

THE LAST BREATH

from the Garden of the Heart

Osman Nûri Topbaş





Dear Lord!

*Protect us from the fate of those who plunge into the world
and drown themselves in a glass of water. O Lord, you
are the most merciful of merciful! Make our life and death
adorned with the bounties, blessings and lofty beauties
that you have showered upon your righteous servants, and
grant us union with You!*

Dear Lord!

*Grant us the ability to look at the universe with the eye of
divine love, to observe it from the level of consciousness,
passion and religious fervor, to reach the depths of
forgiveness with regretful tears running down our cheeks,
and to be able to reach Your presence in complete peace!*



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Osman Nûri TOPBAŞ

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Author: Osman Nûri Topbaş

Translator: El Mahdi Rezoug

Editor: Prof. Dr. Süleyman Derin

Graphics: Rasim Şakiroğlu

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Fax: (90-212) 671-0748

E-mail: info@islamicpublishing.org

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FOREWORD

Praise be to Allah who has granted us the joy and peace of faith!

Salutations and blessings to the pride of the universe, who is the one who takes humanity from the darkness to the light!

By the grace of our Lord, we have compiled the articles from our magazine *Altinoluk* into a book. The following is a brief outline of the book's contents:

When mankind leaves this realm of exile, where he came to be tested, he enters the eternal realm through a gateway. This world has two doors, one leading to frustration and the other to happiness. Which door the servant will pass through is determined by his Last Breath, which is a summary of his entire life. In this regard, every instant of our lives should pass in the apprehension and excitement of our final breath, so that at that point we can spread our wings and enter the realm of eternity through the door that leads to bliss. Therefore, we must be spiritually watchful in this ephemeral world and be cautious and vigilant regarding the Last Breath.

Indeed, our Last Breath is the first and clearest indicator of our situation in the hereafter. To bid farewell to this transient world as a beautiful servant, the numbered breaths must be prepared for the final breath. In other words, for a happy afterlife, a life that is beautiful, prosperous, peaceful, ornamented with good actions and headed in the right direction is necessary. Life is like the drops filling a glass. The clarity of the water in the glass is dependent on the clarity of the drops. The final breath is comparable to the final drop that overflows a glass. In accordance with the following Hadith:



“Every servant will die according to how he lived, and he will be raised up according to how he died.” (Al-Munawi, *Fayd al-Qadir Sharh al-Jami` al-Saghir*, V, 663)

The last breath, that is, the last act of the life scene, is like a clear mirror that reflects everyone’s own fate. At his last breath, man is most self-aware. As Necip Fazil said:

At that moment when veils are cloaked and striped, ingenuity is to be able to say welcome to Azrail (the angel of death).

At that moment, the account of the servant’s whole life is displayed in front of him. For this reason, there is no other time in human existence that can compare to the moment of death in terms of its significance.

All of the breaths that we take, along with the worship, practices and morality that we live in this life, serve as a sort of compass for our final breath and an interpreter of our situation in the afterlife.

Our life in the grave, which will last until the Day of Judgment, will be shaped according to our deeds and our situation in this world. Only those who have mastered the art of preparing themselves for the location they want to inhabit after passing away are able to turn death into a triumph when they reach their final breath.

These servants spend their lives in a manner that is the most beneficial in terms of dhikrullah (remembering Allah) and worship at dawn. They are, in other words, involved in the cosmic circle of dhikrullah and they specifically reap the benefits of the early hours, which are the most fruitful time for dhikr. Are those people who condemn the mornings to sleep not aware that they will be deprived of this abundance and prosperity? Just as the fertile April rain that falls on the desert, the oceans and the steep cliffs is wasted.



In order to avoid falling into such heedlessness, those distinct servants do not separate themselves from the company of the Qur'an and the atmosphere of contemplation. This atmosphere teaches them that there are three places of the manifestation of God's divine attributes in this world: man, the Qur'an and the universe...

The universe is a book of mystery, full of verses to ponder; while the actual manifestation of the Divine Names is a silent Qur'an... The Quran, on the other hand, is like a cosmos shrouded in words... And, man is both a monument to manifestations as well as a focal point of wisdom, standing at the intersection of both.

The sages who lived with this awareness in the Qur'an and the atmosphere of contemplation came to the realization that the Qur'an is always in the lead, and science is always trying to catch up. The Qur'an is not the knowledge of a simple human being; rather, it is the knowledge of Allah, who bestows upon individuals the foundational ideas that underlie all of the sciences that are practiced in this world. At the same time, it is He who creates the comprehension that makes the discoveries made in science possible. In this regard, the following are some of the things that can be said regarding contemplation and the Qur'an:

How magnificent are the truths that can be attained as a result of feeding and strengthening the contemplation and determination in us with the Qur'an, like the magnificence of a seed by turning into a huge tree through fertile soil. In this respect, had it not been for the superior guidance of the Qur'an, our ability to think and comprehend would have remained like a parched seed devoid of fertile soil. Therefore, there can be no better blessing for us servants than to understand the sublimity and boundless majesty of divine compassion realized via the Qur'an.

In this ephemeral world full of human faults, hearts that have been kneaded with such lofty principles wash their inner and outer selves with repentance and tears. The poet describes these servants beautifully:

Those men who are in the spiritual heavens,
They are suffering from crawling on this planet.
They glorify with the stars as if they were a rosary,
Standing at the back row in prayers.
They bear the imprint of an eternal day
That never ends and always begins with them.
If their eyes stare at a stranger for a moment,
They are punished for a lifetime of tears.

In other words, these righteous people are in a constant state of prayer and have responded to the following warning:

قُلْ مَا يَعْجُبُكُمْ رَبِّي لَوْلَا دُعَاؤُكُمْ فَقَدْ كَذَّبْتُمْ فَسَوْفَ يَكُونُ لِزَامًا

Say: “What has my Lord to do with you if you do not call on Him? But you have denied the truth, so punishment is bound to come.” (Al-Furqan, 77)

As a result of such a sublime understanding, they live in the joy of being a member of the best nation. For this reason, they adorn all their beautiful states and traits with invitations to truth and goodness. The way to be among the members of the best nation passes through here. It is commanded in the verse:



كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ
وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَوْ آمَنَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ
لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ مِّنْهُمْ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَأَكْثَرُهُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ

“You are the best nation ever to be produced before mankind. You enjoin the right, forbid the wrong and believe in Allah. If the People of the Book were to believe, it would be better for them. Some of them are believers but most of them are deviators.”

(Ali Imran, 110)

Those who make a sincere effort to fulfill this noble duty properly beautify their spiritual world with the grace, kindness and the wisdom of Islam and set an example in conveying the truth and encouraging good deeds with their words and actions.

They realize the invitation to truth and goodness by the secret of the verse below:

أَدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ
وَجَدِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ
عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ

“Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and fair admonition, and argue with them in the kindest way. Your Lord knows best who is misguided from His Way. And He knows best who are guided.” (An-Nahl, 125)

When these beauties are reflected in the heart and life of a believer, his state and deeds are nothing but beauty. That believer is

now among those who practice altruism. In other words, he is at the peak of material and spiritual generosity. He is in an endless richness with a supreme istighna (self-sufficiency). His business ethics are filled with the blessings of the Noble Prophet's ﷺ trade. His property is a qardh hasan (benevolent loan) given to Allah. Regarding debt and borrowing in social relations, he is exceedingly precise and observant of divine norms in this regard. He has forged an alliance with Allah and His Messenger and established friendships with saints and solidified these bonds through his loyalty. These noble friends will never cause him pain. Consequently, he is in a position to be a model of faith in all dimensions and traits. In this position, his destiny and its mysteries are revealed to him, and he finds serenity in every divine decree.

Dear readers,

These are the topics that we aimed to discuss with you in this piece of writing, which we published under the title "Last Breath." In addition, we commemorated a great friend of Allah, who was endowed with a dazzling light until his last breath and who reached the presence of God with purity, under the title of Musa Efendi, from faith to (Ihsan) beneficence. We have added the interview with Al-tinoluk Magazine to the conclusion of our book, Sufism: A Path towards the Internalization of Faith, which is an effort to discuss the sublime Sufi path that these great people traversed and to demonstrate its beauty and perfection. We aimed to underline that authentic Sufism entails living by the Qur'an and Sunna with profound sincerity and a measure of wisdom. Every state, word and action that contradicts the content of the Qur'an and Sunna is fallacious. This concept was expressed as follows: "The shari'a is the fixed foot of the compass." In conclusion, we stated that Islam can exist without Sufism, yet this would not be enough to lead a Muslim to "ihsan" (perfection). In other words, a life devoid of Sufism, which is spir-

itual education, cannot develop the servitude of “worshiping Allah as if you see Him.”

Those who cannot achieve this state face difficulties and discomfort during their last breath. In other words, in order to pass from the gate of bliss into the realm of eternity at the final breath, one must live a life of worship as if seeing Allah.

It should not be forgotten that every day and night, consciously or unconsciously, humans encounter many causes of death. Death is always waiting for mankind. Mawlana Rumi says in his Mathnawi:

“Every moment, a part of you is perishing... At every moment you are relinquishing a part of your life.”

With every passing day, do we not move a step further away from this mortal life and move a step closer to the grave? Are the days not being torn away from our life’s calendar?

In deathly silence, each tombstone is a passionate adviser from beyond. The establishment of graveyards in the inner city, along roadsides and in the courtyards of mosques is to trigger contemplation - to consider death and put worldly life into perspective accordingly. The terrifying weight of death cannot be carried on the feeble shoulders of language! In the face of death, all authority crumbles and ceases to exist.

Death is the individual’s doom. Let us awake before our day of judgment so that we are not among the regretful. It is inevitable that every mortal will meet Azrail (the angel of death) at an determined time and place. There is no escape from death. In this case, one must immediately heed the call **فَفِرُّوْا إِلَى اللَّهِ** “Flee to Allah!...” (Adh-Dhariyat, 50) and accept divine mercy as the only refuge.

Except for Prophets and those to whom they deliver good news, no servant is safe from the risk of losing faith. Therefore, every believer should make an effort to properly evaluate the gift of life he has received. The only way to avoid feeling the chills of death is to strive to live a righteous life. Those who are prepared for death do not fear it, but rather view it as a means of eternal union. These are content servants who have achieved the serenity to “beautify death.”

Those who ruin their hereafter by leading a heedless life cannot avoid feeling the cold chills of dread in the face of death’s gloomy whirlpool. How nicely Mawlana says:

“Son, the color of each individual’s death is unique; to those who dislike and fear death without contemplating that it leads to Allah, death appears to be a formidable foe. And it appears as a friend to those who are amicable toward it.”

Indeed, the last breath is like a mirror that is smooth and spotless and free of mist. In this mirror, each individual can see the beauty and ugliness of his entire lifetime. At that time, there is no veil of heedlessness over the sight and hearing and all the veils are lifted. Therefore, don’t let the mirror become dirty in which we regretfully reflect on our lives be our last breath! Let this mirror enter our lives while we are living according to the Qur’an and Sunnah because the truly fortunate are those who are able to know themselves before death.



I would like to thank our brothers M. Ali Eşmeli and M. Akif Günay, who contributed to this work, and I pray that Allah accepts their service as a charitable act that will continue to benefit them and others.



**May our Lord make our last breath a window through which
we can watch our rewards in the eternal realm...**

Amin!..

Osman Nuri TOPBAŞ
Üsküdar / 2003

The Last Breath

-1-



Throughout our lifetimes, humans are repeatedly confronted by death. Sickneses, unanticipated events and disasters, as well as numerous other life-threatening risks that are always present in life but sometimes neglected owing to carelessness and heedlessness, demonstrate how close man is to death.



THE LAST BREATH -1-

Allah Almighty has assigned the attribute of eternity to Himself alone. It is for this reason that all that exists, save for His Supreme Essence, is mortal. In fact, Allah says:

كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ

“Everyone on it will pass away.” (Ar-Rahman, 26) The manifestation of this will be actualized by death:

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ

“Every self shall taste of death.” (Al-Anbiya, 35)

Human beings, therefore, should live in contemplation of this reality. Furthermore, Allah says in the Qur'an:

وَجَاءَتْ سَكْرَةُ الْمَوْتِ بِالْحَقِّ ذَلِكَ مَا كُنْتَ مِنْهُ تَحِيدُ

“The throes of death will come revealing the truth. That is what you were trying to evade!” (Qaf, 19)

Since human beings have been put in this world to be tried, their greatest objective should be to strive to attain a place in heaven, the home of peace and elation, by gaining the pleasure of Allah. The only way to achieve this is to attain the state described in the verse:

يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ مَالٌ وَلَا بَنُونَ، إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَى اللَّهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ



“The day when neither wealth nor sons will be of any use - except to those who come to Allah with sound and flawless hearts.”

(Shu'ara, 88-89)

Such is only possible by disciplining the self and the true discipline of the self is submission, commitment and obedience to Allah and His Messenger the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. In reference to the Prophet, this requires one to take lessons from his twenty three-year long Prophetic life. Allah Almighty revealed the Mighty Qur'an through the Archangel Jibril directly to the heart of the Prophet Muhammad. Thus, in some ways, all of the Prophet's worship, sayings, manners and actions are interpretations of the Qur'an. Within the framework of this reality, it is essential for us to love the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ more than we love ourselves, belongings, families and everything else if we are to benefit fully from him. His love moulds the servant into the love of Allah. In other words, loving him means loving Allah and vice versa. And this is necessary for reaching the ultimate union with Allah.

The aforementioned matters are the greatest steps in preparation for our last breath. This means that preparation for the last breath depends on how we use our current breaths. Allah's elected servants, who live throughout their lives with love and devotion to the Almighty and His Messenger, peacefully breathe their last by pronouncing the testimony of faith known as the shahada. They are the ones about whom the Prophet gave glad tidings:

“He who testifies that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah while taking his last breath will enter Paradise...” (Hakim, Mustadrak, I, 503)

In other words, whoever lives throughout his lifetime with the kalima-i tawhid will breathe his last on his journey towards Allah with it on his lips. Such are the ones who have wiped all temporary

and worldly love out of their hearts by saying la (no) and then filled them with the love of Allah Almighty by the pronouncement illa (but).

It is essential to know that the universe which has been created by the power of the Almighty is a transitory dwelling decorated with many attractions. Nothing in the world was created without a cause. The objective of human beings in this world is to attain happiness in the Hereafter. That is why our Lord warns us, the believers:

“You who believe! have taqwa of Allah with the taqwa due to Him and do not die except as Muslims.” (Al ‘Imran, 102)

Death, which sooner or later every living being on earth will face, is tantamount to a personal judgment day. We should never forget that we, whether we realize it or not, are actually confronted by death several times every day. Death ever waits in ambush for us. Imam Jalaluddin Rumi says in his Mathnawi:

“Every moment a part of you is perishing... At every moment you are relinquishing a part of your life.”

With every passing day, do we not move a step away from this mortal life and move a step closer to the grave? Are the days not being torn away from our life’s calendar? As though we stand blind against the current of a river, Rumi warns us:

“O people, take your last glimpse at the embroidery in the mirror! And think how this beauty will be when it grows old and how a building looks in ruins and do not be misled by the lie in the mirror.”

Our last breath is a divine secret that is surrounded by innumerable wisdoms. When death arrives, is a matter of the divine decree. As a matter of fact, humans confront the possibility of death each day of their lives. Illnesses, unexpected events and disasters are all



realities they face, but most people are unaware of these everyday dangers. Does this not show how fine the line is between this world and the next?

Therefore, human beings should contemplate the meanings of the above-mentioned verses and live in accordance with them at all times; they must take action now before time runs out, since there will be no second chance in the Hereafter. Though human beings should be aware of this reality, many remain heedless, wasting their time; the majority of human beings simply watch the passing of days with numbness, like stationary rocks.

In fact, from the time of our birth until we die, we continue along the road without realizing it. With every moment in time we draw that much closer to our end. This is beautifully explained in the following verse:


“When We grant long life to people, We return them to their primal state. So will you not use your intellect?” (Yasin, 36: 68)


In the market of Ukaz, Kus Ibn Sa‘idah, a pious man who lived before the time of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and had given his people glad tidings of his arrival, once made a speech which, in retrospect, is like an interpretation of the verse above. He described the scenes of this mortal life in the following beautiful manner:

“O people! Come, listen and take warning! Every living creature will die, whoever is dead will perish, rain falls and grass grows. Children are born and take the place of their parents. Then all will fade and perish. It is a chain of events, all following one after the other...”

Once our lives are spent and we breathe our last, we will either find ourselves with time to bid farewell to all that is in the world or be out of time. But for those who are truly devoted to and in love with Allah, it will not be death per se; rather, it will be a blessed



resurrection and they will be brought forth as if on Shab-i Arus, the wedding night. This is why we must understand the secret of the expression “die before you die”. This secret is explained in the words of Rumi as: “Die to be resurrected”. ‘Ali  once said “people are asleep and when they die, they wake up.” Therefore, we must know that true life is not to live as a bestial soul, but rather to live in accordance with our divine souls that have been blessed by Allah Almighty, and not being defeated by our emotions or worldly desires.

The worst kind of death is to die unaware of Allah Almighty, bereft of His pleasure. This is why a believer must be conscious of how they live and how they will die; they must train themselves to go from the station of iman (belief) to the station of ihsan (spiritual excellence). Nobody, aside from the Prophets, has been given a guarantee about how they will die or be resurrected, yet in the following verse where the Prophet Yusuf  seeks refuge in Allah, there is a significant message for us:

“Originator of the heavens and the earth! You are my Friend in this world and the Next. So take me as a Muslim at my death and join me to the people who are righteous!” (Yusuf, 101)

Thus, the hearts of believers must be in a state of fear and hope. With this cautiousness and tender-heartedness, a person should always spend his life being concerned with taking his final breath with faith.

The first and clearest indication of our state on the Day of Judgment manifests itself in the way in which we breathe for the last time in this world. The Qur’an, our guide to salvation, gives us several examples of the faithful on their deathbeds, who had striven for eternal salvation-depicting the rewards they received. Subsequent to Prophet Musa performing an incontrovertible miracle, the magicians of Pharaoh said:



“We believe in the Lord of all the Worlds, the Lord of Musa and Harun.” (A’raf, 121-22) They immediately prostrated but Pharaoh became infuriated and considered himself capable of governing their souls with his power; he threatened them saying:

“...Have you believed in him before I authorised you to do so? This is just some plot you have concocted in the city to drive its people from it. I will cut off your alternate hands and feet and then I will crucify every one of you.” (A’raf, 123-24) The magicians, in a deep ecstasy of faith, replied:

“..We are returning to our Lord!” (A’raf, 125)

With the power of faith they stood against Pharaoh.

How exemplary their narrative is: even when they faced the oppression of Pharaoh, they did not ask to be saved from it, but rather they were more concerned about passing away as believers. They said, seeking refuge in Allah Almighty:

“Our Lord, pour down patience upon us and take us back to You as Muslims.” (A’raf, 126)

The price they paid for their faith was to have their hands and legs cut off, and they met their Creator as martyrs and as His friends.

Furthermore, the oppressors in the narrative of the Ashabal Ukhdud or the Companions of the Pit, thought that the believers were committing a crime when they declared their faith in Allah; they thus threw them into a huge pit of fire. But the devoted believers never abandoned their faith, going bravely to their deaths for the sake of their belief in Allah Almighty. Indeed, those who truly fear Allah do not fear anything else.

Habib An-Najjar of the Ashabal Qaria was stoned to death because of his faith. But while the curtains of this world were closing



for him at his final breath, the windows of the afterlife opened and he was shown the divine pleasures he had earned. Grieved by the blindness of his people, he said:

“..If my people only knew how my Lord has forgiven me and placed me among the honored ones!” (Yasin, 26)

Eternal happiness in the Hereafter was bestowed upon him as a result of his being stoned to death in this temporal world.

In the early periods of Christianity, the Romans, in alliance with the Greeks and idolaters, led the believers to their deaths into the jaws of lions. The faithful were not thinking about living while they in the grip of the lions; rather they were struggling to keep their faith. They endured this severe test because they had chosen the reward of Allah the All-Merciful.

Without a doubt, these are all rewards for those who are conscious of being always with Allah Almighty. Thus being with Allah is the peak of servitude.

It is reported that once, Shaykh Shibli was sitting in a congregation where a preacher was giving a sermon on the Day of Judgment. Towards the end of the sermon the preacher spoke about the questions which will be asked to those in the grave:

“Where did you use your knowledge? Where did you spend your wealth? Did you perform your prayers? Were you heedful of what was permitted (halal) and what was forbidden (haram)?”

The preacher continued with similar questions. So many peripheral issues were mentioned then Shaykh Shibli called out to the imam: “O imam! Allah Almighty will not ask that many questions. He will, however, ask, “O My servant! I was with you, who were you with?”



Thus, we see that at the heart of the matter is the constant awareness that we are with the Almighty and then, as a result, to not waste the limited breaths that have been afforded to us. This is explained in the following beautiful lines of poetry:

It has been wasted, we now understand
The one hour which we spent without you...

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ once took hold of ‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Umar’s shoulders and said:

“Be in this world as if you are a stranger or a traveler.” (Bukhari, Riqaq, 5)

It was with these thoughts that ‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Umar (May Allah be pleased with both of them) always gave the following advice in his sermons:

“If you survive till the evening, do not expect to be alive in the morning, and if you survive till the morning, do not expect to be alive in the evening, and take precautions from your health for your sickness, and from your life for your death.” (Bukhari, Riqaq, 3)

These words, which express the temporality of life, direct us to the true life. In fact, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ expressed the same sentiments in one of his prayers: “O Allah! There is no life worth living except the life of the Hereafter...” (Bukhari, Riqaq, 2)

The lives of the Companions, who understood this reality in the best manner, are full of examples of virtue and wisdom. Khubayb ؓ had only one wish before being martyred: to send his affectionate greetings to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. With sadness he turned his eyes to the skies and, seeking refuge in Allah, said:

“O Allah, there is no one here to take my greetings to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, please take my greetings to him!” At that mo-



ment the Prophet Muhammad who was sitting in Medina with his Companions said: “Wa ‘alayhi-salam” (greetings be upon him also). Upon hearing this the Companions, surprised by what they heard, asked the Prophet: “O Messenger of Allah, whose greetings did you reply to?” “To your brother Khubayb’s greetings,” he responded. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ described Khubayb as the most noble of martyrs saying, “He is my neighbor in paradise.”

Another example of this kind of love and enthusiasm is when, at the end of the Battle of ‘Uhud, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ gave orders that all the wounded and martyrs be accounted for, but he was particularly concerned about Sa’d Ibn al-Rabi’ ؓ. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ sent one of his Companions to the battleground to see if there was any news of him. The Companion called out and looked everywhere, but could not find Sa’d ؓ. Finally, without much hope, he shouted towards the wounded and martyrs: “O Sa’d, the Prophet has sent me. He has asked me to find out if you are among the living or the martyrs.” Hearing that the Prophet was concerned about him, Sa’d ؓ mustered all his strength and said in a weak voice: “I am now among the dead.” It is likely that at that very moment he was witnessing scenes of the Afterlife. The Companion ran over to Sa’d. He had been fatally injured. In a low voice, he uttered the following profound words: “By Allah, if you let any harm befall the Prophet ﷺ while your eyes still have the strength to move, you will have no excuse before Allah.” These words of Sa’d ibn al-Rabi’ much like parting advice to all Muslims, were also his words of farewell to the mortal world.

