed except through the remembrance (*dhikr*).

21. When the servant remembers his Lord by extolling His Majesty (*jalāl*), glorifying (*tasbīḥ*) and praising (*tahmīd*) Him, then he too is remembered by Allāh at times of difficulties (*shidda*). Imām Aḥmad has reported in the *Musnad* that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "As you remember the majesty of Allāh, [by saying]: '*Tablīl*—There is none worthy of worship save Allāh', '*Takbīr*—Allāh is the greatest', and '*Tahmīd*—Praise be to Allāh', revolves around the Throne, humming like bees, remembering the one who remembered Allāh.

Wouldn't any of you liked to be mentioned by something which he mentioned [in the presence of Allāh]?""⁸⁸ This is the ḥadīth or its meaning.

22. When a person gets to know his Lord through His remembrance in times of ease (*rakā'*), then Allāh will know him in times of hardship (*shidda*). It is been narrated, the meaning of which is, that a servant who is obedient and remembers Allāh [often], when a hardship befalls, or asks Allāh for a need (*hajja*), the angels say: 'O Lord, this is a familiar voice from a known servant!' As for the one who is neglectful and turns away, then the angels say: 'O Lord, this is an unfamiliar voice, from an unknown servant.'⁸⁹

23. Remembrance saves one from the punishment of Allāh. As Mu'ādh (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) reported from the Prophet (ﷺ): "No person can do anything more to save himself from the punishment of Allāh than to [busy] himself with His remembrance [calling and imploring Him] - the Mighty and Majestic."⁹⁰

24. It causes tranquillity (*sakīnah*) to descend and [Divine] mercy (*rahmah*) to envelop. The angels to surround the one who remembers in the manner the Prophet (ﷺ) has informed us.⁹¹

25. It keeps the tongue busy from backbiting (*ghiba*), slander (*namima*), lies (*kadhab*), lewdness (*fuḥsh*) and vain (*baṭil*) talk. Indeed the servant cannot avoid speaking, so either he speaks with the remembrance of Allāh and His commandments, or his speech involves these forbidden things or [at least] some of them. So

⁸⁸ Ibn Mājah, #3809, Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 4/268-271 and others. It is declared saḥīḥ by Al-Albānī in *Al-Ṣaḥīḥah*, #3358.

⁸⁹ Ibn Abī Shaybah in his *al-Muṣannaf*, 6/61

⁹⁰ Ibn Abī Shaybah in his *al-Muṣannaf*, #29452, Tirmidhī, #3377, Ṭabarānī, #1872 and Ḥākim in his *al-Mustadrik*, 1/394. It is declared ṣaḥīḥ by al-Albānī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi'*, #5644.

there is no way to be safe from them except with the remembrance of Allāh. What is witnessed and experience shows us that this is true. So whoever makes his tongue moist with the remembrance of Allāh, fortifies his tongue from chitter-chatter and vain speech. Whoever's tongue (however) is dry from the remembrance of Allāh then it is made moist with every lewd and evil speech. And there is no power or might except by Allah.

26. The gatherings of remembrance (*majālis al-dhikr*) are the gatherings of the angels (*majālis al-malā'ika*). Whereas those gathering of gossip and heedlessness (*majālis al-lagwi wa'l-ghafla*) are the gatherings of the devils (*majālis al-shayāṭīn*). So let the servant chose which is more pleasing and important to him, for he will be with those very people in this life and in the hereafter.

27. The one remembering (Allāh) is happy by his remembrance, and thus makes those around him happy also. Indeed he is blessed wherever he is. As for the one who is heedless of Allāh's remembrance, someone who just chitter-chatters, he is made unhappy by his heedlessness and vain talk, and so too does he makes those around him unhappy.

28. It gives the servant security from regret and sadness on the Day of Judgement. Every gathering in which the servant does not mention his Lord in will be a source of [great] regret and loss on the Day of Judgement.

29. The remembrance which causes a servant to weep in solitude (*khalwa*) is a cause for the servant to be shaded by the shade of Allāh on the day of great gathering — the shade of His throne, while the rest of the people will be exposed to the heat of the melting sun while they stand there. Meanwhile, he who remem-

⁹¹ Muslim, #2700, Tirmidhī, #3378 and Ibn Mājah, #3791

bered [his Lord], will be shaded beneath the Throne of the Most Merciful (*'arsh al-Rahmān*).

30. The one who is constantly engaged in the remembrance of Allāh, this will be a cause for him to be granted better than those who simply ask for something. As in the ḥadīth of 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) who said: 'The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: "that Allāh says: 'Whoever is preoccupied by my remembrance is to supplicate Me, I will give him better than I give those who [just] ask me.'"⁹²

31. Remembrance is the easiest forms of worship and the most noble and virtuous of them. Indeed the movement of the tongue is the lightest and easiest compared to the moving the limbs of the body. If any other part of the body was to move day and night like the tongue, it would be extremely difficult —rather, it is simply impossible.

32. It is an opportunity to plant the trees of Paradise (*ghirās al-jannah*). In Tirmidhī, 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ud (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) said that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: "I met Ibrāhīm, the friend of Allāh on the Night of my Ascension, so he said to me: 'O Muḥammad, recite the greetings of peace from me to your nation and inform them that Paradise has pure [rich] fragrant soil, its water is sweet [and pure], its land is vast, spacious and even and its trees are planted by [the remembrance of Allāh]:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ.

"Subḥān Allāh wa'l-ḥamdulillāh wa lā ilāha illallāhwallāhu

⁹² Bukhārī in his *Khalq af'āl al-'ibād*, #544, Ibn Hibbān, 1/376 and Bayhaqī in his *al-Shu'ab*, 1/413. It declared weak by al-Albānī in his *Silsilah al-Da'ifab*, #4989.

Akbar.”

“Glory be to Allāh’, ‘All praise is due to Allāh’, ‘none has the right to be worshipped save Allāh’ and ‘Allāh is the greatest.’”⁹³

Also in Tirmidhī is the ḥadīth by of Abū'l-Zubayr on the authority of Jābir (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Whoever says:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ وَيَحْمَدِهِ

“Subḥān Allāh al-Aẓīm, wa biḥamdih.”

“Glory be to Allāh, the Magnificent, and with His Praise.”

a date-palm tree is planted for him in Paradise.”⁹⁴ Tirmidhī declares this ḥadīth ḥasan and ṣaḥīḥ.

33. The recompense and virtue earned through remembrance is unlike any other deed. In both Bukhārī and Muslim, on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: “Whoever says a hundred times in a day

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ،
وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

“La Ilāha Illallāh Wahdahu Lā Sharīka Lah, Lahu al-mulku wa lahu al-hamdu wa huwa ‘ala kulli shay’in Qadīr”

⁹³ Tirmidhī, #3462, Ṭabarānī, in his *al-Awsaṭ*, #4170 and Bazzār in his *Musnad*, #1991, #1992. It is declared ḥasan by Al-Albānī in *al-Ṣaḥīḥah*, #105.

⁹⁴ Tirmidhī, 5/511. It is declared ḥasan by Al-Albānī in *al-Ṣaḥīḥah*, #64.

“There is none worthy of worship save Allāh, alone, without any partners. To Him belongs the kingdom. All praises are for Him (alone). He is sovereign over all things.”

It would be equal in reward to freeing ten slaves. Also, a hundred good deeds will be written and a hundred sins will be erased or wiped off their account. It would also be a protection from Shayṭān from the morning until evening. No one would have done anything better than them unless someone who does more than which he has done.”

And whoever says:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ

“Subḥān Allāhi wa biḥamdih.”

“Glory is to Allāh, and with His Praise.”

a hundred times in one day, will have all his sins wiped away even if they were equal to the foam of the sea.”⁹⁵

And In Muslim, on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) who said: “The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: “That I say:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ

“Subḥān Allāh wa’l-ḥamdulillāh wa lā ilāha illallāh wallāhu Akbar.”

“Glory be to Allāh, All praise is for Allāh, none has the right to be worshipped save Allāh and Allāh is the greatest.”

⁹⁵ Bukhārī, #3293, and Muslim, #2691.

is more beloved to me than what the sun rises upon.”⁹⁶

In Tirmidhī, on the authority of Anas (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) who relates that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: “Whoever says, in the morning or the evening:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَصْبَحْتُ أُشْهِدُكَ وَأُشْهِدُ حَمَلَةَ عَرْشِكَ وَمَلَائِكَتَكَ وَجَمِيعَ
خَلْقِكَ أَنَّكَ أَنْتَ اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ، وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُكَ وَرَسُولُكَ.

“Allāhumma innī aṣbāḥutu ush-hiduka wa ush-hidu ḥamalata ‘arshika, wa malā’ikataka wa jamī’a khalqika, annaka antallāhu lā ilāha illā anta wahdaka lā sharika laka, wa anna Muḥammadan ‘abduka waa rasūluka.”

“O Allāh, I have awoken this morning testifying to You, the bearers of Your Throne, Your Angels and all of creation: that truly You are Allāh, there is none worthy of worship save You alone, You have no partners, and that Muḥammad is your servant and your Messenger.”

Allāh will free a quarter of him from the fire and whoever says it twice Allāh will free half of him from the fire. Whoever says it three times, Allāh will free him three quarters from the fire, and whoever says it four times, Allāh will free all of him completely from the fire.”⁹⁷

And in Tirmidhī, on the authority of Thawbān (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) who relates that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: “Whoever says in the morning and evening:

رَضِيتُ بِاللَّهِ رَبًّا، وَبِالْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا، وَبِمُحَمَّدٍ ﷺ نَبِيًّا.

⁹⁶ Muslim, #2695.

⁹⁷ Abū Dāwūd, #5078, Tirmidhī, #3503 and others. It is declared weak by al-Albānī in *Silsilah al-Ḍa‘īfah*, #1041.

“Raḍitu billāhi Rabban, wa bi'l-Islāmi dīnan wa bi Muḥammadīn nabīyan.”

“I am pleased with Allāh as a Lord, with Islām as a religion and with Muḥammad (ﷺ) as a Prophet.”

Then it is a right upon Allāh that he makes him pleased.”⁹⁸

Also in Tirmidhī, the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: “Whoever enters the marketplace and says:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، لَهُ الْمُلْكُ، وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ، يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ،
وَهُوَ حَيٌّ لَا يَمُوتُ، بِيَدِهِ الْخَيْرُ، وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

“Lā ilāha illallāh, waḥdahū lā sharīka lahu, lahuḥ-mulku wa lahuḥ-ḥamdu, yuḥyī wa yumūtu, wa huwa ḥayyun lā yamūtu, biyadiḥil-khairu, wa huwa ‘alā kulli shay’in qadīr.”

“There is none worthy of worship save Allāh, alone, without partner, to Him belongs the dominion, and to Him is all the praise. He gives life and causes death. He is the ever-living and does not die, in His Hand is the goodness and He has power over all things.”

Allāh shall record a million good deeds for him, wipe a million evil deeds away from him and raise him million ranks for him.”⁹⁹

⁹⁸ Tirmidhī, #3389, Abū Dāwūd, #5072 and Ṭabarānī, 2/932. It is declared weak by Al-Albānī in *Da’if al-Jāmi’*, #5735.

⁹⁹ Tirmidhī, #3429. It is declared ḥasan by al-Albānī in *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, 2/752.

Section One:

Safety in Remembrance of Allāh

34. Continually remembering the Lord brings about security (*amāna*) from forgetting Him. It is this forgetfulness that will be the cause of the servant's unhappiness (*shaqā'*) in this life and the next. This is because forgetfulness of the Lord leads to a person forgetting himself and that which bring him benefit.

Allāh has said:

وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ نَسُوا اللَّهَ فَأَنْسَاهُمْ أَنْفُسَهُمْ أُولَٰئِكَ
هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

“Do not be like those who forgot Allāh, so He made them forget themselves! Such people are the evil-doers!”

[*al-Hashr* (59): 19]

So if a servant neglects himself, he turns away from what benefits him, disregards it and becomes distracted [with other things]. Then there is no escape from corruption and his own destruction. Similar to the person who has land; an orchard or cattle which he can only maintain, by standing over them and continuously taking care of them. If he is negligent and forgets about them and becomes distracted thereby wasting the opportunity to bring benefit to them, then they will become damaged [dying and generally unusable] no doubt. If this is the case another person could have done [better] in his place. Then how about the corruption of his soul! Its destruction and misery if he neglects it and becomes preoccupied with something else, failing to care for it, abandoning what brings it benefit, then corruption, destruction, failure and deprivation is all that can be expected!

This is the one whose affair has been lost and his well being wasted away. He then is surrounded by means of his own severance, failure and destruction. There is no way to ensure safety from this except through remembrance of Allāh and being attached to Him. Keeping the tongue ever moist from it [remembrance of Allāh], until it inhabits a place as important that his very life depends on it, like his food, lack of which would ruin his body, his body fails to function, eventually perishing. Or that it is like having water while being severely thirsty, or like wearing clothes when the climate is hot or cold or like a shelter during a severe winter or hot winds.

It is most befitting for the servant to place the remembrance of Allāh on this level [of importance] or greater. For can the destruction of the soul and heart and their corruption be compared to the destruction and corruption of the physical body? This physical destruction of the body is unavoidable, yet it maybe followed by a better state. As for destruction of the heart and soul then there is no hope for rectification or success, and there is no might or power except by Allāh the Most High, the Most Supreme. If there was no other benefit to remembrance of Allāh except this single benefit, it would be sufficient. Whoever forgets Allāh then He makes that person forget himself in this life and forsakes him in the torment of the Day of Judgement. As Allāh has said:

وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَنْ
ذِكْرِي فَإِنَّ لَهُ مَعِيشَةً ضَنْكًا وَنَحْشُرُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ
أَعْمَى ﴿١٢٤﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ لِمَ حَشَرْتَنِي أَعْمَى وَقَدْ كُنْتُ بَصِيرًا ﴿١٢٥﴾
قَالَ كَذَلِكَ أَنْتَ أَيْتَانَا فَتُحِشِرُنَا وَكَذَلِكَ الْيَوْمَ تُنْشَرُونَ ﴿١٢٦﴾

“But if anyone turns away from My remembrance, his life shall be dark and narrow, and We will gather him

on the Day of Resurrection blind. He will say: 'My Lord, why have you raised me blind when before I was able to see?' He will say: 'Just as Our Signs came to you and you forgot them, in the same way you too are forgotten today.'"

[*Taba* (20): 124-126]

Meaning you will be forgotten in the torment just as you forgot My Signs, neither paying heed to them, nor acting upon them. 'Turning away' from His remembrance includes turning away from the remembrance He has revealed, which is to remember what He has revealed in His book. Meaning it includes turning away from remembering his Lord through His Book, His Names, His Attributes, His Commandments, His Favours and Blessings. All of these are a result of turning away from the Book of his Lord. The remembrance (*dhikr*) mentioned in the verse is either a root noun connected to the verb or connected to nouns only. So 'he turned away from my book, he did not recite it or ponder over it, nor did he act according to it, nor did he understand it. His life and living will be constrained and troubled, and he will be continuously punished in it.'

As for the word *danak* in the verse means narrowness (*ḍaiq*), severe [testing] (*shidda*) and trials (*balā'*). So He described life as being in this way to emphasize the point [not to be taken lightly]. It has been explained also as punishment in the life between this one and the hereafter. What is correct is that it includes life in this world and his condition in the life in the grave (*al-barẓakḥ*) so he will be in this condition—in both worlds—severe toil and hardship and in the hereafter he will be left in torment, which is the opposite to the people of happiness (*sa'ādah*) and success (*ḡalāḥ*). For indeed their life in this world is pure and their reward in the grave and hereafter will be much better.

Allāh has said:

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا
مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيٰوةً طَيِّبَةً

“Anyone who acts rightly, whether male or female, being a believer, We will surely give them a good life.”

This is in the world. Then He says:

وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٧٧﴾

“and We will surely give them their reward according to the best of what they did.”

[*al-Nahl* (16): 97]

Allāh says:

وَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا فِي اللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا ظَلَمُوا
لَنُبَوِّئَنَّهُم فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً ۖ وَلَآ أَجْرَ الْآخِرَةِ أَكْبَرُ لَوْ كَانُوا
يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

“As for those who emigrated for Allāh’s sake after they had been wronged—We shall give them good lodging in this world, but the reward of the Hereafter is greater still if they only but knew.”

[*al-Nahl* (16): 41]

And Allāh says:

وَأَنِ اسْتَغْفِرُوا
رَبَّكُمْ ثُمَّ تَوْبُوا إِلَيْهِ يُعْطِكُمْ مِّنْهُ حَسَنًا إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى وَيُؤْتِ
كُلَّ ذِي فَضْلٍ فَضْلَهُ

“Ask your Lord for forgiveness and then turn to Him in repentance. He will let you enjoy a good life until a specified time and He will give His favour to all who are worthy of favour.”

[Hūd (11): 3]

This is for the hereafter. And Allāh says:

قُلْ يٰعِبَادِ الَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا فِي هَذِهِ الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً
وَأَرْضُ اللَّهِ وَسِعَةٌ إِنَّمَا يُوَفَّى الصَّابِرُونَ أَجْرُهُمْ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿١٠﴾

“Say: ‘O servants of Mine who have believed! Fear your Lord [and keep your duty to Him]. For those who do good in this world there is good and the earth of Allāh is spacious. Indeed, the steadfast will be paid their wages in full without any reckoning.’”

[Zumar (39): 10]

These are the four places that Allāh mentions recompense for the doer of good (*muḥsin*) with good, with two rewards: a reward in this life and a reward in the Hereafter.

So the doer of good has a reward which is hastened in this life and likewise doing wrong has its recompense hastened in this life and both are unavoidable consequences. If the only thing a doer of good is rewarded with is the expansion of his chest (*inshirāḥ*)

ṣadr), expanding his heart (*infisāl qalb*), happiness (*surūr*) and the pleasure he finds in dealing with his Lord, his obedience (*tāʿat*), his remembrance of Him is the delight of his soul (*rūḥ*), with His love (*muhabbah*) [in his heart], with his remembrance. Verily, the joy (*farḥ*) he has with his Lord, is greater than the one who is close to a generous king who has authority over him.

On the other hand, the doer of wrong is recompensed by a tightening in his chest (*ḍaiq al-ṣadr*), hardness of the heart (*qaṣwa al-qalb*), its dispersion (*tashata*), its darkness (*ẓulma*), its rancour (*ḥaḡāẓā*), its sadness (*ghamm*), its misery (*hamm*), its sorrow (*ḥuẓn*) and its fear (*kawf*). This is something that even the person with the least amount of awareness or life cannot doubt. Rather all these types of worries, misery, grievances and tightening of the chest, are the hastened punishments of this life and a [type of] worldly fire and [kind of] hell on earth.

As for devotion to Allāh, returning back to Him, being pleased with Him, [with what is] from Him, having the heart full of love for Him, being attached to His remembrance, having happiness and joy through knowledge of Him is a reward hastened [in this life] and a Paradise. It is a life that even kings [don't live or] have any connection to whatsoever.

Section Two:

Paradise of this World

I heard Shaikh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah—may Allāh have mercy on his soul—say: 'Indeed, there is a Paradise in the worldly life whoever does not enter it, will not enter the Paradise of the hereafter.'

Another time he said to me: 'What can my enemies do to me?

I have in my breast both Paradise and my garden. If I travel it is with me and never leaving me. My imprisonment is a time to be in solitude (*khalwa*) with my Lord. To be killed is martyrdom (*shahāda*) and to be exiled from my land is a spiritual journey.'

He used to say to me while in his prison cell in the fort: 'If I spent the same amount as this fort in gold it would not equal to the thankfulness of the blessing [of imprisonment]. Or he said: 'I could not have repay them for the good it has caused me [being alone].'

He used to say in his prostration while he was captive: 'O Allāh aid me in Your remembrance, being grateful to You and delightfully worshipping You, as long as Allāh wills.'¹⁰⁰

Once he said to me: 'The real prisoner is the one whose heart is imprisoned from his Lord and the true captive is someone captured to his desires.'

When he entered the fort and was inside its walls, he looked at them and then said:

فَضْرِبْ بَيْنَهُمْ سُورَةً بَابُهَا طِينَةٌ فِيهِ الرَّحْمَةُ وَظَاهِرُهُ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ

الْعَذَابُ (١٣)

"And a wall will be placed between them with a gate in it, on the inside of which there will be mercy, but before whose exterior lies the punishment."

[*al-Hadid* (57):13]

¹⁰⁰ The Prophet (ﷺ) used to teach this supplication to Mu'ādh Ibn Jabal (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) to say after the end of each prayer. It is declared *ṣaḥīḥ* by al-Albānī in *Sunan Abi Dāwūd*, 2/86.

Allāh knows that I have never seen anyone with a better life than his, in spite of the hardship [he endured] and the complete opposite to luxury and comfort, nothing but, imprisonment; being threatened and over-burdened. But in spite of all that his life was the most pleasant among the people, the most open hearted, strong willed, a most joyous soul, the radiance of bliss visible on his face.

Whenever we were scared and were not seen in good light among people or we felt lonely, we went to see him and just by seeing and listening to him all of that would go away and change our feelings to feel freedom (*inshirāḥ*), strength (*quwa*), certainty (*yaqīn*) and tranquillity (*ṭamā'niyyah*).

So glory be to the one who made His servants witness His Paradise before they meet Him and opened for them doors in the abode of deeds (*dār al-'aml*). Who gives their souls gentle breeze and the scent of perfume, so that they seek that which has been reserved for them, in order to race towards it with vigour.

Some of the people of knowledge used to say: 'If the kings and princes knew what we had [inner state of happiness], they would come to fight us with their swords drawn to take it from us.'¹⁰¹

Another one said: 'The people of this world are wretched. They leave this world without ever tasting the most pleasant thing in it.' It was asked: 'What is the most pleasant thing in it?' He replied: 'The love of Allāh, knowing Him and remembering Him.'¹⁰²

Someone else once declared: 'Indeed, there are times the heart is ecstatically happy jumping for sheer joy.'

Someone else once remarked: 'Indeed what I experience at times,

¹⁰¹ See *Ṣafwat al-Ṣaffah*, 4/154

¹⁰² See *Jāmi' al-'Ulūm wa'l-Hikām*, p.189

if the people of paradise are experiencing, then they are indeed living a pleasant life.¹⁰³

Loving Allāh and knowing Him, constantly remembering him, feeling relief and tranquillity in Him, singling Him out for love, fear, hope, trust and knowing He alone is dominant over your concerns; intents and decisions. Then this is the paradise of this life and bliss that is not resembled by any other. It is the coolness of the eyes for those that have this love of Allāh and this is the life for those that truly know.

Indeed, the hearts that are delighted with the love of Allāh, they in return are revered in hearts of the people. So whoever is pleased with Allāh, all eyes are pleased with him. Whoever is not pleased with Allāh, this world will become a place of anxiety.

The one in whose heart there is life can testify to this. As for the one whose heart is dead, he will distance you from Allāh, you should seek nearness to Allāh by isolating him if possible, for verily his company will distance you from Allāh. Noting makes you feel more lonely except when you are in his presence. If however you are trialled with him then give him [your] apparent attention, but not your inwardly attention of the heart. Leave him secretly and do not let him distract you from the important One [Allāh].

Know that the greatest regret is being preoccupied by someone who will ruin your relationship with Allāh, splitting you from Him, wasting your time, weaken your resolve and scattering your thoughts. So if you are tested with this, it is inevitable, then bear it for the sake of Allāh and over look him as much as you can.

¹⁰³ See *Fayd al-Qadir*, 1/443

Draw near to Allāh through whatever earns His pleasure. Let your worldly gathering be a source of gain and not a source of loss. Be like a person going along a path whenever someone stops him, he tries take him along with him, he leads him and is not led [or influenced] by him. If however he refuses to come along with you then do not let him hold you up [or delay you]. Rather continue along the path and leave him alone. Pay no attention to him, for indeed he is a highway robber regardless of who he actually might be. Protect your heart and refrain from giving your day or night. Let not the sun set on you before you reach your destination and are taken away. Or that the dawn breaks out on you and you are still at home and your companions have moved on leaving you behind, how would you ever reach them in time.

Section Three:

The Simplest Forms of Worship

35. Remembrance is simple [easy and a joy] for the servant, whether laying in bed, traveling to the market place, in health or sickness, in times of ease and prosperity. There is no other act of worship that can be done in so many places and done so often than remembrance. It is so simple that the one sleeping in his bed may overtake the person standing [in prayer] who is preoccupied with heedlessness, while the sleeping person awakes having covered a great distance whilst lying down, on the other hand the one standing [in prayer] who is not attentive in what he is doing, never goes beyond the saddle. That is the grace of Allāh which He gives to whomever He pleases.

It has been said that a man known for his worship of Allāh stayed as a guest with another man. The guest stood the night praying, while the host spent the night sleeping in bed. In the morning the

worshipper said: 'The ride has gone ahead of you.' So the host said: 'It is not important that one spends the night travelling and then still wake up in the midst of the convoy. What is better is that one spends the night in bed but wake up having crossed a great distance.'

These words can be beneficial and have detrimental effects. So if a person deems that the one lying down on his bed will overtake the person standing in devotion [to Allāh] then this is false. Rather the correct understanding of this is that the one lying on his bed connects his heart to his Lord and attaches his love to the throne of Allāh. His heart spends the night around the Throne with the angels, having taken leave from this world and all that it contains. He is only prevented from standing at night in prayer by some hindrance such as head pain or cold, or fear of being spotted by the enemy or some other reason. So he lies down on his bed while Allāh is very much aware of what is in his heart.

Meanwhile, another person stands before Allāh in the night prayer, he is reciting, yet in his heart is the desire to be seen by others, he is impressed by what he is doing, seeking status and praise from people to which Allāh is fully aware of [i.e. what is in his heart]. Or that his heart is in one valley while his body roams around in another. The person lying down has superseded the one standing by many levels [in virtue]. So actions are from the heart and not the body and [sometimes] it is depended upon the fact that one is tranquil and not concerned about appearances. Taking into consideration the first motivator [i.e. his intention], and it is remembrance that motivates him, it revives the love in his heart which was in slumber and it awakens the search [or the need] that may have died.

Section Four: Remembrance is Light

36. Remembrance is light (*nūr*) for the one who remembers [Allāh] in this life. It will also be light for him in his grave (*qabr*), and on the day of return to Allāh, it will also be in front of him on the bridge (*al-Ṣirāṭ*). Nothing illuminates the hearts and graves more than the remembrance of Allāh, for Allāh said:

أَوْ مَن كَانَ مَيِّتًا فَأَحْيَيْنَاهُ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُ نُورًا يَمْشِي بِهِ فِي
النَّاسِ كَمَن مَّثَلُهُ فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ لَيْسَ بِخَارِجٍ مِنْهَا

“Is the one who was dead and We brought him to life, supplying him with a light by which to walk among the people, the same as someone who is in utter darkness, unable to emerge from it?”

[*al-An‘ām* (6): 122]

The first is a believer who is illuminated by faith in Allāh and His love, awareness of Him and His remembrance. While the other is neglectful of Allāh tuning away from His remembrance and love. This light is the most important issue and all success lies in this light. While all wretchedness is when this light is lost.

For this reason the Prophet (ﷺ) use to emphasise so much the issue when he asked Allāh to put it [light] in his flesh, his bones, his nerves, his hair, his skin, his hearing, his sight, above and beneath him, on his right and his left, behind him and before—saying: “and make me of light.”¹⁰⁴ So he asked his Lord to put light in every atom of his body outwardly and inwardly, and that He surround

¹⁰⁴ Muslim, #763.

him with light from every direction and to make him from light.

The religion of Allāh is light. His Book is light. His Messenger is light. The abode He has created for His allies is shining light. Allāh is the light of the heavens and the earth; and from His names is the name of light, and the darkness is illuminated by the light of His face.

In the supplication of the Prophet (ﷺ) on the day of Ṭa'if he said: "I seek refuge in the light of your face which has illuminated the darkness, and set aright the affairs of this world and hereafter. [I seek refuge] from your anger being upon me or that Your displeasure befalls upon me. For I am devoted completely in humbleness to You, until You are pleased with me. There is no might nor power except by Allāh."¹⁰⁵

Ibn Mas'ūd (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) said: "There is no day or night with your Lord, the light of the heavens is from the light of His face."¹⁰⁶

Allāh says:

وَأَشْرَقَتِ الْأَرْضُ بِنُورِ رَبِّهَا

"And the earth will shine with the Pure Light of its Lord."

[*al-Zumar* (39): 69]

So when your Lord comes on the Day of Judgement to separate His servants, His light will illuminate the earth, it will not be

¹⁰⁵ Tabarānī, #1036 and others. It is declared weak by al-Albānī in his *Silsilah al-Ḍa'if*, #2933.

¹⁰⁶ Tabarānī in his *al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, #8886 and others; however it has a weak chain.

illuminated by the sun or the moon, because the sun would have been folded up and the moon eclipsed, and both their light would have disappeared, and His veil is [also] light.

Abū Mūsā al-Asha'irī (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) said: "The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) established among us five words to keep in mind and said: 'Indeed Allāh does not sleep and it is not befitting for Him to do so. He reduces portions and increase them. Deeds during the night, are raised up to Him before the day, and deeds of the daytime are raised up to Him before the night, his veil is light. If he removed the veil, the light of His face it would burn the sight of any of his creation who gazed upon Him.'" Then he recited:

أَنْ بُرِكَ مَنْ فِي النَّارِ وَمَنْ حَوْلَهَا

"Blessed is him who is by the Fire, and all who are round it!"

[*al-Naml* (27): 8]¹⁰⁷

The veil is illuminated by the light of His face. Had it not been for the veil, His face would destroy the vision of His creation as they gazed upon Him.

When Allāh revealed some of Himself to the mountain, He only removed a very small part of His veil, the mountain crumbled into the earth turning into dust, never again to stand tall before its Lord.

This is what was meant by the statement of Ibn 'Abbās (*radīy Allāhu 'anhumā*) regarding the statement of Allāh:

لَا تَذَرِكُهُ الْآبَاصُ

¹⁰⁷ Muslim, #179.

“Eyesight cannot perceive Him.”

[*al-An'ām* (6): 103]

He said: ‘That is [how] Allāh is, when He reveals His light, nothing can withstand Him.’¹⁰⁸ This shows Ibn ‘Abbās amazing understanding and his acute intellect, and why would he not be so, when the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) supplicated for him that Allāh teach him the explanation [of the Qur’ān].

So the Lord sees with His own eyes, however it is impossible that human sight can grasp Him even if they see Him. Grasping Him is something beyond just looking. The sun for example, and to Allāh belongs the highest of examples, we see it but do not fully grasp it as it truly is, we do not even get close to it. Therefore Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) said to the one that asked about seeing [Allāh] he mentioned to him:

لَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْبَصَرُ

“Eyesight cannot perceive Him.”

[*al-An'ām* (6): 103]

So he said to the man: ‘Do you not see the sky?’

He replied: ‘Of course I do.’

Ibn ‘Abbās said: ‘Can you truly grasp it?’

He responded: ‘No.’

He said: ‘Indeed, Allāh the Most High is far greater and even more overwhelming.’¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁸ Tirmidhī, #3279 and Hākim in his *al-Mustadrak*, 2/306.

¹⁰⁹ See Ibn Kathīr in his *Tafsīr*, 2/216 and Ṭabarī in his *Tafsīr*, 5/294.