The following report by Hudayfa ؓ is significant since it reflects the grace and sublime morals of the Companions during their final moments:



“It was during the battle of Yarmuk. The intensity of the conflict had subsided. Some of the Muslims had been wounded by spears and arrows and they were living their final moments. With what remained of my strength, I began to look for my cousin. After walking among the wounded for a while I found him. He was in a pool of blood, hardly able to speak; he was trying to communicate with his eyes. Showing him the water skin, I asked:

‘Would you like some water?’ It was obvious he did, for his lips had dried up from thirst, but he did not have the strength to answer. It was as if he was trying to tell me of his pain by motioning with his eyes. Just as I was about to give him the water, ‘Ikrima’s voice was heard from among the wounded: ‘Water! Water! Please somebody give me a little water!’ Hearing this, my cousin Harith signaled with his eyes that he wanted me to take the water to ‘Ikrima.

Running among the martyrs across the baking sands I reached ‘Ikrima. I was about to give him water when we heard the groans of ‘Iyash. ‘Give me a drop of water, for the love of Allah, a drop of water!’ On hearing this, ‘Ikrima told me to take the water to ‘Iyash; as Harith had done before him, he did not have the chance to drink any water. By the time I had run through the martyrs and reached ‘Iyash, I heard his last words:

“O Allah, we never abstained from sacrificing our lives in the cause of faith. Give us the honor of martyrdom and forgive our sins!” It was obvious that he had almost attained martyrdom; he had seen the water, but he had no time to drink it... he had just finished saying the kalima-i tawhid. I ran back to ‘Ikrima to offer him the water; then I realized that he had also been blessed with martyrdom! I thought that at least I would be able to reach my cousin Harith. I ran back as fast as I could. But it was in vain, for on the baking sand



he had already surrendered his soul... unfortunately, the water skin was still full despite the thirst of these three martyrs.”

Hudayfa  explains his spiritual state at the time:

“I have seen many incidents during my lifetime, but I have never been as moved or inspired as I was then. Even though there were no family ties between these men, their selflessness, thoughtfulness and affection they extended to one another raised my admiration for them and left deep traces in my memory...”

May Allah Almighty bless us also with a death which takes place in a state of belief and with pronouncing the kalima-i tawhid and may our last breath be the beginning of our eternal reunion with the Beloved.

Amin.



The Last Breath

-2-



*The purpose of life is to live as a beautiful
servant and to die as a beautiful servant
because the objective is to be a subtle,
delicate, refined and sensitive servant by
taking an example from the pure life of the
Prophet ﷺ.*



THE LAST BREATH -2-

In order to leave this world as righteous believers, we must prepare our limited breaths in this temporal world for our last breath. For our happiness in the Hereafter it is essential to spend our lives in this world performing good deeds, showing kindness and following the straight path of Islam. As is stated in the following hadith:

“A man dies in accordance with the state he lived in and he is resurrected in accordance with the state he died in.” (Munawi, *Fayd al-Qadir sharh Jami’ al-Saghir*, vol. V, 663)

The ultimate goal is to take the final step to Allah Almighty with peace and awareness, and to feel contentment and happiness at the moment we breathe our last; there will certainly be those who at the last moments of their lives will be experiencing nothing less than a nightmare. Our goal is also to be in a position to say happily, “I am coming to You, my Lord!” May Allah grant us the ability to be able to say these words, Amin!

Whatever the soul is occupied with in this world, it will continue to be engaged with at the time of death. Of course, there are exceptions: even though a believer spends their life doing good deeds in order to finally pass away in a state of belief, they should never take for granted that they will attain the mercy of Allah. Similarly, a person who has lived a contemptible life should not lose hope in the mercy of Allah. This is because the way in which we expend our final breath is a divine secret.

In the Qur’an there are many examples of those who struggled at the time of death to protect their faith as well as those who, while



living a righteous life, chose to be captives of their desires and consequently fell from grace.

There are the knowledgeable ones who, instead of adorning their knowledge with enlightenment, chose to follow their desires: examples are Shaytan, Qarun, Bal'am Ibn Baura and the Companion of the Prophet, Salaba, all of whom were deceived by the intrigues of this world.

As each of us knows, Shaytan (satan) was once highly esteemed by Allah Almighty but due to his pride he was unable to see the magnificence, power and glory of the Divine Imperative and as a result, he claimed that he was superior to Adam. Deluded by the thought that he was both favored and honored, he opposed the command of Allah. Eventually, due to his pride and stubbornness, Shaytan was subjected to eternal estrangement.

Qarun was once a poor but righteous person. After the Prophet Musa عليه السلام, he was the greatest exegete of the Torah. He was gifted with the secret of alchemy as a result of a prayer by Musa, but later was overcome by his desires and his heart inclined to worldly pleasures. He became so wealthy that even men of great strength were unable to carry the keys to his treasure. He was ensnared by his caprice and affluence such that when the Prophet Musa عليه السلام ordered him to pay his alms, he had the audacity to ask: "Are you after the wealth which I have earned?" Indeed, it was his wealth that was the cause of his impertinence and destruction.

Qarun was also jealous of the spiritual states reached by Musa and Harun عليه السلام. His resentment and envy grew so excessive that he attempted to defame Musa by accusing him of indecency. As a result, Qarun was buried together with his wealth which he had been so proud of. Forgetting who the true owner of wealth is and falling in

love with worldly possessions and ranks are the most grievous kinds of heedlessness.

Bal'am bin Bawra was a pious servant and a miracle worker who was granted knowledge of the most-powerful name of Allah, Ismal Adham. He was known among the Israelites as a saint and a scholar. But Bal'am later squandered his spiritual state by becoming a slave to his carnal passions. This incident is reported in the Qur'an:

“Recite to them the tale of him to whom We gave Our Signs, but who then cast them to one side and Shaytan caught up with him. He was one of those lured into error. If We had wanted to, We would have raised him up by them. But he gravitated towards the earth and pursued his whims and base desires. His metaphor is that of a dog: if you chase it away, it lolls out its tongue and pants, and if you leave it alone, it lolls out its tongue and pants. That is the metaphor of those who deny Our Signs. So tell the story so that hopefully they will reflect.” (A'raf, 7:175-176)

Another example of one who, was deceived and destroyed by worldly passions while living a life of excellence and who exchanged eternal happiness for eternal misery was Salaba. He would spend his time in the mosque and with the Prophet listening to his sermons to begin with but when he became affluent Salaba's affection for worldly possessions grew and in time he abandoned the community. After refusing to pay zakat, he was subjected to a pitiful end. Later, he regretted not listening to the words of the Prophet Muhammad; when he eventually realized that his time had elapsed, he tried in vain to attain the forgiveness of the Messenger of Allah. In his last moments the words of the Prophet echoed in his ears: “O, Salaba, for you to be grateful for a little wealth is much better than you possessing great wealth for which you are not grateful for.”



An example from the life of Sufyan Ath-Thawri, one of the greatest figures in the history of Islamic Law and Sufism, is worthy of mention. Sufyan looked much older than his age. He would tell those who asked the reason for this: "I had a spiritual teacher who was educating me. While he breathed his last he could not say the shahada, even though I exhorted him to do so. Seeing this has aged me."

When death will come to us is a matter that is concealed. Like Pharaoh's sorcerers, there are those who will be guided unto the right path at the end of their lives; then there are those who have lived pious lives but close the final chapter of life in disappointment and frustration, such as Qarun and Bal'am. Therefore, however high the spiritual state, rank and superiority of a servant may be, the lower self (nafs) and Shaytan are at all times waiting for the right moment to attack. No sooner than they find a chance, they attempt to cause the servant's feet to slip from the Straight Path. Shaytan, as stated in the Qur'an, said to Allah Almighty:

"Because thou hast thrown me out (of the Way), lo! I will lie in wait for them on thy straight way." (A'raf, 7: 16)

He asked to be granted respite until the Day of Resurrection. Allah Almighty granted this time to Shaytan. Shaytan swore that only the sincere believers would escape his attacks:

"....except for Your chosen slaves among them." (Sad, 38: 83)

No human being is safe from the danger of losing his faith unless he is a Prophet. This is why all believers need to make the best use of the blessings given to them. Those who are prepared for death will see death as an opportunity to be united with their Beloved rather than something terrifying. These are the blessed believers who have attained peace in death. Those who spend their lives in blind-



ness and destroy their lives in the Hereafter can never be rescued from the torment of the horrific, dark turbulence of death.

How beautifully Rumi explains this: "O Son! Everyone's death is a reflection of themselves. Death the enemy of the one who hates it and never contemplates how it unites him with Allah, yet it is a friend for those who see it as a friend.

O Soul who runs away from death! In fact, your fear of death is really your fear of yourself.

What you see in the mirror of death is your own ugly face, not the visage of death. Your spirit is like a tree, and death is like a leaf. Every leaf is of the genus of its tree"

If a servant can master himself, if he can internalize the divine attributes in his heart, if he can attain the secret of "dying before the arrival of death", then death will be seen as the first mandatory step towards an eternal life with the Supreme and Almighty Lord. So, death, which is a cause for deep fright for many, turns into the excitement of meeting with Rafiqul'Ala, the Highest Companion.

The final moments of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ were times of the greatest excitement in which he looked forward to communion with the Beloved. Since he ﷺ lived all his life in obedience to the orders of his Lord, his days before his death were as a Shab-i Arus or wedding night. According to a report from A'isha and 'Ali ؑ, every day for the last three days before the Prophet's ﷺ death, Allah Almighty sent Archangel Jibril to the Prophet Muhammad to ask about him. On the final day, Jibril, who was with Azra'il the Angel of Death, came to the Prophet and said: "O, Messenger of Allah, the Angel of Death is asking permission to enter. He has never asked for permission to enter from any other son of Adam! And he will never ask per-



mission to enter from any son of Adam after you! Please grant him your permission!”

The Angel of Death went in, stood in front of the Prophet Muhammad and said: “O, Messenger of Allah! Allah Almighty has sent me to you and ordered me to obey all of your orders! If you wish, I will take your soul! If you wish, I will leave your soul!” The Prophet Muhammad asked: “O, Angel of Death! Would you really do this?” Azra’il replied: “I have been ordered to obey every one of your commands.” Jibril then said: “O Ahmad! Allah Almighty misses you!” The Prophet replied: “Everything with Allah is more favorable and more enduring. O Angel of Death, do what you have been ordered to do, take my soul!”

The Prophet Muhammad put his hand in the water at his side and wiped his face. He then said “La illaha illallah! (I bear witness that there is no God but Allah) Truly, death has its own agony!” After this, the Prophet Muhammad held his hands up, looked up towards the ceiling and said: “O Allah! Rafiqul ‘Ala, Rafiqul ‘Ala (the Highest Companion).”

The Prophet Muhammad left behind him a sublime legacy borne out of his love for Allah, and migrated from this mortal world.

It was reported by Husamaddin Chelebi:

‘One day Shaykh Sadreddin and a number of his disciples came to visit Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi at his deathbed. They were saddened when they saw Rumi’s condition. Shaykh Sadreddin said: “May Allah help you to recover quickly! I hope you will soon be completely well.” Upon hearing this, Mawlana said: “May you be blessed with health! There is just a short distance left between the lover and the Beloved; would you not prefer this distance to be removed so that light may reunite with Light?”



Rumi never perceived death as something to fear; on the contrary, he saw death as something which rescues one from a foreign land. He considered death to be a reunion with Allah Almighty. In one of his works, Rumi explains his death:

“Do not call me dead when I die because I was already dead. I have been resurrected with death; a companion has come and taken me...”

This is why Rumi called the moment of his departure from this world “Shab-i Arus” (the wedding night).

To be able to face death with such grace a person must first destroy his lower self and passions. He must live his life in accordance with the Divine Imperative and be prepared to breathe his last. Allah Almighty states:

“And worship your Lord until what is Certain comes to you.”

(Hijr, 15: 99)

This summarizes the principle of all the lives of the Companions of Allah!

Every wise and adoring soul should maintain the life that has been entrusted to it on the Straight Path and embellish it with worship and adoration. In perfect servitude every human being should make an effort to come to Allah with a sound and flawless heart. The Prophet Muhammad’s ﷺ saying Rafiqul ‘Ala, in his final moments was a manifestation of his servitude; it continues to be seen as such by all wise ones who follow the Prophet’s footsteps.

In fact, the state of our grand Shaykh, Mahmud Sami Efendi, in his final moments is a very good example for us. He made every effort to live his life according to the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.



Mahmud Sami Efendi was a slave of Allah Almighty and his heart was full of love for the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

Like the one trying to follow footsteps left in the snow by one who has preceded, Mahmud Sami Efendi spent his life following the footsteps of the Prophet Muhammad.

The greatest manifestation of this is the fact that he surrendered his soul at the time of night prayer (tahajjud) at a place close to the grave of the Prophet Muhammad.

Those who were beside him at the time of his death reported that the only thing that he could be heard uttering was “Allah, Allah, Allah”. In fact, it was not just his tongue uttering this. His soul and every cell in his body affirmed the presence of Allah.

In short, the objective is to live and surrender as a righteous servant; this is what Allah Almighty requires of us. We should follow the life of the Prophet and be kind, thoughtful and gentle human beings. If we wish to achieve the rank of ‘excellent slave!’ (Sa’d 38: 30), we must realize it is only possible through loving Allah Almighty.

Being blessed with spiritual affection is realized by purifying the heart from all filth so the heart is ready for lights to be manifest in it. As a result of this spiritual state, every moment of our lives will be a preparation for our final breath.

On the other hand, spiritual damage and loss is incurred by forgetting Allah the Merciful. The Almighty says in the Qur’an:

“And do not be like those who forgot Allah so He made them forget themselves. Such people are deviators.” (Hashr, 59: 19)

Indeed, we commit sins and do evil deeds when we forget Allah. When we remember the Almighty and are aware of the reality of death, we pay more attention to our actions; we show more sensitiv-

ity and try to avoid hurting others. That is why we must never harm anybody with either our behavior or with our words.

How well Yunus Emre expressed this level of courtesy in the following poem:

The heart is the throne of the Divine
The Divine glanced at the heart
Unhappy he will be in both abodes
Whoever breaks a heart

Allah Almighty has warned us in many verses of the Qur'an about our actions, desires and our conduct, showing us the way to avoid having our lives ending in sorrow.

“You who believe! Have taqwa of Allah with the taqwa due to Him and do not die exact as muslims.” (Al ‘Imran, 3: 102)

The point is to live in accordance with the injunctions of the Qur'an. If we live any other way, it will be of no consequence whether we have a long or a short life. All creatures will confront the reality mentioned in the following divine statement:

“On the Day they see it, it will be as if they had only lingered for the evening or the morning of a single day.” (Nazi'at, 79: 46)

Imam Junayd warned us with the following words of advice:

“An hour on earth is more valuable than a thousand years in the Hereafter because in the Hereafter there is nothing for us to do to attain salvation”

O Allah! Grant us a prosperous life enabling us to breathe our last in a state of love and devotion and unite us in Your Divine Presence!

Amin!



The Last Breath

-3-



The last breath is like a mirror that is free of mist, smooth and spotless. In this mirror, each individual can see the beauty and ugliness of his entire existence. At that time, there is no objection or veil of heedlessness over the sight and hearing. In contrast, all veils are lifted, and all confessions foster an atmosphere of remorse in the mind and conscience. So don't let the mirror reflect with regret in our last breath!



THE LAST BREATH -3-

The last breath is like a clear polished mirror. Man will see his rank at the moment of his final exhalation in it; then his life's account will be displayed before his eyes. It is for this reason that there is no better preparation for death than the contemplation of death itself.

As mentioned in the Qur'an, the Pharaoh spent his life rebelling against Allah and only realized the true meaning of his life when he confronted his fate in the Red Sea. He came to understand the reality of his reign as nothing more than the cause of his own misery and sorrow. When he breathed his last, he did so full of regret:

“We brought the tribe of Israel across the sea and Pharaoh and his troops pursued them out of tyranny and enmity. Then, when he was on the point of drowning, he said, ‘I believe that there is no god but Him in whom the tribe of Israel believe. I am one of the Muslims.’” (Yunus, 10: 90)

But it was too late. Allah Almighty said to the Pharaoh, who testified his faith while drowning in the Red Sea:

“What now! When previously you rebelled! and were one of the corrupters.” (Yunus, 10: 91)

Therefore, waking up from a state of slumber, feeling regret and desiring to embrace Islam when one is breathing their last is too late. Many turn to Allah in moments of trouble and then completely forget in times of ease. When the truth confronts us, failing to hear the profound but silent scream of death when we are so engrossed in the daily concerns of our lives, forgetting that one day we too will pass



through the door of death, is such a very sad state of heedlessness. We should all be prepared for the surprises and the turbulence of life. Living without considering death is blindness; without a doubt, we will all pass through the curtain of death one day.

In many verses of the Qur'an, Allah the Merciful states that the world was created as a place of trial:

"Every self will taste death. We test you with both good and evil as a trial. And you will be returned to Us." (Anbiya, 21: 35)

"He who created death and life to test which of you is best in action." (Mulk, 67: 2)

Every breath we inhale and exhale in this life during our worship, transactions and daily conduct is an indication of how we shall breathe our last.

Imam Ghazali says:

"Those who never attained the pleasure of knowledge in this world will not attain the pleasure of contemplation of the Divine essence in the Hereafter; a person cannot own anything in the Hereafter that they have not earned in this world. Everybody will reap in the Hereafter whatever he has planted in this world; everyone will die as they lived and be raised up as they died. The extent of the reward of blessing in the Hereafter depends on the extent of knowledge we gained in this world or how much we are aware of the Almighty and perform our duties."

Therefore, with each breath we are actually preparing ourselves either for divine punishment or reward. Allah Almighty warns us in the Qur'an:

"You who believe! safeguard yourselves and your families from a fire whose fuel is people and stones." (Tahrim, 66: 6)



“When the Fire is set ablaze, when the Garden is brought up close: then each self will know what it has done.” (Takwir, 81: 12-14)

“So where, then, are you going?” (Takwir, 81: 26)

In this respect, every human being must examine his conduct and be careful in his preparations. He must live with awareness throughout his life before death arrives. Profit and loss, increase and decrease each has its place in this world. In the grave, there will only be reckoning.

It is certain that those who have been deceived by their carnal desires in this world and who, consequently, have lost their spirituality, will be afflicted in their graves. Moreover, it is unknown how much our time in the graves will be compared with the time we spend on Earth. So, every right minded person will prepare for a long life in the grave and for eternal life in the Hereafter.

On the other hand, the dark face of death, brightened by the lights of a believing heart, can be transformed from being a terrifying moment into glad tidings of eternal revival. A graveyard full of friends and family members is not a world of darkness, but it is a place of warning and guidance. For a conscious believer, life and death are natural realities which live side by side. A true believer is at peace with death because he has prepared for it and thus his soul is ever tranquil. The key is making our last breath the most beautiful moment of our lives and it depends on having a heart full of love of Allah. Otherwise, a life full of “Affection for this world and loathing of death” will end in misery.

It is possible to describe the ideal preparation for the Hereafter as an adornment of the self with “attributes of perfection”, such as compassion, kindness, responsibility, forgiveness, self-sacrifice, devotion, benevolence and patience; all of which are mentioned in



the Qur'an. Embracing all of these attributes of goodness and being among the servants loved by Allah is the result of true belief. Belief and devotion should be a Muslim's main goal. On the other hand, we should avoid evil qualities such as pride, arrogance, profligacy, oppression, sedition, backbiting, gossip, slander and lying. Since these and their like are disliked by Allah, abstaining from them is an important part of our preparation for the Hereafter.

In order to breathe one's last in faith, the believer must first refine and purify his soul from vile tendencies and then adorn it with characteristics of perfection. This is because having taqwa in the heart is the most valuable guide on the journey of life.

The following statement of Jalaluddin Rumi in some way explains this side of purification:

"Building a grave is done neither with stone, with wood nor with felt. It is essential to dig a grave for yourself with a pure heart, and in your own abode of purity. And in order to do that, you must be rid of self-deception and selfishness in the presence of Allah Almighty."

For the refinement of the soul and the attainment of the desired states of the heart, it is necessary to be filled with affection for Allah and His Messenger. The greatest sign of affection for Allah is obedience. Rebelling against Allah whilst claiming to have affection is nothing more than self-delusion.

Allah Almighty says:

"Say: 'If your fathers or your sons or your brothers or your wives or your tribe, or any wealth you have acquired, or any business you fear may slump, or any house which pleases you, are dearer to you than Allah and His Messenger and doing jihad in His Way, then wait until Allah brings about His command. Allah does not guide people who are deviators.'" (Tawba, 9: 24)



Love of Allah and His Messenger and devotion to them is above all else. Achieving higher levels of love for Allah can be realized through performing our duties and worship. There is a great difference between the servitude of a soul that is caught up in worldly passions and away from divine love and the servitude of a soul full of devotion and divine love. Noble deeds, good manners, service for other human beings, acts of worship and the obedience of a believer whose heart is full of true affection for Allah and the Prophet ﷺ all bring him closer to the level of excellence. Allah the Merciful specifies the qualities of those believers who have attained salvation:

“It is the believers who are successful: those who are humble in the prayer.” (Mu'minun, 23: 1-2)

As for those who pray in heedlessness, it is said in the Qur'an:

“Woe to those who pray and are forgetful of their prayers.”
(Ma'un, 107: 4-5)

Allah Almighty wants the believers to perform acts of worship with their hearts and bodies in complete harmony, this being a step towards eternal union with Allah. Without a doubt, this divine desire constitutes the basis not only for prayer but also for all other forms of worship such as pilgrimage, fasting, and alms giving.

In this regard, fasting teaches us to appreciate the blessings that have been bestowed upon us, it brings our hearts closer to those who are in difficult positions and it embellishes our hearts with empathy for those who are less fortunate than us. At the same time, by preventing us from the normally permitted blessings, fasting helps us to avoid unlawful and doubtful things at other times. Hajj is a form of worship in which we don the burial shroud of the dead, reminding ourselves of our insignificance in the presence of the Divine Majesty. A believer who gives charity must be aware that the true owner of



wealth is Allah the Merciful, and that he is just a custodian of that wealth. Moreover, how can a believer who gives charity be envious of the wealth of other people? Yet, the level of consciousness in servitude, the basis of all worship, is only in proportion to the strength of faith and affection in the soul. When the soul has been cleansed of all impurities, the acts of worship attain their true luminosity and shine with the light of Truth.

We learn from the exemplary life of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and from the ways of his Companions how to perform acts of worship with the due reverence they deserve. The Prophet at no point considered his life detached from the Hereafter; he constantly drew attention to the importance of performing an act of worship as if it is the last.

One of the Companions came to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and said: “O Messenger of Allah! Please give me some advice which is concise and reaches the heart of the matter!” The Prophet Muhammad answered: “When you pray, pray as if you are leaving this world and it is your last prayer! Do not say anything that you will have to apologize for! Do not be desirous for the possessions of others!” (Ibn-i Majah, Zuhd, 15; Ahmed bin Hanbal, Musnad, V, 412)

Being believers who strive throughout their lives to prepare for death, we need to beautify our manners and transactions with the teachings from the life of the Prophet Muhammad just as we do in our acts of worship. We should strive to be Muslims whose thoughts and actions can benefit the community; whatever we want for ourselves we should also want for our Muslim brothers and sisters. As a result, our affection for Allah and His Messenger should gush forth from our hearts and embrace all living creatures.

Another valuable point to consider when preparing for death is to internalize the state of ihsan in our hearts. That is, remembering



that we are under divine observation at all times. The greatest joy for a believer is the thought of being united with the Beloved, but those whose minds are not synchronized with their hearts and are defeated by carnal desires are incapable of comprehending that joy. In other words, they are unaware of the ultimate happiness.

Believers must put their trust in Allah and be patient. They should never lose moderation or balance which may be shaken by the traumas of life. They must remember the intense trials that the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was made to face. Even though he lost five of his six children, without showing overwhelming grief or spiritual imbalance he accepted his fate. Neither should we forget the patience and strength he displayed when his uncle Hamza ؓ and his beloved companion Mus'ab ؓ were martyred.

Every human being in this mortal world must learn to control their actions with patience. All travelers on the path of spirituality must treat forgetfulness with remembrance, ungratefulness with gratitude, rebellion with obedience, miserliness with generosity, selfishness with altruism, doubt with certainty, hypocrisy with sincerity and sedition with repentance and heedlessness with remembrance.

Holy days and nights and, particularly, dawn times enlivened by remembrance are great opportunities to draw closer to the Almighty. The light of happiness in the Hereafter is hidden in the darkness of dawn. All the friends of the Truth who lived a life combining the temporal world and Hereafter sought the pleasure of Allah Almighty with yearning and fear at dawn. Those who adore Allah the Merciful considered any dawn passed without remembrance as hours of separation from Him.

Another important aspect is charity spent in the way of Allah. As in the following verse:



“Spend in the way of Allah, do not cast yourselves into destruction.” (Baqarah, 2: 195)

The commentators of the Qur'an interpret the warning in this verse as being a “negligence to serve religion and to elevate the voice of Truth, and to stay away from charity and sacrifice due to fear of destitution and love for the world.” Therefore, a believer must always make the effort to spend their wealth and their lives on the path of the Almighty. This is since, just like this mortal life, all our belongings have been entrusted to us. Spending these trusts for just causes will bring us eternal benefit, whereas miserliness or withholding will lead to loss in the Hereafter.

The believer should always remember the following warning regarding charity: When the body of the dead is lowered down into the grave before the insects reach the body, condolences of his family and close relatives end. As the heirs begin to divide inheritance, the earth begins to eat away at the body. These two events continue and end together.

On the one hand, the body is being consumed; on the other, the wealth of the deceased is being divided among the relatives. Observing this in surprise, the soul regrets many actions it did in the world. Only belief and good deeds will be our real wealth in the Hereafter. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

“Depending on the actions in the world the grave will either be one of the gardens of Paradise or one of the pits of Hell.” (Tirmidhi, Qiyamah, 26)

In short, the condition of our lives in the grave, which will last until the Day of Judgment, will be determined by our actions and deeds in this world.

If a servant stands firm on the direction of the qibla, regardless of their occupation, Allah Almighty will bestow upon him the blessing of being able to find the qibla during his last moments in the world. What is meant by the qibla here is right guidance. Those who never lose their attachment to the meaning of tawhid, in their familial or social relationships, or in their servitude to Allah, will usually enjoy the serene atmosphere of the qibla when breathing their last.

The important thing in this life is to attain the secret contained in the verse “Guide us on the straight path” (Fatiha, 1: 6)] and spend our lives on the “straight path” of Islam. Otherwise there remains the likelihood of ending this life in despair, like a ship that has been misguided, doomed to be smashed into pieces on the rocks of the dark seas. May Allah Almighty protect us all.

Those who spend their lives as if death is imminent and comprehend the real meaning of “die before you die” are the wise servants of Allah. It is a divine assurance that they will be at peace, far from the fear and sorrow of Judgment Day.

The mysterious curtain of death which hides the eternal universe of the afterlife is bliss for those who guarded their faith and spent their lives in preparation for their final breaths on Earth.

At the time of death it is our duty to return the soul that Allah has entrusted to us in the same pure and perfect way in which it was given. Just as a poet said:

At that moment curtains open and curtains close;
The real success is to be able to say welcome to Azrael!

(N. Fazıl Kısakürek)

The final breath is like a clean, untarnished mirror. Man looks into this mirror, seeing both the beauty and the hideousness of his





life. All eyes, ears and limbs will testify against him every curtain will be raised and confessions will leave the mind and the conscience in a state of regret. Let not our final glance into the mirror be one of regret. While time remains, we must make the Qur'an and the exemplary life of the Prophet ﷺ a part of our lives. Only the wise truly know themselves before they die.

May Allah make our last breath a window through which we view our rewards in the eternal world!

Amin!



Remembrance of Allah (Dhikrullah) and the Dawn



Dawn is the most blessed time for dhikr. Allah Almighty values dhikr performed at this time more than at other times. Benefiting from the dawn is an indication of the servant's heartfelt love and reverence for his Lord. With the night prayer and dhikr at the most silent time when everyone is fast asleep, there is a perfect chance to focus on worship with full contemplation and the servant has a tangible encounter with Allah. Then that experience will carry the light and spirit through the rest of the day.



REMEMBRANCE OF ALLAH (DHIKRULLAH) AND THE DAWN

Through the manifestation of His name Al-Hay (the Living), Allah has endowed all of His creations with life. There is essentially nothing in the universe that can be called “inanimate”. If we contemplate the dance of substances within an atom with the eye of divine truth, we will be in awe and amazement at the terrific vitality possessed by an ore that is thought to be inanimate, despite the fact that life is often seen as being exclusive to organisms such as plants, animals and humans. This amazement manifests itself increasingly from micro-beings to macro-beings.

Minerals, plants, and animals also know our Prophet and other Prophets. This condition is consistently exhibited in prophetic miracles. By the gift of Allah, when the situation calls for it, they almost give souls to inanimate objects like stones, canes and other similar objects. Because of this, the stones that were in Abu Jahl’s hand found their tongue due to a miracle performed by our Prophet. They attested to his righteousness and testified to the Truth. On the other hand, by the grace of Allah, the staff of Prophet Musa transformed into a snake.

Similarly, when the Red Sea split and became a path for the Prophet Musa and his companions but when Pharaoh and his soldiers followed, it destroyed them. The palm stump in the Prophet’s Mosque on Medina wept and moaned from its longing for the Messenger of Allah. In addition to this, a great number of animals went to the Prophet ﷺ with grievances against their caretakers, who had harmed them.



Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi paints a stunning picture of the submission of the inanimate objects to the will of God:

“Don’t you see? There is a specific order in which the clouds, sun, moon and stars all move. Every one of these uncountable stars is born precisely on time; the moment of their birth is neither a fraction early nor late.

How is it possible that we were not able to comprehend and regard these marvels as components of the miracles that were performed by the Prophets? They gave wisdom to the stone as well as to the staff. Examine and compare other inanimate objects with a stick or a piece of stone.

The submission of the stones to the Prophet ﷺ and the obedience of the staff to the Prophet Musa ﷺ provide insight into the manner in which all other creatures, including those that we consider to be lifeless, submit to the command of Allah.

They proclaim, “We are familiar with Allah, and we submit to His will. We are not just created randomly. We are all like the Red Sea, which differentiated between Pharaoh from the Israelites and knew who to drown..”

Every tree or stone would openly greet the Prophet when they saw him, regardless of where he was. Therefore, you should be aware that everything that you consider to be lifeless is actually living!”

The following hadiths of the Prophet ﷺ that rouse us from our heedlessness are excellent examples:

“All beings on earth and in the heavens know that I am the Messenger of Allah, with the exception of the disobedient jinn and humans.” (Ahmad Bin Hanbal, Musnad, III, 310)



This demonstrates that the state of knowing and obeying Allah and His Messenger is not exclusive to humans. On the other hand, one could even argue that other kinds of species are involuntarily behaving at a higher level in this regard.

In the Quran, Allah Almighty reveals the following about how this reality manifests in other beings:

“We subjected the mountains to Dawud, glorifying, and the birds as well. This is something We are able to do.” (Al-Anbiya, 79)

In His verses, Our Lord arouses people who have been heedless, and He says that everything He created is conscious of Him and mentions the name of their Creator in an incomprehensible language to us. This dhikr of beings may only be heard if the heart is clean due to devotion, dhikr (remembrance), glorification and sincere servitude and then Allah opens the veils of ignorance and one becomes conscious of the truth. Yunus Emre’s conversation with the yellow flower was also of a similar nature. The following story, narrated by the great friend of Allah, Aziz Mahmud Hüdayi, is an excellent illustration of how the plant world is also engaged in dhikrullah:

One day, Shaykh Uftade and his disciples went for a walk in the countryside. On his command, each dervish traveled to the most beautiful parts of the area and returned with a bouquet of flowers for his master. However, Qadi Mahmud Efendi was holding nothing but a pale flower with a broken stem... Qadi Mahmud bowed his head and offered this broken and faded flower to Shaykh Uftade, after the others had presented what they had collected to their master with enthusiasm. Among the curious glances of his other followers, Shaykh Uftade asked:

“My son Mahmud! Why did you bring a wilted, broken-stemmed flower while everyone else brought bouquets?”



Qadi Mahmud bowed respectfully and replied:

“Sorry! You are deserving of the very best. In spite of this, whenever I reached out to pick a flower, I noticed that it was in the process of remembering its Lord by reciting the name “Allah, Allah.” My heart was scrupulous about preventing their dhikr. Desperate, I had to bring this flower, which was unable to continue its dhikr.”

Similarly, Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi is saying:

How shall the stork utter with its soul the cry “lak, lak?” What is the meaning of lak? It means, “Thine is the kingdom, O Thou whose help is invoked.”

Regarding this topic, Muhyiddin Ibn Al-Arabi رحمته الله also states the following:

“Every being makes the dhikr of Allah in their own unique way. However, they are at different levels in this regard:

The creatures that are furthest from heedlessness are inanimate things. As a result of their independence from needs such as eating, drinking and breathing.

Following the inanimate things, comes the plants, and the need commences because they combine the nutrients they receive from the soil, water and sun to develop vibrant blooms, leaves and fruits.

Then comes the animals. Their vital functions are more perfect than plants. Consequently, their needs and desires are more.

While human needs are limitless. For this reason, he is often led astray by his ego, dreams, and worldly ambitions.”

يَا أَيُّهَا الْإِنْسَانُ مَا غَرَّكَ بِرَبِّكَ الْكَرِيمِ، الَّذِي خَلَقَكَ فَسَوَّنَكَ فَعَدَّلَكَ،
فِي أَيِّ صُورَةٍ مَّا شَاءَ رَجَّبَكَ

“O man! what has deluded you in respect of your Noble Lord? He Who created you and formed you and proportioned you and assembled you in whatever way He willed.” (Al-Infitar, 6-8)

Deepening in the realm of spirituality is a necessary condition for contemplating the universe’s mysteries and wisdom. When a believer looks at the land and the sky with the eye of his heart, his heart is filled with an entirely unique emotion. The Qur’an asserts that everything in the sky and on earth, from the smallest atom to the largest sphere, glorifies its Creator. It asserts that the sky, the earth, the mountains, the trees, the grass, the sun, the moon, the stars, the animals and even the shadows on the ground fall into prostration each morning and evening:

“Everyone in heaven and earth prostrates to Allah willingly or unwillingly, as do their shadows in the morning and evening.” (Ar-Ra’d, 15)

“Do they not see the things Allah has created, casting their shadows to the right and to the left, prostrating themselves before Allah in complete humility?” (An-Nahl, 48)

The verses bring to our attention a truly magnificent sight. Throughout this particular scene, the prostrations are carried out in pairs, with the participation of the shadows of the creatures who are performing the act. Each and every atom in the universe, regardless of whether it has faith or not, comes together to worship the Lord in prostration and fulfill its duty in the sight of its Creator... Even though the whole universe is in a state of prostration and even the existence of sinners and heedless people has surrendered to the will of Almighty Allah, their hearts are still in a state of denying and disobeying!



People who are heedless enough to worship deities other than Allah are unaware of the fact that everything in existence, including the shadows of what they idolize, is in fact oriented towards Allah, whom they reject, and is subject to the order that the Lord has set up in the entire universe. What a deception and loss!

A scene that includes shadows, objects, living things and angels is represented in the mentioned verses. Every one of them fulfills their responsibilities of worship. The misfortune of refusing to worship Allah and going against his commandments is one that can only be attributed to the bewildering ignorance of human beings. In an almost ironic way, these verses emphasize the submission of all creatures, including their shadows, to these heedless people.

What a great source of guidance the conditions of the creatures on earth and in the heavens can be for a heart that is receptive. From the supplications of the smallest insect to the roars of huge and majestic animals, they are all separate manifestations of divine power.

The nightingales' heartfelt lamentations, the doves' passionate singing of "hu, hu," and the storks' cries of "lak, lak" are all examples of glorifications. Allah Almighty says in the verse:

"Do you not see that everyone in the heavens and everyone on the earth prostrates to Allah, and the sun and moon and stars and the mountains, trees and beasts and many of mankind? But many of them inevitably merit punishment. Those Allah humiliates will have no one to honor them. Allah does whatever He wills." (Al-Hajj, 18)

As can be seen, all beings and inanimate objects are constantly in a state of glorification. Unfortunately, some people will endure torment because they disregard Allah's remembrance. In fact, everything in the universe, from atoms to galaxies, recognizes its Creator.



Birds are aware of their prayers and supplications, and mountains and streams continue their dhikr and praise. And yet, in the face of this beautiful system of dhikr, glorification and worship of the universe, it is a sad loss and against human dignity for a person not to reach the peak level of this and be deprived of the dhikr, unable to benefit from this beautiful scene.

Unquestionably, the key to achieving heavenly connection is for the servant to keep his Lord constantly in mind. When knowledgeable believers look in any direction, they see the light of dhikr and when they listen to anything, they hear melodies that glorify Allah. The more we remember our Lord in this life, the closer we will get to divine union in the afterlife.

The way to live with a clear conscience and die with faith and eternal peace and purity is to not forget the Lord in any state. For the life of one who forgets his Lord will be wasted in a whirlpool of negligence. Only death can awaken him from that heedlessness. However, at that time, everything will be over and he will find himself in great disappointment.

The one who does not forget his Lord will be able to live his life with a clean conscience, pass away with faith, and achieve eternal peace and purity. The life of a person who forgets his Lord will be swept into a whirlpool of negligence. The only thing that will bring him out of his heedlessness is death. However, by that time, it will be too late.

Allah Almighty states:

“And do not be like those who forgot Allah, so He made them forget themselves. Such people are deviators.” (Al-Hashr, 19)

One of the companions said:



“O Messenger of Allah ﷺ, indeed, the legislated acts of Islam have become too much for me, so inform me of something that I should stick to.” He ﷺ said:

“Let your tongue be moist with the remembrance of Allah.” (Tirmidhi, Da’wat, 4; Ibn Majah, Adab, 53)

Remembering Allah does not consist solely of repeating Allah’s name. Dhikr helps to elevate intentions and deeds only when it finds a home in the heart, the center of devotion. It is to demonstrate loyalty to the promise he gave to Allah Almighty in pre-eternity and to never forget his Lord.

Allah Almighty has warned us numerous times regarding giving up Dhikrullah due to the great virtue associated with it. Despite the fact that Musa and Harun ﷺ were both Prophets, when Allah Almighty sent them to convey the message to Pharaoh, He said to them:

“Go, you and your brother, with My Signs and do not slacken in remembering Me.” (Taha, 42) He didn’t leave them out of this warning, which suggests that the wisdom behind this event is to set it as an example for us in order to give us a lesson.

Through the practice of dhikr, believers are able to rid their hearts of the roughness that comes with being careless and reach the sensitivity that is essential to attract divine pleasure. Carrying the consciousness of dhikrullah in each inhalation and exhalation is the direct way to achieve spiritual alertness, and this is not something that can be achieved just for a limited time period or a specific season, but for one’s entire lifetime.

Allah Almighty states in the Holy Qur’an:



أَلَمْ يَأْنِ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَنْ تَخْشَعَ قُلُوبُهُمْ لِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَمَا نَزَلَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ

“Has the time not arrived for the hearts of the believers to yield to the remembrance of Allah and to the truth He has sent down.” (Al-Hadid, 16) This verse was revealed as a warning to some of the Companions who fell into laxity as a result of having more wealth and luxury after the migration, when before that they were enduring hardship in Mecca. In this regard, we need to make it our goal to achieve a spiritual vitality that is unaffected by the passions of this world and ephemeral interests. We can do this by immersing ourselves in the love of the beloved.

A heart devoid of love is like uncultivated land. Love by itself is a divine awareness because love is the driving force behind everything that exists. Allah Almighty desired to be known out of love for Himself and therefore created this universe. The magnitude of love is proportional to the sacrifice made on behalf of the beloved. One of the best examples of this state is to seek refuge in Allah once you wake up in the morning.



The believers must be constantly doing dhikrullah and the most effective time for dhikr is just before dawn. Allah Almighty places greater significance on dhikr performed at this time than at other times so taking advantage of this time is an indication of a servant's sincere love and reverence of his Lord.

Our Lord describes the fortunate believers with whom He is pleased as follows:

“The people with taqwa will be among Gardens and Fountains, receiving what their Lord has given them. Certainly before that they were good-doers. The part of the night they spent asleep



was small and they would seek forgiveness before the dawn.”

(Adh-Dhariyat, 15-18)

Allah Almighty is also saying:

“He sees you when you stand up to pray and your movements with those who prostrate.” (Ash-Shu'ara, 218-219)

Upon the revelation of this verse, our Prophet ﷺ wandered among the houses of the Companions one night and found those houses humming like beehives with the sounds of Qur'an recitation, dhikr and glorifying Allah.

When there is a greater intensity of love and affection for the divine in a person's heart, there will certainly be a greater manifestation of the desire to worship and glorify during the night. In this sense, glorification and prayer at night and this becomes an intimate meeting and conversation with Allah Almighty.

The following verses give further evidence of this:

“Prostrate to Him during the night and glorify Him throughout the long night. These people love this fleeting world and have put the thought of a Momentous Day behind their backs.” (Al-In-san, 26-27)

“Their sides eschew in their beds as they call on their Lord in fear and ardent hope. And they give of what We have provided for them.” (As-Sajdah, 16)

Indeed, for believers who have attained perfection in their faith, the nights are an exceptional bounty because of the peace and prosperity that can be found in them. Those who are aware of the worth of these treasures, particularly after midnight, when the entire world is enveloped in profound tranquility, find suitable ground to turn to their Lord for prayer, worship, and the acceptance of devoted



supplications during this time. Just as the days are time to work in worldly affairs, the nights are the times for nourishing the soul and illuminating the heart with divine inspiration.

One of the friends of Allah was queried by his students about a matter regarding which they were incapable of comprehending:

“Sir, when we look around, we notice that dogs are not slaughtered for their meat, as is the case with some other animals, but rather die of natural causes. In addition, unlike other animals, their number doesn’t increase, despite having a lot of puppies each litter.

However, people usually sacrifice sheep for religious purposes and also consume their meat. Contrary to this amount of consumption, sheep typically have a single lamb at birth. Nevertheless, their numbers do not decrease; rather, they increase. What is the reason for this bounty?”

After listening to the question with a serene smile, their master gave the following response:

“This condition that you observe in animals is a clear indication of the blessings of the dawn. The dawn is a time when mercy and blessings are showered upon the earth. Dogs howl throughout the night. They, however, fall asleep at dawn. While sheep are awake at dawn. That is why they receive their share of dawn’s blessings.”

Those who spend dawn sleeping are deprived of this divine blessing, just as the fertile April rains that fall on the desert, ocean and steep cliffs are wasted.

O Lord! Do not allow us to forget You for even a moment! Enlighten our days and nights with blessing of dhikrullah! Awaken our hearts with the dawn’s rain! Grant us the opportunity to





partake in the glorious truth of dhikrullah! Guide those who don't understand Your divine majesty! Protect our land and our nation from evil for the sake of those who remember at dawn.

Amin!



Qur'an and Contemplation

-1-



As the heavens will remain a manifestation of sovereign power and majesty until the Day of Judgment, so too will the Qur'an shine with the stars of guidance until the end of time. The world's most auspicious and happy people are, therefore, those who gather beneath the shadow of the Qur'an and are nourished by its life-giving light.



QUR'AN AND CONTEMPLATION -1-

The attributes of Allah have three perfect manifestations in this world:

Mankind, the Qur'an, and the universe...

As a being who has gathered every manifestation of the Divine Names in himself, man has shaped the essence of the universe. The Qur'an is also expressed by the manifestations of the same Divine Names in the form of words. The Qur'an is more detailed than human beings. Nevertheless, it is said that "Man and the Qur'an are twins" due to their fundamental unity.

The universe, which is the third manifestation of the Divine Names, is an interpretation of the Qur'an. The universe is a silent Qur'an, whereas the Qur'an is a universe dressed in words. As for man, his essence places him in the position where his perfection is realized in these audible and inaudible lights of the Qur'an. In this regard, "man, the Qur'an, and the universe" constitute a complete form of tawhid.

Every secret, wisdom and truth are hidden in the Qur'an, and faith reveals every happiness. This vast realm also demonstrates that He can hide the entire ocean in a single drop if He desires.

Based on these truths, Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi says:

"One day, I wished to see the light of Allah in people. It was as if I desired to see the ocean in a drop and the sun in a speck."



This statement, which in some sense expresses the desire and will to reach the truth and its depth, reveals that contemplation is humanity's greatest means of ascending to the heights.

When one thinks about the universe with their heart, they will discover subtle aims and gentle wisdom. It should come as no surprise that there is, in response to the trying circumstances of the world, a school of faith. In this world, where divine education and administration are in effect, people who show contradictions and negative attitudes are in a whirlwind of frustration. This is because these individuals waste their souls and personal values by living outside what their Creator wants from them, and they are unable to provide the required eternal capital.

Human beings are required to untie the knot of the future, which is the mystery of death, by contemplating the revelation. This can be accomplished by living with the dignity and honor of being a servant of God. Death will engulf everyone and is the most difficult future reality that will hit, so the most important goals are to contemplate death and to live life in line with that reality and find peace.