Section Five:

Explanation on the Verse of Light

Allāh gives a parable about His light within the heart of His servant, which is only understood by the learned, as Allāh has said:

اللَّهُ نُورُ السَّمَوَاتِ
وَالْأَرْضِ مِثْلُ نُورِهِ كَمِشْكُوفَةٍ فِيهَا مِصْبَاحٌ الْيَصْبِاحُ فِي زُجَاجَةٍ
الزُّجَاجَةُ كَأَنَّهَا كَوْكَبٌ دُرِّيُّ يُوقَدُ مِنْ شَجَرَةٍ مُبَارَكَةٍ زَيْتُونَةٍ
لَا شَرْقِيَّةٍ وَلَا غَرْبِيَّةٍ يَكَادُ زَيْتُهَا يُضِيءُ وَلَوْ لَمْ تَمْسَسْهُ نَارٌ
نُورٌ عَلَى نُورٍ يَهْدِي اللَّهُ لِنُورِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَضَرِبَ اللَّهُ الْأَمْثَلَ
لِلنَّاسِ وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٣٥﴾

“Allāh is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The example of His light is like a niche, in which is a lamp; a lamp inside a glass, the glass like a brilliant star, lit from [the oil of] a blessed olive tree, located neither to the east nor to the west, its oil would almost glow even if no fire touched it. Light upon Light. Allāh guides to His Light whomever He wills. And Allāh presents metaphors for mankind and Allāh has knowledge of all things.”

[*al-Nūr* (24): 35]

Ubay Ibn Ka'b (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) said: “The similitude of His light is in the heart of a Muslim.”¹¹⁰

This is the light that Allāh has placed in the hearts of His servants so they recognize Him, love Him, to have belief in Him and

¹¹⁰ See Ṭabarī in his *Tafsīr*, 9/323, Qurṭubī, 12/260 and Ibn Kathīr, 3/289-290.

remember Him. It is His light which he sent down to His servants and by which they walk on earth among the people. This light originates in the heart [first], then the fear of Allāh develops as a result of it, then this light gradually increases until it becomes apparent upon their faces, their limbs, their bodies and indeed it becomes visible even on their clothes and their homes. It can be seen by those like them and by all of creation that oppose it. On the Day of Judgement that light will be visible along with their faith, it will race ahead of them illuminating the darkness of the bridge until they cross over it. They will proceed over the bridge according to the strength of their faith in their hearts which they had in the worldly life, either it being strong or weak. So among them are those whose light is like the sun, another like the moon, others like the stars and someone else like a lamp. While some will have a flickering light emanating from their toes, at times bright and at times dimming. Just like his light was on earth he will be given that same amount on Day of Judgment to cross the bridge. Rather it is the very same light that appeared to him before. But the hypocrite does not have a stable light in this world, rather he just has an outward light not an internal light, on the Day of Judgement he will have the same outward light that will eventually flicker out and disappear in complete darkness and will be lost.

Allāh strikes an example of this light, its abode, the one carrying it and its example is just like a niche, like a small hole in a wall which is like the chest. In that niche is the clearest glass, likened to a brilliant star with its brightness and clarity, and this is like the heart. The glass is used because it has the similar qualities as the heart of the believer in terms of purity, softness and firmness. From its clarity the direction of the truth becomes visible and guidance through its brightness, gaining from it gentleness, com-

passion because of its softness, firmness in combating against the enemies of Allāh and stands firm in this struggle defending the truth. None of these qualities negate one another nor oppose it. Rather they aid and strengthen each other. Allāh says:

أَشِدَّاءُ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ رَحِمَاءُ بَيْنَهُمْ

“[The faithful are] strict against the unbelievers and merciful to one another.”

[*al-Fath* (48): 29]

And Allāh says:

فِيمَا رَحِمْتُمُوهُمْ
اللَّهُ لَئِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ قَطًّا غَلِظَ الْقَلْبُ لَا تَقْضُوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ

“It is the mercy from Allāh, that you were gentle with them. If you had been rough or hard of heart, they would have fled from your presence.”

[*Āl-Imrān* (3): 159]

And Allāh says:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ جَاهِدِ الْكُفَّارَ وَالْمُنَافِقِينَ وَاغْلُظْ عَلَيْهِمْ

“O Prophet, strive hard against the unbelievers and the hypocrites and be firm with them.”

[*al-Tawbah* (9): 73]

In a narration it says: ‘Indeed the hearts are vessels of Allāh on this earth and the most beloved to Him are the softest among them, firmest and purest of them.’¹¹¹

¹¹¹ ‘Abdullāh Ibn Imām Aḥmad in his *Zawā'id al-Zubd*, #727 and Abū Nu'aym in his *al-Hilyah*, 6/97.

Contrary to this heart, there are two other blameworthy hearts that lie at opposite ends:

At one extreme there is a heart like stone (*qalb ḥijrī*), harsh (*qāṣ*) and void of any mercy (*rahma*), goodness (*aḥsan*), and righteousness (*birr*). Without any purity (*safā'*) to see the truth (*ḥaqq*) with, rather he is an ignorant tyrant (*jabbār jāhil*) without any knowledge of the truth or mercy towards the creation.

At the other extreme is another heart which is weak (*da'if*) as water. It is devoid of strength (*quwa*), unable to hold on to things tightly, rather it accepts any idea that comes to it, it does not have the strength (*quwa*) to uphold what is correct, neither does he have any effect (*tā'thīr*) on others. Everything that he mixes with, influence him from the strong (*qawī*) to the weak (*da'if*), from the pure (*tayyib*) to the impure (*kabīth*).

In the glass there is a lamp, which is the light of the one who carries it. The fuel of this light is oil squeezed from an olive tree in the most upright of places where the sun can shine on it at the beginning of the day and at the end of day. Its oil is from the purist of oils furthest away from any tarnish, so much so that due to its purity it almost illuminates without a need for a fire, so clear is the glow of this lamp.

So pure is the fuel of this lamp and so pure is the fuel of the light emanating in the heart of the believer which comes forth from the tree of revelation which is the greatest of things of blessings, and the furthest away from deviation. Rather it is from the most balanced of affairs, most just and excellent of them. Not deviating like the deviation of the Christians or the Jews, rather staying in the middle course of those blameworthy ways in all affairs. This is the substance of faith in the heart of the believer.

When this is the case that the purity is so much that it almost ignites itself, then it mixes with the fire and its light intensifies, strengthening the glowing element of the fire, this is then light upon light.

In the same way is the heart of the believer, it almost knows the truth by virtue of its natural disposition (*fitrah*) and intellect (*'aql*), though he has no substance in himself. When revelation reaches him [Qur'ānic guidance] and his heart embraces it and it mixes with his nature, thereby increasing the light of revelation upon the light which Allāh created him upon. Gathering both the light of revelation with the light of natural inclination becomes light upon light. He almost speaks the truth about Allāh even before he has heard anything, then he hears the revelation and it agree with his instincts, so he testified to it thereby being light upon light. This is the affair of the believer he recognises the truth with his instincts in a natural way. Then he hears the narrations of the Prophet (ﷺ) in detail, so his faith is founded upon the testimony of revelation (*wahi*) and his natural instincts (*fitra*) given by Allāh.

So the intelligent one should ponder upon this great verse and on how it can be applied according to this noble meaning. Allāh mentions that His light is in the heavens, on the earth and His light is in the heart of the believing servants. This light is witnessed with insight by the hearts and a light that is witnessed with eyesight which has illuminated the heavens and the earth. They are great forms of light, one being greater than the other one. And when one is lost in any place or spot no human can live there without it, even animals are not found where there is no light. In dark places without light, animals are not to be found. Likewise a nation without the light of revelation and faith, and a heart without this light is dead without any sign of life, as is the case with animals in a place without light.

Section Six:
Life and Light

Allāh combines life and light as is evident in His saying:

أَوْ مَنْ كَانَ مَيِّتًا فَأَحْيَيْنَاهُ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُ نُورًا يَمْشِي بِهِ فِي
النَّاسِ كَمَنْ مَثَلُهُ فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ لَيْسَ بِخَارِجٍ مِنْهَا

“Is someone who was dead and whom We gave life to and supplying him with a light by which to walk among the people, the same as the someone who is in utter darkness unable to emerge from it?”

[*al-An'ām* (6): 122]

Likewise in His saying:

وَكَذَلِكَ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ رُوحًا مِنْ أَمْرِنَا مَا كُنْتَ تَدْرِي مَا الْكِتَابُ
وَلَا الْإِيمَانُ وَلَكِنْ جَعَلْنَاهُ نُورًا نَهْدِي بِهِ مَنْ نَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا

“Accordingly We have inspired you with a spirit from Our command; you had no idea of what the Book was nor faith. But We made it a light by which We guide those of Our servants whom We will.”

[*al-Shurā* (42): 52]

It is said that the pronoun in the word “We made it” refers to the command. It has also been said that it refers to the book or to faith. But the correct position is that it refers the spirit. Thus, ‘We made that spirit with which We inspired you with a light.’ He called it spirit because of what is gained of life and light because of what is gained of illumination. They go hand in hand, so where this life is found with this spirit, illumination and enlightenment is found

too and the opposite is also true. So whichever heart does not accept this spirit his heart is dark and lifeless. Similar to the dead whose spirit of life has departed from his body and he has faded away and perished.

This is why Allāh struck two [other] parables one of water and the other of fire together. To show that one attains life through water and light. As in the beginning of *Surah al-Baqarah* the statement of Allāh:

مَثَلُهُمْ كَمَثَلِ الَّذِي اسْتَوْقَدَ نَارًا فَلَمَّا أَضَاءَتْ مَا حَوْلَهُ
ذَهَبَ اللَّهُ بِنُورِهِمْ وَزَكَرَهُمْ فِي ظُلُمَةٍ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

“Their likeness is that of people who light a fire, and then when it has lit up all those around them, Allāh removes their light and leaves them in utter darkness, unable to see.”

[*al-Baqarah* (2): 17]

Here it says: “*Allāh removes their light*” and He did not say “*their fire*”, because fire has both the ability to give light and the ability burn property. So He takes away their illumination and leaves them with what harms them and burning of property.

This is the condition of the hypocrites, the light of faith leaves them because of their hypocrisy. What remains in their hearts is the pain of disbelief and boiling doubts occupies their hearts. Their hearts indulging in a vast ocean of pain, poison and flames in this life, then Allāh will enter them, on the Day of Judgement, into a lit fire which leaps up over the hearts.

This is similar to the one who is not accompanied by the light of faith anymore in this worldly life, rather leaving it after it once illuminated him and truning away. This is the state of the hypocrite who knew good but then rejects it, he reads but then disputes it. He is in utter darkness, deaf, dumb and blind. As Allāh has said in respect to their brethren from the disbelievers:

وَالَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا صُمُّوْا وَبُكْمٌ فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ

“Those who deny Our Signs are deaf and dumb in utter darkness.”

[*al-An'ām* (6): 39]

And Allāh said:

وَمَثَلُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا كَمَثَلِ الَّذِي يَنْعِقُ
بِمَا لَا يَسْمَعُ إِلَّا دُعَاءً وَنِدَاءً صُمُّوْا عَنْهُمْ فَهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُوْنَ

“The likeness of those who reject faith is that of someone who yells unto to something which hears nothing except a cry or a call [i.e., cattle or sheep]. Deaf, dumb and blind. Therefore they do not use their intellect [nor understand].”

[*al-Baqarah* (2): 171]

Allāh has likened the state of the hypocrites and their leaving the light after it was lit for them. With that of someone who lits the fire then the light faded away after it illuminated what was around them. This is because the hypocrites mix with the Muslims and take part in their prayers, fasting, listening to the Qur'ān, and they witness the standards of Islām. They witnessed the light and saw it with their own very eyes. Therefore Allāh says regarding them: “*They don't return*” back to it. That is because they have left Islām

after being involved in it and illuminated by it. They will not return to it. Allāh says regarding the disbelievers: *"They have no intellect."* That is because they did not understand Islām nor did they enter into it. Neither were they illuminated by it's light. Rather they continued to remain in the darkness of doubt, deaf, dumb and blind.

Glory be to the one who made His speech a cure for the ailments of the heart, a call to faith and its innermost realities. An invite towards eternal life, perpetual bliss and guided towards the upright path. *"We heard a caller calling us to faith"* [Āli 'Imrān 3:193] could be heard by any responsive ears, but admonitions of the Qur'ān have no effect upon a heart which is devoid, due to being occupied with doubtful things and temptations. For them the storm of desires and doubts strikes their hearts putting out the light. Their hands of neglect and ignorance close the doors to guidance. Even the keys are lost. They are overcome by *"what they have earned"* so no words will benefit, becoming intoxicated by desires of ignorance and false testimony, not being able to listen. Admonishments shaper than spears and arrows have no effects upon them, dying in the sea of ignorance and negligence, captured by lust and desires, treatment is of no benefit to them.

Section Seven:

The Similitude of the Rainstorm

The second parable is that of water as mentioned in the statement of Allāh:

أَوْ كَصَيْبٍ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ فِيهِ
ظُلُمٌ وَرَعْدٌ وَبَرْقٌ يَجْعَلُونَ أَصْنَعَهُمْ فِي إِذَا نَهُم مِنَ الصَّوَاعِقِ
حَذَرَ الْمَوْتِ وَاللَّهُ مُحِيطٌ بِالْكَافِرِينَ ﴿١٩﴾

“Or that of a rainstorm from the sky, full of darkness, thunder and lightning. They thrust their fingers in their ears by reason of the thunderclap fearful of death. Allāh encompasses the disbelievers.”

[*al-Baqarah* (2): 19]

A rainstorm (*sayyib*) that falls quickly, which is like the Qur'ān bringing life to the hearts with it, like how the rain brings life to the earthly plants and animals. When it falls the believer knows that it is from Him and they know that it gives life and there is no danger in it. They are not deterred from the thunder or lightening which is a warning or threat and punishments that Allāh has warned those who oppose His commands. He informed us that he will send it down upon those that reject the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ). They are not deterred when commanded, such as combating enemies and patiently enduring the commands that are hardest to carry out for the soul which go against its nature. Then it is like: “darkness, thunder and lightning.” However, the one who knows that places where rain falls and the life it leads to is not scared of the darkness, thunder or lightening, in fact he rejoices by it and is happy with it because of the life and fertility he expects from it.

On the other hand, the heart of the hypocrite is blind, his sight cannot go beyond the darkness, only able to see the lightning and thunder: “*which all but snatches away his eyesight*”, and the mighty thunder and darkness keep him away and scares him. So he becomes afraid of that and fears it, he “*thrusts his fingers into his ears*” in order that he does not hear the sound of the thunder, terrified by the sight of the lightening and its brightness, and the intense light. He is fearful that it will “*snatch away his vision*”, because his sight is too weak to stay with him, so he is in darkness hearing the sounds of heavy thunder and flashes of lightening. If “*it lights up what is in front of him, he walks*” in its light, but when he cannot see

the light, "*he stands*" still not knowing where to go. Due to his ignorance he is unaware that these things are common in a rainstorm, which brings with it life to the earth and plants, and his own life depends upon [rain]. Instead he only sees thunder, lightening and darkness. He does not perceive anything beyond that nor what is its purpose. So loneliness constantly surrounds him along with constant fear and panic.

As for the one who is at ease with the rainstorm, keenly aware that thunder, lightning and darkness is a necessary part of it and for this reason he is pleased with the clouds and does not in any way feel frightened by them. Nor does it stop him from taking his share of the rainstorm.

This similitude is comparative to the rainstorm brought by Jibreel, from Allāh the lord of all the worlds, upon the heart of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) to give life to the hearts and to creation. Allāh's wisdom deemed it fit that the rain clouds, thunder and lightning be connected to water. Far reaching wisdom, which Allāh, the Mighty and the Wise, has laid out. So the share of the hypocrites from that rainstorm is dark clouds, thunder and lightning only. The hypocrite is unaware of what is beyond that, so he feels lonely and insecure from what the believers feel at ease with.

They are in doubt at what those who have knowledge are at peace with. They are uncertain at what those who have insight are certain with. His sight is like the example of the fire is to a bat towards the midday. His hearing is like that of water lifeless dying from the sound of the thunder. It has been mentioned that some animals die due to the sound of the thunder.

When satanic evil, delusional images and supposition takes hold of them, it completely occupies their intellect. Their corrupt thoughts are give false notions. They are preoccupied by them, fallen upon them, overtaken by them and overwhelmed. Heresy increases and the hearing is filled with illusions and their land is full of written books. Yet how many people respond to such calls, and accept it or establish it or protect it or fight under its banner and increase their numbers.

Due to the generality of their affliction and the harm they cause on the hearts due to their speech, Allāh exposes them in His book very clearly, uncovers their secrets and discloses their signs. He explains their actions and statements. Over and over He say: *"from among them..."*, *"from among them..."* and *"from among them..."* continuously until their affair becomes open, their realities become clear and their secrets laid bare.

Allāh mentions at the beginning of *Surah al-Baqarah*, the descriptions of the believers, disbelievers and hypocrites. He mentions regarding the descriptions of the believers in three verses and regarding the disbelievers in two verses. But regarding the hypocrites, He mentions them in over ten verses due to their great harm they cause and the severe nature of affliction in mixing with them.

Why, because they appear outwardly to be belivers, showing that they are in total agreement and in full support, unlike the disbeliever who shows his enmity openly and makes known his inner feelings, calling you to his way or that you leave him alone.

Section Eight:

Two Parables mentioned in *Surah al-Ra'd*

Related to these two parables their are two more mentioned in *Surah al-Ra'd*:

أَنْزَلَ مِنَ
السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَسَالَتْ أَوْدِيَةٌ بِقَدَرِهَا فَاحْتَمَلَ السَّيْلُ زَبَدًا رَابِعًا

“He sends down water from the sky and river-beds fill up and flow according to their capacity, and the flood-water carries with it an increasing layer of scum [foam].”

[*al-Ra'd* (13): 17]

This is the parable of water which Allāh likened to the revelation that He sent down from above the heavens. Which gives life to the hearts to carry [the revelation], just as the valleys carry rain water. The larger the valley the more it can hold of water similarly the large heart can carry great amounts of knowledge like the large valley of water. While a narrow heart can only carry a small amount of knowledge, just as a narrow valley can only carry limited amounts of water. So each heart carries knowledge according to its capacity, just as the valleys flow with water according to their capacity.

The valleys and the paths that the water takes, the scum forms and gathers, floating on the surface of the water. However beneath it there is pure water which gives life to the earth. The valley [naturally] removes the formed scum unto the banks of the river until nothing remains of it except the water, which Allāh supplies the earth, giving life to the earth and mankind, the trees and animals. The scum that formed on the water is left on the edge of the valley and dries up.

Similarly knowledge and faith Allāh has sent down from the heavens into the hearts of His servants. They carry it and are effected by it. These hearts are determined by how much they mix with the scum of desires, and the foams of futile doubts, floating at the top of the heart, meanwhile knowledge, guidance and faith settles down deep in the heart and it is not effected by the scum. As the Prophet (ﷺ) said in a ḥadīth related on the authority of Hudayfah Ibn Yaman (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*): “Faith descends to the roots of the men’s hearts [from Allāh].”¹¹²

The foam and scum on the other hand drifts away on the banks of the river, there it dries up ever so slowly until it all vanishes away leaving behind only beneficial knowledge and sincere faith in the roots of the heart that people seek to drink from, and supply others with and use for nurturing.

In Bukhārī, on the authority of Abū Musā (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The similitude of guidance and knowledge with which Allāh has sent me with is like abundant rain falling on the earth. Some of parts of it is fertile soil that absorbed rain-water and brought forth vegetation and grass in abundance. [And] another part of it was hard land that held the rain-water and Allāh benefited the people with it and they utilized it for drinking, making their animals drink from it and to irrigate the land for cultivation. [And] a part of it was barren land which could neither hold the water nor bring forth vegetation [giving no benefits]. The first is the example of the person who comprehends Allāh’s religion [Islām] and gets benefit [from the knowledge] which Allāh has revealed to me [the Prophet]. Learning it and then teaching it to others. The [last example is that of a] person who does not accept it and

¹¹² Bukhārī, #6497

¹¹³ Bukhārī, #79, and Muslim, #2282.

does not take Allāh's guidance which I have been sent with [he is like that barren land]."¹¹³

Section Nine:

The Levels of People with regards to Knowledge and Guidance

The Prophet (ﷺ) placed the people into three levels with regards to knowledge and guidance:

The first level: They are the inheritors of the Messengers and the Successors of the Prophets. They are those that establish the religion upon knowledge and action and call to Allāh and His Messenger (ﷺ). They are the true followers of the Prophets (*'alayhi as-salām*) and they are like the earth that is pure and takes in the water and brings forth vegetation and grass in abundance. They are pure and purify others. They are the ones that have insight of the religion and the strength in spreading the religion, for that reason they are inheritors of the Prophets. Allāh says about such people:

وَأَذْكُرْ عِبْدَنَا إِبْرَاهِيمَ
وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ أُولِي الْأَيْدِي وَالْأَبْصَارِ ﴿٤٥﴾

“And remember My servants, Ibrāhīm, Ishāq and Ya'qūb, men endowed with true strength and inner vision.”

[Sa'd (38): 45]

So with '*insight and understanding*' of the religion, the truth can be perceived and recognised. And with strength, can one have the ability to spread it, implement it and call to it. This category of people have the power of preservation and understanding in the

religion and insight with the explanation [of the religion]. So from the religious texts do rivers of knowledge flow and the treasures are extracted from them and a special understanding is granted.

When the leader of the believers 'Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) was asked: 'Did the Prophet (ﷺ) give you something specific besides the rest of the people?' He replied: 'No! By the One who breaks open the seed and brings about the soul, except for the understanding that Allāh gives a servant regarding His book.'¹¹⁴

This understanding is like the vegetation and plentiful grass which springs forth from the earth and it is the distinctive factor of this second level of people. The next level is the one that preserved the texts by learning and memorising it by heart. Their concern was to protect it and hold on to it, so that others benefit from it and propagate it. Extracting from it treasures, researching it and sowing seeds in fertile ground, so each one drinks according to it capacity:

قَدْ عَلِمَ كُلُّ أُنَاسٍ مَشْرِبَهُمْ

"Each tribe knew its drinking-place."

[*al-Baqarah* (2): 60]

These are the people about whom the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "May Allāh illuminate the person who hears my words, remembers them and then conveys to others as he heard it. Perhaps a person carrying them conveys it to someone who has more understanding of it than himself."¹¹⁵

¹¹⁴ Bukhārī, #111 and Tirmidhī, #1412.

¹¹⁵ Tirmidhī, #2656. It is declared ṣaḥīḥ by al-Albānī in his *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, 1/84, 85.

‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*), was like this, he was ‘the pen of this ummah’ and ‘the interpreter of the Qur’ān’. The number of ḥadīth he heard from the Prophet (ﷺ), did not exceed twenty, wherein he said: ‘I heard’ and ‘I saw.’¹¹⁶ He heard mostly from the Companions and was blessed with such an understanding and the ability of deduction that he filled the world with knowledge and understanding of the religion.

Abū Muḥammad Ibn Hazm—may Allāh have mercy on his soul—said: ‘His religious verdicts were collected in seven large volumes and that was whatever reached the collector, otherwise the knowledge of Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) was like the ocean and his understanding, ability to extrapolate and understanding of the Qur’ān was on a level above the rest of the people. He heard just as the rest of the people heard, and memorised as they memorised, however his land [heart] was pure accepting cultivation, planting the seeds of the texts, which gave forth every noble kind of produce.

ذَلِكَ

فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ

“That is Allāh’s favour which He gives to whomever He will’s. Allāh’s favour is indeed immense.”

[*al-Jumm‘ah* (62): 4]

The *fatāwa* of Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) and his explanation of the Qur’ān far exceed that of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) and his explanation of the Qur’ān? Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) had memorised more than him, in fact he memorised the most from this community without equal. He conveyed the

¹¹⁶ See *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 5/276-279

ḥadīth as he heard it, studying day and night. He spent his efforts in memorisation and conveying what he had memorised as he had heard it. Whereas Ibn 'Abbās's efforts were spent trying to understand the texts and extracting knowledge from them so that he unlocked the texts and letting the rivers flow from them and seeking out their treasures.

Likewise the people who came after them are in these two categories:

One category is memorisers (*ḥuffāẓ*). They pay special attention to the accuracy of it and memorising it and conveying it exactly how they heard it without ever extracting the treasures of what they have memorised.

Another category is those that pay special attention to extrapolating and to extract the rulings (*istinbāṭ*) from the texts and try to understand them.

So the first category are like Abū Zur'ah, Abū Hātim, Ibn Wārah and before them the likes of Bandar Muḥammad Ibn Bashār, 'Amr al-Nāqid, 'Abdu'l-Razzāq and before them the likes of Muḥammad Ibn Ja'fār Ghandar, Sa'īd Ibn Abī 'Arūbah and others besides them from the people of memorisation and precision and accuracy of what they heard, without extracting rulings of the words or the texts.

The second category such as [Imām] Mālik, [Imām] Shāfi'ī, [Imām] Awza'ī, Ishāq, Imām Aḥmad Ibn Hanbal, [Imām] Bukhārī, [Imām] Abū Dāwūd, Muḥammad Ibn Naṣr al-Marwazī and their likes that joined understanding and extrapolating and narrations together. These two groups of people are the happiest of creation

in terms of what Allāh sent His Messenger (ﷺ). They are those that have accepted it and raised it. As for the third category, then they are the most wretched of creation, those that do not accept the guidance of Allāh, nor pay it any attention. So they do not memorise it, nor understand it, or narrate it and have no awareness or care for it.

So the first level is the people of narration, observance and understanding (*riwāya wa dirāya*).

The second level is the people of narration and observance (*riwāya wa ri'āya*). They also have a portion of understanding, rather their portion of narrating is more.

The third level is the wretched that have no narration or understanding or observance.

إِنَّهُمْ إِلَّا كَالْأَنْعَامِ بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا ﴿٤٤﴾

“They are just like cattle. Indeed, they are even more astray from the path!”

[*al-Furqān* (25): 44]

They are those that are confined to their homes, with ever increasing prices, their only concerns are their stomachs and private parts. If their enthusiasm goes up a little, then they become concerned with their clothes and beautification, if their enthusiasm goes up still, their concern becomes leadership and self-triumph, and if he has more than that he becomes concerned with triumph over the conquering self.

The souls are split between: a dog-like (*kalbiyya*) personality, or even worse lion-like (*sabu'iyya*) personality. The angelic (*malakiyya*)

personality, why would they be given that!.

The dog-like personality is pleased with bones, scraps, carcasses and defilement.

Lion-like personality is not just pleased with that, rather he craves more, he wants to overpower and control other souls, either by truth or by falsehood [i.e. by hook or by crook].

However angelic personality descends above all this. It prepares for the highest friendship. It has understood knowledge and faith and the love of Allāh, the Most High. They turn towards Him in repentance, being tranquil, at peace with Him, giving precedence to His love and His pleasure. Taking from the world only what is needed to help in reaching its Creator, the Lord and Ally, they don't make it a means of cutting off from Him [or get distracted by the world and its adornments].

CHAPTER TEN

The Parable of the Fire¹¹⁷

Then Allāh, the Most High, struck a second parable, an example of fire:

وَمِمَّا يُوقِدُونَ عَلَيْهِ فِي النَّارِ ابْتِغَاءَ حِلْيَةٍ أَوْ مَتَاعٍ زَبَدٌ مِثْلُ النُّعْمِ

“From what they melt in the fire for the sake of making jewellery and [other] tools rises a scum like unto it.”

[*al-Ra'd* (13): 17]

This refers to iron, copper, silver, gold and other metals. They are put into the furnace [at high temperature] and are purified from all impurities, which are then removed and cast aside. Leaving only what is pure and what benefits the people.

When Allāh struck these two parables, He then mentions both types of people, those who respond to His call and being raised by His guidance and those who do not respond nor are they raised by its guidance. He said:

¹¹⁷ See *Paragons of the Qur'ān* by Imām Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah. Published by Dār as-Sunnah Publishers, Birmingham, UK, 1st ed., 2012.

لَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِرَبِّهِمُ الْحَسَنَ وَالَّذِينَ لَمْ يَسْتَجِيبُوا لَهُ
لَوْ أَنَّهُمْ مَافِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا وَمِثْلَهُ مَعَهُ لَاقْتَدَرُوا بِهِ
أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ سُوءُ الْحِسَابِ وَمَأْوَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ وَفِيهَا الْمِهَادُ ﴿١٨﴾

“Those who respond to their Lord will receive the best rewards. But as for those who do not respond to Him, even if they if they owned everything on earth entirely and the like of it with it, they would [attempt to] offer it as a ransom. For them will the reckoning be terrible. Their sheltre will be Hell. What an evil resting-place!”

[*al-Ra'd* (13): 18]

Allāh has given life wherever there is light and death wherever there is darkness. Life comprises of both the spiritual dimension and the physical being by way of light, it is the very substance of life and the substance of illumination. There is no life without it as there is no illumination without light. As for the heart then it lives through this light, its expansiveness and spaciousness is dependant on light. In Tirmidhī, the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “When light enters the heart it expands it and becomes open and spacious.” They said: ‘What is the sign of that?’ He said: “Wanting to return to the eternal abode, withdrawing from the abode of deception and preparing for death before it befalls [him].”¹¹⁸

This light of the servant raises his actions and speech to Allāh. However only that which is pure rises to Allāh. All that is pure is light and it's source is light [which is also pure]. Only righteous actions and only pure souls ascends. The souls of the believers which are illuminated by the light that was revealed to His Mes-

¹¹⁸ Ibn Abī Shaybah in his *al-Muṣannaḡ*, #34314, Ḥākim in his *al-Mustadrik*, 4/311 and others. It is declared weak by al-Albānī in his *Silsilah al-Ḍa'īfah*, #965.

senger (مَلَك), and the angels that were created from light as occurs in Muslim on the authority of 'A'ishah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) from the Prophet (ﷺ) who said: "The angels were created from light, the devils were created from fire, and Ādam was created from what has been described to you."¹¹⁹

The substance the angels are made from is light, they are the ones that ascend to their Lord. Likewise the souls of the believers also ascend to their Lord when the angels take their souls, so the doors of the first Heaven opens, the second, then the third, then the forth until it is taken up to the seventh Heaven, where it presented before Allāh. Then He commands that his servants book be written with the people of the righteous (*Ilīyūn*). This is a pure soul, wholesome, illuminated with light, then it ascends to Allāh with His angels.

As for the dark, corrupted and troubled soul, then the doors of the Heavens are not opened for it. It will not ascend to Allāh, rather it is repelled from the first heaven back to the world and its origin, because it is the lowest of earths, and the first one is the highest of the heavens. So every soul returns to its root and whatever awaits it. This is clear in the long narration of Al-Barā Ibn 'Āzib (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) which was narrated by Imām Aḥmad and Abū 'Awānah Al-Isfārā'īnī in his book and Al-Hākim as well as others and it is an authentic narration.¹²⁰

The intent is that no actions, statements or souls ascend to Allāh except what has with it light, and the greatest of light among crea-

¹¹⁹ Muslim, #2996.