In this regard, all that is required of human beings is the direction provided by the Qur'an and Sunna in order to find the correct path for contemplation and observation in order to learn about the universe and comprehend the divine wisdom and secrets that are contained within it. If our contemplation was already flawless by itself, then Allah would not have sent Prophets with divinely revealed books to help us. To put it another way, man is in need of such divine assistance in order to make appropriate use of the capacity for contemplation that is inherent in his natural disposition. Would man have been able to comprehend the attributes of Allah, such as "Ahad" (oneness) and "Samad" (everlasting sustainer), if the Qur'an had not been addressed to him? The Qur'an directs that natural cap-



ital in the most correct and beautiful way, with countless guidance and warnings, in order to be able to open to the sea of all truths that are the basis for contemplation.

Both the comprehension and the expression of many realities would be inaccessible to us if it were not for the fact that the Qur'an has provided us with a doorway into contemplation. When viewed from this angle, it is essential to reflect on the endless content of the Qur'an. Of course, this too must be within a certain measure and limit because the Qur'an states that "anything fresh or withered but it is in it," it is impossible to grasp all its gems, just as it is impossible to arrive at the end of the set of truths that are contained within the universe.

This implies that the Qur'an has outlined a horizon for humanity with numerous instructions and warnings to contemplate. This point and its degree of presence must be comprehended. The mind given to us is comparable to a hand scale, whereas the truth to be evaluated is the size of Mount Qaf. Therefore, the mind must be melted in the pot of revelation and be adorned with submission.

After explaining the meanings of any verse in accordance with their capacity, commentators who are aware of their limitations and know their place have indicated that it is necessary to believe that the truth is as it is in the sight of Allah, by saying that Allah knows best.

Because there is an infinite difference in volume and quantity between the water in any container in a kitchen and the water in the ocean, even though there is no difference in nature between the two.

On the other hand, if a person who is born blind is given an explanation of color, it undoubtedly leaves an impression on his mind. However, how vast is the difference between this impression and the actual color?! This can't be measured.



Therefore, it is necessary to look at all of the words contained in the Qur'an through the perspective of this logic and refrain from asserting that the meaning that can be comprehended by human capacity is the perfect and definitive meaning of the text.

In conclusion, each of these aspects calls attention to the limit of contemplation that can be comprehended by human perception in order to arrive at the truth. Now, let's try to present a few examples of the warnings and guidance that can be found in the Qur'an for the necessary insight in this direction:

The Qur'an invites us to reflect on the wisdom in the creation of man in many verses. Those who aspire to lead lives of dignity are obligated to enter the realm of contemplation that is outlined in the Qur'an.

Human consciousness, while contemplating on the occurrences of the universe, searches for the answers to the following questions:

"What exactly is this world?" Why was I created? What is the reality and nature of the passing days? Which path leads to happiness?" In brief, "Who am I?" ... How should I live my life? What should I think? And how should I be preparing to leave this mortal realm?"

Is there any way for man to act without calculation, while the entire universe is in subtle flows of power and with delicate calculation?

It is stated in the verse:

أَفَحَسِبْتُمْ أَنَّمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ عَبَثًا وَأَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا تُرْجَعُونَ



“Did you then think that We had created you without purpose, and that you would never be returned to Us?” (Al-Mu'minun, 115)

أَيَحْسَبُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنْ يُتْرَكَ سُدًى

“Do people think they will be left without purpose?” (Al-Qiyamah, 36)

When a man reaches puberty, his period of innocence ends. In this second stage, believers who strive to perform their servitude properly enter a new period of responsibility. During this period of maturation, it is necessary to meditate with the eyes of the heart, as the world only opens its divine secrets and true colors to believing souls. It is stated in the following verses:

“Have they not looked at the sky above them: how We structured it and made it beautiful and how there are no fissures in it? And the earth: how We stretched it out and cast firmly embedded mountains onto it and caused luxuriant plants of every kind to grow in it, an instruction and a reminder for every penitent human being.” (Qaf, 6-8)

The following verses are a great warning for those who spend a life of ungratefulness and ingratitude, too lazy to seek the artist of this world, the true owner of these blessings, while we enjoy various blessings and delights under a vast sky adorned with stars and moonlight, which opens and closes day and night with the setting and rising of the sun:

“We have not created the heavens and earth and everything in between without purpose...” (Sad, 27)



“We did not create the heavens and the earth and everything between them as a game.

We did not create them except with truth but most of them do not know it.” (Ad-Dukhan, 38-39)

The world is a magnificent display of divine manifestations of majesty. Every believer who walks consciously in this physical space is blessed with spiritual awakenings as well as amazement at the flow of divine power in the universe.

As it is stated in the verses:

“Do you not see that Allah sends down water from the sky and threads it through the earth to emerge as springs and then by it brings forth crops of varying colours, which then wither and you see them turning yellow and then He makes them into broken stubble? There is a reminder in that for people of intelligence.”

(Az-Zumar, 21)

“In the creation of the heavens and earth, and the alternation of the night and day, and the ships which sail the seas to people’s benefit, and the water which Allah sends down from the sky - by which He brings the earth to life when it was dead and scatters about in it creatures of every kind - and the varying direction of the winds, and the clouds subservient between heaven and earth, there are Signs for people who use their intellect.” (Al-Baqarah, 164)

Indeed, for those who have eyes to see, the light of love pours down from the heavens, and the emeralds of adoration spring from the ground. To such an extent that every individual who is capable of profound reflection will adopt the duty to evolve spiritually by imbuing both his outer and inner senses with the divine love. Allah Almighty says:



“It is He who stretched out the earth and placed firmly embedded mountains and rivers in it and made two types of every kind of fruit. He covers over day with night. There are Signs in that for people who reflect.” (Ar-Ra’d, 3)

Those individuals who serve their Lord among the ummah of His Noble Messenger are the ones who take sides in this chain of love. Faith is the name of this lofty stance that we take. On the other hand, it is a sacred feeling that consists of shining the light of God in the heart and filling it with divine love. Those who contemplate the universe with a contented spirit have the impression that the heavens above them, which resemble a magnificent crystal chandelier, reveal a depth that glints with divine revelations, whereas the earth, with each tree and each leaf, opens their supplicating hands and begs their Lord with joyful shudders. Grass is like a prayer mat for the faithful, and a joyful community of flowers flutters over it. Majestic mountains stand in the presence of the divine... While clouds are waving seas that circulate as a source of abundance in the sky... Winds are invisible carriers of divine inspiration... Lightning strikes represent both fear and hope. The Thunder is by the decree of the Overwhelmer and a warning against carelessness... The days are manifestations of His light, and the nights are a celebration of secrets and wisdom... In short, the universe is a book of mystery, full of verses of attraction among all; while the actual manifestation of the Divine Names is a silent Qur'an... The Qur'an, on the other hand, is a cosmos shrouded in words... And man is both a monument to manifestations as well as a focal point of wisdom, standing at the intersection of both.

Aisha ؓ describes the delicacy of the Prophet Muhammad's ؓ heart as follows:



“One night, the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said to me,

“O Aisha! Permit me to spend the night in worship of my Lord, if you will.” So I replied:

“By Allah, I love being with you, but I love what makes you happy even more.”

Then he stood for prayer after performing ablution properly. He was crying... He cried so much that his blessed beard, and his clothes and even the place where he was prostrating got wet. While he was in this state, Bilal came to call for prayer and saw him crying, so he said:

“O Messenger of Allah! Why do you cry when Allah has forgiven your past and future sins?”

Thereupon, the Prophet ﷺ said:

“Should I not be a grateful servant to Allah? By Allah, such verses have been revealed to me tonight that it is a disgrace for those who read them but do not reflect on them.” and recited the following verses:

“In the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and day, there are Signs for people with intelligence: those who remember Allah, standing, sitting and lying on their sides, and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth: “Our Lord, You have not created this for nothing. Glory be to You! so safeguard us from the punishment of the Fire.” (Ali ‘Imran, 190-191)” (Ibn Hibban, II, 386)

On the night these verses were revealed, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ cried until morning with tears. By Allah’s grace, the tears of be-

lievers are the beauty of fleeting nights, the light in the darkness of the grave, and the dew in the gardens of Paradise in the hereafter.



There are some months, days and nights that Allah Almighty has blessed, which are the opportunities to attain unity. Our Lord has made some of the twelve months superior to others by His wisdom. The month of Rajab, also known as Shahrullah (the month of Allah), is one of them.¹

Even in the Age of Ignorance, swords were sheathed during this month, and the bloodthirsty passions were veiled. This respect and reverence for the month of Rajab continued with the advent of Islam. This blessed month was honored with two blessed nights: the first Friday night, also known as “Regaib” in the language of angels, and “Mi’raj” on the 27th night.

One of our primary responsibilities should be to decorate these nights with the blessing and love of the Messenger of Allah. The love we have for the Messenger of Allah is the source of our happiness. The fortunate ones who obey him with contentment and love him are eternal travelers who join the caravan of Prophets, truthful people, martyrs and good people whom Allah has blessed.

May Allah fill our hearts with the blessings of these special days, nights and months, whose arrival we celebrate, illuminate them with the light of the Prophet, and fill them with his love. May he raise us under the banner of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, and grant us his intercession.

1 This subject has been mentioned since this article was written in Rajab, which marks the beginning of the three holy months.





May our country and the entire Islamic world be blessed with goodness, victory and prosperity.

O Allah! In this life we are in exile and profound loneliness. May our sun be faith, our friends be Prophets and the righteous and our gardens of joy be our good deeds!

O Allah! make us among your enlightened servants who can observe the universe and events with the eye of the heart. Please bless our hearts with the contents of the divine command “Read”!

Amin!...



Qur'an and Contemplation

-2-



Our hearts should be filled with enthusiasm and love for the Qur'anic and Prophetic traditions. For both the Qur'an and the Prophet ﷺ invite us to the path of eternal happiness and guidance. It should not be forgotten that the Qur'an and Sunnah are Prophetic trusts that can only be obtained through their protection and application.



QUR'AN AND CONTEMPLATION - 2

Men are more than just flesh and bones. Allah Almighty created him as a marvel of art and granted him the ability to reunite with His Supreme Being among the creatures. A human being who attains perfection by preserving the honor and dignity of his creation is a source of divine blessings, spiritual and scientific manifestations, a conduit for goodness, and a being of immense worth. Because his Lord has created him in the finest mold, "Ahsani Taqwim."

How sad it is for a being who with so many blessings to waste his life in doubt and ignorance and weave a shroud of suffering for himself.

People are targets and their egos are the arrows firing against them. It is necessary to live in a state of vigilance without ignoring the possibility of drowning with each sip and choking with each mouthful. For life is a calendar of opportunities that includes the days of a fleeting existence. Every day, an unseen hand plucks a leaf from this calendar and scatters it to the winds of death.

Our past days are our witnesses, while our future days will be our guests. It is necessary to carefully prepare for our guest days. Lives are records of eternity. Without exception, the angels of Kiraman Katibin (the two angels who record the deeds of each person) record what has been committed, and these files will be presented to us one day, and they will say to us:

أَقْرَأُ كِتَابَكَ كَفَىٰ بِنَفْسِكَ الْيَوْمَ عَلَيْكَ حَسِيبًا



“Read your book. You are sufficient this Day to take yourself to account.” (Al-Isra, 14)

In addition to our book of deeds, the earth on which we live will also bear witness to our actions before God. As it is stated in the verse:

يَوْمَئِذٍ تُحَدِّثُ أَخْبَارَهَا

“On that Day it will impart its news.” (Az-Zilzala, 4)

May Allah grant us all the ability to face it with a smile, as believers on that day. Because of this, the Qur’an instructs us in the following way:

“Their sides eschew in their beds as they call on their Lord in fear and ardent hope. And they give of what We have provided for them.” (As-Sajdah, 16)

“We fear from our Lord a horribly distressful Day.” (Al-In-san, 10)

“Those who fear the punishment of their Lord (no one should feel secure from the punishment of his Lord).” (Al-Ma’arij, 27-28)

The Qur’an states that those who assume that they are safe from Allah’s punishment are actually a frustrated group:

“Do they feel secure against Allah’s devising? No one would feel secure against Allah’s devising except people who are losers.” (Al-A’raf, 99)

It is also reported that those who despair of divine mercy and help are only disbelievers:



“...Do not lose hope in the mercy of Allah, for no one loses hope in Allah’s mercy except those with no faith...” (Yusuf, 87)

The heart of a believer quivers with the excitement of servitude, which is balanced between the two opposing poles of fear and hope. “Bayna’l khawfi wa raja” is the Arabic term that refers to a balance between the spiritual states of fear and hope. A believer is always in a state of prayer and supplication toward his Lord and he should be extremely careful to maintain this equilibrium and harmony until the moment of his death. The following is indicated in the verse:

“Call on Him fearfully and eagerly. Allah’s mercy is close to the good-doers.” (Al-A’raf, 56)

Therefore, it is essential for believers to maintain a contemplative practice in their daily lives that is equivalent to the one described in the following verse:

“...hoping for His mercy and fearing His punishment. The punishment of your Lord is truly something to be feared.” (Al-Is-ra, 57)

There is no guarantee of salvation for anyone except the Prophets and those who are informed by them. Our Lord says the following to confirm this state:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ
وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ

“You who believe! have taqwa of Allah with the taqwa due to Him, and do not die except as Muslims.” (Ali ‘Imran, 102)

Taqwa of Allah is the source of true joy because taqwa means to fearfully protect oneself from all that angers Allah. Fear of Allah



is therefore essential. There are many verses in the Qur'an that describe the suffering that awaits people in hell but in spite of this, there are many who say that Allah is merciful, that He should be loved, and not feared. In this respect, the Qur'an gives the following warnings:

“Mankind! have taqwa of your Lord, and fear a Day when no father will be able to atone for his son, or son for his father, in any way. Allah’s promise is true. So do not let the life of this world delude you, and do not let the Deluder delude you concerning Allah.” (Luqman, 33)

Heedless people find relief in the world. They indulge in the pleasures of the many blessings of this world. On the other hand, a person who is righteous and contemplative views the life of this world as a prize and lives their lives in the desire of progressing to higher spiritual levels. Heedless people are in direct opposition and rebellion against destiny and the divine decree. And they got lost in asking questions beginning with “why,” which leads nowhere. On the other hand, the righteous and reflective person is in a state of contentment while making an effort to achieve genuine peace.

It is never acceptable for some people who pretend to have a distinct mystical depth in themselves, while they have not achieved anywhere near the high levels of saints such as Mawlana Jalaludin Rumi and Yunus Emre, nor understood their teaching – making lofty claims such as “I am not afraid of Hell, I am a lover of the Truth, I only love Him,” these pretenders always get exposed.

A person who vanishes in Allah cleans his heart from anything other than Allah. In Him, he reaches the pinnacle of affection and love. In the words of the great master, Shaykh Abdulqadir Al-Jilani, Allah is so beloved to the lover who has reached this state that He removes from his heart the love of all other beings. And He causes



the lover to no longer worry about the world or the afterlife. He desires only intimacy with his Lord. Similar to the case of Layla and Majnun:

Majnun, who was so madly in love with Layla, that he shunned his fellow creatures and preferred to live in isolation, having only the wild animals for company. He left civilization behind and preferred to be in desolate places. He moved away from the praise and blame of people. Their speech and their silence became the same for him; it was all the same to him whether they viewed him with favor or with displeasure. One day he was asked: "Who are you?" "Layla," he said. He was blind to everything apart from her, and deaf to hearing any speech but hers. (Shaykh Abdalqadir Al-Jilani, Al-Fath ar-Rabbani, p 284)

When a believer knows Allah with love and is annihilated in Him, he empties his heart of all beings, so it is only filled with Him. The lover's heart is intimate with its Lord in solitude or in the midst of a crowd. He finds happiness in the command **"be steadfast as you are commanded!"** (Hud, 112) Allah, the Exalted, reveals profound truths to such a servant.

Allah Almighty bestowed on humanity an "exemplary character" in the form of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Our Prophet is the best example for a believer at every stage of life.

It is reported that the Prophet ﷺ felt more love than he should have for his grandsons Hasan and Husain, who exemplify the best of humanity. Then Jibril came and asked the Messenger of Allah:

It is reported that the Prophet ﷺ felt more love than he should have for his grandsons Hasan and Husain, who exemplify the best of humanity. Then Jibril ﷺ came and asked the Messenger of Allah:

"Do you love the two of them?" "Yes," he replied, so Jibril told him: "As for one of the pair, he will be given poison to drink, and as



for the other, he will be slain.” They therefore went out of his heart, as he emptied it for his Lord, and his delight in his two grandsons turned into sadness over them. (Shaykh Abdulqadir Al-Jilani, *Al-Fath ar-Rabani*, p. 314)

This indicates that in the divine presence, excessive love for a being other than Allah is unacceptable. In this example, even though the Prophet was the cause of all existence, he would have made a mistake if Allah Almighty had not provided him with this guidance. Therefore, we should recognize the spiritual dangers of having excessive love and should strive to avoid idolizing by maintaining a balanced interest in everything we pursue because we are not protected as the Prophets are.

Love without limits is permissible only when it is directed toward Allah and His Messenger. If fear and hope for Allah continue to coexist in harmony, hearts will transform into clouds of mercy in the heavens of faith. The lover constantly lives with the fear of harming the beloved and the anxiety of losing his affection.

The Qur'an is saying:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِن تَنْصُرُوا اللَّهَ يَنْصُرْكُمْ وَيُثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَكُمْ

“You who believe! If you help Allah, He will help you and make your feet firm.” (Muhammad, 7)

While we still have the chance, we should endeavor to transform all the beautiful expressions of our faith into good deeds. We should not forget that, by Allah's favor, we believers are the offspring of Adam ﷺ, to whom the angels were commanded to prostrate, as well as the students of the school of Divine Names and the class of

Muhammad Mustafa's ﷺ hidden truth. We are travelers on the right path, which is brought to life by the Qur'an.

Our hearts are filled with enthusiasm and love for the Qur'anic truths and the Prophetic tradition. The Qur'an and the Prophet are in an invitational state to the path of eternal happiness. Our Lord tells us that only those with sound and flawless hearts can approach him. In this regard, remaining insensitive and inconsiderate toward their invitation is a sign of locked hearts and frustration. It is indicated by the verse:

أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ أَمْ عَلَى قُلُوبٍ أَقْفَالُهَا

“Will they not ponder the Qur'an or are there locks upon their hearts?” (Muhammad, 24)

The Qur'an also favors this contemplation for its own greatness and incomparability:

أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ
غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا

“Will they not reflect on the Qur'an? If it had been from other than Allah, they would have found many inconsistencies in it.”
(An-Nisa, 82)

It is impossible to find a verse in the 14-century-old Qur'an that contradicts scientific knowledge. On the contrary, the discoveries and inventions of each successive century only support the Qur'an. It was calling to a Bedouin 1,400 years ago and providing him with what he required. Just as it is astonishing everyone by revealing in-



formation that will amaze even the most eminent scholars of the present day! The Qur'an encompasses and eclipses all scientific advancements that have ever been made and that will ever be made until the end of time.

In fact, it is the promise of the Allah Almighty, as a miracle mentioned in the verses, that the miraculous nature of the Qur'an can be approached in greater depth through scientific discoveries. These magnificent states in the Qur'an are, when the time comes, going to be the realization of lofty truths that are contained within the framework of divine promises. Allah Almighty says:

"We will show them Our Signs on the horizon and in themselves until it becomes clear to them that this is the truth. Is it not enough that your Lord is a Witness over all things?" (Fussilat, 53)

There are many examples in the direction of this divine statement. Here are a few verses and scientific truths:

"Mankind! if you are in any doubt about the Rising, know that We created you from dust then from a drop of sperm then from a clot of blood then from a lump of flesh, formed yet unformed, so We may make things clear to you.

We make whatever We want stay in the womb until a specified time and then We bring you out as children so that you can reach your full maturity. Some of you die and some of you revert to the lowest form of life so that, after having knowledge, they then know nothing at all. And you see the earth dead and barren; then when We send down water onto it." (Al-Hajj, 5)

"We created man from the purest kind of clay; then made him a drop in a secure receptacle; then formed the drop into a clot and formed the clot into a lump and formed the lump into bones and clothed the bones in flesh; and then brought him into



being as another creature. Blessed be Allah, the Best of Creators!"

(Al-Mu'minun, 12-14)

After explaining the stages of human development in the womb in his work on embryology, Canadian Prof. Dr. Keith L. Moore compared this information with the verses of the Qur'an and stated that science is in agreement with the Qur'an, and that the Qur'an surpasses the science with the examples and descriptions it gives.

According to Keith, the terms *nutfa*, *'alaqa*, and *mudgha* that are found in the Qur'an, as well as the characteristics of all of these three stages, shed a great deal of light on the field of biology, in addition to their compatibility with scientific truths. The phase, which can also be expressed as the state of *nutfa*, encompasses the entirety of the material found in scientific studies. During the *alaqa* phase, the blood is in a state that is both suspended and frozen. This coagulated blood is where the fetus stores all of its vital characteristics for its future life. *Mudghah* is an Arabic word that literally means "chewed meat." When viewed in cross-section, it has the appearance of a piece of meat that has been chewed up. After conducting these studies, Keith has developed a profound respect for the Qur'an as well as the Prophet, and he has come to the conclusion that the miracle that occurred 1400 years ago when the Qur'an was first revealed is true and he wholeheartedly embraced Islam.

The Qur'an miraculously reports this and similar confirmations as follows:

"Those gifted with knowledge see that what has been sent down to you from your Lord is the truth and that it guides to the Path of the Almighty, the Praiseworthy." (Saba,6)

The branch of science that studies fingerprints has also revealed that fingertips remain the same throughout life and that no person's



fingerprint is like another's. Because of this, fingerprinting is the method of identification that is considered to be the safest and most reliable in both law and security. The discovery of this fact at the close of the 19th century marked the beginning of its subsequent application. On the other hand, the following can be found in the Qur'an, which was revealed hundreds of years ago:

“Does man imagine We will not reassemble his bones? On the contrary! We are able to reshape his fingertips.” (Al-Qiyamah, 3-4)

In other words, the Qur'an is in the lead, and science is always playing catch up. As it is stated in the following verse:

“Say, If both men and jinn banded together to produce the like of this Qur'an, they could never produce anything like it, even if they backed each other up.” (Al-Isra, 88)

Because of this, the Qur'an is not the knowledge of a human being; rather, it is the knowledge of the Lord, who bestows upon people the foundational principles that underlie all of the other knowledges that are practiced in the world. At the same time, it is Allah, who is the owner of that word and creates the understandings that lead to scientific discoveries.

The truth of the Qur'an is the source of wisdom for all Prophets and saints. As a result, the teachings found in the divine books that came before the Qur'an point in the same direction. Just as human beings are a microcosm of the entire universe, the Qur'an is a divine book that encompasses all of the worlds. In this regard, the knowledge that it contains is timeless and unbound by any specific location or period of time.

As a result of this realization, the friends of Allah have been blessed with various hidden manifestations derived from every word



and letter of the Qur'an. They have also asserted that all of their knowledge and actions are manifestations of the light of the Qur'an.



At this point, we would like to draw attention to the fact that the current month contains a very significant night called the Isra wal Miraj (the night journey and the ascension) and that we will be blessed with its coming.²

The "Isra," which refers to the journey of our Prophet from Masjid Al-Haram in Mecca to the Masjid Al-Aqsa in Jerusalem, and the "Miraj," refers to his ascent through the heavens. This momentous event occurred one and a half years before the Hijra on the 27th night of Rajab.

This blessed journey is described as follows in the verse:

"Glory be to Him Who took His slave on a journey by night from the Masjid al-Haram to the Masjid al-Aqsa, whose surroundings We have blessed in order to show him some of Our Signs. Indeed, He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing." (Al-Isra, 1)

Here is an explanation of the wisdom contained in another verse regarding the manifestations of this divine journey:

"When that which covered the Lote-tree covered it. His eye did not waver nor did he look away. He saw some of the Greatest Signs of his Lord." (An-Najm, 16-18)

This divine manifestation that took place at night is a meeting of the lover and the beloved that was prepared for the Messenger of Allah to witness the majesty of Allah's infinite might. The profound beauty of this divine invitation and acceptance are beyond the limits

2 This topic was discussed in this article because its publication date coincided with the blessed month of Rajab.



of the mind and the logic of human beings, and cannot be adequately grasped. Aside from the limited information that was reported, the inner wisdom of this magnificent journey remained a secret between the lover and the beloved.

Let's not forget that the lamps that will shine on our minarets as they ascend into the heavens on this blessed night are the luminous blessings and divine gifts reflected from the sacred memories of that night.

The Salat (prayer) is the most eminent memory of the night of Miraj for the ummah. Salat is the second pillar of Islam after the declaration of belief and in it is to be found the spiritual ascension for every believer. In proportion to one's status as a servant of Allah and a member of His Messenger's ummah, each of us can realize our own personal miraj or ascension. There are clear indications that the miraj of the life of servitude can be found within the prayer. Consequently, the quality of our prayers is also a measure of our miraj. Five times a day, we are invited to ascend to the lofty heights of intimate conversation with our Lord.

May Allah Almighty make this blessed night a source of happiness for the whole ummah.

Dear Lord! Grant us the direction that will bring us your favor! Save us from ourselves! Oh, our gracious Lord! Grant us the wisdom and insight to comprehend the truth! Fill our hearts with your loving kindness!

Dear Lord! Adorn us with the knowledge of the Qur'an! Keep our hearts alive in the Qur'an's endless realms of contemplation and the love of the Prophet, so that we can come to Your supreme presence with a sound heart...

Amin!



Qur'an and Contemplation

-3-



How magnificent are the feelings and truths of the heart that can be attained as a result of the Qur'an nourishing and strengthening our contemplation and reflection? In this way, our thoughts and feelings would be like a dry seed without fertile soil if it weren't for the Qur'an's endless blessings and supreme guidance.



QUR'AN AND CONTEMPLATION -3-

Allah Almighty, who has made man accountable for servitude, has made everything in the heavens and the earth accessible to him,³ and has endowed man with the capacity for reflection, so that he may ponder and understand his state of slavehood. Again, Allah has blessed people with Prophets as “Uswatul Hasana,” which means “the best example” so that they can reach perfection.

The divine support through the Prophets culminated with the Prophet of the End Times and the Qur'an bestowed upon all mankind through him.

As a result, in addition to all the divine blessings bestowed upon us, we are indebted to Allah Almighty because we are both from the Umma of Muhammad ﷺ and have the miraculous Qur'an. For, just as a speck of plane seed can achieve immense splendor by growing into a massive tree through fertile soil, how magnificent are the truths of the heart that can be attained as a result of the Qur'an - nourishing and strengthening our contemplation and feelings? In this way, our thoughts and feelings would be like a dry seed without fertile soil if it wasn't for the Qur'an's endless blessings and supreme guidance.

As a result, there can be no greater blessing for us than realizing the sublimity and infinite majesty of the Qur'an. The lowliness of primitive tribes deprived of divine teaching in the twenty-first century, which is the space age, exemplifies this point. Millions of people who follow distorted religions, including Buddhists who worship

3 See. Al-Jathiyah, verse 13.



statues, Hindus who regard the cow as sacred, and billions of people who have deified such weak beings, are exemplary sights for us to grasp the magnitude of the Prophetic blessing upon us. What is even more tragic is being deaf to the call of truth because of egoistic desires that overwhelm the angelic, higher, God-given faculties of the intellect and spiritual yearning. Therefore, there can be no greater blessing for us than to realize the sublimity and total perfection of the divine guidance accessible in the Qur'an. The Qur'an describes such people who are present in all ages as:

"They are deaf, dumb, and blind..." (Al-Baqarah, 18)

In this regard, Allah Almighty wishes believers to be alert, prudent, and deeply moved by His verses. As it is stated in the verse:

"Those who, when they are reminded of the Signs of their Lord, do not turn their backs; deaf, dumb and blind to them."

(Al-Furqan, 73)

In such a time, a believer has two important duties:

One of them is to be grateful for the blessings, like precious flowers that get the chance to bloom between the cracks of the rocks. The second is to be diligent in conveying those truths, with compassion for those who are deprived of these truths.

The Qur'an is saying:

"Let there be a community among you who call to the good and enjoin what is right, and forbid what is wrong. They are the ones who will have success." (Ali 'Imran, 104)

"Who could say anything better than someone who summons to Allah and acts rightly and says, 'I am one of the Muslims?'" (Fussilat, 33)



It is necessary to exert one's heart and mind more than ever before on the vast content of the Qur'an in order for the effort of conveying the message to be beneficial. Additionally, it is necessary to follow the Qur'an and adopt its morality. This indicates that when it comes to the immense spirituality and content of the Qur'an, we are obligated to have an effort and a perseverance of the heart that is superior to the acumen and efforts that scientists put forth when investigating the material world.

It should come as no surprise that any and all materialist ideas are unable to generate any result other than the degradation of man and the preparation of his misery. The attempt to maintain equilibrium between human reality and the mind alone was the source of this disastrous outcome. On the other hand, the Qur'an makes reference to the mind that is enlightened through revelation by addressing its readers sixteen times with the phrase, يَا أُولَى الْأَلْبَابِ, "O people of intelligence," as well as including numerous warnings such as "Do you not think, do you not comprehend?"

The Qur'an, which is superior to all sciences, reveals that it is a lofty and fertile source, yielding daily discoveries that satisfy the human desire for contemplation.

We Muslims should consider the noble responsibility of explaining the perfection of the Qur'an to humanity and warning them, as well as being examples to them. Moreover, despite the fact that the Qur'an has been confirmed millions of times by scientific discoveries over the centuries, if we do not adequately announce the truth of this fact, which requires faith, despite the various means and opportunities of our century, the heedless people living in every corner of the world will complain about us before Allah. This increases our sense of obligation. Many scientific discoveries in the last few



hundred years have made it easier to explain and prove the mostly metaphysical truths of religion than it was in the past.

The facts about the universe have been included in the Qur'an in a manner that can only be comprehended at an appropriate scientific level. Until the Day of Judgment, the Qur'an will continue to reveal its truths in accordance with the scientific level and people's understanding of each century. Certainly, this is a result of divine mercy.

If the marvelous features of human creation, great medical discoveries, and the order and system in the heavens and on earth had been clearly and openly expressed in the Qur'an prior to the discovery of science, people would not have attained their current intellectual and scientific levels. It would be impossible for them to accept and approve of these facts and thus embrace faith.

In this regard, the Qur'an is comparable to an ancient land that reveals hidden treasures. So long as we can contemplate its vast content and read it with our hearts.

Only through the contemplation is it possible to reach the depths of understanding of the book of the universe and observe the wisdom and secrets of the world. Our Lord invites all humanity to engage in this contemplation with the following verses:

“Have they not traveled about the earth and do they not have hearts to understand with and ears to hear with? It is not the eyes that are blind, but it is the hearts in the breasts that are blind.”

(Al-Hajj, 46)

“In the earth there are diverse regions side by side and gardens of grapes and cultivated fields, and palm-trees sharing one root and others with individual roots, all watered with the same



water. And We make some taste better than others. There are signs in that for people who use their intellect.” (Al-Ra'd, 4)

Being a perfect believer begins with activating the heart and awakening that heart's appetite for contemplation and love.

A person's brain and heart functions are what make him human. Perhaps a person becomes a good man in terms of worldly criteria when his brain is fully developed but his spiritual realm is neglected. However, in order to be a believer, the heart must soften, become kind, and acquire depth of understanding. Everything speaks the “the language of the state” for a believer whose heart functions in this way. The face, eyes, clothing and appearance of a person are his showcase, beginning with himself. There is a language known as “Lisan al-Hal” (the language of the state) spoken by all beings in which everything is in a state of declaration.

How terrified a naturally blind person would be if their eyes suddenly opened! When he observes wonders such as the ocean, trees and flying birds... Because he had never seen such things before, he would be completely overwhelmed by the beauty with which the Lord had crafted the universe. Humans, who encounter tens of thousands of these wonders on a daily basis, often pass them by without recognizing them, without finding a way to contemplate, are much like the solid rocks that do not benefit from the April rains that shower them.

The verses of the Qur'an call us to such exquisite awareness:

“And in the alternation of night and day and the provision Allah sends down from the sky, bringing the earth to life by it after it has died and the varying direction of the winds, there are Signs for people who use their intellect.” (AL-Jathiyah, 5)

“A Sign for them is the night:



We peel the day away from it and there they are in darkness. And the sun runs to its resting place. That is the decree of the Almighty, the All-Knowing. And We have decreed set phases for the moon, until it ends up looking like an old palm spathe. It is not for the sun to overtake the moon nor for the night to outstrip the day; each one is swimming in a sphere.” (Yasin, 37-40)

“Such metaphors - We derive them for mankind; but only those with knowledge understand them.” (Al-'Ankabut, 43)

The more a person rises in contemplation and wisdom during his lifetime, the more he can acquire divine love and the greater happiness after death. Throughout history, Prophets, saints and contemplative righteous individuals have served as examples of understanding the universe with wisdom. In the depths of man's nature and conscience lie marifatullah, or the ability to know the Lord through the heart, a sense of truth, and a strong need for faith and commitment.

It is a necessity that the heedless who have fallen into trouble, turn to Allah with the guidance of this natural capital and beseech the divine power for assistance. Those who suppress this inclination and who remain distant from the divine power and the wonders of art in this world in despair and ignorance will continue to play this blind game. As stated in the verses:

“...It is not the eyes that are blind, but it is the hearts in the breasts that are blind.” (Al-Hajj, 46)

“Whoever is blind in this world will be blind in the Next world, and even further astray from the right Way.” (Al-Isra, 72)



It is crucial to learn the Qur'an from righteous teachers whose hearts are overflowing with divine love, so that a state formed by these fortunate hearts may drive listeners to reflection.

When they asked the Prophet ﷺ, "Which recitation is better for the Qur'an?" He replied, saying:

"It is the voice and recital that inspires fear of Allah when heard." (Darimi, Fadhail Al-Qur'an, 34)

A recitation that does not exceed the throat and reach to the heart cannot possibly take a person to the contemplative depth of the Qur'an.

In this regard, we must also heed the following Prophetic warning when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

"There will appear some people among you whose prayers will make you look down upon yours, and whose fasting will make you look down upon yours; but they will recite the Qur'an which will not exceed their throats (they will not act on it) and they will go out of Islam as an arrow..." (Bukhari, Fadhail Al-Quran, 36)

Allah urges us, His servants, to reflect in the Qur'an on both the proofs of His sublime existence and the profound wisdom in the blessings He bestows. Among these, the Qur'an highlights the have different languages and skin tones. As it is commanded by the verse:

"Among His signs is the creation of the heavens and earth and the variety of your languages and colors. There are certainly Signs in that for every being." (Ar-Rum, 22)

In reality, none of the languages spoken by humans were developed by the nation speaking that language through commissions. Its grammar and vocabulary are not the result of a collaborative effort. In some languages, a verb comes before the subject and in others,



the subject comes first. These are not deliberate decisions, but divine gifts from Allah Almighty. In addition to this divine favor, the differences in human skin color and their emergence as distinct races constitute another set of wisdoms. Skin colors are the result of geography, while races are the manifestation of creation. This is so individuals can meet and get along with one another more readily. Other than that, there is no such thing as a superior or inferior race. Every race has both good and bad people. The only relevant factor is taqwa. Allah clarifies this reality as follows:

“Mankind! We created you from a male and a female, and made you into peoples and tribes so that you might come to know each other. The noblest among you in Allah’s sight is the one with the most taqwa. Allah All-Knowing and All-Aware.” (Al-Hujurat, 13)

On the other hand, Allah Almighty has reserved unity for Himself and paired off all entities to complement each other. The family life, which began with the Prophet Adam ﷺ and our mother Hawa in Paradise, was handed on to us, the sons of Adam, through the law of marriage established by Allah, and it was perfected by the advent of Islam.

Allah Almighty is saying:

“Among His signs is that He created spouses for you of your own kind so that you might find tranquility in them. And He has placed affection and compassion between you. There are certainly Signs in that for people who reflect.” (Ar-Rum, 21)

Allah Almighty blessed the Ummah of Muhammad ﷺ with marriage and made it a foundation of worldly sanity under the protection of the Qur’an and Sunnah.

In marriage there is subtle lessons as it entails two individuals living together in peaceful harmony but humans have a fighting na-



ture. People are generally hesitant to accept what is right. There are verses of the Qur'an providing examples for individuals of diverse professions and dispositions, so that everyone can find something applicable to his or her situation. This truth is conveyed in the verse below:

“We have variegated throughout this Qur'an all kinds of examples for people, but, more than anything else, man is argumentative.” (Al-Kahf, 54)

The Qur'an encourages reflection by highlighting the nuances of human nature. It instructs people to reflect on their lives as follows:

“When We grant long life to people, We return them to their primal state. So will you not use your intellect?” (Ya-Sin, 68)

In another verse, the fact of human nature's inclination towards taqwa (i.e., piousness) is pointed out as follows:

“And the self and what proportioned it, and what inspired it with depravity or taqwa, he who purifies it has succeeded, he who covers it up has failed.” (Ash-Shams, 7-10)

The resurrection, on the other hand, shows Allah's great power, the weakness of people, and the divine reality that is waiting for them:

“Does not man see that We created him from a drop yet there he is, an open antagonist! He makes likenesses of Us and forgets his own creation, saying, ‘Who will give life to bones when they are decayed? Say ‘He who made them in the first place will bring them back to life.’” (Ya-Sin, 77-79)

Reminding those who pursue time that time is relative:



كَأَنَّهُمْ يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَهَا لَمْ يَلْبُثُوا إِلَّا عَشِيَّةً أَوْ ضُحَاهَا

“On the Day they see it, it will be as if they had only lingered for the evening or the morning of a single day.” (Al-Nazi’at, 46)

All of these verses that call us to reflect and demonstrate that reflection with our minds and hearts deeply is a duty commanded by Allah. One thousand four hundred years ago, the Prophet ﷺ declared in a hadith that there is no worship like contemplation (Kanz al-Muttaqi, Kanz al-Ummal, XVI, 121), which shows that he viewed contemplation as an act of worship.

The significance of reflection has expanded even further in our time due to the explanations given above. It is not enough to mention how much effort we need to put into transmitting the truth and encouraging the good in order to fulfill our responsibilities at this stage.



The Night of Berat, which connects the fourteenth day of Sha’ban to the fifteenth day of Sha’ban is celebrated annually by the righteous believers seeking to benefit from it by calling on their Lord and remembering Him with profundity.

⁴This is the night of separation and judgment. For on this night, “those who will be born and die in the following year, plus the sustenance that will be sent down are all recorded, and deeds are elevated to the divine presence.”

As it is indicated in the hadith:

4 Since the publication of this article corresponds to the month of Sha’ban, which preceded Ramadan, the characteristics of this month were briefly mentioned.

“When it is the night of the middle of Sha’ban, spend the night in prayer and observe a fast on that day. For Allah descends at sunset on that night to the lowest heaven and says:

Is there no one who will ask Me for forgiveness, that I may forgive him? Is there no one who will ask Me for provision, that I may provide for him? Is there no one who is afflicted by trouble, that I may relieve him?” (Ibn Majah, Iqamat al-Salat, 191)

This means that Allah Almighty keeps the doors of exceptional mercy, benevolence and response open until the morning.

What a marvelous promise and good tidings from the Prophet ﷺ that honoring the night of Berat with prayer and fasting during the day will bring believers exceptional benefits. In addition to prayers, we should use this night to profit from the Qur’an, dhikr, glorification, salawat (asking for blessings on the Prophet), and spiritual conversation.

Specifically, our prayers should be performed with the heart and body in harmony and in a state of ecstasy. The prayer is a spiritual conversation between the Lord and His slave.

Someone came to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and said, “O Messenger of Allah, teach me but make it concise.” The Prophet ﷺ replied:

“When you stand to pray, pray like a man bidding farewell. Do not say anything for which you will have to apologize. And give up hope for what other people have.” (Ibn Majah, Zuhd, 15)

A believer should endeavor to obtain all the benefits and rewards of the prayer he performs and should avoid wasting this divine blessing. In another hadith, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ mentions the following:



“A man returns after saying his prayer while a tenth part of his prayer, or a ninth part, or an eighth part, or a seventh part, or a sixth part, or a fifth part, or a third part, or half of it, is recorded for him.”

(Abi Dawud, 123, 124)

Due to Ramadan, whose shadow of mercy and blessings has descended upon us, it is also important to recall that the Qur'an, which was revealed in Ramadan, was revealed to the believers in order to provide them with a Ramadan-like atmosphere until the end of time. Ramadan and the Qur'an both hold vital lessons.

It is stated in the verse:

“The month of Ramadan is the month in which the Qur'an was sent down as guidance for mankind, with Clear Signs containing guidance and discrimination. Any of you who are resident for the month should fast it.” (Al-Baqarah, 185)

After stating that the Qur'an is a guidance with clear signs and measures of wisdom, Allah Almighty adds that everyone who reaches the blessed month of Ramadan is obligated to fast during it.

It should not be forgotten that it is not enough to only listen to the recital of the Qur'an and to review its map of truth. It is vital to obey with joy its divine orders, which reveal the means of preserving eternal life because a believer is someone who uses the teachings of the Qur'an to engage in a war against his ego.

Dear Lord! In this month of blessings, may we be able to experience the heavenly climate of the Qur'an with all our hearts! May our religion and the Qur'an serve as evidence, our fasting as kindness, our sahur (pre-dawn meals) as bounties, and our iftars (fast breaking evening meals) as occasions for reunion.

Amin!...



Repentance and Tears



*“Pray and repent with a heart ablaze with
regret and eyes filled with tears! Because
flowers flourish in sunny and moist places!”*

(Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi)



REPENTANCE AND TEARS

A tailor asked a righteous person, “What do you think about the hadith: Indeed, Allah accepts the repentance of a slave as long as his soul does not reach his throat.”⁵ The righteous man replied:

“- Yes, it is so. But what is your profession?”

“- I am a tailor, I sew clothes.”

“- What is the easiest thing in tailoring?”

“- It is to hold the scissors and cut the fabric.”

“- How many years have you been doing this job?”

“- For thirty years.”

“- When your soul reaches to your throat, can you cut the fabric properly?”

“- No I can’t.”

“O tailor! How can you perform repentance, something you have never done in your life, if you cannot perform a task that you have learned for a long time and have performed smoothly for thirty years? Today, while you are still strong, repent! Otherwise, you may not attain forgiveness and a happy conclusion with your last breath... Hurry to repent before death comes.⁶ Didn’t you hear this?

Thereupon, the tailor understood and became one of the righteous.

5 Tirmidhi, Da’awat, 98.

6 Munawi, Fayz al-Qadir, V, 65.



As illustrated in this story, servants face a variety of worldly and egoistic ditches, the most perilous of which is delaying sincere repentance. Nevertheless, maintaining repentance is the salvation of our entire lives. In reality, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ told his companions that the greatest problem is sin, and that its remedy is repentance in the dark of night.⁷

Because the only way to cleanse oneself of spiritual impurities is through repentance, which plays a crucial role in turning to Allah and attaining forgiveness and spiritual gifts. The repentance that is acceptable removes the obstacles and veils between the servant and his Lord, which is crucial for the performance of good deeds. It is vital to eliminate the concerns that prevent one from accomplishing the goal and thus to make the heart suitable for the primary aim. For this reason, in all Sufi paths, the morning prayer begins with repentance.

The first repentance started with the first human being the Prophet, Adam ﷺ. He prayed as follows:

قَالَ رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَا أَنْفُسَنَا وَإِنْ لَمْ تَغْفِرْ لَنَا
وَتَرْحَمْنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ

“Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves. If you do not forgive us and have mercy on us, we will be among the losers.” (Al-A'raf, 23)
This prayer is an example of repentance for his descendants till the end of the world.

Friends of Allah classify repentance into three categories:

⁷ See, Daylami, Musnad, I, 136.



1- Repentance of the common people (tawbatul awam): They repent from wrong actions.

2- Repentance of the elite (tawbatul khawas): They repent from forgetfulness.

3- The repentance of the elite of the elite, (tawbatul khas al-khawas): Those people repent in order to draw closer to Allah.

However, like with other good deeds, sincerity is a prerequisite for repentance. So much so that many individuals have repented from their repentance. In other words, it is required to take refuge in Allah from repentance that requires additional repentance and to apply the “tawbatun-nasuha” (sincere repentance) commanded in the verse. When the lower self and the devil are unable to entice the heart, they appear as masters of beauty and virtue. Consequently, they trap the servant and waste his repentance. However, persistently turning away from repentance is a catastrophe that will darken the hereafter. Allah Almighty states:

عَسَىٰ رَبُّكُمْ أَن يَرْحَمَكُمْ وَإِنْ عُثِرْتُمْ عُدْنَا

“It may well be that your Lord will have mercy on you. But if you revert to what you did We will also revert.” (Al-Isra, 8)

Because one who continually breaches his repentance has become the devil’s plaything. Now, if he repents, he promptly abandons it as soon as Satan and demonic, heedless people tell him, “Shame on you!” In light of this, the Qur’an states:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا تُوبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ تَوْبَةً نَّصُوحًا

“You who believe! Turn to Allah in sincere repentance...”

(At-Tahrim, 8)

The poet expresses the hearts that come to repentance in the following manner:

While the heart is careless, asking for repentance with a few words
Will eventually cause the ego to fall into a thousand and one ratholes!