¹²⁰ Abū Dāwūd, #4753

¹²¹ Shaikh Ibn Bāz—may Allāh have mercy upon him—said: 'All praise be to Allāh, to proceed: These clear verses and narrations about the creation of the angels from light, and that when Allāh wishes good for a slave he expands his

tion is the one closest to Him and most honourable to Him.¹²¹

In the *Musnad* of Aḥmad, on the authority of ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Amr (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Indeed Allāh

chest and so it becomes open and expanded. From the things that bring about this is “*Inābah*” longing for the eternal place of rest, and not for this life of deceptions, preparing for death before it descends. The hearts are beads of water and light. As for the heart that is sound and alive, its substance is made up of water and light, as for the dead heart, then it is not the same, its substance is made from filth and darkness. The believer who has purity of heart and sound belief is in light, and alive, because he sees with Allāh’s light where his happiness and salvation lie. In his heart is life and insight which makes him choose the pure and leave the impure, choose the righteous over the impure which is bereft of light. Allāh made His Messenger a light, His book light and He created the angels from light, and they are the ones that carry the very lamps of guidance, and He created the devils from fire and He created mankind from clay. So the substance which has life is the substance of water and light.

A believer must try to keep his heart upright by following the book and the Sunnah, and earning what is lawful and pure. Staying away from what Allāh has forbidden of impurities which make the heart impure, hard, and diseased. As for earning that which is lawful and remaining upright upon Allāh’s obedience, it gives the person life and light. Where as sins, and earning impure things makes the heart hard and dark. So according to the level of righteousness of a person’s heart and uprightness, so shall be his light and his life. Also according to a person’s deviation from the straight path and lack of knowledge about Allāh and His religion, so shall be his level of darkness and hardness [of heart]. So whoever’s heart is upright in Allāh’s obedience, His laws, venerating His commands and prohibitions, understanding His religion and holding on to His commands are from the aspect of life and light. As for the one who is overcome by ignorance and desires, the substance of darkness, filth and hardness of heart overcomes him. The believer who takes himself to account, is the believe who has a heart that is alive, he strives in the cause of Allāh until his affairs become upright, until he traverses the correct path, and until he becomes among the righteous and close allies of Allāh. Those that seek the light of Allāh and follow His way are His chosen one’s. So they live in light, and a pure life, as opposed to those that turn away from His laws and religion and what the messengers came with, following their desires, the turning away being caused by the hardness and darkness of their hearts. We ask Allāh for guidance and support.

created His creation in darkness, then he cast His light over them. Whoever received some of that light was guided, and whoever did not went astray. For this reason I say, the pen has already dried of the knowledge of Allāh.”¹²²

This tremendous narration is one of the fundamentals of belief. A great door from the secret doors of pre-decree and its wisdom is opened through it. Allāh, the Most High is the one who grants success.

This light that he casts over them, is what gives them life and guidance. The natural disposition has a portion of the light and if not possessed completely, is completed by the spirit which He casts on His Messengers (*'alayhum as-salām*). The light that He reveals to them and so the natural disposition makes up for it with the previous light it received when the light was cast. So it adds that light to the light of revelation and Prophethood to the light of the Allāh's given nature (*fitrah*). “*Light upon light*”, the hearts shine from it, the faces beam with radiance, the souls are awaked by it and the limbs surrender to the acts of obedience voluntarily and out of choice.

Section One: The Attributes of Allāh

So the hearts increase life upon its life. Then the light leads them to another light, more greater light and that is the light of the lofty attributes [of Allāh] where all other light dims into insignificance. Witnessing them with the consciousness of faith in the same way the eye sees things because certainty overcomes them, and the realities of faith become clear to it. Until it is almost as

¹²² Tirmidhī, #2642 and it is declared ṣaḥīḥ by al-Albānī in his *Ṣaḥīḥah*, #1076.

if they [the souls] are looking at the throne of Allāh, the Most High and blessed, right in front of them, and how he rose above it (*istiwā'ihī*) as He informed us in His book, and His Messenger (ﷺ) informed us about Him. He disposes of the affairs of the kingdoms, He forbids and commands, He creates and provides sustenance. He gives and takes life, He judges and implements, gives honour to whom He wills and humiliates whom He wills, He alternates between the night and the day. He alternates the days between people and nations, by taking away and replacing them with another group of people.

The Messengers from among the angels—peace be upon them—either go up to Him with an affair or are descending down from Him with an command. His commands follow one after the other in succession as He wills. Whatever He wishes becomes into being, at the time He wills and in the way He wills, without increase or decrease, neither ahead of it's time nor delayed. His command and authority is implemented in the heavens and all its parts, and upon the earth, whatever is on it's surface and whatever is beneath it, in the seas and in the skies, and every parts of the universe. He alternates among them, disposes their affairs, and makes happen whatever He wishes to happen in it. He has encompassed everything with His knowledge and keeps a record of everything, He covers and encapsulates everythings with His mercy and divine wisdom.

Allāh's hearing encompasses all sounds and voices, they do not get mixed with each other nor do they sound similar or resemble one another. Rather He hears the sound of each and everyone with all their various languages, despite the huge amount [of voices calling out] their unique needs He hears them all. He is not distracted by one voice over another, nor does He err due to

the enormous numbers of things being asked and He does not become displeased by those in need who keep persist in asking for their needs.

His sight has encompassed all things. He sees the smallest black ant, crawling on a dark stone on a moon-less night. The hidden with Him is like the visible. The secrets in the hearts with Him are made public. He knows the secrets and what is more hidden than a secret! The hidden secret is what is concealed in the mind of His servants and what is formulated in his heart, however it not spoken on his lips. He knows what is even more hidden than that, that which has not yet even occurred to the servant. He knows when his heart will formulate such and such thing and at what time. To Allāh belongs the entire creation and all of it is in His grasp. The dominion and praise belongs to Him. To Him belongs this world and the next. His is the favour and bounty and all good belongs to Him. His is all of the dominion and His mercy presides over all. In His hands lie all good and to Him everything shall return. His command and power covers all things. His mercy has encompassed all things and His favours reach all living things.

يَسْأَلُهُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ كُلَّ يَوْمٍ هُوَ فِي شَأْنٍ ﴿٢٩﴾

“Everyone in the heavens and earth seeks His aid. Every day He is brings about some [new] affair.”

[*al-Rahmān* (55): 29]

He forgives sins, removes worries and alleviates calamities. He mends all those who are broken and enriches the poor. He teaches the ignorant, guides those gone astray and He makes clear for the one who is confused. He gives relief to the one grieving, frees the one suffering and feeds the hungry. He clothes the naked, cures

the sick and relieves the one being put to trial. He accepts repentance of the sinner, rewards the one who does good and aids the who is oppressed. He humbles the tyrant, makes steadfast the one who has fallen and covers up the shame of His servant. He grants safety from fear, raises some nations and brings down others. He does not sleep nor is it befitting that He sleeps. He lowers some scales and raises others. Good actions of the night are raised up to Him before the day begins and good actions of the day are raised to Him before the night commences. His veil is light, if it were to be removed the light of His Face would burn as far as the eye could see from His creation. His right hand is full and never decrease when He gives generously to His creation in the night and in the day.

Have you not seen what He has given from the time He created the creation [day after day, night after night, month after month, year after year], it has not diminished what He possesses. The hearts of His creation are in His hand, He controls all the affairs and everything is tied to His will and decree. The entire earth will be in His grasp on the Day of Judgement and the skies will be folded up in His right hand, He will hold all the heavens in His noble hand and the earth in the other hand. Then He will shake them and say: 'I am the King, I am the King! I am the one who created the world when there was nothing, I am the one who will return it to how it was in the beginning.'

No sin is too big for Him to forgive, nor a need for Him to fulfil. If all those in the heavens and those of the earth, from the very first creation to the very last of them, both from mankind and the jinn, were to [all] be the most pious of hearts from them, that would not increase His Kingdom in any way. And if the very first of creation until the very last one from both mankind and jinn

were to have the most evil of hearts that would not decrease His Kingdom in any way. If those in the heavens and on earth, from mankind and jinn, the living and the dead, the young and old, all stood in one place and asked Him and He gave each and every one of them what they asked, none of that would decrease His Kingdom by even an atom. If all the trees of the earth, from the very first tree until the end of the world, were all pens, and the seas beyond the seven seas were ink, and He wrote with those pens and ink, then the pens would be exhausted and the ink would run dry but the words of the creator would not end. How can it be so when His words have no beginning nor any ending. The creation has a beginning and an end, were it dies and is exhausted out. How is it not possible that creation comes to an end and perishes except that they are created things.

He is the first (*al-Awwal*), He has no beginning neither is there anything before Him. He is the Last (*al-Ākhir*), there is no one after Him. He is the Apparent (*al-Zāhir*), nothing is above Him. He is the Inward (*al-Bāṭin*) no one close to Him. He has the most right to be remembered, worshipped and praised. He is the first to be thanked and the most sought for victory and aid. He is the most gentle of those who possess and most generous of those who are asked, most pardoning of those that can pardon and most noble of those that are sought. He is the most just of those that show anger. With His knowledge comes His kindness, He is the most pardoning of those who has power, He is the most forgiving of those that has might, His withholding comes from His divine wisdom and His excellence comes from His kindness, mercy and supervision.

The servants have no real right over Him

Nay and nor any effort with Him is lost

If they were to be punished then it is His pure justice

And if they were to be in bliss then only with His bounty,
for He is the most generous and accommodating

He is the Possessor (*al-Mālik*) who has no partner, the unique who has no equal. The Self-sufficient (*al-Ghani*) who none can overpower, the one who others rely on and has no son or wife. The Most High (*al-'Alīyy*) no one resembles Him or shares His name. Everything will perish except His Face. Every kingdom will perish except His. All shades will disappear except His shade will remain. All bounties have a limit that comes to an end, except His is limitless.

He will never be obeyed except by His permission and mercy. He will never be disobeyed except with His knowledge and wisdom. If He is obeyed then He is grateful, if He is disobeyed then He overlooks and forgives. All punishments from Him are just, and all favours from Him are from His bounty. He is the closest witness and the closest protector. He comes between the souls and takes hold of their forelocks. He records their footsteps and writes their life spans. The hearts lead to Him. The hidden is open to Him and the secret is known to Him. His giving is by words and His punishment is by words:

إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُ إِذَا أَرَادَ شَيْئًا أَنْ يَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ ﴿٨٢﴾

“Verily, His command, when He intends a thing is just to say to it, ‘Be!’ and it is!”

[*Yasīn* (36): 82]

These are the qualities before which every light fades. Beyond this is what does not occur to the mind nor can be expressed in words.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Remembrance is the Foremost Principle of Faith

What is intended is that remembrance illuminates the heart, the face and limbs. It is the light of the servant in his world, in the life of the grave and on the Day of Judgement,¹¹ according to the light

¹¹ Shaikh Ibn Bāz—may Allāh have mercy on his soul—said: “These words that the author has mentioned in explaining the attributes of Allāh and the narration of the Prophet (ﷺ): “Indeed, Allāh created His slaves in darkness then cast His light on them, whoever is touched by that light is guided, and whoever it does not will go astray.”

This is a great blessing and mercy that Allāh has bestowed upon whomsoever He wishes from His servants when they are created. As has proceeded, when Allāh wishes good for His slave he casts light into his heart. When light enters his heart and that is the truth, he opens up and expands (his chest) and he understands the truth, and the truth before it, and he dislikes falsehood and leaves it. This is why Allāh says: “*Allāh is the light of the heavens and the earth. The parable of His light is as if there were a Niche and in which is a Lamp, the Lamp inside a glass, the glass like a brilliant star, lit from a blessed tree, an Olive, neither of the east nor of the west, its oil all but giving off light even though no fire has touched it. Light upon Light.*” [al-Nūr (24): 35] The natural light that Allāh places in the heart, then the light of revelation once they gather in a heart the slave rejoices overwhelmingly, as every new born is born upon the natural disposition as the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “There is not a new born except he is born upon the *fitrah*, i.e. upon Islām, thus

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of faith in the heart of the slave, his actions and statements merge

the parents turn the new born into a Jew, Christian or Magian.” So whoever Allāh grants the ability to stay upon this way and learns the religion of Allāh and guides him towards the truth. Then he stays upon His light. Whoever Allāh wishes to be wretched, then the causes of his wretchedness comes to him from either his parents or their parents.

What is obligatory for the Muslim is to supplicate to Allāh and ask Him for guidance, compatibility and uprightness. Because when He guides and casts light into his heart, he is guided and upright. Allāh sent all His Messengers for the purpose of this light. He sent them with this light to guide the slaves and guide them to Him. Whoever is touched by this light upon the hands of the messengers is guided and upright. He conforms to the light that the Messengers have come with along with the light that is in his heart from the *fitrah*. Whoever is not affected by this light, follows his desires, then the devil makes go astray, either motivated by evil or by his parents or by other means such as a caller to falsehood.

So it is an obligation upon every believing man and woman to reflect and ponder what he or she has been created for and the revelation which is the Qur’ān, because it is life and the spirit. *“Likewise we have revealed unto you a spirit from Our command.”* [al-Shurā (42): 52] and He has called it light. *“However we have made it a light we guide with whomsoever we wish from our slaves.”* This revelation that the Prophet (ﷺ) came with is a spirit and a light. Light from which illumination and guidance is gained and a spirit from which a pure life is gained. Whoever is blessed by Allāh with uprightness upon the guidance of Allāh, upon the Quran and Sunnah then he has achieved the spirit which has life. He has also obtained the light which has insight with it and illumination. Whoever goes astray from that, is not guided and does not gain insight, will miss the life and light. And there is no might or power except by Allāh. This is what has been commanded, that knowledge be sought, towards guidance and the effort to strive towards them. So a person learns and tries to gain insight. He asks Allāh for beneficial knowledge, strong insight and guidance to the straight path. When a person is truthful in that and persists to his lord then Allāh fulfills His promise as He has said to His messenger: *“If My slaves ask you about Me, I am near. I answer the supplication of the caller when he calls on me.”* [al-Baqarah (2): 186]. And He says: *“Ask Allāh from His bounty.”* [al-Nisā’ (4): 32]

Allāh has made His book clear for all of mankind, a guidance and insight.

with light and evidence, until someone among the believers will have the light of his actions raise up to Allāh like the light of the sun and the light of his soul when it presented to Allāh. Likewise the light will be in front of him on the Bridge, and likewise the light on his face on the Day of Judgement. Allāh's help is sought and upon Him we have trust.

37. Remembrance is the chief of all fundamentals (*ra's al-amūr*) [in religion]. It is the way of those who are most devoted and leads towards to righteousness. So whoever has a door opened up for him to the remembrance of Allāh, has a door opened to Allāh. Let him purify himself in order to enter upon his Lord and with Him he will find everything he wants. For whoever finds his Lord, will find everything with Him and whoever loses His Lord, has lost everything.

38. The heart has a need which cannot be satisfied except by the remembrance of Allāh, [otherwise it becomes a lonely, empty and a narrow place]. So when the heart is absorbed by remembrance so too does the tongue stay moist with remembrance of Allāh wherever the servant may be. Remembrance fills that void and suffices the heart of any need. He who keeps to remembrance

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So the believer should reflect and benefit from the words of Allāh, until he gains illumination and insight with this light, until he gains light from this spirit. His heart will be alive, upright upon the love of Allāh and His messenger, and benefit from beneficial knowledge and strong insight so that he can know what Allāh has made obligatory for him and so he can act accordingly. Also he comes to know that which Allāh has forbidden so that he can stay away, and he can learn the limits Allāh has set. With this knowledge [He is aware] how much he is in need of pondering over the book of Allāh and gaining insight from it, and how severe his need for what the Prophet (ﷺ) said, his guidance and knowledge, until he is able to gain a good life, light, guidance and insight.

will become self-sufficient even without material wealth, he will become honoured without anyone close friends or supporters, he will be held in high esteem by others without holding any position of authority. If however he is heedless of the remembrance of Allāh, then he is the opposite of all that. Poor in spite of all his wealth, humiliated despite his authority, despised and worthless even though he has many friends and supporters.

39. Remembrance brings together whatever has dispersed and disperses of whatever has been gathered. It draws nearer what is distant and makes distant what is near.

So it gathers for the servant what has slipped away: his heart, his wants, his fears and his intention. However he is punished when all these have split away or become scattered and he neglects them. If however they are together in his heart then it is real life and bliss for the servant. It is also a means of breaking away from what has gathered of worries, sadness and regrets over what has slipped him by. It also removes from him his sins and mistakes and its burdens falling from him and disappearing.

It also separates him from the army of Shayṭān that has gathered to fight him. Shayṭān will not cease to send a small batch of soldiers, one after the other. So the stronger he seeks Allāh and is connected to Him, the stronger the battalion will be in their motivation. So whatever the slave has of good substance and intent, then the only way to break up that gathering [of soldiers] is to persist with the remembrance of Allāh.

As for bringing nearer what is distant, then He brings closer to him the hereafter that Shayṭān made distant from him and vain hope. A servant continues to remember Allāh until he enters it,

and at that moment the whole world becomes insignificant in his eyes, while the hereafter becomes magnified in his heart. It also distances him from the world which has become close to him.¹² So the more the Hereafter draws closer to his heart, the worldly

¹² These benefits of remembrance that the author has mentioned are all correct. This remembrance is the sustenance of the hearts, the very corner stone of its safety and good health. It is the main way to reform the hearts and make it upright, keeping upon the straight path. It blocks out poverty and fulfils his needs. It brings the hearts closer to the hereafter and makes the world move further away. It gathers the heart and unity with the love of Allāh and his being aware of Him. It gives uprightness upon the person's religion. Also remembering His mercy, kindness, generosity and what He has promised His allies from the eternal bliss in the place of honour [Paradise]. It also keeps him far away from the devil, his whispers, his causes of evil and destruction which befall a person while he is neglectful. Allāh says: "*O you who believe! Remember Allāh much [and do this often] and glorify Him in the morning and the evening. It is He Who calls down blessings on you, as do His angels, to bring you out of the depths of darkness into Light. He is full of Mercy to the believers.*" [al-Aḥzāb (33): 41-43], and He says: "*Thus remember me and I will remember you, and do not disbelieve in me.*" He also says: "*Indeed the Muslims male and female, believing male and female, the devout men and women*" until the statement: "*the men that remember Allāh much and the women, Allāh has prepared for them forgiveness and a great reward.*" And Allāh says: "*but if any turns away from the remembrance of His Lord, He will cause Him to undergo a severe penalty.*" [Jinn (72): 17]. Allāh also says: "*If anyone withdraws himself from remembrance of [Allāh] Most Gracious, we will appoint for Him a shayṭān, to be an intimate companion to Him.*" [al-Zukhruf (43): 36]. The believer's nourishment, his life, his happiness, making his heart get use to remembering Allāh with love, fear, hope, glorifying Him, declaring His oneness, praising Him, exalting Him, supplicating to Him and other forms of remembrance, are all extra from his Lord. So the prayer is remembrance, charity is remembrance, fear is remembrance, hope is remembrance, glorifying Him, declaring His oneness, praising Him, exalting Him are all forms of remembrance. Also seeking forgiveness is a form of remembrance. The greatest and most virtuous form of remembrance is the statement: "There is no god worthy of worship save Allāh alone, with no partner, to Him belongs the dominion and all praise, and He is upon all things powerful." This shows that glorifying, praising and exalting Allāh is from the best forms of speech as the Prophet (ﷺ) said in an sahih narration: "The most beloved speech to Allāh

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are four: *Subhān Allāh, Alhamdulilāh, Lā ilahailalāh, wa Allāhu akbar.*” He also said: “The remaining righteous deeds are: *Alhamdulilāh, and Lā ilaha illa Allāh, and Allāhu akbar, and Lāhawlah wala quwata illa billah.*” He also said: “There are two expressions (sayings) which are dear to the Most Gracious (Allāh) and very easy for the tongue to say, but very heavy in weight on the balance.” They are: ‘*Subhān Allāhi wa bihamdihī*’ and ‘*Subhān Allāhil—Aẓim*’. ” And when Prophet (ﷺ) entered upon Juwayriyyah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anbā*) after he had left her praying the Morning Prayer. He returned after the sunset prayer while she was still sitting so he said to her: ‘Are you still in the same state I left you in?’ She said: ‘Yes.’ So the Prophet (ﷺ) said: ‘I said after you four statements three times. If they were to be weighed against what you have said since this morning they would outweighed them. (They are): ‘*Subhān Allāh wabihamdihī adada kbalkibī, wa ridha nafsihi, wa ẓinata arsihi, wa midada kalimatihī.*’

So frequently say these words and words such as: “*Subhān Allāh, Alhamdulilāh, Lailah Illalah and Allāhu akbar.* Also frequently saying the statement: “*Lā ilaha ilalāh waddahu la sharikalau, labul mulk walaul hamd yuhyi wayamut waowa ala kulli shayin qadir.*” The Prophet (ﷺ) use to say: “Whoever says: ‘*Lā ilaha ilalāh waddahu la sharikalau, labul mulk walaul hamd waowa ala kulli shayin qadir* ten times, then that would be the equivalent of freeing four from the sons of Ismā‘īl.’ He also said: ‘Whoever says: “There is no deity worthy of worship besides Allāh, alone, without any partners. To Him belong kingship and praise, and He is able to do all things,” one hundred times in a day then it is equal to freeing ten slaves, Allāh writes for him a hundred good deeds, wipes away a hundred sins, and he has protection from the devil for that day until the evening, and no one can do better than him [for that day] except someone who does more than him. This is a great virtue, so we must increase the remembrance of Allāh from the *tasbīh, tahmīd, tahlīl* and *takbīr*, and seeking forgiveness day and night hoping in Allāh’s pleasure and fearing His punishment, repelling the Shayṭān, because the Shayṭān attacks a person’s heart when he is unaware and beautifies everything to him. When you remember Allāh he flees from you and stays away, so increase in the remembrance of Allāh truthfully from your heart wherever you are, Allāh says: “*So remember Allāh sitting down and on your sides.*” [al-Nisā’ (4): 103].

‘A’ishah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anbā*) said: ‘The Prophet (ﷺ) use to remember [Allāh] in every state, standing, sitting, lying down, walking and standing still. Likewise the believer should increase in the remembrance of Allāh with his heart, tongue and actions.

life drives further away from him. So when the Hereafter draws closer to him, the worldly life moves further away from him. This can only happen with the continuity of the remembrance of Allāh.

40. Remembrance alerts the heart from its sleep and keep it awake from falling asleep. For the sleeping heart will miss out on all the benefits and bargains, and will most likely be at a loss. So when it awakens and realises what it has missed while it was asleep, it will revive it self and spend the rest of its life trying to make up for what it has lost. Wakefulness only comes about through remembrance of Allāh, for indeed heedlessness of Allāh is a very deep sleep.

41. Remembrance is a tree that gives the fruits of spiritual knowledge and conditions the servant to traverse upon the path. There is no path to these fruits except through the tree of remembrance. The bigger the tree becomes the firmer its roots become and the greater the fruits. Remembrance results in all the levels—from awakening to oneness. It is the base that every level is built upon, as every wall is built upon a foundation. Every roof sits on walls. If the servant does not wake up, he is unable to get to those places. He will not awaken except through remembrance as has been mentioned before. So heedlessness is the slumber of the heart and its death.

Section One:

Allāh is with the One who Remembers Him

42. The one remembering is close (*qarīb*) to the one who he remembers (*dhākir*), and he is close to the One remembered (*mad-bkoor*), and the One remembered is with him. This 'withness' is special and different compared to the one who is close through knowledge (*'ilm*) or encompassment (*ihāta*). It is a closeness of

proximity (*qurb*), alliance (*wilāya*), love (*mahabbah*), victory (*naṣr*) and help (*tanfīq*), as Allāh says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ مُحْسِنُونَ ﴿١٢٨﴾

“Indeed, Allāh is with those who have piety of Him.”

[*al-Naḥl* (16): 128]

And Allāh says:

وَاللَّهُ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ ﴿٢٤٩﴾

“Allāh is with those that have patience.”

[*al-Baqarah* (2): 249]

And Allāh says:

وَاللَّهُ لَمَعَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٦٩﴾

“Truly Allāh is with those that do good.”

[*al-Ankabūt* (29): 69]

And Allāh says:

لَا تَحْزَنْ إِنَّا اللَّهُ مَعَنَا

“Do not be sad, for indeed Allāh is with us.”

[*al-Tawbah* (9): 40]

The one who remembers Allāh, he has a large portion of this closeness as in the divine narration: “I am with my slave when he remembers Me and moves his lips.”¹³

According to another narration it mentions: “The people of my remembrance are the people who sit my company. Those who

¹³ Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 2/540-541, Ibn al-Mubārak in his *al-Zuhd*, #956 and others. It was declared ṣaḥīḥ by al-Albānī in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmiʿ*, #1906.

are grateful to Me are the people that will visit Me. The people of My obedience are the people deserving of My honour. But the people of My disobedience I will not make them despair of My mercy. If they repent then I will be their beloved [friend] to them, for indeed I love those that repent and those that purify themselves. If they do not repent then I will be their physician, and test them with calamities so that I may purify them from all their faults.”¹⁴

The closeness (*ma'yyah*) that is gained by the one who remembers is unlike anything else. It is also more unique than what is gained by the doers of good deeds (*muhsin*) and the pious (*mutaqi*). It is a closeness that is not understood by mere terms, or can be reached by descriptions, rather it is something experience. It can also force the servant (*'abd*) into error if he does not accompany it with distinction between the eternal and the temporal, the Lord (*al-Rabb*) and the slave (*'abd*), the Creator (*al-Khāliq*) and the created (*makhluq*). Between the worshipper (*'ābid*) and the one worshipped (*ma'būd*). Otherwise he will fall into incarnationism (*ḥulūl*)¹⁵—by which the Christians were misguided—or the false belief of union (*itihād*)¹⁶—by which the advocates of the doctrine of the oneness of being (*wahdat al-wujūd*) have been misguided.

And that the existence of the Lord is the very essence of the existence of all other things, in fact they do not believe that there is a Lord and a slave, or a creation or the Truth. Rather [they believe that] the Lord is the slave, and the slave is the Lord, and the creation is Allāh. How far is Allāh removed from what the wrong doers and deniers say about Him!

¹⁴ Aḥmad, 1/43, however its chain is weak.

¹⁵ *Ḥulūl*—the belief that Allāh is in everything.

¹⁶ *Itihād*—The belief that we are all part of the same entity.

The intended meaning is that if the servant does not have the correct and sound belief (*'aqidah ṣaḥībah*), the power of remembrance will take over him, causing him to lose consciousness of himself and his invocation in the [consciousness of] the One he remembers, then he is bound to drift through the doors of incarnationism (*bulūl*) and union (*itihād*) without doubt.¹⁷

¹⁷ Shaikh Ibn Bāz said: 'These are all clear benefits of remembrance (*dhikr*). Indeed the servant sometimes falls into neglect, forgetfulness, absentmindedness and avoidance. So the more he remembers Allāh the more his heart opens up, so too does his life, his purity returns and that is a source of fighting off the sins and fighting anything that prevents good. That becomes his life, which helps him upon the truth and guidance. As opposed to the person who is neglectful. The person of remembrance is alive in heart and limbs, alive in his spirit, close to good and far removed from evil. He draws closer to Allāh with the truth, and stays away from what harms him and causes his heart to become hard. For this reason Allāh says:

"If anyone withdraws Himself from remembrance of [Allāh] Most Gracious, we appoint for Him an evil one, to be an intimate companion to Him." [al-Zukhruf (43): 36]

And He says: *"Remember Me—I shall remember you. And be grateful to Me, and do not disbelieve."* [al-Baqarah (2): 152] and He also says: *"Indeed Allāh is with those that do good."* [al-Nahl (16): 128]

So remembering Allāh often is from piety and righteousness. It is befitting for the believer to strive hard to increase in the remembrance of Allāh and be someone who does so often. For in the remembrance [of Allāh] is life for his heart and safety of his morals from being corrupted. There is also an encouragement for him to [stay] upon the truth, a light to honour the character and good deeds. Removing him from the attributes of the criminals and their characteristics. Allāh is the highest aim of the one doing remembrance and the height of what is sought. In [seeking] His pleasure, loving Him, drawing nearer to Him is a source of comfort to the hearts, a bliss for the spirit and a delight for the souls. Allāh is with those that do remembrance and the pious granting them success, guidance, His love, making their affairs easy and keeping them away from falling into the pit of misguidance. *"Indeed Allāh is with those who have piety and do righteousness."* [al-Nahl (16): 128] and He said to [Prophet] Mūsa (*'alayhis-salām*): *"Indeed I am with you both, I hear and see."* [Tabā (20): 46]. He said to His Prophet (ﷺ): *"Indeed Allāh is with us."* What is intended is the remembering

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43. Remembrance is equal to freeing slaves, spending wealth for the sake of Allāh and carrying loads on horse back for the sake of Allāh. It is equal to meeting the enemy in battle for sake of Allāh.

As quoted earlier: "For whoever says one hundred times in a single day: 'There is no deity worthy of worship besides Allāh, alone, without any partners. To Him belong kingship and praise, and He is able to do all things', a hundred times in a day, it would be the same reward as freeing ten slaves. Also, a hundred good deeds will be written in their account and a hundred sins will be erased. It would also be a protection from shayṭān on that day, until the evening. No one would have done better than them unless someone who said it more times than that."¹⁸

Ibn Abī Dunyā mentioned from al-A'mash, who narrated from Salīm Ibn Abī Al-Ja'd who said: 'It was said to Abū'l-Dardā' (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*): 'Indeed a man freed a hundred slaves.' He said: 'Freeing a hundred people takes up a lot of wealth. What is better though, is the faith of a person were in he commits day and night, keeping his tongue moist with the remembrance of Allāh.'¹⁹

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Allāh. As it is a key to the hearts, returning to it its life and liveliness. It is also a way to draw closer to Allāh, bring about His love. And obedience and drawing close to Him. Also causing the person to be aware of his sins and what causes His anger. This is how the people of Sunnah recognise the truth of His Names and Attributes. That He is their Lord, they worship Him alone, increase in His remembrance and follow Him. Contrary to them are the people of falsehood and rejection. They follow their desires, giving their souls whatever they desire, becoming misguided and misleading others.'

¹⁸ Bukhārī, #3293, and Muslim, #2691.

¹⁹ Aḥmad in his *al-Zuhd*, p.136, Ibn Abī Shaybah in his *al-Muṣannaf*, #29464, Ibn al-Mubārak in his *al-Zuhd*, #959, and others. It is declared weak by al-Albānī in *Da'if al-Targhib wa'l-Tarhib*, #896.

²⁰ Ibn Abī Shaybah in his *al-Muṣannaf*, #29424, #29422, #35027 and #35032.

And Ibn Mas'ūd (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) said: 'For me to praise Allāh a certain number of times, is more beloved to me than if I spent the same amount in dinars in battle for the sake of Allāh.'²⁰

'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar (*radīy Allāhu 'anhumā*) sat with 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) and he said to him: "Glory be to Allāh", 'All praise is due to Allāh', 'None has the right to be worshipped save Allāh', and 'Allāh is the greatest', is more beloved to me than spending the same amount of dinars for the sake of Allāh in battle.' To this 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar (*radīy Allāhu 'anhumā*) said: 'For me, to set out on a path saying these words is more beloved to me than if I gave the same amount in number of mounts in the way of Allāh.'²¹

The narration of Abū'l-Dardā' (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) has preceded in which he said: 'The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: "Should I not inform you of the best of your deeds? The purest of them with your Master? The highest of them in your ranks and what is better for you than spending gold and silver, better for you than meeting your enemy, that you striking their necks and they strike your necks?"

They said: 'Of course!'

He said: "The remembrance of Allāh, the Most High!"