Sayri

The following issue in the matter of repentance is also important:

According to the hadith book Jamiu's-Saghir, the angel who records sins waits for the servant to repent within six hours after the sin has been committed. For this reason, no one should claim, "I cannot remain faithful to my repentance. I am sinning again, so I should not repent at all." But we should always seek forgiveness because Allah loves repentance and will bless the servant with genuine repentance. It should be noted, however, that since repentance is a supplication for forgiveness, it necessitates an unwavering commitment to achieve genuine repentance and refrain from repeating the sin for which forgiveness is requested. For this reason, Allah Almighty issues the following warning:

“...Do not let shaytan deceive you about Allah's forgiveness.”

(Luqman, 33)

Repentance consists of expressing regret and seeking forgiveness. (Ahmed bin Hanbel, VI, 264) This hadith also emphasizes how repentance should prevent a person from committing the same sin again.

In addition, this hadith indicates that regret must precede repentance. This implies cleansing with sincere tears.

According to the narration:

A repentant sinner was given a list of his sins and instructed to read them. In response to this situation, the sinner wept so deeply that he was unable to see the sins on the list. Eventually, these tears of sincerity washed away all those sins. Thus, that sinner was pardoned.

Therefore, sometimes forgiveness for a sin requires a thousand tears, and sometimes a single tear drop for Allah can wash away a thousand sins.

Tears are a fountain of repentance for those who enter the contract of divine love. They wash away sins. It is an expression of gratitude towards the Lord. Tears are the hope lodge of Allah Almighty. Those who can cry on the threshold of this dervish lodge at a time when all hopes are lost are the fortunate people.

Each teardrop, for those who look at the world with sincere tears, is like a mirror reflecting a thousand and one oceans, indicating that the divine mystery is evident and clear in every particle. Many pages of unreadable wisdom are recited with them. Tears are a language that conveys and expresses meanings that words cannot, the servant beseeches his Lord for things he cannot even imagine. For him, the fountain of tears is a source of solace. The helpless rest on their shores.

How nicely the following story illustrates the significance of one drop of tears shed for Allah:

One day, while wandering, Imam Junayd al-Baghdadi witnessed angels descending from the sky and snatching something from the ground. He asked one of them:



“What are you collecting?”

The angel replied to him:

“As a friend of Allah passed by, he sighed deeply and shed a few tears. So, we are gathering these tear drops so that we may attain Allah’s mercy and forgiveness.”

As indicated in a hadith:

“There are two eyes that shall not be touched by the Fire: An eye that wept from the fear of Allah, and an eye that spent the night standing on guard in the cause of Allah.” (Tirmidhi, *Fadhail al-Jihad*, 12/1639)

As an illustration of how a person is purified by repentance and tears, Mawlana Rumi refers to waters that became polluted, evaporated and returned to the ground as pure mercy:

“When the water is no longer pure and clear, when it becomes muddy as a result of pollution on the earth, it becomes restless... Within, it begins to weep and beseech God. Allah Almighty evaporates it and carries it to the heavens in response to these supplications and cries. There, traveling on numerous routes causes the water to become pristine. Then it falls upon the earth, sometimes as rain, sometimes as snow and occasionally as hail. It ultimately reaches into a vast ocean with no shore.”

Unquestionably, these symbols represent Allah Almighty’s mercy and affection for His servants, whom He desires to save. In reality, if the water of repentance and the sun of regret unite in individuals whose hearts are polluted by the filth of sin, Allah Almighty raises their hearts to the heavens. He purifies them from dust, grime and all spiritual dirt. As a result of His benevolence, He again bestows them upon the earth as the most noble beings. Prayers are the



embodiment of this state in the broadest sense. Therefore, it was indicated that prayers which are performed properly are the ascension of a believer.

However, because humans do not comprehend this fact the majority of the time, they plunge into the world and burst out laughing rather than crying, so Allah Almighty says:

وَتَضْحَكُونَ وَلَا تَبْكُونَ، وَأَنْتُمْ سَمِيدُونَ

“You are laughing and not weeping, and treating life as a game.” (An-Najm, 60-61) and in another verse, he decreed to avoid this heedlessness as follows:

فَلْيَضْحَكُوا قَلِيلًا وَلْيَبْكُوا كَثِيرًا جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ

“Let them laugh a little and weep much, as a repayment for what they have earned.” (At-Tawba, 82)

In other words, Allah wishes for His servant to be cleansed through tears of repentance. In this context, Mawlana Rumi explains the importance of tears as follows:

“The bough is made green and fresh by the weeping cloud, for the same reason that the candle is made brighter by its weeping.”

“Likewise, the acceptance of repentance necessitates tears and grief, which are comparable to thunder and lightning.”

“Until there is the lightning of the heart and the rain-clouds of the two eyes, how shall the fire of menace and wrath be allayed? How shall the herbage of the delight of union with God grow? How shall the fountains of clear water gush forth? How shall the rose-beds tell

their secret to the garden? How shall the violet make an engagement with the jasmine?”

“Let nature cry. When these lands are deprived of water, they become barren. The waters, which are cut off from rivers and streams, likewise turn yellow, stink, become murky, and eventually turn black.”

“When the vineyards and gardens, which are as green as paradise, fall apart from the rivers, they turn yellow, wither and their leaves dry and fall, become a breeding ground for diseases (man is like this too...).”

In order to be protected from this situation, Prophet Shuayb’s ﷺ eyes were blinded by crying. And the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said:

“By Allah! If you knew what I know, you would laugh little and weep much...” (Suyuti, Jami al-Saghir, V. II, p. 10)

Only those who wash and cleanse a wound in their hearts caused by a sin with tears of remorse can access the paradise of forgiveness. For this reason, all the saints, the virtuous, and the faithful, notably the Prophets, have constantly sought refuge in Allah Almighty, during adversity and abundance, in grief and in comfort, through repentance and supplication. It is impossible to conceive of a servant who doesn’t need repentance and forgiveness, not even in the case of Prophets, who sometimes fall into involuntary mistakes. Repentance and supplication are the most powerful modes of reaching Allah because, in their actual nature, they represent profound sincerity and love.

The pain and suffering that Allah inflicts upon His servants and the repentance and tears that He demands from them lead to success in the next life. In addition, this trade is so profitable that individuals who comprehend its value do not complain about any misfortune



that they reap an unending profit from. As one of them, Mawlana Rumi says:

“In this world, Allah takes a few drops of tears from you, but in exchange, He gives you paradise. He gets from you the sighs and cries that are full of love and pain. And for each sigh and each cry, He awards hundreds of lofty ranks and unreachable stations.”

However, we should know that not every cry is the same. There are significant differences between them. In reality, there are numerous groans that are cold, artificial and that are comprised of heedlessness and deception.

Sufyan Ath-Thawri  is saying:

“Crying consists of ten. Nine of them are manifestations of hypocrisy and only one of them is for Allah. Inshallah, if a servant weeps for God even once a year, Allah will save him from Hell.”

According to a story, a woman who had an argument with her husband went to Qadi Shuraih in tears. At that time, Sha’bi, who was present, said to him:

“I believe this woman is the victim. Don’t you see that she’s crying?”

Qadi Shuraih replied, “O Sha’bi, Yusuf’s brothers came wailing to their father, despite being the aggressors. It would be inappropriate to judge based on these tears!”

Obviously, such tears are not accepted. Similarly, the cries that are denied are those that reflect heedlessness. These are the hollow and vain tears of people who are troubled by their own laziness, for which the late Akif warns:

Let go of your mourning! Let go of your tears;
If crying helped, my father would rise from his resting place!



What can be attained from tears? Why didn't you sweat instead?!

The cry we are talking about is not one that will disgrace us in front of our friends and foes, but rather one that will elevate the heart. Our tears should be like the water that prevents us from sinking and takes us to the desired station. They should flow from the heart rather than the eye, and they should be delivered to God rather than to the people.

Another crucial aspect of tears is that this cry is not one of complaint because a complaint indicates a state of dissatisfaction, which is never acceptable. Complaints motivate people to rebel and destroy everything they possess, which evokes God's wrath. Our cries shouldn't evoke God's wrath, but should please the true Friend and lead us to His presence.

When death arrives, all sleepers awaken—in other words, they open their eyes and see the reality. However, witnessing the truth in that final breath will no longer help, just as it did not help Pharaoh...

How beautifully Mawlana Rumi describes this reality:

"The wise weep beforehand, while the foolish knock their heads in sorrow after reaching the end. You should foresee the end from the beginning so that you do not fall into regrets on the Day of Judgment!"

"Let the situation of the bird serve as a lesson to you in this regard; when it saw the wheat in the hunter's trap, it was overjoyed and unable to think clearly. Therefore, it ate the wheat but remained entrapped. How many Sura of Yasins and An'ams did the poor bird recite to be saved from trap. But what's the point of crying, wailing and moaning when catastrophe has arrived? This sigh and wail were required before it fell into the trap..."



As a matter of fact, when Prophet Ibrahim learned that the people of Lot would be destroyed due to their transgression, which provoked divine anger, he wanted to pray for them to be forgiven because he did not know how awful their sin was. The angels told him:

“The time for supplication is over!”

It is unknown where or when or how Allah will bring about our death. For this reason, hearts must be prepared to meet their Lord at any moment by being illuminated with the secret of ‘die before you die’. Otherwise, the final breath will be a frustrated lament of wailing... In accordance with the verse:

وَجَاءَتْ سَكْرَةُ الْمَوْتِ بِالْحَقِّ ۖ ذَٰلِكَ مَا كُنْتَ مِنْهُ تَحِيدُ

“Ultimately, with the throes of death will come the truth. This is what you were trying to escape!” (Qaf, 19)

Therefore, the most significant concern of the servants is the purification of the soul and heart. The repentance and tears we have shed thus far are merely the gateway to this state. Of course, it is vital to execute all the required good deeds after passing through this door. While fulfilling the various obligatory and recommended actions and courtesies, one should strive to always respect the rights of servants and parents with compassion and forgiveness. Those with the capacity to forgive, for instance, are more deserving of heavenly forgiveness. People who are devoid of love and compassion and do not open their hearts to the pleas of others, are this world’s heedless travelers.

Therefore, hearts should turn to the Lord by acquiring all the virtues in an atmosphere of repentance and tears. Certainly, this approach should encompass every moment of existence. However,

there are some exceptional times in the life of a servant that are like different seasons where certain benefits manifest. Like the value and beauty of spring, there are spiritual springs given to the servants. The most valuable of these is the month of Ramadan⁸, which includes the Night of Power, a night more valuable than a thousand months, when the Qur'an was first sent down from the Lawh al-Mahfudh to the heavens of the earth and filled the world and its people with light.

This blessed and exceptional month that we perceive is a moon whose light illuminates hearts as dark as night. It is a window opened for the ascension from the earth to the heavens. In this regard, a believer must spend his entire life with Ramadan's sensitivity. For those who are endowed with such a life, the day of judgment is not a day of regret but a morning of celebration.

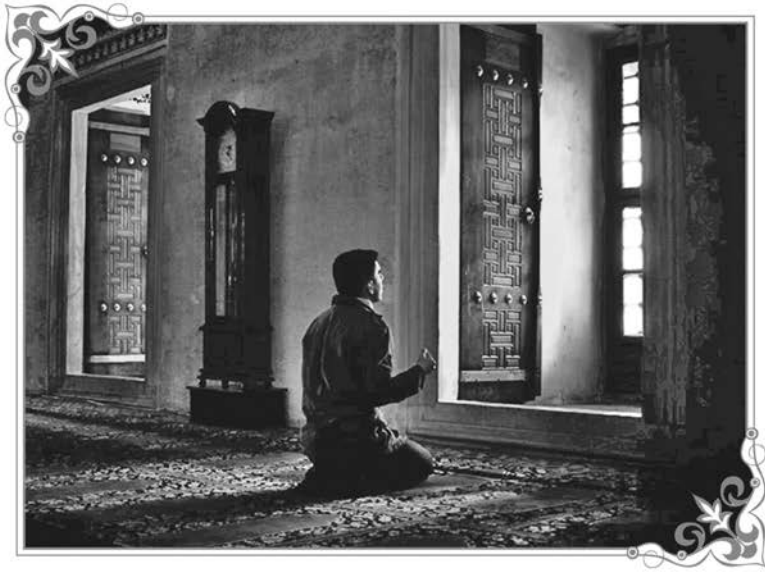
May our Lord grant us such a feast morning! May we attain divine mercy and forgiveness with love, ecstasy and sincere tears!

Amin!

8 This article was published in Ramadan.



Supplication (Dua)



As the supplication is repeated, it is imprinted on the soul of the believer and it fuses with his personality, and becomes a trait of his. For this reason, those with elevated spirits are always calling on their Lord.



SUPPLICATION (DUA)

All the Prophets who were sent as a mercy to humanity and the friends of Allah, frequently turned to Allah in supplication, in both times of adversity and prosperity; in agony and joy. In any event, they are the eternal guides who instruct the requirement of supplication to the Lord through their state and conduct.

Taking refuge in Allah is both a creational law and a regulation of worship. All that exists on earth and in the skies is in a state of submission to the divine predestination, as well as a state of remembrance of the possessor of limitless power, and they pray to Him. A genuine religious education also seeks to permanently implant the state of invocation in the believer's soul to unlock the heart's highest doorway, which leads to Allah.

As the supplication is repeated, it is imprinted on the soul of the believer and it fuses with his personality and becomes a trait of his. For this reason, those with elevated spirits are always in a state of prayer and invocation. Their hearts are trembling in response to the heavenly warning contained in the following verse regarding the importance of maintaining invocation:

Allah Almighty is saying:

قُلْ مَا يَعْبُدُونَ بِي لَوْلَا دُعَاؤُكُمْ ط

Say, "What does my Lord have to do with you if you do not call on Him?" (Al-Furqan, 77)



Persistent prayer and supplication to the Lord builds a spiritual tie between Allah and His servant in the believer's soul. The times of ecstatic prayer are when the heart embraces divine mercy.

Divine compassion and mercy are sought through invocation. In this regard, the confession of utter helplessness and incompetence should be the first statement that rises from the hearts. Supplication is our submission to the All-Powerful by transforming our helplessness into awareness and calmly submitting to Him. Indeed, confessing one's weakness has a significant impact on attracting divine mercy and, thus, on the prayer's acceptance. In fact, Prophet Adam and his wife Hawa sought refuge with Allah Almighty in the following manner, as revealed in the verse:

They replied, "Our Lord! We have wronged ourselves. If You do not forgive us and have mercy on us, we will be among lost."

(Al-A'raf, 23)

In another verse, Prophet Yunus's refuge with Allah is stated as follows:

And Dhu'n-Nun when he left in anger, and thought We would not punish him. He called out in pitch darkness: "There is no god but You. Glory be to You! Truly I have been one of the wrongdoers." (Al-Anbya, 87)



The following dua was made by Sultan Murad I in front of Kosovo:

"O God! You are the owner of both the sovereignty and this servant. I am a helpless servant. You know my intentions and secrets better than anybody else, and that sovereignty and possessions are not my goal. I only want your pleasure..."



O Allah! Do not allow the disbelievers to defeat these faith-filled soldiers! Give them a victory so great that all Muslims will feast! If you wish, let your servant Murad be sacrificed in Your way on that feast!”

Following this heartfelt prayer, the storm that had been creating havoc up until that point suddenly ceased, and after a brutal conflict that lasted for eight hours against an army that was two or three times larger, victory was finally assured.

While Sultan Murad was visiting the veterans after the war and taking care of their needs, he was mischievously stabbed and martyred by a wounded Serbian soldier. Thus, his prayer was fully accepted.



Light and love give birth to sincere prayers, the language of high spirits and the most beautiful words. It brings life to the hopeless and soothes the broken hearts. Sincere and tearful prayer is a request for the manifestation of divine mercy. Invocations conceal the secret of surrender to the Lord, which brings peace to the heart.

It is our Master, the Prophet ﷺ, whose style of living best instructs us in prayer. He used to seek refuge in Allah Almighty, often with feelings of helplessness in the invocations he made such as, “O Allah, I seek refuge in Your pleasure from Your anger, and in Your forgiveness from Your punishment, and I seek refuge in You from You. I cannot reckon Your praise. You are as You have lauded Yourself” (Muslim, Salat, 222) in addition to the prayers he prayed until his feet swelled. He also emphasized the importance of supplication as follows:

“Dua is worship. It is the core and marrow of worship. There is nothing more valuable in the sight of Allah than dua. Allah punishes



those who do not ask anything from Himself. Whoever wants his dua to be accepted in times of difficulty and suffering must likewise make dua abundantly in times of comfort and ease. Your Lord is Hayy (the Living) and Karim (the Most Generous); when a servant extends his hands in prayer to Him, He responds without fail. To whom the doors of dua have been opened, the doors of wisdom have also been opened. Dua or supplication is the key to mercy, the weapon of the believer, the pillar of religion, and the source of light for the sky and the earth.” (Rudani, Jami al-Fawa'id, 9219-20-21-22-25)



The supplications of that console a weeping orphan, bring out a smile and providing peace to disturbed people are accepted, as opposed to those who oppress others, despise the vulnerable, and live a heedless life. In reality, prayers from people who love God and ask for forgiveness for their sins over and over again are more likely to be heard than prayers from arrogant people who think they are perfect.


Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi says the following about the acceptance of supplication:

“Pray and repent with a broken heart and tear-stained eyes! Because flowers bloom in bright and moist environments!”


Therefore, it is insufficient to just verbalize the request in the dua. We should strive to infuse our supplications with “khawf and raja,” that is, fear and hope. The heart should quake with the desires. Also, if the prayer is for forgiveness of a sin, it must be done with a firm intention to never return to the same sin.


According to the narration, the Prophet Musa ﷺ encountered a man praying in desperation, and upon observing his external ap-



pearance, he sincerely desired that his prayer might be accepted. At that time, Allah revealed the following to Musa :

“I am more merciful than you toward that servant. However, although he prays to Me with his tongue, his heart is attached to his flock of sheep that he has.”

As soon as Musa  relayed this information, the guy fixed his state and turned to Allah with a pure heart.

A prayer for a brother or sister in Islam that is performed in his or her absence, on the other hand, is readily accepted. Our Prophet  said:

“No supplication is more readily responded to, than the supplication made for someone who is absent.” (Tirmidhi, Birr, 50)

People seek dua from those they believe their prayers will be accepted. However, sincerity is the primary factor that ensures acceptance. This means that even a sinner’s sincere, heartfelt prayer for his believing brother or sister may be better than the half-hearted prayer of someone whose position in the sight of Allah is thought to be superior.

The following cry from Mawlana Rumi’s heart, which is an ocean of compassion and mercy, has great significance:

“Oh, my Lord! If only the righteous can trust in Your mercy, then where can the sinful find refuge?..”

“O my God! If You only accept Your virtuous servants, to whom will the criminals go and supplicate?”



In fact, the fact that a servant is a sinner does not imply that Allah Almighty has abandoned him. For this reason, only Allah



knows whose prayer will be the means of achieving another servant's request. In this way, it's important to get to the point where you can be in the duas of any servant of Allah, no matter who they are.

One day, Ma'ruf al-Karkhi came across someone who was serving water in the bazaar. The man said:

"Please drink from my water for the sake of Allah."

Ma'ruf al-Karkhi drank the water, despite the fact that he was fasting in order to receive the prayer of the man who said, "For the sake of Allah."

After Ma'ruf al-Karkhi passed away, an wali (friend of Allah) had a dream in which he saw him in a beautiful state and asked him:

"For which of your deeds did Allah Almighty bestow you this honor?" Ma'ruf al-Karkhi, replied by saying:

"By a man who was giving out water calling on Allah and asking for his pleasure."

It is equally crucial to avoid the curses of oppressed and heart-broken believers as it is to receive their prayers.

When the Seljuk Sultan Alaaddin Keykubad finished the city's fortress, he invited Bahauddin Veled, the father of Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi, to view the structure and provide his views. Bahauddin Veled observed the castle and said:

"Your fortress appears exceptionally beautiful and fortified against floods and enemy attacks. However, what measures did you take to protect yourself from the arrows of the curse of the oppressed and vulnerable people under your rule? Because these arrows would not only pierce a castle like yours, but also hundreds of thousands of castle bastions and destroy the whole world.



It is preferable that you construct fortresses out of justice and goodness and attempt to form prayer warriors from the righteous. This way is safer than the walls because such prayer troops ensure the trust and peace of the people and the world.”

Indeed, the believers’ achievements, successes and victories are a result of sincere prayers in addition to their physical effort and hard work.

The Qur’an, which is the guide to eternal bliss for us, contains the greatest teachings of how to ask from our Lord. Our Almighty Lord states the following in verses regarding dua:

“Say, “what do you think?

If Allah’s punishment came down upon you or the Hour, would you call on other than Allah? if you are being truthful?

It is Him you call on and, if He wills, He will deliver you from whatever it was that made you call on Him; and you will forget what you associated with Him.” (Al-An’am, 40-41)

“Call upon your Lord humbly and secretly. He does not love those who overstep the limits.” (Al-A’raf, 55)

One of the most important prayers we should not forget in this ephemeral world, which is the only resource for saving our afterlife, is to ask to die with a pure heart. In the verse, the Lord declares:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ
وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ

“You who believe! have taqwa of Allah with the taqwa due to Him, and do not die except as Muslims.” (Ali ‘Imran, 102)



Every believer's efforts throughout their existence are directed toward achieving the bliss of being able to breathe their last breath in peace. Because everyone is uninsured except for Prophets. Even Allah's friends have always been concerned about their final breath.

Although it is unknown when we will die and in what condition, it is a fact that every human dies in the condition in which they lived. In order to die with faith, we must always constantly be on the straight path and in a state of supplication and repentance before Allah Almighty. According to the verse, the Prophet Yusuf عليه السلام would pray as follows:

تَوَفَّنِي مُسْلِمًا وَأَلْحِقْنِي بِالصَّالِحِينَ

"... take me as a Muslim at my death and join me with the people who are righteous." (Yusuf, 101)

The prayer of his righteous servants, whom Allah praises as the possessors of sense, is also reported in the Qur'an as follows:

رَبَّنَا فَاعْفُ رَ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَكَفِّرْ عَنَّا سَيِّئَاتِنَا وَتَوَفَّنَا مَعَ الْأَبْرَارِ

"Our Lord, forgive us our wrong actions, erase our bad actions from us, and take us back to You with those who are truly good." (Ali 'Imran, 193)

In response to Musa's عليه السلام miracle, the magicians who had just arrived at belief prayed to Allah, ignoring Pharaoh's threats to kill them through torture, that they may be able to surrender their lives as Muslims without a shred of doubt. What a tremendous warning and lesson this is for us.



In contrast, what will obtain divine favor in supplications are not just fancy sentences. If it was only about eloquent requests with poetic phrases then the prayers of a sick patient who could only groan and sob, as well as the prayers of strangers who were too feeble to speak for themselves, should not have been accepted. Entertaining such a notion means being ignorant of the spiritual language and disclaiming its existence.