Ibn Mājah and Tirmidhī narrated this ḥadīth, whose chain of transmission al-Hākim said is sound.^{22, 23}

²¹ Ibn Abī Shaybah in his *al-Muṣannaf*, #29422, #29421, #35027 and #35029.

²² Tirmidhī, #3377. It is declared ṣaḥīḥ by Al-Albānī in *al-Jāmi' Tirmidhī*, 5/459.

²³ Shaikh Ibn Bāz said: 'These narrations and those that have similar meaning show the great virtue of remembrance. The believer should increase in remembrance during the day and night, and in all the hours of the day, because Allāh has placed great reward, and much good. It is one of the ways to repel the devils. Also it is a way to soften the heart. So the believer should increase

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in remembrance. For this reason ‘A’ishah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anbā*) said: ‘The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Shall I not inform you of the best of your actions? The purest of them with your Master (Allāh). The ones which raise your rank the highest, more better for you than spending gold, better than when you meet your enemy, you striking their necks and they strike yours?” They said: “Of course o messenger of Allāh (ﷺ).” He said: “It is the remembrance Allāh.”

So increasing in the remembrance of Allāh is something sought after what ever you are doing of other actions along with it. Abū’l-Dardā’ (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘When the freeing of servants was mentioned and its virtue: ‘What was better than that is to adhere to faith day and night.’ So the narration of faith in Allāh with the remembrance of Allāh and staying upright upon the obedience of Allāh and His Messenger (ﷺ) which necessitates with increasing in remembrance, this is a pure and good life. Allāh says: “*O you who believe! Remember Allāh much, and glorify Him in the morning and in the evening.*” [*al-Aḥzāb* (33): 42],

And He says: “*Indeed, the Muslim men and Muslim women, the believing men and believing women, the obedient men and obedient women, the truthful men and truthful women, the patient men and patient women, the humble men and humble women, the charitable men and charitable women, the fasting men and fasting women, the men who guard their private parts and the women who do so, and the men who remember Allāh much and the women who do so—for them Allāh has prepared forgiveness for them and a great reward.*” [*al-Aḥzāb* (33): 35]

Increasing in the remembrance of Allāh, establishing what He has made obligatory, leaving what He has forbidden, holding onto faith and being upright upon that is a great virtue. The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said in a narration: ‘Whoever says: “There is no deity worthy of worship besides Allāh, alone, without any partners. To Him belong kingship and praise, and He is able to do all things.”

Then that would equal to freeing ten servants, a hundred good deeds are written for him and a hundred sins are wiped away from him. He will have protection from the devil for that day until the evening and no one will come with anything better than that except someone who does more than his actions. This is a great virtue which shows the virtue of this speech and to repeat it. The Prophet (ﷺ) also said: ‘Whoever says: “There is no deity worthy of worship besides Allāh, alone, without any partners. To Him belong kingship and praise, and He is able to do all things.” Ten times, then that would be the equivalent of freeing four from the sons of Ismā’īl. And he said: The most beloved speech

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Section Two:
Remembrance is the
Most Important form of Thankfulness

44. Remembrance is the most important forms of thankfulness. The one who does not remember Allāh, has not thanked Him. Bayhaqī mentioned from Zayd Ibn Aslam (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that [Prophet] Mūsā (*‘alayhis-salām*) said: ‘My Lord, You have blessed me with so much, how can I thank you abundantly.’

He said: ‘When you remember Me often, then you have shown much thanks to Me, and if you forget Me then you are ungrateful.’²⁴

Bayhaqī mentioned in *Shu‘ab al-Imān* also, that ‘Abdullāh Ibn Salam (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘Mūsā (*‘alayhis-salām*) said: ‘O Lord,

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to Allāh are four: “Glory is to Allāh”, ‘All praise is due to Allāh’, ‘None has the right to be worshipped save Allāh’, and ‘Allāh is the greatest.’” and “There is neither strength nor power except in Allāh.” This is great speech that you can say wherever you are, so it is a great virtue and a good deed. Surely you can say it on the sea and on the land, in the night and during the day, at home and away from home. In every place you are able to say it. As opposed to gold and silver and wealth which at times you might stumble upon and be able to give, however it is a must for every believer to increase in this great good that is easy and convenient. To increase in the reading of the Qur’ān, increase in remembrance and all forms of remembrance have a great good. In a narration of the Prophet (ﷺ) when he said to a man: “Indeed the laws of Islām have become too much for me, so advise me to an action that I may hold to. So he said: “Keep your tongue moist with the remembrance of Allāh.”

So this is legislated for the believer that his tongue be kept ever moist with the remembrance of Allāh in every place [he goes] with the *tasbeeh*, the *tahmid*, the *tablil*, the *takbīr* and the *istighfar*. Supplicating to his Lord, seeking His help, enjoining the good, forbidding the evil, calling upon on Allāh, guiding to good and being preoccupied with good wherever he may be.

²⁴ Bayhaqī in *Shu‘ab al-Imān*, 1/458.

²⁵ Bayhaqī in *Shu‘ab al-Imān*, 4/103.

what thanks is due to you?’

So Allāh revealed to him ‘That your tongue should stay moist with My remembrance.’

He said: ‘O Lord, There are times when I am in a state that is not befitting to mention you.’

He said: ‘Even so?’

Mūsā (*‘alayhis-salām*) replied: ‘If I am in a state of sexual impurity or answering the call of nature.’

So He said: ‘What of it?’

Mūsā (*‘alayhis-salām*) said: ‘What do I say then?’

He said: ‘Say: Glory be to You, remove from me what is harmful. Glory and praise belongings to You. Only you can protect me from harm.’²⁵

I said: “A’ishah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhā*) said: “The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) use to remember Allāh in every state.”²⁶

Remembrance should be done no matter what state a person might be in. This shows that he invoked and remembered his Lord in [a state of] purity (*ṭahārah*) as well as ritual impurity (*janābah*).²⁷

As for in a state of relieving himself, then there was no one that witnessed him do so to report it. However he legislated for his nation supplications before and after relieving themselves which shows the great importance of remembrance even when relieving oneself and after. Likewise he has legislated remembrance just before sexual relations:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ اللَّهُمَّ جَنِّبْنَا الشَّيْطَانَ وَجَنِّبِ الشَّيْطَانَ مَا رَزَقْتَنَا

“Bismillāh Allāhumma jannibna al-shayṭān wa jannibi al-shayṭān mā razaqtanā.”—“In the name of Allāh, O

²⁶ Muslim, #373.

²⁷ See *al-Awsaṭ* of Ibn al-Mundhir, 1/340 and *Fayḍ al-Qadīr*, 5/214

²⁸ Bukhārī, #141, and Muslim, #1434.

Allāh, protect us from Shayṭān and keep Shayṭān away
from the children You grant us.”²⁸

As for answering the call of nature or union with one's spouse then there is no doubt that the heart (*qalb*) does not dislike it, because he did not disapprove of it in the heart. It is impossible to turn the heart away from remembering the one who is the most beloved in his life. In fact, if the heart is burdened to forget then it would be impossible, as someone said:

What is wanted from the heart is forgetfulness,
However it nature refuses to change

Remembrance with the tongue (*lisān*) in this situation, then that has not been legislated, nor has it been recommended to us by the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ), nor has it been reported from any of the Companions (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhum*).

‘Abdullāh Ibn Abi al-Hudhayl said: ‘Indeed Allāh loves to be remembered in the marketplace, and He loves to be remembered in every situation, except when a person relieves himself.’²⁹

It is sufficient for him to feel modesty (*ḥayā*) in front Allāh by covering himself while in that state, a sense of vigilance, and a favour (*ni‘ma*) upon him and it is the most noble of remembrances. He makes remembrance in every situation according to what is appropriate in that particular state with dignity (*ijlāl*) from Allāh, remembering His favours upon him, His kindness (*iḥsān*) towards him and removing the harmful from his body, had it remained, it would kill him. So the favour in facilitating its exiting the body is as much beneficial as is nourishment to the body.

²⁹ Abū Nua‘ym in his *al-Ḥilyat al-Awliyā*, 4/359.

³⁰ Bayhaqī in *Shu‘ab al-Imān*, 4/113.

After having relieved himself, ‘Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhu*) passed his hands over his stomach and said: ‘What a blessing this is [from Allāh] if only people knew its true value.’³⁰

Some of the Salaf used to say: ‘All praise is due to Allāh who let us taste its sweetness, kept it beneficial within us and removed any of its harm.’³¹

Likewise Prophet (ﷺ) remembrance of Allāh before having sexual relations is a great blessing which we have been favoured with and it is one of the most noble of blessings in the world. So when he remembered the blessings of Allāh upon him, his heart awakened by the urge to give thanks (*shukr*) to Allāh, so remembrance is the best form of giving thanks.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said to Mu‘adh Ibn Jabal (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhu*) “By Allāh, O Mu‘adh, I truly love you. So do not forget to say at the end of each prayer:

«اللهم أعني على ذكرك وشكرك وحسن عبادتك»

“Allāhuma ‘ainnī ‘ala dhikrika wa shukrika wa ḥusni ‘ibādatika.”—“O Allāh, Aid me in remembering You, thanking You and worshipping You better.”³²

Thus he connected remembrance (*dhikr*) and thankfulness (*shukr*) as prescribed by Allāh in the verse:

فَاذْكُرُونِي
أَذْكُرْكُمْ وَأَشْكُرُوا لِي وَلَا تَكْفُرُونِ ﴿١٠٦﴾

³¹ Ibn Abī Shaybah in his *al-Muṣannaf*, 1/12.

³² Abū Dāwūd, #1522. It is declared ṣaḥīḥ by al-Albānī in *Sunan Abū Dāwūd*, 2/86.

³³ Shaikh Ibn Bāz said: “These narrations mentioned by the author Ibn al-Qayyim

“Remember Me - I will remember you. Give thanks to Me and do not be ungrateful.”

[*al-Baqarah* (2): 152]

So remembrance (*dhikr*) and thankfulness (*shukr*) brings together happiness (*sa'ādah*) and success. (*falāh*)³³

all show the greatness of remembrance. And that it is a great form of worship. The verses and narrations that show the virtues of remembrance have preceded and that it is more virtuous of all forms of worship. As Allāh says: “And the remembrance of Allāh is the greatest.” And what is better than that is the statement: “*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*, and that is the best of all types of remembrance. Likewise saying: “Glory be to Allāh”, ‘All praise is due to Allāh’, ‘None has the right to be worshipped save Allāh’, and ‘Allāh is the greatest.’” The Prophet (ﷺ) used to say: “The most beloved speech to Allāh are four: “Glory is to Allāh”, ‘All praise is due to Allāh’, ‘None has the right to be worshipped save Allāh’, and ‘Allāh is the greatest.’” The Prophet (ﷺ) said: The remaining good deeds are “Glory is to Allāh”, ‘All praise is due to Allāh’, ‘None has the right to be worshipped but Allāh’, and ‘Allāh is the greatest.’” and “There is neither strength nor power except in Allāh.” The Prophet (ﷺ) said: ‘Faith is seventy odd branches, the highest is the statement ‘None has the right to be worshipped save Allāh’. He also said: ‘Whoever says: “There is no deity worthy of worship besides Allāh, alone, without any partners. To Him belong kingship and praise, and He is able to do all things.”’ Ten times, then that would be the equivalent of freeing four from the sons of Isma‘eel. The Prophet (ﷺ) also said: “Whoever says: ‘There is no deity worthy of worship besides Allāh, alone, without any partners. To Him belong kingship and praise, and He is able to do all things.’” Then that would equal to freeing ten servants, a hundred good deeds are written for him, a hundred sins are wiped away from him, and he will have protection from the devil for that day until the evening. No one would come with better than that except someone who did more than him.

So remembrance is the best form of thanks. Allāh said: “*Remember Me—I will remember you. Give thanks to Me, and do not be ungrateful.*”[*al-Baqarah* (2): 152]

So maintaining remembrance nurtures speech and actions. Fearing Allāh is a form of remembrance. Fear, love, hope, awe of Allāh are all remembrance of the heart and so is sincerity to Allāh also a remembrance of the heart. Saying “Glory is to Allāh”, ‘All praise is due to Allāh’, ‘None has the right to be

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worshipped but Allāh', and 'Allāh is the greatest'; and saying "There is neither strength nor power save in Allāh", supplicating, seeking forgiveness are all forms of remembrance of the tongue. The prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, combat, giving charity are all forms of bodily worship and therefore remembrance of actions. So the believer remembers Allāh with his heart, his tongue and his actions at all times. 'A'ishah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhā*) said: "The Prophet (ﷺ) use to remember Allāh at all times." Meaning in his house, on the road, in the bathroom, and in all places. However in the bathroom only with his heart, and would not use words while relieving himself, and in other places with his heart, tongue and actions. This shows that Prophet (ﷺ) did not speak words for remembrance when he was relieving himself. Once a person passed by him and gave him salām. The Prophet (ﷺ) did not reply until he relieved himself, made ablution and apologised to him, when he had finished he replied to him and said: "I dislike remembering Allāh in a ritual impure state." What is intended by this is that a person remembers Allāh with his heart, his tongue, and limbs at all times, however while relieving himself he should remember with his heart and not with his tongue. So while he relieves himself his heart is busy and remembers the favours upon him and kindness towards him. When he leaves the place of relieving himself, he says: "O Allāh your forgiveness (I seek)." The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) used to say this why? Because the servant is always falling short and relieving himself shows that, so Allāh blesses him so that he is able to relieve himself and this is one of the most important blessing upon him. The servant cannot show enough thanks to Allāh therefore he says: "O Allāh your forgiveness [I seek]"—meaning Allāh forgives me for my short comings in being able to show thanks sufficient for your blessing. Before he begins relieving himself he says: "In the Name of Allāh, I seek refuge with You from the male and female unclean spirits." When he finishes he comes out with his right foot and says: "O Allāh your forgiveness [I seek]" When he enters the bathroom or the place where he is about to relieve himself he does so with his left foot and says: "In the Name of Allāh, I seek refuge with You from the male and female unclean spirits." When he enters the marketplace he keeps himself busy with the remembrance of Allāh, on the streets and at home.

"Remember Me—I will remember you. Give thanks to Me, and do not be ungrateful." [*al-Baqarab* (2): 152]

In summary, from the things that Allāh has legislated, then all of it is remem-

Section Three: The Laborers for the Next World

45. The most noblest of creation (*akram al-khalq*) is the person who feels deep respect and admiration for Allāh, from the pious (*mutaqīn*) is the one whose tongue remains moist with His remembrance. He reveres Him through His commands and prohibitions and makes His remembrance his constant slogan.

This will necessitate his entry into Paradise (*dukhūl al-jannah*) and salvation from the Fire (*najāt min al-nār*). By his remembrances will he achieve a high station (*manzila*) and nearness (*qurb*) with Allāh.

Among those who work for the Afterlife, there are of two types of people: the one who works for the reward (*thawab*) and recompense (*ajar*), and one who works for the high station (*manzila*) and degree (*daraja*), so he races with others to get near to Allāh. Allāh has mentioned both types of people in Chapter of *al-Hadid*:

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brance, either in secret or openly with the tongue or with the limbs in all forms of worship. Remembrance is the easiest type of worship and rushing towards all types of obedience to Allāh will bring success in the hereafter with lofty gardens, and the heedless heart is far from Allāh. The believer's heart is full of the remembrance of Allāh, and there is no more severe enemy of Allāh than the ones who are neglectful as Allāh says: "*And We have certainly created for Hell many of the jinn and mankind. They have hearts with which they do not understand, they have eyes with which they do not see, and they have ears with which they do not hear. Those are like livestock, rather they are more astray. It is they who are the heedless.*" [*al-A'raf* (7): 179]. And Allāh says: "*And whoever is blinded from remembrance of the Most Merciful—We appoint for him a devil and he is to him a companion.*" [*al-Zukhruf* (43): 36]

The servant that is neglectful of Allāh's remembrance is attacked by the devil who is the enemy of Allāh, because of the weakness that person has. When he remembers Allāh he repels the devil and he is encouraged to do [good] deeds.

إِنَّ الْمَصْدِقِينَ وَالْمَصَدِّقَاتِ وَأَقْرَضُوا
 اللَّهُ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا يَضَعُ لَهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ أَجْرًا كَرِيمًا ﴿١٨﴾

“Indeed, the men and women who give charity and make a good loan to Allāh will have it increased for them, and they will have a generous reward.”

[*al-Hadid* (57): 18]

These are the people of rewards and recompense (*ashāb al-ajūr wa'l-thawāb*). Then Allāh says [in the very next verse]:

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الصَّادِقُونَ

“And those who believe in Allāh and His Messengers — such people are the truly sincere.”

These are the people of rank and nearness (*ashāb al-manẓila wa'l-qurb*). Then He says:

وَالشَّهَدَاءُ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ وَنُورُهُمْ

“And the martyrs who are with their Lord will receive their wages [in full] and their light.”

According to some, this refers to,

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ

“those who have believed in Allāh and His Messengers.”

He has informed us about them because “*those are the truly sincere*” and “*the Martyrs*” they bear witness over other nations. Then He stated: “For them is a generous reward and their light.” So He has

informed us of them concerning four matters: That “those are the truly sincere” and “the Martyrs” is to describe their degree (*martaba*) and station (*manzila*). It is also said, that the first phrase ends at: “those are the truly sincere”, and then He mentions after that the condition of “the Martyrs” saying:

لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ وَنُورُهُمْ

“who are with their Lord will receive their wages [in full] and their light”

The people of charity (*mutasadiqin*) are mentioned first, those of righteousness (*birr*) and excellence (*ihṣān*). Then “the truly sincere”, they are the true believers (*mu'min*), they are people of knowledge and action (*ahl al-'ilm wa'l-'aml*). In their hearts faith (*imān*) has taken a strong hold, firmly rooted. Then He mentioned “the Martyrs”, who He will continue to give them their wages and their light. That is because they sacrificed themselves for the sake of Allāh voluntarily, so He rewarded them for it and made them alive again, giving them their sustenance and allowing it to flow between them and giving them their light. All of them are among the delighted.

Then lastly He mentioned the wretched:

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ

الْجَحِيمِ

“But those who have disbelieved and denied Our Signs, will be the companions of the Blazing Fire.”

[*al-Ḥadid* (57): 19]

The meaning behind this is that, He mentioned the people of recompense and people of degree, these being the two things the

Pharaoh promised the sorcerers if they defeat the Prophet Mūsā ('alayhis-salām) as they said:

قَالُوا إِنَّا
لَنَاجِرُونَ كُنَّا نَحْنُ الْغَالِبِينَ ﴿١١٣﴾ قَالَ نَعَمْ وَإِنَّكُمْ
لَمِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ ﴿١١٤﴾

“Will we receive a reward if we are the winners? He said,
‘Yes, and moreover you will be among those brought
near [to me].’”

[*al-A'raf* (7): 113-114]

Meaning I will give you a great reward and bring you close to me
[having high status and rank].

Therefore, the workers ('ummāl) work for the sake of recompense, while the devote servant works for rank, standing and to be near Allāh. For these people their inner deeds of the heart are more and plentiful than those physical workers, whereas the workers their bodily limbs preform actions more than the others.

Bayhaqī mentioned from Muḥammad Ibn Ka'b al-Qurazī, who said: 'Prophet Mūsā ('alayhis-salām) asked: 'O Lord, which of your creation is the most noble in your sight?'

He said: 'The one whose tongue does not cease to be moist from My remembrance.'

Mūsā asked: 'O Lord, who among Your creation is the most knowledgeable?'

He said: 'The one who holds others knowledge in high regard then his own.'

Mūsā asked: 'O Lord, who among Your creation is the most just?'

He said: 'The one who judges himself the same as he judges

others.'

Mūsā asked: O Lord, who among Your creation has the greatest of sins?

He said: 'The one who accuses Me wrongdoing.'

Mūsā asked: 'O Lord, is there anyone that accuses You of wrong?'

He said: 'The one who seeks My guidance in a matter and then is not pleased with My Judgement.'³⁴

He also—mentioned—from Ibn 'Abbās (*radīy Allāhu 'anhumā*) who said: 'When Mūsā (*'alayhis-salām*) arrived at Mount Sinai, he asked: 'O Lord which of your servants is the most beloved to you?'

He said: 'The one who remembers Me and never forget me.'

And Ka'b relates that Musā (*'alayhis-salām*) said: 'O Lord, are You near, so that I may converse with You intimately, or are You far, that I must call You?'

He said: 'O Mūsā I am close to the one who remembers Me.'

Mūsā asked: 'What if I am in a state not befitting that I remember you?'

He said: 'And what state would that be?'

Mūsā replied: 'When relieving myself or in a state of sexual impurity.'

He said: 'Remember Me in every state.'³⁵

'Ubayd Ibn 'Umayr said: 'The saying of one praise to Allāh in the book of deeds of the believer is better for him, than all the mountains of the world, over flowing with gold.'³⁶

³⁴ Bayhaqī in *Shu'ab al-Imān*, 1/451.

³⁵ Ibn Abī Shaybah in his *al-Muṣannaf*, 7/73.

³⁶ Ibn Abī Shaybah in his *al-Muṣannaf*, 6/55.

Al-Ḥasān al-Baṣrī said: 'On the Day of Judgement a voice will call out saying: 'Let the people of this gathering come to know who are those most worthy of honour. Where are those people who:

تَجَافَى جُنُوبُهُمْ عَنِ الْمَضَاجِعِ
يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

"Their sides forsake their beds as they call on their Lord in fear and ardent hope. And they gave of what We have provided for them?"

[*al-Sajdah* (32): 16]

[Al-Ḥasān] said: 'They will stand up and come forward stepping over people.'

The he said: A voice will call out: 'Let the people of this gathering come to know who are those most worthy of honour. Where are those people who were:

لَا تُلْهِيمُهُمْ تِجَارَةً وَلَا بَيْعًا عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ

"Not distracted by trade or commerce from the remembrance of Allāh."

[*al-Nūr* (24): 37]

[Al-Ḥasān] said: 'They will stand up and come forward stepping over people.'

Then he said: Then a voice will call out: 'Let the people of this gathering come to know who are those most worthy of honour. Where are those people that praised Allāh in every situation?'

He said: 'They will stand up and they will be many in number. Then the judgment will follow for all those that are remaining.'

A man came to Abū Muslim al-Khawlānī and said: 'Give me counsel, O Abū Muslim.'

He said: 'Remember Allāh under every tree and rock.'

So he said: 'Advise me more.'

He replied: 'Remember Allāh until people think that you are mentally obsessed with the remembrance of Allāh.'

Abū Muslim would occupy himself with so much remembrance of Allāh that a man saw him while he was remembering Allāh and asked his friend: 'Is your companion gone mad!?'

Upon hearing this Abū Muslim replied: 'This is not madness, my dear nephew, rather it is a cure for madness.'³⁸

³⁷ Hākim in his *al-Mustadrak*, 2/433, Bayhaqī in his *Shu'ab al-Imān*, 1/453, 454 and others

³⁸ Bayhaqī in *Shu'ab al-Imān*, 1/455 #696

Shaikh Ibn Bāz said: 'From the benefits of remembrance is that the person will get Paradise with its High Gardens near to Allāh. Because remembrance helps carry a person to fulfil the obligations and avoid the forbidden matters which will result in achieving Paradise and the its High Gardens. They are the Messengers, their followers, the special ones among the believers, those that were preoccupied with acts of obedience to Allāh and their tongues and hearts were busy with the remembrance of Allāh. So those that busy themselves and their tongues with remembrance of Allāh are the allies of Allāh. When the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) was asked: 'The legislated acts have become too many for me, so tell me something inclusive that I may hold onto.' The Prophet (ﷺ) said clarifying to him: "Do not let your tongue stop being moist from the remembrance of Allāh. The believer should fill his time with the remembrance of Allāh. As Allāh says: "O you who believe! Remember Allāh much, and glorify Him in the morning and the evening." [al-Aḥzāb (33): 41], Allāh also said: "Remember Me—I shall remember you. And be grateful to Me, and do not be ungrateful." [al-Baqarah (2): 152]. He also said: "Indeed, the Muslim men and Muslim women, the believing men and believing women, the obedient men and obedient women, the truthful men and truthful women, the patient men and patient women, the humble men and humble women, the charitable men and charitable women, the fasting men and fasting women, the men who guard their private parts and the women who do so, and the men who remember Allāh often and the women who do so—for them Allāh has prepared forgiveness and a great reward." [al-Aḥzāb (33): 35]

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The Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Journey on, the solitary ones (*mufridūn*) have gone ahead." They said: 'Who are the solitary ones?' He said: "Remembrance will remove the burdens of those who are completely occupied with it." So they preceded them in every good. Let the believer strive to keep his heart and tongue in a state of remembering of Allāh, fearing Him, having a sense of Him watching over us, venerating and yearning towards Him. Enjoy and revel in His remembrance. Contemplate on His verses and His creation, which show His greatness. Keep your tongue ever busy with His remembrance in glorification, praising and magnifying Him. He should also keep his limbs busy with all types of acts of obedience such as the prayer and other actions of devotion. Likewise the believer's time is filled with actions pertaining to this world, such as buying, selling and planting etc. He should not neglect his worldly needs, rather do it with the remembrance of Allāh at the same time. Indeed worldly needs should not distract a person from the remembrance of Allāh with the tongue or heart. The Prophet (ﷺ) said: The most beloved speech to Allāh are four: "Glory is to Allāh", 'All praise is due to Allāh', 'None has the right to be worshipped save Allāh', and 'Allāh is the greatest.'" He also said: "The remaining righteous deeds are: 'All praise is due to Allāh', and 'None has the right to be worshipped save Allāh', and 'Allāh is the greatest, and "There is neither strength nor power except in Allāh." He (ﷺ) also said: ""That I say: "Glory is to Allāh", 'All praise is due to Allāh', 'None has the right to be worshipped save Allāh', and 'Allāh is the greatest'", is more beloved to me than what the sun rises up on."

He (ﷺ) also said: "There are two expressions (sayings) which are dear to the Most Gracious (Allāh) and very easy for the tongue to say, but are very heavy in weight on the balance." They are: "Glory is to Allāh with His Praise" and "Glory is to Allāh, the Magnificent."

O servant of Allāh make your tongue busy, and these limbs with the remembrance of Allāh, while standing, sitting and in every place. The heart should be filled with the remembrance of Allāh, from the fear of Allāh and having hope in Him. Extolling His greatness and finding pleasure in His remembrance. Yearning towards Him and reflecting on His verses that show His greatness. Reflecting on His many favours which He has bestowed upon you. Likewise keep the tongue busy with seeking forgiveness, supplicating, with glorification, praising and magnifying Him. Likewise the limbs should be kept busy with doing good deeds, and work in your land and business with the intention of eating what is lawful.'

46. In the heart there is a hardness (*qaṣwā*) that cannot be removed except with the remembrance of Allāh, so let the servant treat this hardness of the heart with the remembrance of Allāh.

Ḥammād Ibn Zayd mentioned from al-Mu'allā Ibn Ziyād who mentioned that man said to Ḥassan: 'O Abū Sa'īd, I complain to you about the hardness of my heart.'

He said to him: 'Remove it with remembrance.'³⁹

This is because as the heart increases in heedlessness and the hardness also intensifies. So when a person remembers Allāh the hardness dissolves as copper melts in fire. Nothing dissolves the hardness of the heart better than the remembrance of Allāh.

47. Remembrance is the cure of the heart and its medicine. While heedlessness (*ghafla*) is its sickness (*marad*). So the hearts are sick, their cure and medicine is in the remembrance of Allāh.

Makhūl said: 'Remembrance of Allāh is the cure and remembering people is the sickness.'⁴⁰

Bayhaqī mentioned this ḥadīth from Makhūl in both *marfu'* and *mursal* form.

'When I remembered Allāh I was the cured and had wellbeing [of the heart]. But when I was neglectful of Allāh they regressed.' As it was said:

When we are sick, we treat ourselves with Your remembrance.
At times when we leave Your remembrance, we relapse into sickness.

³⁹ Bayhaqī in *Shu'ab al-Imān*, 1/456

⁴⁰ Bayhaqī in *Shu'ab al-Imān*, 1/459 #717 in a *marfu'* form.

48. Remembrance is the basis and the means of loyalty to Allāh (*asl-muwālātallāh*) and its main part. However heedlessness (*ghafla*) is the basis and the means of His enmity (*ma'ādāt*). The servant will continue to remember Allāh until He loves him and gives him His loyalty, or he will continue to neglect Him until he hates Him and becomes His enemy.

Al-Awzā'ī said: 'Hassān Ibn 'Atīyah said: 'A servant can never shown more enmity to his Lord than disliking His remembrance or disliking the one who remembers Him.'⁴¹

Enmity is caused by neglect and heedlessness. However this emity can even go further by hating the person who remembers Allāh often, until that person becomes his enemy (*'adu*). When that happens Allāh takes him as an enemy and He takes the one who remembers Him as a close friend (*walī*).⁴²

⁴¹ Bayhaqī in *Shu'ab al-Imān*, 1/461.

⁴² Shaikh Ibn Bāz said: 'From the benefits of the remembrance of Allāh is that it is from the causes of giving life to the heart, to be uprightness and racing to do good deeds. When the heart becomes unaware of the remembrance of Allāh it becomes the cause of the hardness of his heart and its death. So the remembrance of Allāh with the heart, tongue and actions are the life of his heart. The heart becomes soft and tender. Its a cure from all diseases and loyalty to his Lord. As for heedlessness, then it is from the causes of hardness and distance from Allāh. A believer should strive in increasing in the remembrance of Allāh with his heart, tongue and actions. Allāh says: "*if anyone withdraws Himself from remembrance of Most Gracious, we appoint for Him an evil one, to be an intimate companion to Him.*" [al-Zukhruf (43): 36] and in a narration: "Indeed the furthest heart from Allāh is the hard heart." The hard heart is the furthest thing from Allāh, from His love and from seeking His forgiveness. On the other hand the soft heart is filled with the remembrance of Allāh is the closest to Allāh's obedience, His loyalty, love and is far removed from His anger. And Allāh says: "*but if any turns away from the remembrance of His Lord, He will cause Him to undergo a severe penalty.*" [Jinn (72): 17]. Allāh also says: "*if anyone withdraws Himself from remembrance of Most Gracious, we appoint for Him an evil one, to be an intimate companion to Him.*" [al-Zukhruf (43): 36]. =

Section Four:
Remembrance Brings with it Blessings

49. Nothing brings about the Allāh's blessing and repels His wrath more than the remembrance of Allāh. Remembrance leads to blessings and is a shield against anger. Allāh says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُدْفِعُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا

“Indeed, Allāh defends those that believe.”