Such excessive ostentatious supplications actually diminish the prayer's essence, spirit and purity. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ says the following concerning those who pray in this manner:

“There will be people who will exaggerate in supplication. You should not be one of them.” (Abu Dawud, Witir, 23) And he said in another hadith:

“O people! Be merciful of yourselves, for you are not calling on one who is deaf or absent, but One Who is with you, no doubt He is the All-Hearing, ever Near.” (Bukhari, Jihad, 131)

Sincere prayers are not rejected by Allah Almighty. However, despite all the sincerity, He does not answer certain requests that contradict absolute destiny. Therefore, a person who prays should never demonstrate fatigue and should persevere in his supplications because in such circumstances, the answer of the prayer is reserved for the hereafter.

A heart in prayer must know that it has sought refuge at the highest gate. Even after a lifetime, hearts praying for favor and waiting at the threshold of mercy do not become fatigued. For in their sphere, dua and tears are like an elixir of happiness that brings consolation and serenity, as they flow from divine mercy, which is the source of God's love for shattered souls.



We must never forget that we can achieve the true honor and dignity of humanity by having our mistakes forgiven. Those who wish to discover the secret of eternal forgiveness after death and taste the inexhaustible blessings of God must first employ impassioned prayers and supplications to extract the scent of forgiveness from the roses in the gardens of their hearts. We also pray that our Lord, who has infinite power and mercy, will have mercy on us and shower his blessings on us.

My God! Through love, pleasure, and sincere tears, please grant us a portion of divine mercy and forgiveness. In the hope of obtaining your pleasure, make compassion for your creatures an inexhaustible resource within our hearts. For the sake of the sincere prayers of your faithful servants, grant our blessed homeland happiness and peace, and unite our nation in righteousness and goodness!

Amin!...



Inviting to the Truth and Goodness! -1-



We must not forget the struggle that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, of whose ummah we are privileged to be a part, endured to declare to humanity his call to eternal salvation. As a member of his ummah, we should frequently consider how successfully we are able to follow this tradition of his and how deserving we are of the title “Allah’s witnesses on earth.”



INVITING TO THE TRUTH AND GOODNESS! -1-

Every individual whose innate qualities such as mind, comprehension, and intellect have not been corrupted has no trouble comprehending that he was not created in vain, without purpose, or without an underlying wisdom when he observes his life and the universe with the eyes of his heart. Man, who was created with profound wisdom and significant purposes, is manifestly not idle in this transient world. Since it is mentioned in the verses:

أَيَحْسَبُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنْ يُتْرَكَ سُدًى

“Do people think they will be left without purpose?” (AL-Qiyamah, 36)

أَفَحَسِبْتُمْ أَنْمَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ عَبَثًا وَأَنْكُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا تُرْجَعُونَ

“Did you then think that We had created you without purpose, and that you would never be returned to Us?” (Al-Mu'minun, 115)

Every human being has a responsibility to have an understanding of the cycle of life, which includes the connection between man and the universe as well as the link between the cradle and the grave.

The divine order and power that runs through the universe, forces humans with reason and conscience to acknowledge the existence of a wise creator. Allah Almighty favored human beings with another blessing by sending Prophets to guide them, thus allowing them to realize their faith in its full sense.



Without a doubt, “compassion” is one of the most essential characteristics that the blessing of “faith” will bestow upon man. In the heart of a believer, mercy is like an unquenchable fire. It is a divine element that draws us closer to the Lord. Compassion is the result of the mercy which comes with belief and it transforms arrogance into generosity. As the blessing of faith is refined in the heart, compassion for others who lack faith grows, as does the effort to help them find it. It is due to this that a perfect believer’s soul can’t find comfort in his own faith while there are others who need an invitation to true guidance.

A human being is unquestionably an ephemeral traveler who has embarked on a voyage to the hereafter. Denying this reality is as antithetical to logic, reason, and conscience as closing one’s eyes and rejecting the sun’s existence. Consequently, ordering one’s life in accordance with this reality is a rational, logical, and moral requirement. On this life’s journey, one of the most essential religious and moral obligations of a believer is to help those in need of guidance by not keeping the benefits of faith to oneself. To invite people to the truth, is one of the most rewarding responsibilities in this world and the hereafter to make an effort to prevent them from falling into the pits of disgrace and the darkness of unbelief due to moral weakness.

As the Prophet ﷺ indicates in one of his hadiths:

“He who calls people to righteousness, there would be a reward for him like the rewards of those who adhered to it, without their rewards being diminished in any respect. And whoever calls people to error, he shall have to carry the burden of it, like those who committed it, without their sins being diminished in any respect.”

(Muslim, Ilim, 16; Abu Dawud, Sunnah, 6; Tirmidhi, Ilim, 15)

As can be seen, there is great Prophetic good news about the virtue and abundance of the duty of inviting to the truth and goodness,



and on the other hand, it is reported that those who invite to evil acts are dragged into a plague and sin that increases exponentially, like a snowball rolling into an avalanche. This attribute adequately conveys the significance of the duty and obligation to encourage the pursuit of truth and kindness and the avoidance of evil.

On the other hand, every believer who will be tasked with conveying the message must first develop his own character. For the most successful method of directing people toward truth and goodness is to become a living, concrete example of virtue and righteousness. Therefore, it is necessary that the inviter of guidance be already on the right path (sirat al-mustaqim). The caller must have a serene heart (mutma'in) in order for the invitation to be perfectly effective. As a result of experiencing the ecstasy of eternity, those who attain this spiritual level lose their attraction to transient pleasures and desires. Therefore, they fulfill their obligation to communicate with sincerity, not in the hope of gaining favor from others or to please their egos, but solely for Allah's sake. This attribute is also a characteristic of the Prophets' morality.

The Qur'an is saying the following about this issue:

“I do not ask you for any reward for this. My reward is only from the Lord of all the worlds.” (Ahs-Su'ara, 180) There are many other divine statements pointing to this prophetic morality.



In our religion, the duty of encouraging good and forbidding evil is called “amr bil maruf wa nahy anil munkar”. The divine command regarding this matter is stated in the verse as follows:

وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ
وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ ۚ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ



“Let there be a community among you who call to the good, and enjoin the right, and forbid the wrong. They are the ones who have success.” (Ali ‘Imran, 104)

The only criterion for distinguishing right from wrong, good from bad, virtue from disgrace, and maturity from immaturity is the voice of religion, namely, Allah and His Messenger’s commands and recommendations. This is one of the primary responsibilities of every believer.

In another verse, Allah Almighty describes the responsibility to convey the message as “great jihad”:

“So do not obey the disbelievers but use this to battle against them with all your might.” (Al-Furqan, 52)

In fact, one of the most significant meanings of jihad is revealed by the fact that this “great struggle” edict was issued during the Meccan period, when the believers lacked the power and ability to confront the disbelievers. At that time, the believers lacked the strength and military equipment necessary to combat their tyrants and foes. They had nothing except Allah’s word. In such circumstances, transmitting the message of the Qur’an was the only way to take on this great struggle and effort described in the verse.



The Messenger of Allah is saying in one of his hadiths:

“Do not wish to be like anyone except in two cases. A person, whom Allah has given wealth and he spends it righteously; the one whom Allah has given wisdom and he acts according to it and teaches it to others.” (Bukhari, Ilim, 14; Muslim, Musafirin, 266)

The most virtuous way to engage with the Qur’an is to learn it, teach it, internalize it with its morals, live in accordance with its



commands and prohibitions, and deliver the message with a gentle tone. Sensitive believers who have reached this level of feeling by studying the Qur'an will be able to deliver the message of the Qur'an in a way that has the desired effect.

In truth, the event that led to the guidance of Umar رضي الله عنه, who set out with the aim of killing the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, was some verses of the Qur'an that read with a deep heart in his sister's home, in addition to the Prophet's prayer.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ and his Companions tried every effort to spread the Qur'an and, by extension, the religion of Allah, and they sacrificed their wealth and lives for this cause. The Companions who courageously read and delivered the Messenger of Allah's message to the monarchs in front of the executioners did not hesitate to sacrifice their lives for the sake of their duty. Considering that only 20,000 of the approximately 120,000 Companions who listened to the famous Farewell Sermon of the Messenger of Allah are believed to be buried in Mecca and Medina, it is easy to understand how the Companions' invitation was made. In reality, the Companions who traveled from China to Istanbul and from Africa to the Caucasus imparted guidance and mercy wherever they went, achieving a prominent role in Islamic destiny. Thus, they endeavored to extend the invitation to guidance from Mecca to all eras and places.

Specifically, the extraordinary effort and struggle of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in conveying the divine message that invites humanity to guidance reveals, on the one hand, the magnificence and significance of the duty and responsibility of conveying the message and, on the other hand, what kind of faith believers should have in this matter.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ, whom Allah Almighty sent as a model for His slaves, devoted his entire life to communicating



Allah's words. Even the persecution, scorn, insults, and injustices that followed his rejection of the immensely appealing materialistic and egoistic promises of the unbelievers did not deter him from pursuing his cause. He was so dedicated that he would not tolerate even the least disturbance on this journey. The following historical answer to the extremely enticing offers given by the unbelievers to discourage him from his cause, during his weakest moments when it was his duty to deliver the message, revealed this truth:

“By Allah, even if they were to place the Sun in my right hand and the Moon in my left, I would never abandon this cause! Either Allah will spread it to the entire globe, thereby completing my job, or I will perish on this path!”⁹

In fact, for the sake of spreading the message of Islam, our Prophet ﷺ went through hardships and trials that no one else could endure. He made the most of every chance and set the best example for the ummah by using all means to plant the seeds of guidance in people's hearts.

During the early years of his prophethood, when people travelled to Mecca for the pilgrimage, he personally toured all the tribes and explained Islam to them. He would visit the gathering places of the people and explain the religion of Allah without stopping, and he would invite everyone he met to believe in the unity of Allah, without discrimination between the free and the slave, the weak and the strong, or the wealthy and the poor.

Jabir رضي الله عنه report that:

“The Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to present his case to the pilgrims at the place of foundation during every pilgrimage season of the Age of Ignorance and say:

9 See. Ibn al-Kathir, *Al-Kamil fit Tarikh*, II, 64.

Is there any man who takes me to his people? The Quraysh have prevented me from preaching the word of my Lord.” (Abi Dawud, Sunnah, 19-20)

Moreover, he would visit the tribes’ settlements at Mecca’s Uqaz, Majanna, and Zulmajaz fairs, present himself to them, and encourage them to acknowledge the unity of Allah and worship Him alone.

Despite the insults and persecution he endured, particularly in Taif, he continued to pray to Allah for their salvation, and even the guidance of a single slave named Addas from the entire city of Taif was enough to ease his sorrow. Even though he was mistreated and insulted, he never got angry and always prayed for them. This was because of the great sense of forgiveness and compassion that he had in his heart.

Even though the tyranny of the people of Taif broke the Messenger of Allah’s ﷺ heart, his primary concern was the fear of failure and weakness in fulfilling his mission and responsibility to transmit the divine message. In truth, even under these circumstances, he sought refuge with Allah Almighty in the following manner:

“To You, my Lord, I complain of my weakness, lack of support and the humiliation I am made to receive. Most Compassionate and Merciful! You are the Lord of the weak, and you are my Lord. To whom do You leave me? To a distant person who receives me with hostility? Or to an enemy You have given power over me? As long as you are not displeased with me, I do not care what I face. I would, however, be much happier with Your mercy. I seek refuge in the light of Your face by which all darkness is dispelled and both this life and the life to come are put in their right course against incurring your wrath or being the subject of your anger. To You I submit, until I earn Your pleasure...” (Ibn Hashim, II, 30)



Like the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, it is possible to experience the unending joy of this ephemeral life by extracting the fragrance of forgiveness and mercy from the gardens of the heart. It is essential that we elevate mercy above all other affections. Let us be merciful so that we may earn divine mercy and obtain a gift from the “Rahman” (the All-Merciful).

Allah’s mercy is so vast that a single drop is sufficient to fill our hearts. As soon as that drop falls into the heart and imparts the flavor of that ocean, the heart dissolves into that ocean. Through invocation, prayer, and conveying the divine message, hearts that have become a sea of mercy achieve their genuine constancy. Such hearts can now hear the silent screams of the heedless, who are oblivious of the purpose of their existence and who cry out “have pity on us” in the language of their state. Taif is the most prominent illustration of this state in this context. In the same way that it is impossible for the sun not to shine, it is also impossible for perfected souls not to feel compassion and, as a result, to ignore communicating the truth and kindness.

Certainly, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was sent as a mercy to the world. Even if some people once refused to recognize his worth, and exposed him to all kinds of insults, this did not prevent the Prophet’s mercy from overcoming his fury; on the contrary, it increased his compassion for them. So, many darkened souls who thought their pain was happiness came to believe in the climate of the prophet’s heart, which was an ocean of deep compassion, tolerance, forgiveness and mercy.

In fact, the following quotes from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ show how he felt about his duty to spread the divine message:

“My example and the example of the people is that of a man who made a fire, and when it lit what was around it, moths and other



insects started falling into the fire. The man tried his best to prevent them from falling into the fire but they overpowered him and rushed into the fire. Now, similarly, I take hold of the knots at your waist belts to prevent you from falling into the fire, but you insist on falling into it.” (Bukhari, Riqaq, 26)



Allah Almighty is saying the Qur'an:

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ
بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ

“You are the best community ever raised up before mankind—you enjoin the right and forbid the wrong...” (Ali ‘Imran, 110)

So in order to reach the content of the verse’s statement of “the best community,” we must live and order ma’ruf, or virtue and goodness, like our Prophet ﷺ, and avoid munkar, which is evil and bad, and forbid it.

Allah Almighty states the value of this lofty duty in his sight as:

“Who could say anything better than someone who calls to Allah and acts rightly and says, I am one of the Muslims?” (Fussilat, 33)

We should not forget the struggle of our Prophet ﷺ, whose ummah we are honored and blessed to be a part of and we should frequently reflect on how we might follow his sunnah as members of his ummah. Because the Messenger of Allah ﷺ desires for his ummah to continue this duty, which he performed throughout his life. He reminded his community of his duty and responsibility to deliv-



er the divine message at every opportunity, and he encouraged them to do so.

As indicated in one of his hadiths:

“Convey (my teachings) to the people even if it were a single sentence.” (Bukhari, Anbiya, 50) And he also encouraged the nation to convey in another hadith:

“May Allah gladden a man who hears a Hadith from us, so he memorizes it until he conveys it to someone else. Perhaps he carries the knowledge to one who is more understanding than him, and perhaps the one who carries the knowledge is not a Faqih.” (Tirmidhi, Ilim, 7)

In addition, the following Prophetic statement is a good example, which warns that all these responsibilities of conveying and warning, which call humanity from evil and ill to beauty and goodness, serve as a kind of measurement tool for the degree of faith:

“Whoever sees something wrong should change it with his hand and if he can’t then he should do it with his tongue, and if he can’t, then he should abhor it in his heart, and that is the least of iman (faith).” (Muslim, Iman, 78)

In another hadith, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said:

“By the One in Whose Hand is my soul! Either you command good and forbid evil, or Allah will soon send upon you a punishment from Him, then you will call upon Him, but He will not respond to you.” (Tirmidhi, Fitan, 9)

Dear Lord! We seek refuge in You from the terrible repercussions that may result from ignoring the obligation to promote the good and prohibit evil.



Dear Lord! Grant us, your feeble servants, the ability to perform our duty of encouraging truth and goodness by imitating the sublime character of your Messenger, whom you have bestowed as humanity's greatest example, so that we may gain his intercession!

Amin!



Inviting to the Truth and Goodness! -2-



Those who can transform their hearts into lodges of the spiritual atmosphere of the Qur'an and Sunnah are the happiest of mankind. The primary value and dignity of man is to live by enlightening his heart and conveying the message with it. When a person's heart is full of thorns, it is useless and a sign of great weakness to try to convey the divine message.



INVITING TO THE TRUTH AND GOODNESS! -2-

In order to apply the Qur'an and Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah to our lives, we must develop a passion for communicating the truth and helping people because a believer's life should consist of service and calling to the truth.

Certainly, one of the most fundamental characteristics that distinguishes a sincere believer from others is his mercy. The delivery of the message is likewise an effect of mercy. The call to truth and encouragement of goodness, which are a manifestation of mercy, must first be realized inside the believer's own self.

In order to invite people to the truth and inspire them to perform good deeds, it is first vital to have a firm grasp on the nature of right and goodness because it is impossible for the words of the ignorant to be free of mistakes, not only in terms of style but also in terms of content. In this situation, the initial requirement for this path is scientific and spiritual capital. These two capitals are required for a life of trusting Allah and service to be lived in accord with the mind and heart.

On the other hand, every believer is required to know at least the fundamental concepts, as it is mandatory for every Muslim to have knowledge of "the essentials of the religion." Those who do not know, worried that they would make matters worse while attempting to help, should immediately overcome their scientific and spiritual limitations and attempt to transform their information into wisdom by applying it to their lives. The impact of an invitation to the truth and goodness rests on the depth of our hearts and to what level our inner world is filled with illumination and spirituality.



As Mawlana Rumi is saying:

“When attempting to fill a bag, do not open it from the bottom.”

It is futile and senseless to anticipate the desired result from communication produced in ignorance, hastily, devoid of love and experience, using vulgar terms and a common style, and it also bears a serious responsibility.

For this reason, a believer should beautify his heart with the compassion, kindness and beauty of Islam, and set an example in imparting the truth and inspiring good deeds through his behavior.

It is indicated in the verse:

“The men and women of the believers are friends of one another. They command what is right and forbid what is wrong, and establish salat and pay zakat, and obey Allah and His Messenger. They are the people on whom Allah will show mercy. Allah is Al-mighty, All-Wise. Allah has promised the men and women of the believers, Gardens with rivers flowing under them, remaining in them timelessly, for ever, and fine dwellings in the Garden of Eden. And Allah’s good pleasure is even greater. That is the great victory.” (At-Tawba, 71-72)

Those who can transform their hearts into receptacles of the Qur’an and Sunnah are the happiest of mankind. Again, they are the ones who live a life of genuine trust in their Lord by drawing from the depths of the Qur’an and protecting their hearts till their last breath from the fallacies of the ego. The basic value and dignity of man is to live by illuminating his heart and communicating its message. When a person’s heart is full of thorns, attempting to impart the divine message is futile. Our way rejects “false claims and accusations,” which are the disease of the human soul, and instills humility, love and compassion in hearts. The world of a believer’s




heart should resemble a flower garden where every troubled, worried face and sorrowful heart can find peace. For this reason, it is vital to purge the heart and body of thorn-like emotions, ideas and actions.

Although the historical figure Hajjaj az-Zalim was known for his tyranny, he was also a philosopher. One day, when the Imam spotted him at the Friday prayer, he said, "Allah's favorite action is to proclaim his injustice to the oppressor king." And he delivered some heavy words in the sermon. Hajjaj az-Zalim listened calmly.

After the Friday sermon he called him to his presence and asked:

"What did you just say in the khutba?!"

The Imam repeated his comments from the sermon to Hajjaj in a slightly harsher tone, oblivious to the fact that he would be beheaded. Hajjaj said:

"How strange!... You seem to be a knowledgeable man, yet you seem to not understand the methods of wise invitation. Don't you ever read the Qur'an? When sending Prophet Musa , who was unquestionably more pious than you, to Pharaoh, who was more tyrannical than me and who was a disbeliever, did Allah Almighty not instruct him to use a soft tone?"

The Imam realized his mistake. He apologized, and owing to Hajjaj's forgiveness and tolerance, he was spared his head.

This is not the only divine declaration concerning that illustrates the method to us.¹⁰ There are many verses where it is emphasized that the message must be conveyed with gentle and discerning language, without offending the listener.

¹⁰ See, Surah Taha, verses 43-44.



Allah Almighty revealed the manners of conveying the message in His Might Book:

“Call to the Way of your Lord with wisdom and fair admonition, and argue with them in the kindest way.” (An-Nahl, 125) Because of this, it is important to learn from the good example of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, whose life is a living Qur’an, and to follow the manners set forth by him.

Consequently, a believer must first beautify his inner and outer worlds with the splendors of Islam and have a personality and character that inspires trust in those around him through his exemplary conduct. When the verse **“Warn your closest relatives”** (ash-Shuara, 214) was revealed to the Noble Prophet ﷺ, he gathered the Quraysh to the hill of Safa and called out to them from a high rock:

“O Quraysh community! Would you believe me if I told you that there are hostile riders at the base of this mountain or in that valley who will immediately assault you and steal your possessions?”

They replied without hesitation:

“Yes, we would believe you! we have always found you to be trustworthy. We’ve never heard you lie!”

Thus, they confirmed to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ that he was a confident and trustworthy individual who was not ever known to have lied. In other words, he made them admit that he was a trustworthy witness. Even Abu Jahl, who was among the most hostile to Islam, couldn’t say that the Messenger of Allah was lying. Instead, he would only object by saying:

O Muhammad! We are not saying you are a liar. It is the Mccan people, that is, we who gave you the title of “al-Amin” (the trust-



worthy). You are not lying. But maybe the angel who informs you of this duty is deceiving you.”

Allah Almighty describes this attitude as follows in the verse:

“We know what they say grieves you. It is not that they are calling you a liar; the wrongdoers are just denying Allah’s Signs.”

(Al-An’am, 33)

There were even people who, upon seeing the Messenger of Allah, were influenced by his words and said, “This face would not lie” and embraced Islam. It is indisputable that this trait is crucial for the conquering of hearts.

Ten years after the conquest of Istanbul, one of the most notable individuals in our history, Fatih Sultan Mehmed Han, conquered Bosnia. The true triumph, however was the conquest of the hearts and that occurred after the return of the sword that unlocked the area. He initiated a campaign of resettling Muslim families to Bosnia who had grown up in the heart of Anatolia. As a consequence, the Bosnians soon accepted Islam.

In fact, the weapon is only employed to end injustice. The real conquest that must be won, however, is the conquest of hearts. This is achievable by embodying the morality and etiquette of Islam and being a role model. The result is from the close relationship between the effect of invitation and the spiritual life of the inviter. Accordingly, for a real inviter, the inability to comprehend the divine order of the cosmos and to comprehend it through the common language of creatures is a result of a lack of spirituality.

Therefore, the battle that must be won is the war within the human heart. In light of this explanation, Allah Almighty shows the internal conflict between “fujur and taqwa” (depravity and taqwa). Cleansing the heart of impurities and adorning it with taqwa is the



true source of human happiness and ultimate salvation. Only people who have completely submitted themselves to God and won the battle with themselves can influence hearts in a way that leads to eternal salvation.

On the other hand, valuing the conveyer of the message is another consideration for the message. Since the recipient of the message is human, it must never be forgotten that Allah created him as an honorable being. If the message must begin with faith, the recipient must be viewed in terms of the essential value inherent in his creation. This means treating them with a good opinion, tolerance and compassion as opposed to a bad opinion, hostility and arrogance. This behavior is more consistent with this fundamental perspective of the human being. The poet describes this as:

“The value of a diamond is not diminished by falling to the ground.”