[*al-Hajj* (22): 38]

In another recitation: “*Indeed Allāh repels harm.*” So His defence

They are the ones who are neglectful, they will not benefit from their hearing, nor from their hearts nor from their sight. As opposed to the person making remembrance of Allāh, the one who is aware treating the illnesses of his heart, the illnesses of his body, the ills of society with the obedience of Allāh and His Messenger and His remembrance. The greatest form of remembrance with the tongue is saying: “There is no deity worthy of worship besides Allāh, alone, without any partners. To Him belong kingship and praise, He is able to do all things.” This statement is the best form of remembrance and the statement of Tawhīd. The prophet (ﷺ) said: The best of what I have said and the prophets before me is ‘None has the right to be worshipped save Allāh’. He also said: “Faith is seventy odd branches, the best of them is the statement: ‘None has the right to be worshipped save Allāh’. He also said: The most beloved speech to Allāh are four: “Glory is to Allāh’, ‘All praise is due to Allāh’, ‘None has the right to be worshipped save Allāh’, ‘Allāh is the greatest.’ He also said: “The deeds that remain are: ‘All praise is due to Allāh’, and ‘None has the right to be worshipped save Allāh’ and ‘Allāh is the greatest’, and “There is neither strength nor power except in Allāh.” So strive hard o servant of Allāh in remembering with your heart and tongue. Fear Allāh, be aware of Him, for He is watching over you. Increasing in acts of worship such as the prayer and the like which all gives life to the heart. When the heart is neglectful of the remembrance of Allāh the devil overcomes him and dictates to him evil actions and lowly thoughts until he disbelieves in Allāh. As Allāh says: “*Or do you think that most of them hear or reason? They are not except like livestock. Rather, they are [even] more astray in [their] way.*” [*al-Furqān* (25): 44]

of them or repelling harm away from them is according to the strength and perfection of their faith in Allāh. The substance of faith and its strength comes with the remembrance of Allāh. So whoever is more complete in faith and more abundant in remembrance, the greater Allāh's defence of him. For one that falls short in remembrance, will be reduced in defence. Remembrance for a similar type of remembrance and forgetfulness for the similar forgetfulness. Allāh says:

وَإِذْ تَأَذَّنَ رَبُّكُمْ لَئِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ

“And (remember) when Your Lord announced: ‘If you are grateful, I will increase give you increase.’”

[*Ibrāhīm* (14): 7]

Remembrance is the best form of thankfulness as has been explained and gratitude brings about blessings and necessitates more.

As one of the Salaf said: ‘What is worse than neglecting to remember the one who is never neglectful of remembering you.’⁴³

Section Five:

The Angels Ask for Blessings for the One Who Does Remembrance

50. Remembrance necessitates Allāh sending blessings on the one who practices it and so do His angels. Whosoever is blessed by Allāh and His angels has achieved the success of all success (*falāḥ*) and victory of all victories (*fawṣ*). Allāh says:

⁴³ Bayhaqī in *Shu‘ab al-Imān*, 1/458 #713. It is from the speech of Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abdu’l-Wahhāb al-Balakhī.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا ۖ وَسَبِّحُوهُ بُكْرَةً
وَأَصِيلًا ۖ هُوَ الَّذِي يُصَلِّيْ عَلَيْكُمْ وَمَلَائِكَتُهُ لِيُخْرِجَكُمْ
مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ وَكَانَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَحِيمًا ۝٤٣

“O you who believe! Remember Allāh much, and glorify Him in the morning and the evening. It is He Who sends down blessings on you, as do His angels, that He may bring you out from the depths of darkness into Light. He is Most Merciful to the believers.”

[*al-Aḥzāb* (33): 41-43]

So this mercy is from Him and His angels are a means for them to emerge out of darkness into light. If they receive this mercy from Allāh and His angels, they emerge from the darkness into the light, then what goodness has not reached them through it, and what evil has not been repelled from them? So what a great utter loss for those who are heedless of their Lord's remembrance to be denied His goodness and bounty! And with Allāh lies all success.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Shaikh Ibn Bāz said: “These benefits are also from the benefits of the remembrance of Allāh. It has already preceded that remembrance in reality is all of faith, because remembrance is done with actions, the heart and the tongue. As we have said before this includes having fear of Allāh, being aware of His presence, His greatness and being in awe of Him is all from remembrance. Using the tongue to say the glorification, praising, magnifying and making supplications to Him is all from remembrance. Fulfilling what Allāh has made obligatory for us from the prayers, charities, fasting, pilgrimage and including striving in His way is all from remembrance. The one who does remembrance of Allāh is preoccupied with his heart and limbs doing the acts of obedience to Allāh. Allāh defends those who believe in Him and complete faith is only when remembrance is done with the heart, tongue and actions. Allāh repels from them things which are disliked and harmful for the servant. He allows only those things which are beneficial to the servant and this due their remembrance

Section Six:

The Gardens of Paradise

51. Whoever wishes to live in the Gardens of Paradise (*riyāḍ al-jannah*) in this world then let him frequent the Gatherings of Remembrance (*majālis al-dhikr*) for they are the Gardens of Para-

of Him and them obeying His commands, leaving His prohibitions and that is pinnacle of showing thanks. Allāh increases them from His bounty due to their remembrance of Him wholeheartedly and increases their actions, so the one doing remembrance is the one who is grateful to Allāh. "If you are thankful then I will increase you" and from being grateful to Allāh is good deeds with the heart, tongue, limbs and fearing Allāh, being aware of Him, venerating Him and being in awe of Him. Also glorification, praising and magnifying Him are all types of remembrance and likewise good actions are types of remembrance. The believer remembers Allāh with his heart, his tongue and his actions. This is the opposite of neglect, as the neglectful person is distant from Allāh and from His guidance, whereas the doer of remembrance is near to Allāh and near to all good. Allāh says: "*Remember me and I will remember you, give me thanks and do not be ungrateful.*" [*al-Baqarah* (2): 152]. Allāh sends blessings on those who remember Him, and His angels seek blessings for them also. So which favour is better and greater than that? Allāh says: "*O you who believe! Remember Allāh much, and glorify Him in the morning and the evening. It is He Who sends down blessings on you, as do His angels, that He may bring you out from the depths of darkness into Light. He is Most Merciful to the believers.*" [*al-Ahzāb* (33): 41-43]. This shows that remembrance of Allāh is from the means of Allāh's blessings and His angels seeking the blessings, and from the means of a servant emerging out of the darkness and going into the light. A believer must increase in the remembrance of Allāh with his heart, tongue and actions. Should the servant do that Allāh will not be neglectful of taking care of his provisions, showing him kindness and giving him health and all sorts of good, so beware of neglecting His remembrance. As Allāh says: "*if anyone withdraws Himself from remembrance of Most Gracious, we appoint for Him an evil one, to be an intimate companion to Him.*" [*al-Zukhruf* (43): 36]. Allāh says: "*And indeed, they [the devils] avert them from the way [of guidance] while they think that they are [rightly] guided.*" [*al-Zukhruf* (43): 37]. So the heedless is trialed with devils overpowering him and hindering him from the remembrance of Allāh. As for the one remembering Allāh with his heart; tongue and limbs, holding sacred what Allāh has forbidden, Allāh repels the

dise in this world.

Ibn Abi al-Dunyā and others, mentioned from the narration of Jābir Ibn ‘Abdullāh (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) who said: “The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) came out to us and said: “O people take as much benefit as you can from the gardens of Paradise.”

We said: ‘O the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) and what are the gardens of Paradise?’

He said: “The gatherings of remembrance.”

Then he said: “Remember Allāh as you come and go, whoever wishes to know his place with Allāh then let him look at Allāh’s place with himself, for indeed Allāh puts a servant on a level where the servant has placed Allāh [in his heart].”⁴⁵

Section Seven:

The Gatherings of the Angels

52. The Gatherings of Remembrance (*majālis al-dhikr*) are also the Gatherings of Angels (*majālis al-malā’ika*). The Angels only gather in this world in those gatherings where Allah is being remembered.

As it has been stated in two *sahīhs* (Bukhārī and Muslim) from the narration of al-A’mash from Abū Šālih, on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), who said that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: “Indeed, Allāh has some angels roaming the paths and roads of the earth seeking out the people of remembrance. And when they find people remembering Allāh, the Most High, they call upon each other:

devils, send down His blessings and the angels ask blessings for him.

⁴⁵ Hākim in his *al-Mustadrak*, 1/494-495, Abū Ya’la in his *al-Musnad*, #1865 and others. It is declared weak by al-Albānī in *Da’if al-Targhib wa’l-Tarhib*.

"Be quick! Here is a gathering that you're looking for." They the angels encircle them with their wings up to the nearest heaven filling it up [one above the another].

Then their Lord, the Most High asks them: "What are My servants saying?" and He knows better than they.

They answer: 'They are glorifying You, magnifying You and praising You.'

Allāh than asks them: "Have they seen Me?"

They reply: 'No! by Allāh, O Lord! they have not seen You.'

Allāh than asks them: "If they could see Me, how would they be?"

The angels reply: 'If they could see You, they would worship you more devoutly, glorify You ever more abundantly.'

Allāh than asks them: "And what do they want from Me?"

The angels reply: 'They ask of You of Your Paradise.'

Allāh than asks them: "Have they seen it?"

The angels reply: 'No! by Allāh, O Lord! they have not seen it.'

Allāh than asks them: "Had they seen it, how would they be?"

The angels reply: 'They would strive even more and long for it with greater zeal.'

Allāh than asks them: "And from what do they seek refuge from?"

The angels reply, "They seek refuge from the (Hell) Fire."

Allāh than asks them: "Have they seen it?"

They reply: 'No, by Allāh, they have not.'

Allāh than asks them: "If they could see it, how would they be?"

The angels reply: 'If they saw it they would flee from it with the extreme fleeing and would have extreme fear of it.'

Then Allāh says: "I make you witnesses that I have forgiven them all."

(Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) added:) Then one of the angels says: "There is someone among them, who is not really from them, he only came and joined them due to being in need of something."

Allāh then says: “Whoever sits in these gatherings shall not be reduced to misery.”⁴⁶

So this is from their blessings upon themselves and upon those that sit with them. They will have a portion from the statement of Allāh:

وَجَعَلَنِي مُبَارَكًا أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُ

“He has made me blessed wherever I may be.”

[Maryam (19): 31]

Likewise the believer is blessed wherever may be. The evil doer is unfortunate wherever he may be. The gatherings of remembrance are the gatherings of the angels. The gatherings of heedless are the gatherings of the devils. Each person will connect to what is familiar to him and travel towards what it seeks him.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Bukhāri, #6408, and Muslim. #2689.

⁴⁷ Shaikh Ibn Bāz said: “These benefits are similar to the ones mentioned before as they express the great virtues of remembrance. Allāh has set reward for good deeds and has mentioned it in His great book in order to encourage His servants to increase in their remembrance of Allāh. As He says: “O you who believe remember Allāh much, and say His praise morning and evening.” [al-Aḥzāb (33): 41] and Allāh says: “And when the prayer has been concluded, disperse within the land and seek from the bounty of Allāh, and remember Allāh often that you may succeed.” [al-Jumm’uh (62): 10] and He says: “Indeed, the Muslim men and Muslim women, the believing men and believing women, the obedient men and obedient women, the truthful men and truthful women, the patient men and patient women, the humble men and humble women, the charitable men and charitable women, the fasting men and fasting women, the men who guard their private parts and the women who do so, and the men who remember Allāh often and the women who do so—for them Allāh has prepared forgiveness and a great reward.” [al-Aḥzāb (33): 35]. Allāh says: “Remember Me—I shall remember you. And be grateful to Me, and do not ungrateful.” [al-Baqarah (2):152.] Remembrance is of great importance with the glorification, praising and magnifying Him and all other the acts of worship. The prayer is a form of remembrance, the fasting is remembrance, charities are remembrance, likewise every act of obedience to Allāh that the servant does

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out of obedience to Allāh and out of love for Him is remembrance. It has been narrated from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said: Go forth to the gatherings of the Gardens of Paradise. They said: 'What are they O Messenger of Allāh?' He said: "The gatherings of remembrance." It has also been narrated from the Prophet (ﷺ): "O people when you pass by the gardens of Paradise take as much benefit as you can from them." We said: 'O Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) and what are the gardens of Paradise?' He said: "The gatherings of remembrance." They are also the gatherings of angels, indeed the angels search for the gatherings of remembrance, when they find one they call out 'Be quick to what you are searching for, here is the gathering of remembrance and it is the gatherings of the good people.' The gathering of the angels are where Allāh is mentioned, which help servant to obey Him, they help one another remember Him and aid to leave His prohibitions. The people sitting in those gatherings are the truthful ones and the close allies of Allāh. The believer must increase in his remembrance of Allāh and that he should be a person of these gatherings which is knowledge. Seeking knowledge, understanding and having insight into the religion. Because the circles of remembrance are the circles of knowledge [where the person is taught] what Allāh has commanded and what the Messenger (ﷺ) has informed.

The believer is in great need to seek understanding and insight into the religion. He should occupy his limbs and tongue with His remembrance and veneration. In this way he will raise his rank with Allāh through the levels (of Paradise). The angels surround the people of remembrance and the gatherings of remembrance. When they ascend Allāh will ask them, to make clear the virtue of those that remember Allāh. He asks them: "What are my servants saying?" They will say: 'They are making *tasbeeh* of you and *tahmid* and remembering you.' So Allāh will say: "Have they seen me?" They will say: 'No, O Lord, they have not seen you.' He already knows that but He wants to make their virtue be known and made public. He says: "And how would it be if they did see me?" They will say: 'If they saw you they would remember you and venerate you even more.' Then He asks them: "What are they asking for?" They said: 'They are asking for Paradise.' He will say: "Have they seen it?" They will say: 'No, they have not seen it.' He will say: "And how would they be if they did see it?" The angels will say: 'If they would see it then they would have even more enthusiasm for it and desire for it.' He will say: "And from what are they seeking refuge?" They will say: 'From the fire?' He will say: "Have they seen it?" They will say: 'They have not seen it.' Allāh knows that they have not seen

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Section Eight:

Allāh's Boasting in Front of the Angels

53. Indeed Allāh boasts about those people that remember Him in front of the angels, as narrated by Muslim on the authority of Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) who said: 'Mu'āwiyah came upon a circle of men seated in the *masjid* and asked: 'Why are you sitting here?'

They replied: 'We are sitting to remember Allāh.'

He said: 'By Allāh, are you only sitting for that purpose?'

They said: By Allāh, we are only sitting for this purpose.'

He said: 'I did not ask you to swear because I doubted you. There is no one of my status in relation to the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) who has narrated fewer traditions from him other than me.

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it. And how would they be if they saw it? They would try to flee from it even more. Allāh will say: "I make you as My witness that I have forgiven them and I will give them what they seek, and I give them safety from what they fear." A gathering in which there is remembrance will aid you in obeying and reminding you of Allāh. With it you will increase in certainty of Paradise, Hellfire and the that this world is coming to an end. This is in sharp contrast to the gatherings of neglect, as they aid you only in this life and make you forget the Hereafter. The believer must strive to attend these gatherings of remembrance, as the hereafter is mentioned in them, they contain knowledge and understanding of the religion, until he increases in knowledge and good. These angels that travel the earth looking for gatherings of remembrance are not the angels that come and go at the end of the night and they are not the angels that protect you. They gather at the time of the morning (*fajr*) and evening (*ʿaṣr*) prayers. Once the people have prayed *ʿaṣr*, the angels of the daytime go up to Allāh and after the morning prayer they go up to Allāh. Allāh asks them: "How did you leave my servants?" They will say: 'We left them while they were praying and when we came to them they were praying.' So carefree is the one who observes the prayers in all their times and the angels bear witness for him with their Lord. What is greater in regret than the one who neglects this command and there is no might or power save by Allāh, we ask Allāh for good health and peace.'

The Messenger of Allāh came upon a circle of his Companions and asked: "Why are you sitting here?"

They replied: 'We are sitting to remember Allāh, and praise Him for having guided us to Islām and blessed us with it.'

He (ﷺ) said: "By Allāh, are you only sitting for that purpose?"

They replied: "By Allāh, we are only sitting for that purpose.'

He (ﷺ) said: "I did not ask you to swear because I doubted you, but the Angel Jibrīl came to me and told me that Allāh, the Exalted was boasting of you to the angels."⁴⁸

So this boasting from the Lord is proof of the great honour (*sharḥ*) and esteem which is connected to remembrance and His love (*maḥabbah*) for it and its excellence above all other practices.

54. The person who is habitual with remembrance will enter Paradise laughing. Ibn Abī al-Dunyā mentioned from 'Abdu'l-Raḥmān Ibn Mahdī, from Mu'āwiyah Ibn Ṣāliḥ, from 'Abdu'l-Raḥmān Ibn Jubayr Ibn Nufayr al-Hadhramī, on the authority of Abū'l-Dardā' (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) who said: "The one whose tongue does not cease to be moist with the remembrance of Allāh will enter Paradise while laughing."^{49,50}

⁴⁸ Muslim, #6857

⁴⁹ Ibn Abi Shaybah in his *al-Musannaf*, 6/558 #29459 and Abū Nu'aym in his *al-Hilyah*, 1/219 and 5/133. It is declared weak by al-Albānī in *Da'if al-Jami'*, #4966.

⁵⁰ Shaikh Ibn Bāz said: "These two narrations are connected to the benefits of remembrance and the many benefits that have already proceeded, from the greatest of those benefits is: "*Remember me and I shall remember you.*" Whoever remembers Allāh while on earth, Allāh will mention him in the heavens, by praising him. "*I am as my servant thinks of me. I am with him when he remembers me. Whoever remembers me within his own self, I will remember him within my own self, and whoever remembers me in a gathering, I will mention him in a gathering better than it.*" This is a great virtue, from this virtue is that Allāh boasts to the angels about the people of remembrance out of honour for them and for their remembrance. "*Look at my servants they are doing such and such.*" Their affair is raised with the

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angels and their worth is elevated because of remembrance. This is the reason why when the Prophet (ﷺ) came out to a group of his companions sitting so he asked them: Why are you sitting? They said: 'We are sitting to remember Allāh and His favours upon us that He guided us to Islām. He took us away from disbelief. The Prophet (ﷺ) said to them: "By Allāh, are you only sitting for that purpose?" They said: 'By Allāh, we are only sitting for that purpose.' He said: "I did not ask you to swear because I am accusing you, but Jibril came to me and told me that Allāh was boasting of you to the angels." He mentions them to the angels out of honouring them and the affair of remembrance. Therefore strive in doing much remembrance, supplication and praise for what Allāh has favoured you with. He has favoured you with guidance, success, good intention, and the expanse of your chest with good and countless blessings. Reflect, look, take yourself to account, praises Him and thank Him. Ask Him for success, to aid you upon good, to give you success in obeying Him, and ask His protection from sins. Be humble towards Him and remember Him a lot. This is from the great bounty of Allāh bestowed upon His servant that when he remembers Him, Allāh remembers him in a higher gathering. So it is imperative for you O believer that you strive for this great good and seek to love His remembrance and seek His pleasure. Take yourself to account, strive with it until you adhere to His remembrance, until you keep away from the things which cause His anger. With this remembrance the servant will be in a perpetual state of good as long as he does remembrance of Allāh, as long as his tongue is ever moist with His remembrance. In a narration the Prophet (ﷺ) said when a man came to him and said: 'O Messenger of Allāh, indeed the legislated acts of Islām have become too many for me, so tell something I can hold on to.' He (ﷺ) said: "Let your tongue be ever moist with the remembrance of Allāh." It has been narrated from the Prophet (ﷺ) that those who do remembrance will enter Paradise laughing, joyful, tranquil and pleased due to this greatness of remembrance. So the prayer is a form of remembrance, the fasting too, so too the charity, pilgrimage, enjoining good, forbidding evil and all righteous actions. As for glorification, praising and magnifying Him, then they are from the remembrance of Allāh in speech. From the remembrance of Allāh in action is to fear Allāh with the heart, being in aware of Him, longing to meet Him, feeling joy in His remembrance and conversing with Him. All of this is from remembrance.

55. All actions and deeds have been legislated for the purpose of establishing the remembrance of Allāh and to achieve this remembrance is the aim. Allāh says:

وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذِكْرِي ﴿١٤﴾

“Establish the regular prayer to remember Me.”

[*Taba* (20): 14]

It has been said that it is a verbal noun [root word] which is connected to the subject, meaning “so that I [Allāh] may remember you with it.” It has also been said that it is a predicated to the One remembered: “So that you may remember Me with it.” So based on this the letter *lām*, in both cases is used to express purpose. It has also argued by others that the *lām* denotes a sense of time, meaning “establish the prayer at the time of My remembrance”. Such as the statement of Allāh:

وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِدُلُوكِ الشَّمْسِ

“Establish the prayer at the time of sunset”

[*al-Isrā'* (17): 78]

and the statement of Allāh:

وَنَضَعُ الْمَوَازِينَ الْقِسْطَ لِيَوْمِ الْقِيَمَةِ

“We will place the scales of justice on the Day of Judgement.”

[*al-Anbiyā'* (21): 47]

This is the intended meaning of the above two verses is time, however to say that, this is the explanation of “Establish regular prayer for My remembrance” needs to be looked at, because the *lām* that is denoting time is always followed by adverbs of time and

place; whereas remembrance is a verbal noun, unless the time is hidden, that is at the time of my remembrance—which is a possibility. What is most apparent is that it is the *lām* denoting purpose. The verse means ‘Establish the prayer for the purpose of My remembrance.’

What is necessitated from this is that the prayer should be established at the time when Allāh is remembered. So when the servant remembers his Lord, Allāh’s remembrance of him has already preceded his remembrance of Allāh. Hence when Allāh remembers him, He inspires the servant to His remembrance of Him. Hence all these meanings are correct. Allāh says:

أَتْلُ مَا أُوْحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ
وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ
وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

“Recite what has been revealed to you of the Book and establish the prayer. Indeed, the prayer restrains from shameful deeds and wrongdoing. And remembrance of Allāh is greater still.”

[*al-‘Ankabūt* (29): 45]

So it has been said: ‘The meaning is that you remember Allāh in the prayer and He remembers the one who remembers Him and the remembrance of Allāh is greater than your remembrance of Him. This has been narrated from Ibn ‘Abbās, Salmān [al-Farsī], Abū’l Dardā’ and Ibn Mas‘ūd (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhum*).

Ibn Abī al-Dunyā mentioned from Fudayl Ibn Marzūq that ‘Aṭīyah who said that “And Allāh’s remembrance is greater” is the same as the verse “Remember me and I will remember you.”

⁵¹ Bayhaqī in *Shu‘ab al-Imān*, 1/448, 449

So the remembrance of Allāh of you is greater than your remembrance of Him.⁵¹

Ibn Zayd and Qatādah said: 'It could mean the remembrance of Allāh is greater than everything else.'⁵²

It was said to Salmān: 'What is the best practice?' He answered: 'Have you not read the verse: "And Allāh's remembrance is greater"?'⁵³

The narration of Abū'l-Dardā' (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) has preceded in which he said: 'The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: "Should I not inform you of the best of your deeds? The purest of them with your Master, the highest of them in your ranks and what is better for you than spending gold and silver. Better for you than meeting your enemy and striking their necks and they strike your necks?"

They said: 'Of course.'

He said: "The remembrance of Allāh, the Most High!"⁵⁴

Shaikh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah—may Allāh have mercy on his soul—used to say: 'What is correct about the verse is that the prayer has two great purposes, one of them is greater than the other, the prayer prevents from shameful deeds (*fahshā'*) and wrongdoings (*munkar*). It also includes of the remembrance of Allāh, the Most High, the remembrance of Allāh is greater than the restraint from shameful deeds and wrongdoings.'⁵⁵

Ibn Abī al-Dunyā said that Ibn 'Abbās (*radīy Allāhu 'anhumā*) was asked: 'Which deed is the most excellent?' He answered: 'And

⁵² See Qurtubi in his *Tafsir*, 13/308

⁵³ Ibn Abī Shaybah in his *al-Muṣannaf*, 6/60

⁵⁴ Tirmidhī, #3377. It is declared ṣaḥīḥ by al-Albānī in *al-Jāmi' Tirmidhī*, 5/459.

⁵⁵ See *Majmu' al-Fatāwa*, 10/753, 15/344, 20/192-193, 23/232 and *Madārij al-Sālikin*, 2/443-444.

⁵⁶ Ibn Abī Shaybah in his *al-Muṣannaf*, 7/135, #34777.

Allāh's remembrance is greater.⁵⁶

In the *Sunan*, it is reported on the authority of 'A'ishah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhā*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "The circumambulation (*tawāf*) around the Sacred House, running between *Ṣafā* and *Marwā* and the casting of the stones are all forms of establish the remembrance of Allāh."⁵⁷

This ḥadīth was narrated by Abū Dāwūd and Tirmidhī and both of them considered it ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Abū Dāwūd, #1883, Tirmidhī, #902 and Aḥmad, 8/86. It is declared weak by al-Albānī in *Sunan Abū Dāwūd*, 2/179.

⁵⁸ Shaikh Ibn Bāz said: 'This all is from the benefits of remembering Allāh. Remembrance combines all good and for this reason Allāh legislated all righteous actions in order to establish His remembrance. So the prayer, fasting, Zakah, pilgrimage, and striving in the path of Allah, are all for maintaining His remembrance. As Allāh says: "Recite what has been revealed to you of the Book and establish the prayer. Indeed, the prayer restrains from shameful deeds and wrongdoings. And Allāh's remembrance is greater still." [al-'Ankabūt (29): 45], this is because of His remembrance, veneration and sanctifying Him is greater. He deserves to be remembered and supplicated to, wherever and whenever a person may be. Allāh says: "O you who believe remember Allāh much, and say His praise morning and evening." [al-Aḥzāb (33): 41] and Allāh says: "Remember Me—I shall remember you. And be grateful to Me, and do not be Ungrateful." [al-Baqarah (2): 152]. And Allāh says: "Indeed, the Muslim men and Muslim women, the believing men and believing women, the obedient men and obedient women, the truthful men and truthful women, the patient men and patient women, the humble men and humble women, the charitable men and charitable women, the fasting men and fasting women, the men who guard their private parts and the women who do so, and the men who remember Allāh often and the women who do so—for them Allāh has prepared forgiveness and a great reward." [al-Aḥzāb (33): 35]. All of these are characteristics of the believers. You will never find the believer except that he is remembering Allāh. This is because Allāh is the one who is blessing him, showing him kindness and to his children. They are enjoying His kindness day and night. It is He who is worthy to be remembered and glorified. His remembrance is from being thankful to Him. Allāh says: "Remember Me—I shall remember you. And be grateful to Me, and do not Ungrateful." [al-Baqarah (2): 152]

In a narration the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "The circumambulation (*tawāf*) around the Sacred House, and running between *Ṣafā* and *Marwā* and the casting of the

56. The most excellent (*afḍal*) of those who perform any good deed (*ʿaml*) are people who do it with the greatest amount of remembrance of Allāh. The best fasting (*afḍal al-ṣuwm*) is of those people who remember Allāh the most whilst they are fasting. The best charitable giving (*afḍal al-mutaṣaddiq*) is of those people who remember Allāh the most whilst they are giving. The best of those who perform pilgrimage (*afḍal al-ḥujjā*) are those people who remember Allāh the most while they are performing their pilgrimage. This virtue of remembrance also applies to all other deeds.

Ibn Abī al-Dunyā stated a mursal ḥadīth concerning this: The Prophet (ﷺ) was asked who from the people who visit the *masjid* (*ablu'l-masjid*) are the best? He said: "Those who remember Allāh the most." It was said: 'Which of the people who attended the funeral procession (*ablu'l-janāzab*) were best?' He said: "Those who remember Allāh, the Most." It was said: 'Which of the *mujāhidīn* were best?' He said: "Those who remember Allāh the most." It was said: 'Which of the people who perform pilgrimage (*ḥujjā*) were best?' He said: "Those who remember Allāh the most." It was then said: 'Which of the servants (*ʿubbād*) were best?' He said: "Those who remember Allāh the most."⁵⁹

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stones are all forms of maintaining (*iqāmah*) the remembrance of Allāh." Allāh has legislated these deeds so that His remembrance is made and so that He may be remembered often, praised and sanctified. In another authentic narration of Abū'l-Dardā' (*raḍiy Allāhu ʿanhu*) has preceded in which he said: 'The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: "Should I not inform you of the best of your deeds, and the purest of them with your Master? The highest of them in your ranks, and what is better for you than spending gold and silver. Better for you than meeting your enemy, you striking their necks, and they strike your necks?" They said: 'Of course.' He said: "The remembrance of Allāh, the Most High! Remember Allāh by fulfilling the obligations and leaving His prohibitions. Keeping the heart, tongue and limbs busy with Allāh has obligated and legislated. This is the purpose of this life.

⁵⁹ Bayhaqī in *Shu'ab al-Imān*, 1/408, #558.

Abū Bakr said: 'Those that remember Allāh have taken with them all good.'⁶⁰

‘Ubayd Ibn ‘Umayr said: 'If you find nights too long for standing or you are too stingy to spend your wealth in charity or you are too cowardly to fight against your enemy [in combat], then abundantly increase in the remembrance of Allāh.'⁶¹

Section Nine: Benefits of Maintaining Remembrance

57. Constant remembrance (*idāma al-dhikr*) can replace voluntary good actions. Whether it is physical actions or monetary or even both like a voluntary *Hajj*.

This is clear from the narration of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*): 'The poorest among the *Muhajirūn* came to the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) and said: 'O Messenger of Allāh! The rich among us have taken the highest degrees (*darajāt al-‘ulā*) and permanent pleasures (*na‘im muqīm*) [in this life and the life to come in the Hereafter].' The Prophet (ﷺ) asked, "How so?"

They said: 'They pray as we pray and fast as we fast. But they also spend from their surplus wealth, which they use to go on the *Hajj* and 'Umrah and they spend in Allāh's cause.'

He (ﷺ) said: "Shall I not teach you something, which, by doing it, you can easily reach those who are ahead of you and supersede those who will come after you. Nobody will be able to do better than you in good deeds except those who does as you do?"

⁶⁰ Bayhaqī in *Shu‘ab al-Imān*, 1/408.

⁶¹ Ibn Abī Shaybah in his *al-Muṣannaf*, 6/91, #29726, and mentioned by Abū'l-Qāsim Tamām Ibn Muḥammad al-Rāzī in *al-Fawā'id*, 1/136 in a marfu' form with a weak chain.

They said: 'Yes, O Messenger of Allāh!'

He (ﷺ) said: "Glorify Allāh ten times, praise Allāh ten times and magnify Allāh ten times, do this after every prayer." This tradition is agreed upon.⁶²

He has made remembrance as a replacement for them for what they were unable to do from *Hajj*, *Umrah* and spending in His cause. He informed them that they can surpass them all with remembrance. So when the rich heard about what they were doing, they began doing the same—thereby adding to their charities, and other acts of worship with their wealth—so worshipping with this remembrance, they achieve both excellence and they competed with the poor. The poor again informed the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) that the rich were partaking in the same remembrance and were leaving them behind [in the race to do more good deeds], and they the poor, could not do nor had they any control over it. He then said:

ذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَاءُ

"That is the unbounded favour of Allāh which He gives to whomever He wills"

[*al-Mā'idah* (5): 54]⁶³

In the narration of 'Abdullāh Ibn Bishr (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) who said: 'A Bedouin came and said: 'O Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ), the legislated acts have become too much for me. So give me something comprehensive that I can do.'

He (ﷺ) said: "Upon you is the remembrance of Allāh, the Most High."

He said: 'Will that be enough for me O Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ)?'

He replied: "Yes, it will be more than enough."⁶⁴

⁶² Bukhārī, #6329 and Muslim, #595.

⁶³ Bukhārī, #6329.

So the Prophet (ﷺ) directed him something that would inspire him to carry out all the acts of Islām and to increase in it. When he takes to remembrance and makes it his slogan he starts to love Allāh and love everything that Allāh loves. Then nothing becomes more beloved to him than getting closer to Allāh through the actions that are legislation in Islām. So the Prophet (ﷺ) directed him to something that would enable him fulfil those deeds of Islām, something that would make them easy for him and that thing is the remembrance of Allāh. This is made clearer by the following:

58. The remembrance of Allāh is the best aid for His obedience (*tā'at*). It makes obedience beloved and easy for the servant and subservient to Him. Remembrance becomes the coolness of his eyes (*qurra 'aynnhi*), its becomes his bliss (*na'im*) and joy (*surūr*) until he finds no difficulty in it or a burden like what the heedless person finds. Experience has proven this. The following point make this clearer.

59. Remembrance of Allāh makes every difficulty (*sa'b*) easy and lightens what is heavy. When the servant remembers Allāh it removes every difficulty, make easy what is difficult, removes every obstacle, it lightens every hardship and removes grief. So the remembrance of Allāh is the relief when in adversity (*shidda*), the ease when in hardship, and the relief (*farj*) when in grief (*ghamm*) and sorrow (*hamm*). The following point makes it clearer.

60. The remembrance of Allāh, Exalted alleviates all fear from the heart. It has an amazing effect of bringing about security and peace. For the person whose has fear that has intensified there is nothing more beneficial than the remembrance of Allāh. It is in proportional to his remembrance, he will finds security, and his

⁶⁴Tirmidhī, #3297, Ibn Mājah, #3783 and Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, #17020.

fears fade will away. So much so, that the fear he once felt has now become a source of peace and comfort. Whereas the heedless person may be scared even if he is in relative peace and comfort, yet is still afraid. Everything seems to be a source of fear for him. Whoever has the slightest sense has experienced this, and Allāh's help is sought.⁶⁵

⁶⁵ Shaikh Ibn Bāz said: 'All of these narrations show that the best of actions are those that contain a lot of remembrance. The more remembrance an action contains, the more the reward for that action will be, so the best of people that do actions are those that remember Allāh the most, in prayer, fasting, zakat, pilgrimage, and striving in His path, are all for maintaining His remembrance. So the best righteousness is for the one who remembers Allāh the most in their actions of the heart and body. The believer does good with his heart and tongue and his limbs. So the limbs, the tongue and the heart are all busy with actions, all of which are from the remembrance of Allāh. Fear of Allāh, being aware of His watching over you, longing for Him, having good thoughts towards Him is all from the remembrance of the heart. Frequently saying glorification, praising and magnifying Him are from the remembrance of the tongue. The prayer, the fasting, charity and striving in His path are from the actions of the limbs. The more a servant gathers between the forms of remembrance like praying, which is a form of remembrance. Fasting, giving charity, making the pilgrimage is not being neglectful and will have more reward. So the best of the warriors are the ones that make more remembrance of Allāh. The best of those that pray are those that remember Allāh the most. The best of those that give charity are those that remember Allāh the most and so on and so forth. When the poorest people saw the rich doing good actions such as giving charity, making the major and lesser pilgrimage, striving with their wealth, they said: 'O Messenger of Allāh! The wealthy [among us] have taken the highest degrees (*darajāt al-'ulā*) and permanent pleasures (*na'im muqīm*).' They said: 'They pray as we do and fast as we do, but they spend from their surplus wealth, which they use to go on the greater pilgrimage and the lesser pilgrimage and spend in His path.' He (ﷺ) said: "Shall I not teach you something, which, by doing it, you can catch up with those who are ahead of you and supersede those who will come after you and nobody will be able to do such a good deed as you do except the one who does as you do?" They said: 'Yes, O Messenger of Allāh!' He (ﷺ) said: "You glorify, praise and magnify [Allāh] after every prayer."

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In another narration to complete a hundred (by saying): "There is no deity worthy of worship save Allāh, alone, without any partners. To Him belong kingship and praise, and He is able to do all things." He informed them they can catch up to those who had wealth and where giving in charity and other good deeds such as freeing servants with this remembrance, because they were unable to do the deeds of the rich people, they made up for it with remembrance of Allāh with the heart, tongue and actions. Thereby reaching those that went ahead of them (in the race to do good deeds). The poor said: Their brothers who had wealth heard about this remembrance and started doing it too. So the poor came and informed the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) that the wealthy were partaking in the same remembrance and were leaving them behind [in the race to do more good deeds], and they the poor, could not do. He said: *"That is the unbounded favour of Allāh which He gives to whomever He wills"* [al-Mā'idah (5): 54]

When Allāh gives a servant the complete entrustment of wealth, of the heart and tongue, then that is the bounty of Allāh He gives it to whomsoever He wishes, and he will be on the highest level. A man came to the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) "Indeed the laws of Islām have become too much for me, so tell of an action that I can keep to. So he said: "Keep your tongue moist from the remembrance of Allāh." Because he knew that remembrance was something that would help him compete with others in good deeds, and reach all types of good. All this from the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) shows us that the believer must increase in remembrance and not be in a state of heedlessness. Whether in his house, out on the road, in his shop, in his car or in any other place. Even in his prayer or when fasting. He should not be heedless, while praying his heart is in remembrance to Allāh, while making pilgrimage his heart is making remembrance and while he is giving charity. In every situations his heart is connected to Allāh, remembering His kindness towards him, having hope in Him, glorifying, praising and magnifying Him. The servant is always thinking about Him in a good way. Praying, fasting, giving in charity, and doing other good deeds only for the sake Allāh. It must not be done for fame nor for reputation, and nor for any other reason. This is the best of all actions. The person doing them will be granted success and it will lead other good deeds. However this is only for the one who is occupied with the remembrance of Allāh, all the while he is busy with what Allāh has prescribed from the obligations and staying away from the forbidden matters. All this while his heart is fully engaged in the remembrance of Allāh.

Section Ten:

Remembrance Gives Strenght

61. Remembrance gives strength to the one who practices it, so much so that he is able to do that which he can not be done without it. For I witnessed Shaikh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah—may Allāh have mercy on his soul—have strength in his actions, speech and writing books in an amazing way. He would write in one day what it would take a scribe to write in a week or more and the soldiers also testified to the amazing strength in combat [that remembrance gave him].

The Prophet (ﷺ) taught his daughter Fāṭimah and ‘Alī—(*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*)—to recite each night upon going to bed: the glorification thirty three times, praising thirty three times, and magnifying thirty four times. This was when she asked the Prophet (ﷺ) for a maid and complained to him about the difficulty she suffered in grinding flour, doing errands and doing other household chores, so he taught her and [her husband] ‘Alī to say this remembrance and said: “This will be better for you both than a maid.”⁶⁶

It has also been said: “To continuously say this remembrance gives a person such strength that it will also suffice them the following day, leaving them in no need for a servant.”

I heard Shaikh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah—may Allāh have mercy on his soul—mentioning a narration regarding this issue: ‘Indeed the angels, when they were ordered to carry the throne of Allāh, they said: ‘O Our Lord, how do we carry Your Throne when upon it is Your Greatness and Might?’ He said: “Say: There is neither

⁶⁶ Bukhārī, #3705.

strength nor power except in Allāh.”⁶⁷

I even saw Ibn Abi al-Dunyā mention this exact narration from Layth Ibn Sa’d, from Mu’āwiyah Ibn Ṣāliḥ, who said: ‘Our teachers narrated to us that it has reached them that the first of what Allāh created—when His Throne was upon the water—was the carriers of the Throne.’

They said: ‘Our Lord, why have you created us?’

He said: ‘I have created you so that you can carry My Throne.’

They said: ‘Our Lord, how will we have the strength to carry Your Throne, when upon it will be Your Greatness and Majesty?’

He said: “That is why I created you.” So they repeated this question over and over again, until He said to them: “Say: There is neither strength nor power except in Allāh.”⁶⁸

This statement has tremendous benefits and effects in aiding the servant when faced with a difficult task by easing that task, lightening the load of hardship, removing the fear when entering upon monstrous kings and bear terrible events. It also has an effect on driving away poverty, as was narrated by Ibn Abi al-Dunyā, from Layth Ibn Sa’d, from Mu’āwiyah Ibn Ṣāliḥ from Asad Ibn Wāda’a, who said: ‘The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: ‘Whoever says: “There is neither strength nor power except in Allāh,” one hundred times every day, will never have poverty befall him.”’⁶⁹

Whenever Ḥabīb Ibn Musllamma would encounter an enemy or

⁶⁷ See Shaikh ul-Islām in *Minhāj al-Sunnab al-Nabawiyah*, 4/512. Also a detail commentary of this statement in the book, “*Treasure from the Treasures of Paradise*” of ‘Abdu’l-Razzāq Ibn ‘Abdu’l-Muḥsin al-Badr. Published by Dār as-Sunnab Publishers, Birmingham, United Kingdom, 1st ed., 2013.

⁶⁸ Ṭabarī in his *Tafsīr*, 29/37, 38. As for this narration, then with this particular chain it appears to be weak due to hidden defects.

⁶⁹ See *Targhib wa’l-Tarhib* of al-Mundhri, 2/441. It is declared weak by al-Albānī in *Da’if al-Targhib wa’l-Tarhib*, 1/486-487.

storm a fortress, he preferred to say: "There is neither strength nor power except in Allāh." One day, he attacked a fortress belonging to the Byzantines, the Muslims began to repeat these words and as a result the fortress fell to them."⁷⁰

⁷⁰ Shaikh Ibn Bāz said: These are also from the many benefits of remembrance, and all types of remembrance is good. "*And the remembrance of Allāh is the greatest.*" It aids all other acts of worship, makes them easier for the believer and beloved to him. It also encourages him to stay firm upon them and His Lord remembers him: "*Remember me and I will remember you.*" So doing remembrance of Allāh during acts of worship and being occupied with it at all times aids in the obedience of Allāh. It reminds the servant of Allāh's right and makes easy for him the obligations that are required of him. It is a cause for him to be in the utmost state of happiness, tranquillity, safety and bliss. Whereas the heedless is isolated in all his situations. So upon you O servant of Allāh is to strive with keeping your tongue ever moist with the remembrance of Allāh and the same applies in all act of worship. Remembrance of the heart should be fear, love, hope, yearning for Him, remembering His favours and kindness to you. Remembrance is also with the tongue by saying glorification, praising and magnifying Him - and supplication, and saying: "*There is neither strength nor power except in Allāh*"—and other than that which is said by the tongue of remembrance. It can also be with the limbs such as the prayer, fasting, pilgrimage and striving in His path, enjoining the good and forbidding the evil and all other acts of righteousness. All such actions are a source of strength and power for you and for your heart. It is also a way to make easy your obedience to Allāh and His messenger. It removes your anxieties and fears, because the one who remembers Allāh is tranquil, his fears all fade away and is replaced with peace, serenity and calmness. This is because he knows that Allāh remembers the one who remembers Him, and loves that person. "*Remember Me—I shall remember you. And be grateful to Me, and do not be ungrateful.*" [al-Baqarah (2): 152]

"*And the remembrance of Allāh is the greatest.*" And Allāh says when mentioning the description of the believers he finished by saying: "*and the men who remember Allāh often and the women who do so—for them Allāh has prepared forgiveness and a great reward.*" [al-Ahzāb (33): 35]

The Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Journey on, the solitary ones (*mufridūn*) have gone ahead." They said: 'Who are the solitary ones?' He said: "Remembrance will remove the burdens of those who are completely taken up by the remembrance of Allāh, the Most High." They have gone ahead to every good, because their

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62. Those who work for the next world are like those who are running upon a racetrack and the people of remembrance are the ones leading the race. However their lead is forming dust clouds that are not allowing the view of the track to be clear. When the dust settles, the people finally get to see them and they will have already won the race.

Al-Walid Ibn Muslim said: ‘Muḥammad Ibn ‘Ijlān said: ‘I heard ‘Umar, the freed slave of Ghafarah saying: ‘On the Day of Judgment, when the veil is lifted to disclose the reward of the actions of the people, they will not see any greater reward for an action other than remembrance. Many people will have regrets on that day, they will say: ‘There was nothing easier for us to do then remembrance.’”

Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: “Go ahead, the *mufridūn* have surpassed everyone.” They said: ‘Who are the *mufridūn*?’ He said: “Those that have accustomed themselves with the remembrance of Allāh, the Most High. Remembrance has removed their burdens completely.””⁷¹

63. Remembrance becomes a means for the Lord to confirm His servant’s truthfulness, for the person making remembrance he pronounces clearly Allāh’s lofty attributes of perfection (*kamāl*) and sublimity (*jalāl*). Each time the servant pronounce this remembrance, his Lord confirms his statement. And whoever’s statement is considered truthful by Allāh, then he would not be

remembrance of Allāh has helped them to fulfil His right, and to restrain themselves from His disobedience. It reminds them of His rights over them, so reflect on that. You will find them filling their time with obedience and caution from those things that earn His anger.

⁷¹ Tirmidhi, #3520. It is declared weak by al-Albānī in *Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī*, 5/577.

gathered with the liars (*kādhībīn*), rather it is hoped that he would be gathered with the truthful (*ṣādiqīn*).

Abū Ishāq narrated on the authority of al-Agharra Abū Muslim that he witnessed Abū Hurayrah and Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*), that they witnessed the Prophet (ﷺ) say: 'Whoever says: "There is none worthy of worship except Allāh, and Allāh is the Greatest."

Allāh says: "My servant has spoken the truth, there is none worthy of worship except Me and I am the Greatest,"

And when he says: 'There is none worthy of worship except for Allāh, Alone.'

Allāh says: "My servant has spoken the truth, there is none worthy of worship except for Me and I am Alone." And when he says: 'There is none worthy of worship except for Allāh, Alone, without partner.'

Allāh says: "My servant has spoken the truth, there is none worthy of worship except Me, Alone, I have no partner." And when he says: 'There is none worthy of worship except for Allāh, to Him belongs the Kingdom, and to Him belong the praise.'

Allāh says: "My servant has spoken the truth, there is none worthy of worship except Me, to Me belongs all that exists, and to Me is the praise." And when he says: 'There is none worthy of worship except Allāh', and 'There is neither strength nor power but in Allāh'

Allāh says: "My servant has spoken the truth, there is none worthy of worship except Me, and there is neither strength nor power

⁷² Tirmidhī, #3430

⁷³ Shaikh Ibn Bāz said: 'These narrations show that remembrance is a great affair in giving the servant strength in obeying Allāh and strength to carry out his household chores etc. Also, while combating against the enemies of Allāh. Remembrance and doing good deeds have an important role in fortifying the hearts and giving it vitality. The servant must increase in the remembrance of

but in Me.” And then he said: “Whoever said this when he was in ill, then dies, the Fire shall not consume him.”^{72,73}

64. The Higher levels of Paradise are built by remembrance. So when the servant ceases his remembrance, the angels cease their building, when he continues his remembrance, they continue building.

Ibn Abī al-Dunyā mentioned in his book that Ḥakīm Ibn Muḥammad al-Akhnaṣī, who said: ‘It has reached me that the buildings in Paradise are made through remembrance, so when the servant ceases in remembrance, they stop building, and when the angels are asked, why have you stopped building? They say: ‘When our wages come.’”

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Allāh, glorification, praising and magnifying Him, reading the Qur’ān, seeking forgiveness and supplicating. All of this has a great effect on the strength of the servant and his determination with the truth, which is something well known to those that reflect. So when Fatimah complained to the Prophet (ﷺ) about her household chores and asked for a maid, because at that time she did not have one, he said to her and her husband ‘Alī (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*): “make glorification, praising and magnifying Him before going to sleep, and that will be better for you than a maid.” Fātimah started doing that and was never tired after that. Once she had become tired of saying that remembrance, she said: ‘I have not felt tired doing house chores since.’ Also the statement: “There is neither strength nor power except in Allāh,” is a tremendous statement and a treasure from the treasures of Paradise as mentioned in the narration of Bukhārī and Muslim on the authority of Abū Musā (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), who reported: ‘Shall I not tell you of treasure from the treasures of Paradise?’ They said; ‘of course O Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ).’ He said: “There is neither strength nor power except in Allāh.” So this should be said a lot while going through adversities and all times.” This is also something said during combating against the enemies, and bringing down fortresses, repelling evil and to bringing about good. All of the forms of remembrance aforementioned are means to bring about an end to tribulations and make things ease, to help fulfil the needs of a person and also a way to obtain Allāh’s pleasure.

Ibn Abi al-Dunyā also mentioned on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: ‘Whoever says: “Glory be to Allāh and praise! Glory be to Allāh Almighty!”—seven times—a tower is built for him in Paradise.’”⁷⁴

Just as its structures are built by remembrance, so too are its gardens planted by remembrance, as has preceded in the narration from the Prophet (ﷺ) who said that Ibrāhīm (*‘alayhis-salām*) said: “Paradise has pure soil, sweet water, it has green vegetation and its trees are planted by the remembrance: “Glory be to Allāh’, ‘All praise is due to Allāh’, ‘None has the right to be worshipped but Allāh’, and Allāh is the greatest.””⁷⁵

So by doing remembrance it is planting in the garden and building on it.

Also Ibn Abī al-Dunyā mentioned the narration of ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Plant the trees of Paradise abundantly!”

They said: ‘O Messenger of Allāh, how do we plant the trees of Paradise?’

He said: [by saying] “Whatever Allāh wills. There is neither strength nor power except in Allāh.””⁷⁶

65. Remembrance is a barrier (*sadd*) between the servant (*‘abd*) and the Hellfire (*jahannam*). So if he is going on a path towards the Hellfire because of certain actions, then remembrance will form a

⁷⁴ Bukhārī in his *Tarikh al-Kabīr*, 3/522, #1750 on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*).

⁷⁵ Tirmidhī, #3462, Ṭabarānī, in his *al-Awsaṭ*, #4170 and Bazār in his *Musnad*, #1991, #1992. It is declared ḥasan by Al-Albānī in *al-Ṣaḥīḥah*, #105.

⁷⁶ Ṭabarānī in his *al-Mu‘jam al-Kabīr*, #13354 and others. It is declared ḥasan by al-Albānī in *al-Targhib wa’l-Tarhib*, #1584.

barrier on that path. So if the remembrance is continuous (*da'im*) and complete (*kāmil*) then the barrier is fortified (*muhkam*) and impenetrable (*munfadh*), otherwise it will be according to the level of his remembrance.

'Abdu'l-'Azīz Ibn Abū Rawād said: 'A man was out in the desert who built himself a *masjid*, where he placed seven stones towards the front of the *masjid*. Whenever he would finished from the prayer he would say to them: 'O you stones! I make you as a witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allāh!' Some time later he said: 'The man became very sick and his soul ascended.' He said: 'I saw in my sleep that I was ordered to enter the Hellfire. All

⁷⁷ Ibn Abi al-Dunyā in his *Manamāt*, 1/115, #239.

⁷⁸ Shaikh Ibn Bāz said: 'All these narrations show the virtue of the people of remembrance, they are the foremost in doing every good. Indeed, they are the close allies of Allāh, the highest in rank on the day of Judgement. Their righteous actions are better due to the amount of remembrance they do with their good deeds. Remembrance of the heart, tongue and actions rectifies the affairs of the servant and keeps them upright upon the truth. Remembrance is the sign of truthfulness, fulfilling the obligations and keeping far away from the forbidden matters. One should increases in all the various forms of remembrance be it glorification, praising and magnifying Him and the statement: "There is neither strength nor power except in Allāh" abundantly in all acts of worship. In this regards the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Go ahead, the *mufridūn* have gone ahead." They said: 'Who are the *mufridūn* ones?' He said: "Those men and women that remember Allāh much." That is because they have preceded in all good deeds due to the remembrance of Allāh which makes the heart move towards the obedience of Allāh, it renews the acts of obedience to Allāh, it keeps the heart away from anything which might cause the anger of Allāh as preceded in the narration: "Shall I not inform you of the best of your actions, or the purest of them with your King (Allāh)? The ones which raise your rank. It is better for you than spending gold, better than when you meeting your enemy and strike their necks and they striking yours?" They said: 'Of course O Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ).' He said: "The remembrance Allāh." What is meant is that the remembrance of Allāh includes the fulfilling of the obligations, leaving of the forbidden matters, stopping short of the boundaries

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of a sudden I saw one of those stones which I realised had grown huge size come before me until it blocked the door way for me to enter the Hellfire. I was then called from another door of the hellfire. But another stone came which I recognized, again grown huge size, it did the same thing, until all seven stones blocked all the seven doors of the Hellfire.”^{77,78}

66. The angels seek forgiveness for the one who makes regular remembrance (*dhākir*), just as they do for the one who repents from sin.

As narrated by Ḥusayn al-Mu‘allim from ‘Abdullāh Ibn Buraydah, from ‘Āmir al-Sha‘bī, on the authority of ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Amr Ibn al-‘Āṣ (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), who said: ‘I found in the book of Allāh that if a servant says: “Praise be to Allāh”, the angels say: “Lord of the Worlds.”

And when he says: “Praise be to Allāh, Lord of the Worlds”, the angels say: “O Allāh, forgive Your servant.”

And when he says: “Glory be to Allāh”, the angels say: “And His praise.”

When he says: “Glory be to Allāh and His praise”, the angels say: “O Allāh, forgive Your servant.”

When he says: “None has the right to be worshipped save Allāh,” the angels say: “And Allāh is Greater.”

When he says: “None has the right to be worshipped but Allāh and Allāh is Greater”, the angels say: “O Allāh, forgive Your servant.”

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⁷⁹ Ibn Abī al-Dunyā in his *Kitāb al-Dbīk*

⁸⁰ Ṭabarānī in *Mu‘jam al-Kabīr*, 9/103, #8542, Ibn al-Mubārak in his *al-Zuhd*, p112-113, Ibn Abī Shaybah in his *al-Muṣannaḥ*, 13/305, and Bayhaqī in *Shu‘ab al-Imān*, 2/433-344, 581 with a hasan chain.

Section Twelve:

The Mountains and the Wilderness Boast and
Rejoice at the Invoker of Remembrance

67. The mountains and the wilderness boast to one another and are rejoiced at the one who remembers Allāh Almighty.

Ibn Mas'ūd (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) said: 'Indeed a mountain calls another mountain by its name and asks: 'Did anyone pass by you today remembering Allāh?' If the reply is in the affirmative, then the mountain rejoices.'⁸⁰

'Awn Ibn 'Abdullāh said: 'Indeed the patches of land call out to one another saying: 'O my neighbours, did anyone pass by you today remembering Allāh?' Some will say yes, and others will say no.'⁸¹

Al-A'mash related from Mujāhid that a mountain calls to another [mountain] by its name: 'O such and such did anyone pass by you today that was remembering Allāh?' Some will say no, and others will say yes.'⁸²

68. Abundance in the remembrance of Allāh is security from hypocrisy [for the invoker], for the hypocrites (*munāfiqūn*) remember Allāh but little. Allāh says about them:

وَلَا يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا

"And they do not remember Allāh but very little."

[*al-Nisā'* (4): 142]

⁸¹ Ibn Abi Hātim in his *Tafsīr*, Ibn Kathīr in his *Tafsīr*, 5/2252 and Abū Nu'aym in his *al-Hilyah*, 4/242.

⁸² Ṭabarānī in *Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, 1/17742, Abū Nu'aym in his *al-Hilyah*, 6/174-175, Ibn al-Mubārak in his *al-Zuhd*, p.113, Ibn Abī Shaybah in his *al-Muṣannaḥ*, 13/365,

Ka'b said: 'Whoever is frequent in remembering Allāh will be free from hypocrisy (*nifāq*).

For this reason—and Allāh knows best—Allāh ended the chapter of hypocrisy with the verse:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تُلْهِكُمْ
أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُكُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ
ذَٰلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ ﴿٩﴾

"O you who believe! do not let your wealth or your children divert you from the remembrance of Allāh. Whosoever does that is lost."

[*al-Munāfiqūn* (63): 9]

So there is a warning (*taḥdhīr*) against trials that are neglectful of the remembrance of Allāh and so fell into hypocrisy (*nifāq*).

Some of the Companions were asked—(*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*)—about the Khawārij: 'Are they hypocrites?' They said: 'No, the hypocrites are those that only remember Allāh a little.'⁸³ To remember Allāh little is a sign of hypocrisy (*'alāmat al-nifāq*)—to remember Him much is a protection from hypocrisy (*amān min al-nifāq*). Allāh is

⁸³ Ibn Abī Shaybah in his *al-Muṣannaf*, 15/206-207, 332, 'Abdu'l-Razzāq in his *al-Muṣannaf*, 10/150, Muḥammad Ibn Naṣr al-Marwazī in his *Ta'ẓīm qadr al-ṣalat*, 2/543-544 and others with some of its chain ṣaḥīḥ.

⁸⁴ Shaikh Ibn Bāz said: 'These narrations are all connected with the excellence of remembrance, it's great virtue and the many benefits. It has been narrated that planting in paradise occurs when remembrance is done. So the believer should do as much remembrance as he can, in the morning and evening, and when ever possible, because Allāh has commanded so: "O you who believe remember Allāh much, and say His praise morning and evening." [*al-Aḥzāb* (33): 41] The Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Go ahead, the *mufridūn* have surpassed everyone." They said: 'Who

too generous to put to trial a heart that remembers Him, with hypocrisy. Rather it is for the hearts that neglect His remembrance.⁸⁴

69. Remembrance has such a sweetness that there is no other practice (*a'māl*) that can compare to it. If there was no other reward (*thawab*) for the servant except the feeling of delight (*ladha*) and happiness, then that would be sufficient for the believer. For this reason the gatherings of remembrance are called gardens of Paradise (*riyāḍ al-jannah*).

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are the *mufridūn*?" He said: "Those that have accustomed themselves with the remembrance of Allāh, the Most High. Remembrance has removed their burdens completely" When a man came and said: 'O Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) the legislated acts have become too much for me, so tell me something comprehensive that I can do.' He said: "Keep your tongue ever moist with the remembrance of Allāh." So the believer should always remember Allāh, this should be his habit, along with establishing Allāh's right from all the obligatory acts of obedience and leaving the forbidden matters. As for the narration about the seven stones, then there is no evidence for it or a legal position. The doors of the Hellfire are blocked by *tawhid* and *imān* and not by stones. The doors of the Hellfire are open for those who will enter it from any one of its seven doors. The author (may Allāh have mercy on him) should have avoided this narration as it has no basis or value. We should not pay any attention to things of this nature that some of the worshippers may have done in the past. The Messenger and his companions did not say this, rather we should increase in the remembrance of Allāh and try our best to do so. In a narration it has been reported: "O Allāh I enter the morning (bearing) witness to you and the holders of the throne and your angels" there is no mention of stones, even though these things (will bear) witness for people. The Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Nothing hears the sound of the muezzin, not a tree or stone, except it will bear witness for him on the Day of Judgement." There is nothing that you need to make witness to, these modes of remembrance that a person says, and the muezzin says, will bear witness for him without the need for the servant to make something bearing witness on his behalf. So the believer should say remembrance without the need to make things bear witness for him, what is legislated is you increase in doing remembrance always and try to fulfil what Allāh has made obligatory, and stay away from what He has forbidden. Increasing in remembrance is from piety, and neglect of remembrance is the opposite of piety.'

Mālik Ibn Dinār said: 'No delight that can be compared with the delight of remembrance of Allāh.'⁸⁵

There is no other deed which is as lighter and easier then performing remembrance. It brings to the heart such great delight, happiness, pleasure [and gratitude].

70. Remembrance adorns the face with a glow (*nudrah*) in this life and light (*nūr*) in the Hereafter. Therefore the people of remembrance have more brighter and glowing faces in this world compared to anyone else and they will have brighter illuminated faces in the Hereafter.

In a ḥadīth classified as mursal, it has been narrated from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said: "Whoever says a hundred times a day: 'There is none worthy of worship besides Allāh, alone, without any partners. To Him belongs the entire Kingdom and [all] praise is for Him. He gives life and cause death. In His hand is all goodness, He has power over all things,' he will come to Allāh, the Most High on the on the Day of Judgement with a face brighter than a full moon."⁸⁶

71. The continuous remembrance a person makes indoors and outdoors, or while travelling, increases the number of those who will bear witness for him on Day of Judgement. For the land, the home, the mountains and the earth will bear witness for one the invoker [of remembrance] on the Day of Judgement. Allāh says:

⁸⁵ Bayhaqī in his *Shu'ab al-Imān*, 2/589, Aḥmad in his *al-Zuhd*, p.321 and Abū Nu'aym in his *al-Hilyah*, 2/358

⁸⁶ Ṭabarānī in *Musnad al-Shāmiyīn*, #992, 2/103 on the authority of Abū'l-Dardā' (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*), however the chain is weak.

إِذَا زُلْزِلَتِ الْأَرْضُ زِلْزَالَهَا ۖ وَأَخْرَجَتِ الْأَرْضُ أَثْقَالَهَا ۖ
 وَقَالَ الْإِنْسَانُ مَا لَهَا ۚ يَوْمَئِذٍ تُحَدِّثُ أَخْبَارَهَا ۚ
 بِأَنَّ رَبَّكَ أَوْحَىٰ لَهَا ۚ

“When the earth is shaken with a [final] mighty shaking and it sends forth its burden. And man asks: ‘What is wrong with it?’ On that day it will recount all its news [about all what happened over it of good and evil], because Your Lord has inspired it.”

[*al-Zalzalah* (99): 1-5]

Tirmidhi narrated a ḥadīth on the authority of Sa‘īd al-Muqbiri that Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: “The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) recited this verse: “On that day it will recount its news.” Then he asked: “Do you know what its news are?” They said: ‘Allāh and His Messenger know best.’ He said: “Its news are that it will bear witness to everything the servant did on it by saying: ‘He did this on such and such a day, and did this on such and such a day.’”⁸⁷ Tirmidhī classified this ḥadīth ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ.

The one who remembers Allāh much, has many witnesses in every part of the earth. It may be perchance one of them or many of them are accepted, coming forward for him on the Day of Judgement, the Day of witnessing and the testimonies they give will bring him great happiness and joy with their testimonies.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ Tirmidhī, #3353, Nasā’ī #11693, Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 4/374 and others. It is declared weak by al-Albānī in *Jamī‘ al-Tirmidhī*, 4/619.

⁸⁸ These are more benefits of remembrance all of which invite the believer to keep himself busy with the remembrance of Allāh, and his tongue moist with the remembrance of Allāh. As Allāh ordered him and encouraged him to do so by saying: “O you who believe, remember Allāh much, and say His praise morning and evening.” [*al-Abzāb* (33): 41] and Allāh says: “Indeed, the Muslim men and Muslim

72. Preoccupying with remembrance keeps a person away from vain talk (*kalam al-batil*), be it back-biting (*ghiba*), spreading tales (*namima*), nonsensical chatter (*lughw*), praising (*madh*) or blame (*dhamm*) and criticizing.

In fact, the tongue never stays silent, so either the tongue does remembrance or it is used for falsehood and one of them is unavoidable. Such is the soul, either you busy it with the truth, or it will busy you with falsehood. That is the heart, either you place

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women, the believing men and believing women, the obedient men and obedient women, the truthful men and truthful women, the patient men and patient women, the humble men and humble women, the charitable men and charitable women, the fasting men and fasting women, the men who guard their private parts and the women who do so, and the men who remember Allāh often and the women who do so—for them Allāh has prepared forgiveness and a great reward." [*al-Aḥzāb* (33): 35] Allāh says: "*And when the prayer has been concluded, disperse within the land and seek from the bounty of Allāh, and remember Allāh often that you may succeed.*" [*al-Jumm'uh* (62): 10]. In these narrations we find that the angels rejoice at the people who do *dhikr*, and they invoke Allāh for forgiveness for them. Also the patches of land rejoice when a person remembering Allāh passes by them.

The believer must increase in the remembrance of Allāh, because at the same time he will be differing with the people of hypocrisy and being distant from their characteristics. Indeed the people of hypocrisy and neglect do very little remembrance as Allāh says: "*Verily, the hypocrites seek to deceive Allāh, but it is He who deceives them. And when they stand up for the prayer, they stand with laziness and to be seen of men, and they do not remember Allāh but little.*" [*al-Nisā'* (4): 142] From their blameworthy traits is the lack of remembrance of Allāh and major neglect. As for the believer, then he differs from them by increasing all forms of the remembrance of Allāh, keeping his tongue ever moist with it. As the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Go ahead, the *mufridūn* have surpassed everyone." They said: 'Who are the *mufridūn*?' He said: "Those that have accustomed themselves with the remembrance of Allāh, the Most High. Remembrance has removed their burdens completely." They have raced ahead in every good, to their salvation and happiness due to their remembrance of Allāh with their hearts, tongues and actions, and avoiding being heedless. What is legislated for believer is that you follow the way of your brethren from the believers that have come before you who raced to every good and every type of virtue. Follow them when you are out and about, in the masjid, in your house and while you are at home.

in it the love of Allāh, or the love of the creation is placed in it [one of the two is] unavoidable. The same [can be said] for the tongue, either you busy it with remembrance or it will busy you vain talk. So choose for yourself one of the two paths and place it into one of the two categories.

Section Thirteen: Protection from the Devil

73. This benefit has been mentioned previously briefly, but we will mention it here again in more length due to its great benefit and the dire need everyone has towards it. [Imagine] the devils have surrounded a servant and they are his enemies. Then [imagine] a man surrounded by his enemies, all angry at him, each one of them threatening evil and wanting to inflicting harm upon him, he has no one to turn to escape, except through the remembrance of Allāh.

In this great and noble ḥadīth, which every Muslim should memorise, we will mention it here in full due to the widespread benefits it contains and the need of the creation for it. It is the ḥadīth of Saʿīd Ibn al-Mūsāyyab from ʿAbdu'l-Raḥmān Ibn Samarah Ibn Jundub (*radīy Allāhu ʿanhu*), who said: 'One day the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) came out and stood before us as we were seated on the steps in Medīnah, and said: "I saw something amazing last night, I saw a man from my nation when the angel of death came to take his soul. The righteousness he did towards his parents came and repelled the angel of death for him.

I saw a man from my nation for whom the punishment of the grave was laid before him. His ablution came to him and saved him from it.

I saw a man from my nation who was surrounded by devils, and

the remembrance of Allāh came to him and caused the devils to flee from him.

I saw a man of my nation surrounded by the angels of punishment and his prayer saved him. I saw a man from my nation thirsty each time he would try to come near the lake he would be prevented and pushed back from it. His fasting during Ramadan came to him and gave him water and quenched his thirst.

I saw a man from my nation come and the Prophets were sitting down in circles. Each time he approached he was pushed back, and then his bathing from ritual impurity (*janābah*) came to him and took him by the hand and seated him down right next to me. I saw a man from my nation surrounded by darkness, behind him was darkness, on his right was darkness, on his left was darkness and from above was darkness and he was really confused in darkness. And then his pilgrimage came him, the *hajj* and the *'umrah*, it took him out of darkness and brought him into the light.

I saw a man of my nation trying to save himself from the glare and sparks of the fire with his bare hands. His charity came to him and shielded him from the fire and provided shade for his head.

I saw a man from my nation speaking to the believers but they would not respond, ignoring him, so the action of keeping the ties of kinship came and said: 'O assembly of believers, indeed he was a person who kept the ties of kinship, so talk to him.' So the believers spoke to him and shook his hands and he shook theirs.

I saw a man from my nation who had been surrounded by the angels of punishment (*ṣabaneyyah*). His enjoining the good and forbidding the evil saved him and placed him in front of the angels of mercy.

I saw a man from my nation kneeling on his knees and between him and Allāh was a veil, so his good manners came to him and he took him by the hand and brought him to Allāh.

I saw a man from my nation whose book of deeds had been

placed in his left, so his fear of Allāh came and took his book of deeds and put it in his right hand.

I saw a man from my nation, whose scale was light, and there came those family members he had lost and this made his scales heavier.

I saw a man from my nation on the edge of the Hellfire, his hope in Allāh came and rescued him from the fire.

I saw a man from my nation fall into the Hellfire and his tears that he had shed in fear of Allāh rescued him from the fire.

I saw a man of my nation standing on the bridge, tossing and turning like a palm tree in a storm. His good thoughts of Allāh came to him, they calmed him down and he walked across.

I saw a man from my nation crawling on the bridge. Sometimes he would be crawling and other times he would stop and hold on to it. Then the salutation he sent upon me came to him and stood him upright firmly on his two feet and he was saved.

I saw a man from my nation reaching the gates of Paradise but all the doors were locked before of him, then his testimony “That there is no one worthy of worship save Allāh” came and opened the gates of Paradise and led him inside.”⁸⁹

This was narrated by Al-Hāfiz Abū Musā al-Madaynī in *al-Targhib fe kbisāl al-Munjiyya wa'l-Tarhib min al-Khilāl al-Mardīyyah*, he based his book on this narration and made it an explanation for it and said: “This ḥadīth is ḥasan jiddan, transmitted by Sa’id Ibn al-Musayyib ‘Amr Ibn Āzar and ‘Alī Ibn Zayd Ibn Jud‘ān, and Hilāl Abū Jiblah.’

Shaikh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah—may Allāh have mercy on his soul—used to give due importance to this ḥadīth and it has reached

⁸⁹ Tirmidhī in his *Nawādir*, 3/236, *Tārikh al-Dimishque*, 34/406, 407, also mentioned in *Umdat al-Alqarī*, 11/181, 22/92.

me that he also used to say that the supporting narrations of this ḥadīth are authentic.

What is meant by the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ): “I saw a man from my nation who was surrounded by devils, and the remembrance of Allāh came to him, and caused the devils to flee from him.” This is in accordance to the narration of Abū Musā al-Ash‘arī (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), which we have explained in this treatise and in that addition it says: ‘And He enjoins upon you the remembrance of Allāh, the Most High. Indeed, the parable of that is a man whose enemy quickly tracks him until he reaches an impermeable fortress (*ḥisn ḥasayn*) in which he protects himself from them.’⁹⁰

Likewise the devils can only be protected against by the servants with the remembrance of Allāh.

In Tirmidhī it is reported on the authority of Anas Ibn Mālīk (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) who said that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: ‘Whoever says—that is: when he leaves his house—“In the Name of Allāh, I place my trust in Allāh, there is neither strength nor power but in Allāh,” it will be said to him: ‘You have been sufficed, guided and protected,’ shayṭān will become distant from him.

⁹⁰Tirmidhī, #2863, and Aḥmad, 16/718, 17/334, it is authenticated by al-Albānī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī*, #1724.

⁹¹Tirmidhī, #3426, and It is declared ṣaḥīḥ by al-Albānī in *Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī*, 5/490.

⁹²These benefits of the remembrance of Allāh have mostly been aforementioned, they are the most virtuous of the acts of worship and the most important. It has great lasting effects and countless benefits. As aforementioned, that whoever remembers Allāh, then Allāh will remember him. So the remembrance of Allāh causes the believer to be remembered by Allāh and it becomes a means of success for the servant. In remembrance there is pleasure for the hearts. They say that nothing can compete with it, so all of these types of remembrance have a great impact on the heart when a servant is sincere to Allāh and increases in his remembrance of Allāh. The earth will testify for the person who remembers =

Shayṭān will say to another devil: How can you [harm] a man that has been guided, sufficed and saved?"⁹¹ Abū Dāwūd, Nasā'ī and Tirmidhī all said the ḥadīth is ḥasan.⁹²

As the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ) mentioned previously says: "Whoever says a hundred times in each day: "There is no deity worthy of worship besides Allāh, alone, without any partners. To Him belong kingship and praise, He is able to do all things," will have protection from the shayṭān for that day until the evening."⁹³

Sufyān mentioned from Abū'l-Zubayr, on the authority of 'Abdullāh Ibn Dhamrah, from Ka'b, who said: 'When a man leaves his house and says: "In the Name of Allāh", the angel says: 'You have been guided.' When he says: "I depend on Allāh", the angel says: 'You have been sufficed. When he says: "There is neither strength nor power except in Allāh," the angel says: 'You have been protected.' The shayṭān then say to other one: "Return! You have no power over him and what can you do to someone who is sufficed, guided and protected?"'

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Allāh as He says: "*On that day it will recount its news, for Your Lord has inspired it.*" [*al-Zalzalah* (99): 3-5]. The believer must increase in all the forms of remembrance and as it was said: Whoever says each day a hundred times: "There is no deity worthy of worship besides Allāh, alone, without any partners. To Him belong kingship and praise, and He is able to do all things." Then that would equal to freeing ten servants, hundred good deeds are written for him, hundred bad deeds are wiped away from him and he will have protection from the devil for that day until the evening." The Prophet (ﷺ) said: "The most beloved speech to Allāh is "Glory be to Allāh", 'All praise is due to Allāh', 'None has the right to be worshipped save Allāh', and 'Allāh is the greatest.'" These four words are the most beloved to Allāh, and including "There is neither strength nor power save in Allāh." These are the everlasting righteous good deeds. All good deeds are everlasting righteous deeds, remembrance encourages a person to do more good deeds. The person doing remembrance frequently will have more energy and strength to do righteous actions.

⁹³ Bukhārī, #3293, and Muslim, #2691.

Abū Khulād al-Misrī said: ‘Whoever enters into Islām, enters into a safe fortress. Whoever enters into a masjid, enters into two fortresses. Whoever enters into a gathering of remembrance, enters into three fortresses.’

Al-Hāfiẓ Abū Mūsā mentioned in his book from the ḥadīth of Abū ‘Imrān al-Jūnī, on the authority of Anas (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that Prophet (ﷺ) said: “When the servant lies down on his side to sleep in bed and says: ‘In the Name of Allāh, and then recites opening chapter *al-Fātiḥah*. He will be safe from the evil of the jinns, humans and from the every kind of evil.”⁹⁵

And in Bukhārī, Muḥammad Ibn Sirīn relates that Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘The Messenger of Allāh put me in charge of watching over the zakat at the end of Ramadān (i.e., donations of food given for *Zakat-ul-Fitr*). Then a man came to steal the food, he started scooping it up with both hands and I caught him in the act while he was stealing. I told him that I shall take him to Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) so he said: ‘Let me go! I shall not return again...’ And he went on to mention the rest of the ḥadīth, saying: “He (i.e., the thief) said ‘I shall teach you some words by which Allāh will benefit you—when you lie down in your bed, recite the verse of al-Kursi from beginning to end, then a protecting angel from Allāh will stay by you and no devil will approach you until dawn.’ I tried this and when I awoke up in the morning. I told the Prophet (ﷺ) what he had said, and the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “He told you the truth, though he is a liar and he (the thief) himself was the shayṭān.”⁹⁶

Al-Hāfiẓ Abū Mūsā mentioned in his book on the authority of Jābir (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), who said: ‘The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: “When a man enters his house or goes to bed, an angel and

⁹⁴ The checking for this has already been mentioned.

⁹⁵ Bazzār, #3109, *Targhib*, 1/235 and *al-Majma’*, 10/121.

⁹⁶ Bukhārī, #3275.

devil hastens to him. The angel says: 'Seal it with goodness!' The shayṭān says: 'Seal it with evil.' If he praises Allāh and remembers Him, the angel drives the shayṭān away, guarding him throughout the night. When he wakes up in the morning, the angel and devil hasten to him again and say the same thing. If he mentions Allāh and says: 'Praise be to Allāh who revived my soul after its death and did not cause me to die in my sleep. All praise be to Allāh who keeps hold of the souls that He has ordained death for and He releases others until their appointed time. All praise be to Allāh who keeps firm hold of the heavens and earth, preventing them from vanishing away. And if they vanished no one could then keep hold of them after Him. Praise be to Allāh who holds back the sky, preventing it from falling on the earth, except by His permission.' Whoever says this then the angel chases the devil away and protects him."⁹⁷

In the both Bukhārī and Muslim, it has been related from the ḥadīth on the authority of Sālim Ibn Abī Ja'd, from Kurayb, from Ibn 'Abbās (*radīy Allāhu 'anhumā*), who said: "The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: "When one of you approaches his wife (for sexual relations) and says: "In the Name of Allāh. O Allāh protect us from Shayṭān, and protect what You bestow upon us from Shayṭān." Then if a child is born [as a result of that relation] the Shayṭān will never be able to harm newborn baby."^{98,99}

⁹⁷ Nasā'ī, #10689, Abū Ya'la in his *Musnad*, 3/326 and others. It is declared weak by al-Albānī in *Da'if al-Targhib wa'l-Tarhib*, #346.

⁹⁸ Bukhārī, #141, #3271 and Muslim, #1434.

⁹⁹ Shaikh Ibn Bāz said: "This narration and other narrations of similar meaning show the virtue of the remembrance. It shows the believers need to give more attention to remembrance, every act of obedience draws him closer to Allāh, creates distance between him and the fire and the devils. Meanwhile it draws him closer to paradise and Allāh.

From the greatest benefits of remembrance is that it keeps your tongue and limbs busy in goodness. Therefore keeps him away from all that will harm him. The tongue is busy with words, so unless you keep it busy with the remembrance

Al-Hāfiẓ Abū Mūsā mentioned from Al-Ḥasan Ibn ‘Alī (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhumā*), who said: ‘I guarantee safety to anyone who recites these twenty verses from the book of Allāh from any oppressive ruler, any rebellious devil, any dangerous animal and from any thief, the Verse of *al-Kursī*, the three verses of Chapter of *al-A‘raf*: “Indeed Your Lord is Allāh, who created the heavens and the earth”; the first ten verses from the Chapter of *al-Ṣāffāt*; three verses from the Chapter of *al-Raḥmān*, starting with: “O you assembly of jinn and men” and the end of Chapter of *al-Ḥashr*, starting from: “If We sent this Qur’ān down upon a mountain.”¹⁰⁰

Muḥammad Ibn Abān said: ‘A man was praying in the *masjid* when something came next to him and it frightened him. It said

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of Allāh, *istighfār* and supplications. Otherwise it will fall into falsehood, such as backbiting, spreading tales and foul speech. So your tongue should be busy with remembrance so that it is preoccupied with goodness, which will earn you good deeds and save you from bad deeds. If however you are neglectful and abandon (remembrance) and remain silent, then there is no questioning for this. Mostly though, the tongue is seldom quiet, so busy yourself with the remembrance of Allāh so that you prevent your tongue from speech that harms you, such a person will be successful and will prosper. From the benefits of remembrance, is that it repels the devils that surround the son of Ādam, and the devil which accompanies each person called Qareen. As Allāh says: “If anyone withdraws Himself from remembrance of [Allāh] Most Gracious, we appoint for Him an evil one, to be an intimate companion to Him.” [Zukhruf (43): 36]

This shows that the person who is not neglectful is able to repel the devil. The long ḥadīth presented above shows that the servant is surrounded by devils that are trying to misguide him. The best way to protect oneself is to increase in remembrance. In the same way other good deeds also can save a person from the devils of men and jinn such as being dutiful to parents and showing them kindness. So what benefits the believer is that he must fill his time with all forms of remembrance and strives to do all forms of good until he protects his limbs and tongue from anything harmful. The devils stay away from such people. The more neglectful one becomes, the more sway his enemies have over him in accordance to the level of his neglect and rejection.

¹⁰⁰ Ibn Mājah, 3549, Ḥākim in his *al-Mustadrak*, 4/412-413, *Fath al-Qadir*, 2/307 and others.

to him: 'You have no reason to fear me, I came to you for Allāh's sake. Go to 'Urwah and ask him what words he says when he seeks refuge from the shayāṭīn? He replied: Say: 'I believe in Allāh the Supreme alone, I disbelieve in sorcery (*jibḥ*) and idolatry (*taghūḥ*). I hold fast to the trustworthy hold of the hand that never breaks and indeed Allāh is all hearing and all knowing. Allāh is sufficient for me. Allāh hears the one who calls to Him and Allāh is everlasting.'"

Bishr Ibn Maṣṣūr from Wahīb Ibn al-Ward said: 'A man went out during the night to relieve himself, all of a sudden he heard a loud sound, a bed was brought and placed there. Some figure came and sat upon it. He gathered all his soldiers [i.e. the shayāṭīn] and shouted: 'Who will go out to get 'Urwah Ibn al-Zubayr? [to harm him]' No one answered until one said: 'I will get him you for him.' So he went towards Madīnah while I was watching, then he was on the verge of coming back when he said there is no way to [harm] 'Urwah. He then said: 'Woe unto you, I found him saying words in the morning and evening which stop us from getting to him.' So the man said when the morning came he went to his family and said prepare my luggage for travel. He reached Madīnah and asked for the man ['Urwah] until he was led to an old Shaikh. I asked him: 'Is there something you say in the morning and in the evening?' He refused to answer me at first, so I related to him the story of what I saw and heard, and he then told him: 'I don't know, other than when I enter upon the morning, or sleep at night, I say three times: 'I believe in Allāh the Supreme alone. I disbelieve in sorcery (*jibḥ*) and idolatry (*taghūḥ*). I hold on tightly to the unbreakable bond that never breaks and indeed Allāh is all hearing and all knowing.¹⁰¹

Abū Mūsā also mentioned that Muslim Al-Baṭīn said that the [Angel] Jibrīl said to the Prophet (ﷺ): 'There is a devil (*ifrīt*) from

¹⁰¹ Al-Mundharī in his *al-Targhib*, #991 and it is declared weak by al-Albānī in *Da'if Targhib wa'l-Tarhib*, #400.

the jinn who planning against you. So, whenever you lie down to rest say: "I seek refuge in the perfect words of Allāh, which cannot be trespassed by any. Whether good or bad. And from the evil which descends from the sky and returns back to it. From the evil of every temptation of the night and day. From the evil of the pathways at night or day. But not from the path of goodness, O Merciful One."¹⁰²

It has been reported in Bukhārī that the shayṭān flees when the call to prayer (*adhān*) is made. Suhayl Ibn Abī Šāliḥ said: 'My father sent me to Bani Hārithah, with me was our servant or a friend. Someone called his name from behind a wall. So his servant climbed the wall to look and could not see anything. I mentioned that to my father and he said: 'Had I known this was going to happen, I would not have sent you. If you do hear a voice again then make the call to the prayer, for I heard Abū Hurayrah (*raḍiy Allāhu 'anhu*) relate from the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "When the *Adhān* is called, the shayṭān turns back [so vehemently] that he breaks wind."¹⁰³ In another narration: "When the shayṭān hears the *Adhān*, he turns back [so vehemently] that he breaks wind trying not to hear the *Adhān*..."¹⁰⁴ until the remainder of the ḥadīth.¹⁰⁵

Al-Ḥāfiẓ Abū Mūsā mentioned from Abū Rajā', from Abū Bakr al-Šiddīq (*raḍiy Allāhu 'anhu*), who narrated that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: "There is none worthy of worship save Allāh" and ask for forgiveness frequently, for the shayaṭīn says: 'I

¹⁰² Ibn Abī Shaybah in his *al-Muṣannaf*, 11/268, and 'Abdu'l-Razzāq in his *al-Muṣannaf*, 5/50-51.

¹⁰³ Bukhārī, #608, Muslim, #389 and Abū Dāwūd, #516.

¹⁰⁴ Bukhārī, #608.

¹⁰⁵ Shaikh Ibn Bāz said: 'These narrations are connected to the virtues of remembrance, seeking refuge in Allāh and the importance of the remembrance of Allāh. It is from the causes of safety from the devil. Through it Allāh repels the devil as He says: "If anyone withdraws Himself from remembrance of [Allāh] Most

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Gracious, we appoint for Him an evil one, to be an intimate companion to Him.” [al-Zukhruf (43): 36]. This shows that when the servant is neglectful of the remembrance of Allāh he is attacked by the enemy of Allāh, but as long as he is remembering Allāh, He will protect him from the traps of the devil. The authentic narrations in this regard are sufficient, while the author has mentioned some weak narrations, it was more befitting to simply suffice with the authentic ones. The Sunnah is that when a person goes to bed he says: “In the Name of Allāh”, “In Your Name, O Allāh, I die and I live”, and “In Your Name, O my Lord, I die and I live”. As the Prophet (ﷺ) use to say: “With Your Name my Lord, I lay myself down and with Your Name I rise. And if my soul You take, have mercy on it, and if You send it back then protect it as You protect Your righteous servants.” Likewise all the other supplications the Prophet (ﷺ) has taught us before we go to sleep, we should say them in order to have protection from the devils. As for reciting the Chapter of *al-Hashr*, this has not been authentically related from the Prophet (ﷺ) and we should suffice with the authentic narrations. When a person says: “There is no deity worthy of worship besides Allāh, alone, without any partners. To Him belong kingship and praise, and He is able to do all things,” one hundred times in a day then it is equal to freeing ten servants, Allāh writes for him a hundred good deeds, wipes away a hundred sins, and he has protection from the devil for that day until the evening. No one can do better than him [for that day] except someone who does more than him. Also in the story of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) with the devil shows that the devil can resemble a person. Until that devil told Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) to recite the Verse of *al-Kursi* before sleeping and it will protect him from the devils. So when you say this you will have protection from an Angel until you wake up. When the devil told him this, he let him go. In the morning he informed the Prophet (ﷺ) about what happened, and he said: “He spoke the truth even though he is a compulsive liar.” So devil spoke the truth even though it is in nature to lie but due to his own need he told him the truth. So we gain from this a tremendous benefit, that is a person should strive to take benefit. Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) did what he did for the sake of benefiting himself, and that the truth is accepted regardless of where it comes from, even if the source is not truthful, but the truth is always accepted. Also we learn that the jinn can imitate a human being as Allāh says: “Indeed he (the devil) sees you and his tribe from where you do not see them.” This is what the norm is. However, jinn can be seen when in the form of a person as is the case during the time of the

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destroyed them with sins and they destroyed me by saying there is none worthy of worship save Allāh and by asking for Allāh's forgiveness. Then I saw that I could destroy them by way of them following their desires because they thought they were guided and stopped asking forgiveness."¹⁰⁶

Al-Ḥāfiẓ Abū Mūsā also mentioned from Ibrāhīm Ibn al-Ḥakam, on the authority of his father that 'Ikrimah said: 'Once a man was travelling while he came across another man sleeping. He saw two devils next to him. He heard one of them say to the other: 'Go and disturb him in his sleep.' When he went near him he returned back to the other devil and said: 'He has slept upon a verse of the Qur'ān and we have no way to get to him.' Then the other one went, approached the sleeping man but then returned and said 'You are right,' then they left. Then the traveller woke up the sleeping person, told him what he had seen and then he asked him: 'Tell me which verse of the Qur'ān did you recited before sleeping. The man answered: 'This

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Prophet (ﷺ) when he came to Quraysh and said do this and that to harm the Prophet (ﷺ). Also in Badr he came in the form of Suraqah and said: Do this and do that. So he can come in the form of a person to misguide, either with a call to falsehood, or discoursing from the truth. This has happened many times throughout history in every time and place. A person must strive to stay away from the evil of the devils among men and jinn. Allāh says: "*And thus We have made for every prophet an enemy—devils from mankind and jinn, inspiring to one another decorative speech in delusion. But if your Lord had willed, they would not have done it, so leave them and that which they invent.*" [al-An'ām (6): 112]

So we should be aware of the devils among men and jinn and the devil from every nation of humans are the rebellious and most wicked among them. This type of person is called a *shayṭān*. When he transgresses his boundary he becomes a *Shayṭān*. So the devils among men and jinn are the rebellious ones. The devils among dogs are the black dogs, and so on and so forth.

¹⁰⁶ Abū Ya'la in his *Musnad*, 1/123, 124, Ibn Abi 'Āsim, 9/1 and others, however it has a weak chain.

¹⁰⁷ A part of the narration of Yahyā Ibn Zakāriyya aforementioned.

verse:

إِنَّ رَبَّكُمُ اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ فِي سِتَّةِ
 أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ يُغْشِي اللَّيْلَ النَّهَارَ يَطْلُبُهُ حَثِيثًا
 وَالشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرُ وَالنُّجُومُ مُسَخَّرَاتٌ بِأَمْرِ اللَّهِ أَلَا لَهُ الْخَلْقُ
 وَالْأَمْرُ تَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٥٤﴾

“Indeed, your Lord is Allāh, Who created the heavens and earth in six days and then established Himself above the Throne. He covers the day with the night, each pursuing it rapidly; and the sun, the moon, and the stars are subjected to His command. Both creation and command belong to Him. Blessed is Allāh, Lord of all the worlds.”

[*al-A'raf* (7): 54]

Abū'l-Nadhr Hāshim Ibn al-Qāsim said: ‘I saw something in my house and was told: ‘O Abū'l-Nadhr, leave our place.’ He said: ‘I was so overcome with fear by this that I wrote to Ibn Idrees, al-Muharibī and Abū Usāmah in Kufa.’ Al-Muharibī wrote back to me: ‘Indeed, there is a well in the city and its rope kept breaking. So a group of travelers complained to a rider, so he called for a jug of it’s water be brought, he recited some words upon it, poured it back into the well and a fire emerged out of the well, more was recited to the point the fire was extinguished at the brim of the well.’

Abū'l-Nadhr said: ‘I took a jug of water then recited these words upon it. Then I sprinkled the water in all corners of my house. Then something shouted out, saying: ‘You have burnt us! We will move away from you.’ And the words he said were: ‘We have reached the evening in the Name of Allāh, whom nothing

can hold back. By Allāh's might, which can never be defeated nor overpowered. In Allāh's protection and covering. With all of Allāh's beautiful names and attributes. Protecting us from the evil of the shayaṭīn from amongst mankind and jinn, those who speak in public or in secret. From every evil that comes out in the darkness and is hidden in the daylight or is hidden in darkness and appears in daylight. From the evil of what Allāh has created. From the evil of *Iblīs* and his allies. From the evil of every wild beast whose forehead is in Your control. Indeed, my Lord is upon a straight path. I seek refuge in Allāh from that which Prophets Mūsā, 'Isā and Ibrāhīm, had taken refuge in, they fulfilled His mission and from the evil of what Allāh created including *Iblīs* and his allies and their plots and plans. I seek refuge in Allāh, the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing from Shayṭān the accursed. In the Name of Allāh, the Most Merciful and All-Compassionate. And then verses from Chapter of *al-Ṣāffāt*:

وَالصَّافَّاتِ صَفًّا ۝١ فَالزَّجَرِجَرِ زَجْرًا ۝٢ فَالتَّالِيَاتِ ذِكْرًا ۝٣
 إِنَّ إِلَٰهَكُمْ لَوَاحِدٌ ۝٤ رَبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا وَرَبُّ
 الْمَشْرِقِ ۝٥ إِنْ أَرَادْنَا السَّمَاءَ الدُّنْيَا نَزْنَةً الْكَوَاكِبِ ۝٦ وَحِفْظًا
 مِن كُلِّ شَيْطَانٍ مَّارِدٍ ۝٧ لَا يَسْمَعُونَ إِلَى الْأَعْلَىٰ وَلَا يُفْقَدُونَ
 مِن كُلِّ جَانِبٍ ۝٨ دُخُورًا لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ وَاصِبٌ ۝٩ إِلَّا مَن خُطِفَ
 الْخَطْفَةَ فَأَتْبَعَهُ شَهَابٌ ثَاقِبٌ ۝١٠

“ I swear by those [angels] who have stood in ranks. By those who drive away the devil. And the reciters of our Remembrance. Indeed, your God is One. Lord of the heavens and the earth and that which is between them and the Lord of every point of the sun's risings. Indeed, We have adorned the lowest heaven with an adornment of stars. And guarded it against every rebel-

lious shayṭān. They cannot eavesdrop on the Highest Assembly [of angels] and they are stoned from every side. Repelled with harshness - they will suffer eternal punishment - except one who snatches [some words] by theft, but then is pursued by a piercing flame.”

[*al-Ṣaffāt* (37): 1-10]

This is a glimpse of what is connected to the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ) to that servant: He protects himself from the devil with the remembrance of Allāh.¹⁰⁷

We shall now mention chapters connected with remembrance in order to complete the benefits of remembrance.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁸ Shaikh Ibn Bāz said: “These narrations are part of what has been narrated from some of the Salaf in some of their supplications. What has reached us from the prophet (ﷺ) all indicate that they repel the devil, when the servant busies himself with the remembrance of Allāh, then this is a means for him to stay away from the devil and Allāh’s protection from him. Whatever the Prophet (ﷺ) has told us and what the Qur’ān guides to is sufficient in itself. The speech of the Salaf is not a proof in these. Rather what is proof is, what Allāh said and what the Messenger has said. The believer looks for what Allāh said and His Messenger and holds on to that, from that is to increase in the remembrance of Allāh, reading the Qur’ān, all of these are a means to rectifying the hearts and gaining safety from the enemies of Allāh among the jinn and mankind. “If anyone withdraws Himself from remembrance of [Allāh] Most Gracious, we appoint for Him an evil one, to be an intimate companion to Him.” [al-Zukhruf (43): 36] This is what the Lord says. The believer strives to keep his tongue busy, limbs and heart with the remembrance of Allāh. This is the path of salvation. Whoever follows the guidance is saved and safe. Whoever holds on to the sunnah of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) is successful. So the believer must always keep his heart and tongue busy with the remembrance of Allāh and obedience of Allāh. Standing firm upon the command of Allāh, staying clear of the prohibitions of Allāh, then this is the path of salvation and happiness in this world and the hereafter. Remembrance is the path which protects from the evil of the devils, also seeking refuge in the perfect words of Allāh from the evil of what He has

CHAPTER TWELVE

Two Types of Remembrance

74. Remembrance is of two types, one of them is to mention the Names of the Allāh, the Most High, His Attributes and praising Him through them, declaring Him free [of any imperfection] and

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created is sufficient. As narrated from 'Urwah and others that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Whoever settles in a (new) place then says: "I seek refuge in the perfect words of Allāh from the evil of what He has created." He will not be harmed by anything while he is there." He also ordered the one who is scared from the devils to seek refuge in the perfect words of Allāh from the evil of what He has created, from the evil of what descends from the sky, from the evil of what rises up, from the evil of enters the earth, from the evil of what comes out of the earth, from the evil of the trials of the day and night. From the evil of the one who comes at night except the one who brings good O Allāh. What is intended by the seeking refuge in the perfect words of Allāh is, to increase in the remembrance of Allāh, reciting the Qur'ān at night and during the day, while travelling and at home, along the street, when on land or out at sea, while flying in an airplane, and in every other place. A person increases his remembrance of Allāh and uses the various forms of legislated remembrance. This is the path to salvation in this life and the next and the way to safety from the evil of the devils among jinn and mankind. The Verse of *al-Kursī* is from His worship, after every prayer, before going to bed, in the morning and evening. And after *Fajr* and *Maghrib*. *All of this is from the means to protect oneself from the every type of evil.*

declaring His Divinity from that which is not befitting Him. This is also of two types:

The first type is for the one remembers to recite the praises of Allāh by using His Names and Attributes as mentioned in many narrations such as: “Glory is to Allāh”, ‘All praise is due to Allāh’, ‘None has the right to be worshipped but Allāh’, and ‘Allāh is the greatest.’”¹⁰⁹ Also “Glory is to Allāh, and with His Praise” and “There is no deity worthy of worship besides Allāh, alone, without any partners. To Him belong kingship and praise, and He is able to do all things.”¹¹⁰

The best of this type is what brings together praise and makes it comprehensive such as: “Glory is to Allāh in ways as numerous as His creation,” is better than just saying: “Glory is to Allāh.” And when you say: “All praise is due to Allāh, praise as numerous as all His created in the sky and on the earth, and all that He has created between them, and all that He has created as He is the Creator,” is better than just saying “All praise is due to Allāh”.

This is taken from the narration of Juwayriyya (*radīy Allāhu ‘anha*) to whom the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Indeed I said after you four words three times. If they were weighed against what you have said since this morning, they would outweigh them, they are: “Glory is to Allāh and praise is to Him, according to the number of His creation and according to in His pleasure and according to the weight of His Throne and according to the ink [used in recording] His Words.””¹¹¹ Reported by Muslim.

¹⁰⁹ Muslim, #2695.

¹¹⁰ Bukhārī, #3293.

¹¹¹ Muslim, #2726.

In Tirmidhī and Abū Dāwūd on the authority Saʿīd Ibn Abī Waqqāṣ (*radīy Allāhu ʿanhu*) narrated that he entered with the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) upon a woman who had in front of her date seeds and pebbles in her hand, which she was using to count the praises of Allāh with. So the Messenger said: “Should I not inform you of something easier and better?” Then he said: “Glory is to Allāh as numerous as all He has created on the earth, Glory is to Allāh in ways as numerous as all He has created in the sky, Glory is to Allāh as numerous as all that He has created between them, Glory is to Allāh in ways as numerous as all [that He has created] as He is the Creator.” Then say: “Allāh is the greatest” and “All praise is due to Allāh” and “There is none has the right to be worshipped but Allāh” and “There is neither strength nor power except in Allāh” all in same manner.¹¹²

75. The second type of remembrance is to speak about the Lord by mentioning His Names and Attributes like saying: “Allāh hears all the voices of His servants, He sees their movements and nothing is hidden from Him of their actions. He is more Merciful to them than their fathers and mothers. He has power over all things. He is more pleased with the repentance of His servant than the servant who loses His riding beast [then finds it again] and so on and so forth.

The best of this type of praise is the way Allāh has praised Himself or the way His Messenger (ﷺ) has praised Him, without distortion (*taḥrīf*), neither denying His Attributes (*taʿtīl*), nor drawing similarities (*tashbīḥ*) nor likening (*tamthīl*) Him to others.

This type is itself can be of three types: praise (*ḥamd*); extolling

¹¹² Abū Dāwūd, #1500, Tirmidhī, #3568 and others. It is declared weak by al-Albānī in *Sunan Abū Dāwūd*, 2/80.

(*thanā'*) and glorification (*majd*).

So all praise is to Allāh: To mention Him with the attribute of perfection, to express your love (*maḥabab*) and contentment (*riḍā*) with Him. The one who is silent cannot love nor praises Him, untill he extols Him with love and be the one who praises Him, until love and extolling him are gathered together. If the praise is repeated often then it is extolling (*thanā'*), and if the praise (*madḥ*) is made with the attributes of His Majesty (*jalāl*), Magnificence (*ʿazma*), Greatness (*kibriyā'*) and Sovereignty (*mulk*), then it is [true] glorification (*majd*).

Allāh has gathered these three types at the beginning of Chapter of *al-Fāṭiḥah*: So when the servant says: "Praise be to Allāh, Lord of the Worlds," Allāh says: "My servant has praised Me." When he says: "The Merciful, and the Compassionate," Allāh says: "My servant has extolled Me." And when he says: "Master of the Day of Judgement," Allāh says: "My servant has glorified Me."¹¹³

76. From His remembrance is mentioning His commandments, prohibitions and laws. And this also is of two types.

One of them is that his mentioning of that is informing that He has commanded such and such, and has forbidden such and such, and He loves such and such, and is angered and pleased with such and such.

The second is to remember that something is commanded so that he may rush towards it or to remember his prohibition so that he may flee from it. So remembering His command and prohibition is one thing and remembering Him is something else. When

¹¹³ Muslim, #395.

these types are combined for the doer of remembrance then his remembrance is better, greater and more virtuous.

Benefit: This remembrance is from the greatest of understanding and whatever else lesser than that is the best of remembrance if the intention is correct. From His remembrance is to remember His favours, blessings, kindness, help and times when he bestowed upon His servant His bounty. This also is from the most noble of remembrance.

So these five types of remembrance are to be done with the heart and tongue and that is the best of remembrance. At other times it is to be done by the heart alone, and this is the second level, and at times when only the tongue alone does remembrance and this is of the third level. So the best remembrance is what the heart and tongue do together.

The remembrance of the heart by itself is better than the tongue by itself, because the remembrance of the heart leads to awareness (*marī'ah*), it invokes love (*maḥabbah*) and shyness (*hayā'*), borne out of fear (*makhāfah*). It calls to aware of Allāh's presence, it keeps checks on a person's shortcomings in acts of obedience (*tā'āt*), and abasement of sins (*ma'āsī*). While remembrance on the tongue alone does not lead to any of these affects, and if it did lead to anything it would be weak [in comparison].¹¹⁴

¹¹⁴ Shaikh Ibn Bāz said: It has already preceded that Allāh has made clear on the tongue of His Messenger (ﷺ) what a person will achieve with remembrance. Also from what we should seek refuge from and it has been established from some of the Salaf: 'To hold on to what has come by way of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) is the right way. The enemy of Allāh, the Shayṭān tries to find any lapses and any evil: "Surely, Satan is an enemy to you, so take (treat) Him as an enemy."

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He only invites his followers that they may become the dwellers of the blazing Fire." [Fāṭir (35): 6], he knows without doubt for this reason the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Indeed the devil says: 'I have destroyed people with sins and they have destroyed me with 'None has the right to be worshipped but Allāh' and seeking forgiveness.'" So when I saw that from them I spread among them desires, so they sinned and did not ask for forgiveness. Because they thought they were upon guidance [meaning innovations]. So the devil beautifies innovation to people, thinking they are upon guidance, for that reason they do not repent and continue upon innovation. What is compulsory for the believer is to increase in the remembrance of Allāh, to seek refuge from the devil, seek forgiveness and this is the path of salvation.

The legal means to seek refuge are sufficient: All the above mentioned supplications are authentic and sufficient, they have been reported from the Prophet (ﷺ). Before going to sleep reciting of Verse of *al-Kursi*, all of the Qurān is guidance, it is also a means of protection from the devil, but the Prophet (ﷺ) has specified certain parts such as he specified Verse of *al-Kursi* before going to sleep, reciting the last three chapters of the Qurān three times each before going to sleep. Also saying "Glory is to Allāh", and 'All praise is due to Allāh' thirty three times, and 'Allāh is the greatest' thirty four times before sleeping.

All of this is Prophetic tradition which helps to protect against the devil and from every other evil. It is most deserving that we give it due importance and strive upon it. This is what has been narrated from all those that came after. What has been narrated from the messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) is the base because he does not speak from desire, it is something inspired unto him, and Allāh says: "*Whatever the Messenger gives you then take it, and whatever he forbids you from then stop doing it.*" [al-Hashr (57): 7]

The believer seeks protection from the legally prescribed supplications of refuge, seeking forgiveness, and having due diligence in the acts of obedience and being cautious of sins. This is the path of salvation and safety in this life and the next.'

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Remembrance and Invocation

77. Remembrance is better or more virtuous than supplication (*du'ā*), this is because remembrance contains the words that praise Allāh by way of His beautiful Attributes, His favours and His beautiful Names. Where as the supplication of the servant contains words asking Allāh for his needs, this can in no way compare to remembrance!

In a narration it says: 'Whoever is preoccupied by my remembrance from supplicating to Me, I will give him better than I give those who ask.'¹¹⁵

Therefore it is highly recommended to begin the supplication with the caller praising and extolling Allāh, then send blessing upon His Prophet and then he should ask for his needs, as in the narration of Fuḍālāh Ibn 'Ubayd (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*), who said: 'The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) heard a man in his prayer supplicating to Allāh and did not praise Him, nor did he send blessings upon His Prophet (ﷺ), so the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: "This one is very hasty." Then he called him and said to him or to someone

¹¹⁵ Bukhārī in his *Khalq af'āl al-'ibād*, #544, Ibn Hibbān, 1/376 and Bayhaqī in his *al-Shu'ab*, 1/413. It declared weak by al-Albānī in his *Silsilah al-Da'ifah*, #4989.

else: "When one of you prays [or supplicates] then let him begin with the praise of his Lord, then let him send salutations upon me and then he should supplicate after that whatever he wants."¹¹⁶

This is how the invocation of Dhū'l-Nūn was to Allāh. About it the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "The invocation of my brother Dhū'l-Nūn, none who is experiencing difficulty employs it except that Allāh would relieve him of his difficulty: "There is none worthy of worship save You! Glory be to You, far removed are You from any imperfection, I have been among the wrongdoers."¹¹⁷

In the narration of Tirmidhī: "The invocation of my brother Dhū'l-Nūn when he supplicated while he was in the bell of the whale:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ

"There is none worthy of worship save You! Glory be to You, far removed are You from any imperfection. I have been among the wrongdoers."

[*al-Anbiyā'* (21): 87]

Any Muslim who supplicates to Allāh [using these words] wherever he may be, except that he is answered by Allāh.¹¹⁸

Likewise, all the Prophetic supplications of the Prophet (ﷺ), have such words, such as the statement for distress: "There is no one worthy of worship save Allāh, the Exalted and the Forbearing.

¹¹⁶ Abū Dāwūd, #1493, #1494 and Tirmidhī, #3475. It is declared ṣaḥīḥ by al-Albānī in *Sunan Abū Dāwūd*, #1481.

¹¹⁷ Tirmidhī, #3515. It is declared ṣaḥīḥ by al-Albānī in *Jamī' al-Tirmidhī*, 5/529.

¹¹⁸ Bukhārī, #7431. See "The Relief from Distress—*An explanation to the Duā of Prophet Yunūs ('alayhis-salām)*—by Ibn Taymiyyah. This book explains this invocation in extensive detail and its significance. Published by Dār as-Sunnah Publisher, 2nd ed., Birmingham, United Kingdom.

There is no one worthy of worship save Allāh, Lord of the Great Throne. There is no one worthy of worship save Allāh, Lord of the heavens and the earth and the Lord of the Noble Throne.”¹¹⁹

From those supplications is the ḥadīth of Buraydah Ibn al-Aslamī (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), related by Tirmidhī in his *Sunan* and Ibn Ḥibbān his collection. The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) heard a man supplicate saying: “O Allāh I ask You because I make you witness that You indeed are Allāh and there is no god worthy of worship save you, the One, the Eternal, the One who does not beget nor was He begotten and there is no one equal to You.” So the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: “By the one in whose hand is my soul, indeed you have asked Allāh by His greatest name. By which if you supplicated with, He will answer, and if He is asked by way of it, He will give.”¹²⁰

Abū Dāwūd and Nasā’ī narrated from the ḥadīth of Anas (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*): “That he was with the Prophet (ﷺ) sitting while a man was praying, he then supplicated: “O Allāh I ask You, because to You belongs All Praise, there is no one worthy of worship save You, the only One [who has the right to] remind of His favours, the Originator of the heavens and the earth. O Possessor of Majesty and Nobility, the Ever-living and One who sustains.” The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Indeed the supplication is answered when it is preceded by this praise and remembrance Allāh, and the mention of His Most Lofty Names.”¹²¹

So the remembrance of Allāh and praising Him is the most noble and the best way a servant can ask for his needs.

¹¹⁹ Bukhārī, #6346.

¹²⁰ Abū Dāwūd, #1493, #1494 and Tirmidhī, #3475. It is declared ṣaḥīḥ by al-Albānī in *Sunan Abū Dāwūd*, 2/79.

¹²¹ Abū Dāwūd, #1495 and Nasā’ī, #7701. It is declared ṣaḥīḥ by al-Albānī in *Sunan Abū Dāwūd*, #1390.

This is another benefit to add to the many benefits of remembrance and praising Allāh. The *duā* that has this is more likely to be answered, so the supplication which is preceded by remembrance and praise, is far better and closer to being answered than just the request or need by itself. It is better to add to it his impoverished condition, his state of need, his helplessness and acknowledge that only Allāh can assist and aid him, this is more likely to be answered.

This is due to the fact that you are interceding with the One by supplicating using His Perfect Attributes, Kindness and Bounty, openly declaring the severity of your need and dependence. This is what is necessary from the servant and is unique to him, in the same respect the attributes of Allah [which are included in the supplication] are uniquely essential only to Allāh. The descriptions of the One being asked is a requirement, when both the questioner and the One being asked gather then it is more emphatic, more gentle, more complete in terms of servitude and awareness of Allāh. As you will have seen, and to Allāh belongs the best of examples, that a man seeks to intercede with someone he wants their favour, he first mentions his generosity, charitable nature, righteousness and then mentions his need while expressing his poverty and impoverished state. This then becomes more appealing to the emotions of the one being asked and his need is more likely to be fulfilled. So when he says to him: ‘Your generosity is well known and Your bounty is like the sun which cannot be denied. You never say no, I have a dire need that I cannot do without.’ This is more likely to get his need fulfilled, instead of saying from the very beginning: “Give me such and such”. If you understand this then try to ponder over the statement of [Prophet] Mūsā (*‘alayhis-salām*):

رَبِّ إِنِّي لِمَا أَنْزَلْتَ إِلَيَّ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَقِيرٌ ﴿٢٨﴾

“My Lord, indeed I am truly in need of any good, You have in store for me.”

[*al-Qaṣaṣ* (28): 24]

And the statement of Dhū'l-Nūn (*'alayhis-salām*) in his invocation:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ

“There is none worthy of worship save You! Glory be to You, far removed are You from any imperfection; I have been among the wrongdoers.”

[*al-Anbiyā'* (21): 87]

and the statement of our father Ādam (*'alayhis-salām*):

رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَا أَنْفُسَنَا وَإِنْ لَمْ تَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ

الْخَسِرِينَ ﴿٣٢﴾

“Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves. If You do not forgive us and have mercy on us, we shall certainly be among the losers.”

[*al-A'raf* (7): 23]

In Bukhārī and Muslim, there is a narration that Abū Bakr al-Siddīq (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) said: ‘O Messenger of Allāh teach me a supplication that I can use in my prayer, he (ﷺ) said: ‘Say: “O Allāh indeed I have wronged myself much, and no one forgives sins except You, so forgive me and have mercy upon me. Indeed, You are the Most Forgiving and the Most Merciful.”’¹²²

So in this noble and great supplication the acknowledgement of one’s condition and interceding with Allāh’s bounty and generosity is joined together. Then the servant asks for his need. This is from the etiquettes of supplicating and showing servitude towards Allāh.¹²³

¹²² Bukhārī, #6326.

¹²³ Shaikh Ibn Bāz said: ‘In this section there is an encouragement for the remem-
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brance in the heart and upon the tongue. With praising Allāh in His commands and prohibitions, loving Him, declaring His greatness and His holiness. Being cautious of what He has prohibited and staying upright upon His commands, is the best form of remembrance. Remember Him on your tongue with love of Him in your heart, be eager to meet Him with fear of Him, be in awe of Him and extolling His commands and prohibitions. If you obey His orders and leaving what He has forbidden - then this the greatest form of remembrance. A believer must strive to increase in saying "Glory be to Allāh," "All Praise be to Allāh," "Allāh is the greatest," with belief in His names and attributes. Allāh is the praised one in every situation and deserves [all] praise. The more a servant remembers to repeats this it becomes more complete, so when he says: "So when the servant says: "Praise be to Allāh, Lord of the Worlds," Allāh says: "My servant has praised Me." When he says: "The Merciful, and the Compassionate," Allāh says: "My servant has extolled Me." And when he says: "Master of the Day of Judgement," Allāh says: "My servant has glorified Me." Therefore, repeating praise of Him and extolling Him is called glorification (*tamjīd*): which is to intercede with Him via praise and extolling.

The servant must pay attention to the words that are comprehensive such as: "Glory is to Allāh in ways as numerous as His creation," "Glory is to Allāh in ways as numerous as His pleasure," "Glory is to Allāh in ways as numerous as the weight of His Throne," "Glory is to Allāh in ways as numerous as the extent of His Words.".... this is how he should seek forgiveness from Allāh and increase in supplication to Him. From glorification, praising and magnifying Him. The time of a believer should be spent supplicating and seeking forgiveness, this is the remembrance of Allāh of heart and tongue which is done with love and declaring the greatness of Allāh. This is the way to sanctifying Him, while rushing to fulfil His commands and leaving His prohibitions. The heart of the believer is overflowing with the love of Allāh, so the tongue of the servant is busy with praising Him with speech, and in actions by leaving all sins and holding onto His obedience. This is the greatest form of remembrance.

As for the remembrance of the tongue by the one whose heart is neglectful, then this is empty words. He must strive to make his limbs act with what is in his heart. So when he remembers Allāh with his tongue, he should strive to move his heart with love of Allāh and veneration of Him. So the tongue utters words and he gets the reward for it. His heart should be full of love, veneration,

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Section One:

Remembrance, Recitation and Invocation

78. Reciting the Qur'ān is better than remembrance and remembrance is better than supplication. This is if each one is viewed by itself. There can be times where the thing which is less virtuous can be better than what is more virtuous in fact it may even help it. It is not permissible to equate it with what is more virtuous, such as glorification in bowing or prostration is better than reciting the Qur'ān in those positions, rather reciting Qur'ān is disliked then. Likewise glorification, praising and magnifying Him in their rightful places are better than reciting the Qur'ān. Also in the *tashahud*, and in between the two prostrations, saying: "O Lord forgive me, have mercy upon me, guide me, cure me, give me sustenance," is better than reciting Qur'ān. Similarly, after the end of each prayer saying the glorification, praising and magnifying Him, is better than reciting.

Similarly, replying to the call to prayer is better than reciting even though the virtue of the Qur'ān is above the speech of

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knowing that his Lord is deserving of his worship, to be praised and extolled. He is deserving of all types of praise. The root of this love is from the heart and then the limbs follow, the tongue and actions which the believer does out of obedience to Allāh. All of which is a result of the love of the heart and venerating Him and acknowledging Him.

And among the most comprehensive of remembrances is the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ) to Juwayriya (*radīy Allāhu 'anhā*) [as mentioned above] when she was sitting in her place after *Fajr* until sunrise. He said to her have you been in the same place since you finished the prayer? Then he said to her: I said after you a few words that if they were weighed against what you have been saying [since *Fajr*] it would outweigh them and I said them three times. See above for the full wording. He repeated them three times and they are from the greatest forms of remembrances.

everyone else, like the superiority of Allāh is greater than that of His creation. However for each place and time there is asset and prescribed remembrance to say. So if he misses it and tries to equate it with something else then the wisdom and benefit of what was intended is lost.

In this way all the prescribed remembrances that have been specified for a certain time and place are better than reciting the Qur'ān generally. So reciting generally is better than doing remembrance generally, except when the servant is faced with something which makes remembrance or invocation more beneficial to him than reciting the Qur'ān. For example: A person may reflect on his sins and because of that it leads him to repent by way of seeking forgiveness, or that he is faced with fear of harm from devils among the jinn and mankind so he leans towards remembrance of Allāh and supplications which will protect him and surround him.

Likewise, a need may arise for the servant which is urgent so if he is preoccupied away from it with recitation of the Qur'ān his heart will not be immerse in it. However if he faces his issue with asking about it and supplicating for it, then his heart will be immersed praying to Allāh, with humility and concentration. So this type of person should be busy with supplicating because in this scenario, this is more beneficial for him. Even though recitation and remembrance is better and of greater reward.

This is something that is not in need of understanding in depth, and is a clear distinction between the virtues of something in itself and something temporary. So each right is given to each situation, and each thing is placed in its rightful place. So the eye has its rightful place, the leg has its rightful place, water has its

rightful place, flesh has its rightful place. The order and place of things is from divine wisdom of the system of commandments and prohibitions, and Allāh is the one who grants success. Soap is at times more useful for a garment and at other times boiling rose water and pressing a garment is more useful.

One day I told Shaikh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah: ‘Some of the people of knowledge were asked what is more beneficial to a servant making glorification or seeking forgiveness?’ So he said: ‘If the garment is clean, then burning fragrance and applying rose water is more beneficial for it. If however, the garment is stained, then soap and hot water is more beneficial for it.’ So he said to me: ‘What would you do if the garment continues to be stained?’

With regards to this point, the Chapter of Qur’ān, *al-Ikhlās* [Sincerity]: “Say, He is Allāh, the One and Only,” it is equal to a third of the Qur’ān, in spite of this virtue it does not take the place of the verses of inheritance, divorce, legal separation, polygamy and the like. Rather these verses when the need arises are more beneficial than reciting the Chapter of *al-Ikhlās*. However [a point to note in relation to] the prayer is that it contains recitation, remembrance and supplication, it joins all the parts of worship together in the most complete way. For this reason it is better than recitation, remembrance and supplication by themselves, as it joins together all these forms of worship together, with all parts of the body.

This is a very beneficial principle. It opens up for the servant the different levels of the actions, and placing them in their rightful place, so that he is not preoccupied with what is less virtuous from that which is more virtuous, so that the devil does not gain from the difference between them.

Or that he sees what is more virtuous and becomes occupied by it from what is less virtuous, even though it is the time [for the less virtuous deed] so he misses all of the good, due to fact that he thinks being busy with the more virtuous act is greater in reward, then this requires awareness of the levels of the action and their differences and intents. This all requires deep understanding of each given deed and its rightful place, and placing it on the right level, and allowing it to pass you by when there is an deed more important.

Or allowing what is more deserving to pass by if it can be done at another time. So the less virtuous deed if it is missed it cannot be done later, is more deserving of being done. This is like stopping recitation of the Qur'ān in order to return someone's greeting or asking mercy for the one that sneezes, even though the Qur'ān is better in virtue, it is possible to do the less virtuous act and return to that which is better after that. This is contrary to someone busy with recitation and the benefit of returning the greeting or asking for mercy for the one that sneezes misses him. The same applies to all actions once they coincide with each other.

May Allāh, the Most High, Grant Success.

Glossary of Arabic Terms

Āyah: pl. *āyāt*. Sign, miracle, example, lesson, verse.

‘Abd: pl. *‘ebād*. slave, servant, worshipper.

Abrār: righteous.

Adhān: the call to prayer

Awliyā’: plural of *walī*; friend, ally, loyal companion. From the word *wilāyah* meaning loyalty and closeness, the opposite of enmity.

‘Ayy: withholding the tongue from speaking, carefully considering each word before it is said.

Barẖakh: barrier, isthmus, A barrier that is erected between the deceased and this life preventing him from returning and a generic reference to the life that commences after death.

Bayān: Speech, clarification, discourse. It is of two types: the first whereby the intended meaning is expressed clearly, whatever language it may be in, this category is not regarded as magic; the second whereby the intended meaning is expressed in eloquent, cleverly doctored phrases based upon specific rules such that one listening takes pleasure in hearing the words and they affect his very heart. This category is what has been likened to magic as it captivates and beguiles the heart and overcomes the soul to the point that the face of reality could

be transformed to illusion and the one captivated perceive only that which the speaker wants him to perceive. This category can be used in a commendable fashion and in a blameworthy fashion. As for the commendable form, it is to direct the person towards the truth and use these methods to aid the truth. As for the blameworthy form, it is to direct the person towards falsehood or envelop him in confusion such that the truth is seen as falsehood and falsehood as truth. This is completely blameworthy and has been likened to that which is completely blameworthy - magic

Bid'ah: innovation, that which is newly introduced into the religion of Allāh.

Da'if: weak; the ḥadīth that is neither ṣaḥīḥ nor ḥasan because it fails to meet one of their requirements. It is of varying degrees of severity, the most severe of which being mawḍū', fabricated.

Dhawq: taste, perceptivity, technically referring to spiritual experience, *dhawq* is a more temporary state of *wajd*. One may receive some forms of inspiration in the heart as a result of these states however this inspiration should always be compared to the Book and Sunnah to ascertain its correctness.

Dhikr: remembrance, recollection, technically referring the remembrance of Allāh.

Du'ā: supplication, invocation, it is an action of worship that may only be directed to Allāh. It is of two types, supplication through worship (*du'ā 'ibādah*) and supplication of request (*du'ā mas'alah*). The first type of *du'ā* can be understood when one understands that every act of worship is done with the unstated plea that Allāh accept that action of worship and the desire to draw closer to him; and hence attain His pleasure. Hence every action of worship is a type of request to Allāh. The second type of *du'ā* is whereby one explicitly asks his

Lord of something such as 'O Allāh! Grant me good in this world and the Hereafter.' The second type includes the first type and the first type necessitates the second type.

Fard: see *wājib*.

Fasād: corruption, decay, and invalidity.

Fatwā: *fiqh*: legal ruling.

Fiqh: understanding and comprehension. *fiqh*: of the rulings and legislation of Islām.

Fisq: pl. *fusūq*. Immorality, transgression, wickedness.

Fitnah: pl. *fitan*. Trial, tribulation, civil strife.

Fitrah: primordial nature, the harmony between man, creation and Creator.

Ghayb: the Unseen, those matters beyond our senses.

Ghubṭa: envy, referring to the permissible form of envy where the envier wishes to have the same blessings as the envied but without desiring to see them removed from the envied. This is opposed to *ḥasad*, the blameworthy form of envy where the envier wishes to see the blessings removed from the envied.

Ḥadīth: A text attributed to the Prophet (ﷺ) describing his actions, words, descriptions and tacit approvals. It consists of two portions, the body of the text (*matn*) and the *isnād*. Rarely the term is also used to refer to a text attributed to a Companion or a *Tābi'i*.

Ḥāfiẓ: pl. *ḥuffāẓ*. Ḥadīth Master, commonly referred to one who has memorised at least 100,000 ḥadīths.

Ḥasan: good, fair. A ḥadīth whose *isnād* is continuously linked of just, morally upright narrators but whose precision (*ḍabt*) falls short of the requirements of the ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth; containing no irregularity (*shādh*) and no hidden defect (*'illah*). A ḥadīth can be ḥasan in and of itself, or contain a defect but still be ruled to be so due to supporting evidences.

Hudūd: limits, boundaries. The limits ordained by Allāh, prescribed

punishments.

Ḥulūl wa-l-Ittibāḥ: incarnation and unification, the settling of a superior faculty upon a support.

Ihsān: beneficence, excellence. To worship Allāh as if one is seeing Him, and knowing that even though one sees Him not, He sees the servant.

ʿIlm: knowledge.

Īmān: The firm belief, complete acknowledgement and acceptance of all that Allāh and His Messenger have commanded to have faith in, submitting to it both inwardly and outwardly. It is the acceptance and belief of the heart that includes the actions of the heart and body, therefore it encompasses the establishment of the whole religion. This is why the Imāms and Salaf used to say, 'Faith is the statement of the heart and tongue, action of the heart, tongue and limbs.' Hence it comprises statement, action and belief, it increases through obedience and decreases through disobedience. It includes the beliefs of faith, its morals and manners and the actions demanded by it.

Khalaf: successors. A reference to those who followed a path other than the path of the Salaf.

Khalīfah: pl. *khulafāʾ*. Successor, representative. The Successors of the Prophet (ﷺ), head of the Islāmic state. Also called *Amīr al-Muʿminīn* or Leader of the Believers.

Khushūʿ: submissiveness, humility.

Kufr: denial, rejection, hiding, technically referring to disbelief. It can be major (removing a person from the fold of Islām) or minor (not removing a person from the fold of Islām).

Qadr: Divine Decree and Destiny.

Qurʾān: The actual Word of Allāh revealed to the Prophet (ﷺ) in the Arabic language through the medium of the Angel Gabriel and the greatest miracle bestowed him. It consists of 114 chapters commencing with al-Fātiḥah and ending with an-Nās.

Rabbah: dread.

Radīy Allāhu ‘anhu/‘anhā/‘anhum/‘anhumā: may Allāh be pleased with him/her/them/both of them.

Rahimah Allāh/Rahimahum Allāh: may Allāh bestow his mercy upon him/them.

Ramaḍān: ninth month of the Islāmic calendar.

Riḍā: contentment and pleasure.

Riyā’: showing off, ostentation, an example of which lies in person beautifying actions of worship because he knows people are watching.

Ruqyā: recitation used to cure an illness or disease. It can only be done in the Arabic tongue, in words whose meaning is understood, using verses of the Qur’ān or supplications of the Prophet combined with the belief that it is only Allāh who in reality gives the cure.

Ṣabr: patience and steadfastness, the restraint of ones self to that which is dictated by the divine law. It is of three levels, steadfastness in the obedience of Allāh, steadfastness in avoiding the prohibited matters and patience at the onset of calamity. *Ikhlāṣ* can never be complete without *ṣidq* and *ṣidq* can never be complete without *ikhlāṣ* and the two can never be complete without *ḍabr*. The person is patient through Allāh, i.e. seeking His aid Alone; for Allāh, i.e. arising out of love for Him and the desire to draw close to Him; and with Allāh, i.e. doing only that which He wills.

Ṣaḥābah: The Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ), those who saw him, believed in him and died upon that belief.

Ṣāḥih: correct, authentic. A ḥadīth which has a continuously linked *isnād*, of just, morally upright and precise narrators; containing no irregularity (*shādh*) or hidden defect (*‘illab*). Hence five conditions have to be met: the *isnād* being continuously linked; the justice (*‘adl*) of the narrator; the precision (*ḍabt*) of the nar-

- rator; its not being *shādh*; and its not containing an *'illab*. The ḥadīth can be ḍaḥīḥ in and of itself, or it can contain a defect but still be ruled to be ṣaḥīḥ due to supporting evidences.
- Salaf*: predecessors. Technically used to refer to the best generations of Muslims, the first three generation: the *Ṣaḥābah*, the *Tābi'ūn* and the *Tab' Tābi'ūn*.
- Shirk*: association, technically referring to directing a right that is due to Allāh Alone to another object of creation, either completely or partially. It can be major (removing a person from the fold of Islām) or minor (not removing a person from the fold of Islām).
- Sunan*: a compilation of *aḥādīth*.
- Sunnah*: habit, customary practice, norm and usage as sanctioned by tradition. *fiqh*: the sayings, commands, prohibitions, actions, and tacit approvals of the Prophet (ﷺ).
- Sūrah*: chapter of the Qur'ān.
- Ṣurab*: image, form, face.
- Tābi'ūn*: The generation following that of the Companions.
- Taqwā*: the basic meaning of which is setting a barrier between two things. This is why it is said that one *ittaqā* with his shield, i.e. he set it as a barrier between him and the one who wished him evil. Therefore it is as if the one who has *taqwa* (*muttaqī*) has used his following the commands of Allāh and avoiding His prohibitions as a barrier between himself and the Punishment. Hence he has preserved and fortified himself against the punishment of Allāh through his obeying Him.
- Tawḥīd*: unification, monotheism, the belief in the absolute Oneness of Allāh. It is to believe that Allāh Alone is the creator, nourisher, and sustainer of the worlds; it is to believe that Allāh Alone deserves to be worshipped; and it is to believe that He has unique and perfect Names and Attributes that far transcend anything that one can imagine.

Ummah: nation, the Muslim nation.

Wudū': *ḥiḡb*: ritual ablution.

Zakāh: *ḥiḡb*: one of the pillars of Islām, an obligatory tax levied on a Muslim wealth subject to certain criteria.