In all of the Qur’anic verses that praise mankind, this fundamental trait is emphasized. In actuality, it is mentioned in the verse:

وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ

“We have ennobled the children of Adam.” (Al-Isra, 70) In reality, man is described in the Qur’an as the khalif of Allah Almighty just by being a human.

The commandments of this innate honor are faith and the good deeds that accompany it. The deprivation of faith and good acts is a dreadful loss of this initial honor, namely the dignity of being human. Those who have gained the ecstasy and taste of perfect belief, however, ought to feel compassion for those in loss because that is



the expected consequence of this merit. And the greatest help that can be offered to them is the invitation to eternal happiness.



A sincere inviter to Allah is a guiding individual who may bring life to the spirits. He is a person of the heart who knows how to communicate with love, sympathy and compassion. Those who show the route to peace and happiness through their words, writings and exemplary acts of kindness are at the bedside of the afflicted and next to orphans. Since they sense the anguish of the suffering around them and their own duties in this regard, they always come to the aid of individuals who are seeking illumination as well.

Again, they view humanity as a trust from Allah. They cultivate an attitude that embraces all living things with love and compassion. In this way, the sense of duty that grows from the seed of compassion in their hearts distinguishes them from ordinary people and transforms them into travelers on an eternal journey. Those who bear tribulations, dedicate themselves to service and instruction, and therefore carry their hearts into eternity by joining this caravan of truth are so many like Aziz Mahmud Hudai, Yunus Amra, famous Turkish Sufis, and their peers.



It is a divine promise from Allah Almighty that his light will be perfected and Islam will continue until the Day of Judgment. However, it should not be forgotten that the obligation of delivering the message is a condition that serves as a means of the religion's continuation. That religion is the recognition of Allah in line with His truth and glorifying Him through worship because this is the purpose of existence.



If it is seen that people have gone astray, the act of conveying the message presents itself as the first and most important obligation after belief. Unless and until the truth and kindness are successfully communicated, the legitimacy of even the most basic deeds will be lost. What a lovely and blessed action it is for a mother to breastfeed her child at the age of suckling, for example. However, if a mother notices that her house is on fire, then putting out the fire is of far greater importance at that moment than breastfeeding the child. So, when religion is defeated in the representational perspective, being preoccupied with other things becomes a more terrible sin than at other times, unless there is a community that instills and communicates the right and good.

It should not be forgotten that this blessing of Islam has come to us after hundreds of years of suffering. It is our responsibility to pass on this trust to future generations with the same care. In this regard, ours is a moment when self-sacrifice is required to be ardent for the triumph of good. This is, in essence, a logical fact because when a car's wheels get stuck in the mud, the effort of the person pushing it cannot be compared to the effort of the person pushing the car on a normal smooth road. There's one more nuance here. For example, when a child's modest push is required to get the wheels of a car out of the mud, that little effort is all the more vital. On the other hand, the crime of someone standing on the sidelines and failing to perform his duty during the difficult times becomes more serious. In today's world young people are trapped in many negative currents, and mankind has fallen into the hands of destructive powers and lives under the spell of ego, we should act according to our time, noting that a little work gives tremendous rewards and small negligence produces great responsibility.

Being successful in the service of the religion is of course, a source of immense happiness for all humans. However, the main is-



sue in the task of conveying the religion is not success or failure. The main thing is to work as much as possible with the aim of gaining Allah's favor. It is also not reasonable to anticipate every notice to have positive results just because the required causes have been established, and it is unreasonable to tire oneself out by feeling hopeless and depressed in case of failure. Because it is Allah who provides guidance. The servant's responsibility is to keep communicating the message without giving up, even if he is tired of complacency, and to leave the outcome to Allah and put his trust in Allah. In truth, when Allah's Messenger ﷺ, who was sent as a mercy to the world, exerted himself excessively in the hope of "saving one more person from the fire," the following divine warnings were sent down to him:

"Perhaps you will destroy yourself with grief because they will not become believers. If We willed We could send down a Sign to them from heaven, before which their heads would be bowed low in subjection." (ash-Shu'ara, 3-4)

"You cannot guide those you would like to but Allah guides those He wills. He has best knowledge of the guided." (Al-Qasas, 56)

As a result, it should not be forgotten that even if people do not accept the guidance, it will at least decrease the speed of evil, maybe even lead to an improvement in the long term. Furthermore, even if the efforts fail to produce a result, the person is released from this responsibility. Because it is certain that one will be questioned in regards to how much one transmits the message to others. The divine scale will evaluate whether we did our share in this affair or not.

There have been instances when Prophets had huge followings and other times when Prophets were sent to nations where only a tiny number of people were guided. That is, Allah provides guidance, but the entire ummah, particularly the Prophets, are required to live and spread Islam.



In summary, the message must become ingrained in the essence of a Muslim, beginning with his children and family. Every believer is responsible for discovering the best manner to transmit the message, fulfilling his responsibility of invitation, and attempting to increase people's consciousness in accordance with knowledge and capability. Because, according to the Qur'an, Allah Almighty did not ask people for anything beyond their capacity. He has made them responsible for carrying out their responsibilities in accordance with their strength.



The Prophet ﷺ is without a doubt the most exalted and distinguished example of inviting to the truth and virtue, and after him the Ahlullah (the people of Allah), whose every condition contains a different beauty, delicacy, depth and sublimity. In fact, the life of Musa Efendi رحمہ اللہ, whose guidance we are blessed with, is packed with signs that guide towards truth and righteousness on every occasion.

Shaykh Musa Efendi رحمہ اللہ was eager and wished for the strength to roam from city to city, village to village, and strive to be an ointment to the material and spiritual troubles of others, even during the illnesses that led to his death.

Because he had made it his highest priority to live his life in service, both physically and monetarily. He embraced every wounded heart and even all the creatures he could reach, sometimes with his hand, sometimes with his heart, in proportion to his strength. When the doors of Central Asia were first opened, he raced there with vigor and zest that belied his senior age. On the other hand, he traveled to South Africa and Europe in an attempt to bring spiritual, social revitalization there.



In short, he spent his entire life striving to be a lovely servant who is lauded in the Qur'an as "What a beautiful servant."¹¹ As a result, he left a delightful echo that will last eternally in this earthly dome. A lovely loyalty, peace, morality, and an exemplary life full of beauty remained...

May our Lord provide us with the benefit of his heart's heavenly blessings!

May our Lord allow us all the opportunity to be acquitted with Allah's presence by fulfilling the invitation to truth and goodness in accordance with what He has instilled in us!

Oh, Lord! Protect our hearts from the illusion of considering this world to be our home, which we are only passing through on our way to eternity. Bestow upon our hearts the deep wisdom of knowing that one day we will become a trodden earth as we trample the lands beneath us! May the light of Islam be our nutrition, the climate of the Muhammadan spirit our respiration, and your lofty love and pleasure be our paradise of happiness!

Amin!

11 See, Sad, 30, 40.



Altruism (Ithar)



Mercy is a fire that never fades in the heart of a Muslim. It is the most noble aspect of our humanity in this world, leading us to God's reunion through the heart. A merciful believer is a generous, humble, service-minded doctor who brings order and life into people's souls.



ALTRUISM (ITHAR)

While traveling, Abdullah Ibn Jafar ﷺ stopped by a date orchard. The servant of the garden was a black slave. They brought the slave three pieces of bread. Meanwhile, a dog arrived. The slave threw one piece to him. The bread was devoured by the dog. He flung the other. That was also eaten by the dog. He then gave him the third piece of bread left. The dog ate that too.

The slave and Abdullah Ibn Jafar ﷺ then had the following conversation:

“What is your fee?”

“The three loaves that you see,” the slave said.

“How come you gave it all to the dog?”

“There were no dogs around here. This dog came from a long distance away. My heart did not approve of his going hungry” said the slave.

“So, what are you going to eat today?” Abdullah ﷺ asked.

“I’ll be patient, the slave said. “Today, I gave my right to this hungry creature of my Lord, who needs it more.”

“Subhanallah!” said Abdullah ﷺ and added; They claim that I am generous, but this slave is more generous than me!

Then he bought the slave and the date garden, liberated the slave, and gave him the date garden as a gift. (Ghazali, *Kimya al-Sa’adah*, p. 440)




To foster such generous, merciful, and subtle personalities, Islam has made zakat mandatory in order to remove animosity and envy in the social order, to maintain balance, and to secure love. It fosters spending in the way of Allah, which is a conscientious requirement, and peaks it with “altruism” in order to actualize Islamic brotherhood at a higher level and to help every believer “have a prosperous heart.” Because the major objective of our religion is to provide peace to society by developing beautiful, delicate, and profound people who recognize Allah’s oneness.

This maturation is only to be able to share the feeling of compassion and mercy that manifests in the heart, and to share his own opportunity as the most beautiful manifestation of it, and beyond that, to reach the virtue and level of being able to spend even with “altruism” despite one’s own need.

Mercy is a fire that never goes out in the heart of a Muslim. It is the most noble aspect of our humanity in this world, leading us to God’s reunion through the heart. A merciful believer is a generous, humble, service-minded. Again, the merciful believer is a source of hope and faith who knows how to serve with love and compassion in every field. He is at the vanguard of every endeavor to bring peace to people’s souls. Again, he places himself in the midst of every agony and suffering through his words, writing and behavior. He is surrounded by the sick, the homeless and the forlorn because mercy and compassion are the first fruits of the religion in a real believer. With the Qur’an, humanity’s morality has been completed. In fact, when we open the Qur’an, the first divine traits that come to mind are “Rahman” and “Rahim.” Our Lord announces His glorified Self as “the most merciful of the merciful” and instructs his disciple to be moralized by his own morals. As a result, a believer’s heart full of love for God must surround all of the Lord’s creatures with compassion and mercy. Turning with love and compassion to His creatures






is a sign of loving the Lord. As much as the lover loves, the lover finds it a pleasure and a duty to make sacrifices for the beloved. Spending on Allah's creation demonstrates love for Allah.

There are numerous varieties of sadaqah and infaq, which are broad terms for giving for Allah's sake. As previously said, altruism is the pinnacle of these. It is the virtue of putting others' needs ahead of one's own. Every mature believer is conscientiously responsible for the highest display of sensitivity. They actually asked Muhammad Hakim-i Tirmidhi :

"What is the definition of giving?"

"To give is to find serenity in the joy of others," he said.

Entering the rank of altruism is only for lofty souls because true generosity is the ability to offer without fear of being impoverished. This state has been manifested in the most beautiful and perfect way in the lives of the friends of Allah and the Prophets. Of course, reaching such a peak and reaching those lofty stars is not for everyone but because the closer we get to those horizons, the more priceless rewards we will get, even the smallest step toward altruism is a vital eternal benefit for us.

Abu Hurayra  narrated that a man came to the Prophet and said that he was hungry. The Prophet  sent a messenger to his wives to bring something for that man to eat, but they said that they had nothing except water. Then Allah's Messenger  said,

"Who will take this person or feed him as a guest?" An Ansar man said, "I." So he took him to his wife and said to her,

"Feed generously the guest of Allah's Messenger  " She said,

"We have got nothing except the meals of my children." He said,



“Prepare your meal, light your lamp and let your children sleep if they ask for supper.”

So she prepared her meal, lit her lamp, and made her children sleep, and then stood up, pretending to mend her lamp, but she put it off. Then both of them pretended to be eating, but they really went to bed hungry. In the morning, the Ansari went to the Messenger ﷺ who said,

“Allah was very pleased with your actions toward the guest last night.” (Bukhari, *Manaqibul Ansar*, 10; Muslim, *Ashribah*, 172)



Despite having studied law, Ramazanoğlu Mahmud Sami, one of the friends of Allah, did not engage in this profession owing to his fear of injustice and instead handled the accounting book of a workplace in Tahtakale. He used to take the ferry to Karaköy to get to work. Instead of taking the minibus from Karaköy to Tahtakale, he would walk there, forego this need, and donate the money. The elders’ good values and manners set a wonderful example for us. Indeed, everyone should strive to join in this noble act, even if it means making tiny compromises in personal comfort, from house decoration to daily expenses.

The summit of giving is altruism because generosity is defined as giving what one does not need from one’s surplus. Altruism, on the other hand, is the act of giving something that a person needs for himself. Altruism’s spiritual reward is proportional to the servant’s self-sacrifice. Allah Almighty praises the Ansar Kiram for entrusting their resources to the Meccan immigrants and meeting their needs by preferring them over themselves, as follows:



“...and prefer them to themselves even if they themselves are needy. It is the people who are safe-guarded from the avarice of their own selves who are successful.” (Al-Hashr, 9)



Three wounded people were offered water during the expedition of Yarmuk, and each of them handed the water to the other wounded person. As a result, all three were martyred without even having a sip of water.

Ibn Umar ﷺ narrated that the head of a sheep was given as a gift to a companion, who thereupon said:

“My brother so and so is in need of it more than me.” And sent it to him, and the latter said the same and sent it to a third, and so on until the head continued to be moved among seven families, and in the end, it returned to the first one who gave it. (Ghazali, *Ihya Ulum ad-Din*, v. III, p. 571)

Similarly, there is the famous occasion when the great companion and ruler Umar Ibn Al-Khattab ﷺ was on a journey to Damascus, he persisted on getting his slave on the camel because it was his turn even though they had arrived at the gates of the city, and entered Damascus even though he was on foot and his slave was on the camel. This is a superb example of infaq. As a result, infaq is not always carried out materially. Such attitudes are also a form of giving.

Ithar (altruism), the highest degree of infaq, is a situation of giving up one's right and transferring it to his brother. The Prophets, Companions, Saints and Righteous Servants all have this high station.

How well do the following states of Ali ﷺ and Fatima ﷺ represent the truth of altruism:



Ibn Abbas ؓ reported that Ali Ibn Abi Talib ؓ and his wife, Fatima ؓ, fasted for three days after their sons, Hasan and Husayn, were cured of illness. For breaking their fast on the first day, they prepared a supper of barley flour. Someone knocked on their door just as they were ready to break their fast. It was a hungry and impoverished man. For the sake of Allah, the blessed family broke their fast with water and offered their food to this poor man. When it was time to break the fast on the second day, an orphan knocked on the door. They fed the orphan that day and broke their fast with water. On the third day, when a hostage came to ask for help during the break of the fast, they showed amazing patience and altruism by donating their food to that hostage.

With the revealed verses, Allah Almighty confirmed and praised their excessive generosity in giving, preferring others to themselves, and exalted morality.

Allah, the Almighty, says:

“They give food, despite their love for it, to the poor, and orphans and captives: orphan, and the captive, saying to them, ‘We feed you only out of desire for the Face of Allah. We do not want any repayment from you or any thanks. Truly we fear from our Lord a glowering, calamitous Day.’ So Allah has safeguarded them from the evil of that Day and has made them meet with radiance and pure joy.” (Al-Insan, 8-11)

Another perspective on altruism from the time of the Prophet and his Companions is as follows:

After the Battle of Badr, the captives were split up among the Companions into groups of two or three, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ told them to treat them well.

Abu Uzayr, brother of Mus'ab Ibn Umayr, who was among the captives at that time, said:

“The Ansar, with whom I was kept hostage, used to get by with dates and give me their bread and meals when it came time to eat. I would be embarrassed in this case and offer them the food. They, however, refused because the Messenger of Allah directed them to look after the captives.” (Ramazanoğlu, Mahmud Sami, *The Battle of Badr*, p. 93)



In terms of generosity, infaq, and compassion, none of the created beings can be compared to the Messenger ﷺ. He was the epitome of generosity.

He possessed all knowledge, wealth, and generosity. He was always directing the servants to the right path, feeding the hungry, offering advice to the uninformed, supplying the needs of the destitute, and enduring their anguish and suffering.

While examining the loot gathered at Ju'ranah, The Messenger of Allah ﷺ noticed a well-known proud Qurayshi man called Safwan Ibn Umayya looking at them and the Prophet inquired, “Did you like it?” “Yes,” he confirmed. When the Prophet heard this answer, he told him; “Take it! It’s all yours!” Then Safwan couldn’t stop himself from saying: “No other heart can be as generous as the Prophet’s heart.” He then proclaimed his shahada on the spot and became one of the believers. (Waqidi, *Maghazi*, II, 854-855)

Indeed, the most magnificent form of offering is altruism. Many people who persist in their doubts and enemies have become friends and reached guidance, and many believers’ love for their fellow believers has grown as a result of such acts by the Messenger of Allah, his Companions, and righteous servants.



The Messenger of Allah would never decline a request if he was able to fulfill it. He once had ninety thousand dirhams. He poured them onto a mat and distributed them among the needy and poor until nothing was left of it.



Al-Birr

The virtue of “spending from what one’s love,” known as “birr” in the Qur’an, is likewise a high level of spending, similar to ithar (altruism).

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ, who exemplifies all moral characteristics, is without a doubt an incomprehensible personality in this regard. Here’s an example of his sensitivity to choosing his believing brother over himself, even in a minor matter:

One day, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ made two miswaks (twig for cleaning teeth) from a miswak branch. One miswak was bent, while the other was straight and nice. He gave the nice miswak to his Companion, while he kept the crooked one for himself. “This nice miswak suits you, O Messenger of Allah!” said the Companion. “Anyone who makes friends with someone, even for an hour, will be asked whether he respected the right of friendship,” the Messenger of Allah ﷺ remarked. He emphasized that this right would be compensated for with ithar and birr, that is, by preferring his believing brother over himself and giving out of love. (Ghazali, *Ihya Ulum ad-Din*, v. II, p. 435)


The following incident exemplifies the importance of spending and giving in this way:



One day, the Companions assembled in the Masjid an-Nabi to listen to the Messenger of Allah's enlightened speech. The Prophet ﷺ recited the following verse at one point:

لَنْ تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّى تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ
وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ

“You will attain birr (true goodness) until you give of what you love. Whatever you give away, Allah knows it.” (Ali ‘Imran, 92)

The Companions were determined to realize this verse and spend all that they had in the way of Allah on hearing this Prophetic instruction in a deep ecstasy. Suddenly, a Companion rose to his feet. Abu Talha was this wonderful Companion with a radiant face . Abu Talha had a beautiful garden with six hundred date palm trees near Masjid an-Nabawi, which he adored. He would often ask the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to bless his garden by inviting him and entertaining him.

Abu Talha  said:

The most beloved property to me is Bairuha' (which was the name of that garden where Messenger of Allah used to visit and sit in its shade and drink from its water). I gave it to Allah and His Messenger ﷺ hoping to reach birr and for Allah's reward in the Hereafter. So, here it is, Messenger of Allah! Use it as Allah orders you to use it.”¹²

It is not difficult to foretell what kind of age of bliss will be generated on Earth when the kind of spiritual aspiration that drove Abu

12 See. Bukhari, Wasaya, 17.



Talha to make this sacrifice takes root in the souls of humanity and becomes widespread.



Even those with nothing were encouraged to give. Even though Abu Dharr ؓ was one of the poorest companions, the Prophet would urge him to give in the way of Allah and say, “Abu Dharr, when you cook the broth, add water to it and give it to your neighbor!” (Muslim, Birr, 142)

A believer should be as generous and full of the joy of giving to others as the moonlight on a dark night.

Today, there is a need for a serious mobilization of infaq and ithar as much as possible. Let us not forget that we could have been in the shoes of those in need. For this reason, our infaq and ithar to the sick, suffering and hungry people is a debt of gratitude to our Lord. Let us share our blessings with the needy so that the hearts we have made happy may be our spirituality in this world, our support in the afterlife, and our happiness in Paradise.

Oh, Lord! May all demonstrations of mercy be an endless source of joy in our hearts! Oh, Lord! Give us a glimpse of altruism in the lives of the Master of the Universe and the best of those who followed in his footsteps!

Amin!



Istighna (being free from expectations)



Istighna is the quality of virtuous and faithful hearts that have transcended their raw individuality and achieved perfection. It is to be content with the wealth of the heart. According to a Hadith, "contentment is an inexhaustible treasure." It is the spiritual richness and peace of the heart and thus it does not finish.



ISTIGHNA (BEING FREE FROM EXPECTATIONS)

While the Companions left Mecca and migrated to Medina, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ formed a brotherhood between Abdurrahman Ibn Awf, who was one of the Muhajirun, and Sa'd Ibn Rabi ؓ, from among the Ansar. Sa'd Ibn Rabi told Abdurrahman Ibn Awf:

“I am the wealthiest man of the Ansar, I've set aside half of my wealth for you. Here it is. Please take it.”

On the other hand, Abdurrahman Ibn Awf ؓ, who was detached from all these, replied by saying:

“May Allah bless you with your money and wealth, my brother. I don't need this. It would be enough to just show me the route to the bazaar.”

Abdurrahman Ibn Awf ؓ went to the market and began trading. He quickly made a lot of money and entered the rank of Aghniya Shakirin (grateful rich people).

Years passed and the believers reached the powerful and wealthy age of Islam. When his son placed various types of food in front of Abdurrahman Ibn Awf ؓ during the breaking of the fast, he was saddened;

“When Mus'ab Ibn Umayr was martyred, there was no shroud to cover his body. The shroud put around him was short, so if his head was covered, his feet were left exposed, and if his feet were covered, his head was left exposed. Finally, we slipped his shroud over his head and wrapped an aromatic plant over his feet! When Hamza ؓ was martyred, he was wrapped in an old cardigan worn by old women.



As for me, Allah Almighty has showered numerous bounties on me in this world. I wonder if he will reduce them in the hereafter?! Am I consuming my rights reserved for the hereafter in this world? How shall I account for these favors in Allah's presence tomorrow?" He mentioned this as he walked away from the table with teary eyes.

This is the superior servitude displayed by the great men of Islam in the way of Truth, and what a beautiful state of asceticism and altruism that reflects their interest in the world. Because in their world asceticism (zuhd) was felt in their hearts with the loss of value of everything other than Allah through loving and fearing Him, while istighna was experienced as the ultimate level of asceticism in the heart.

Istighna is the quality of virtuous and faithful hearts that have transcended their raw individuality and achieved perfection. It is to be content with the wealth of the heart and not to seek more. According to a Hadith, "contentment is an inexhaustible treasure." It is the spiritual richness and peace of the heart. A contented heart finds refuge from worldly anxieties and fears. Hence, the soul attains eternity, and the allure of ephemeral pleasures fades from the believer.

There are many examples of istighna in the lives of Allah's friends who have reached the pinnacle by living in this state in the most beautiful way:

During the caliphate of Umar Ibn Khattab ؓ, regions such as Syria, Palestine, and Egypt were conquered, and Iran was fully integrated into the Islamic state's frontiers. The vast treasures of Byzantium and Iran began to pour into Madinah, the Islamic world's center. The material well-being of believers vastly improved. Despite the majesty of the state and the richness of the bayt al-mal (state treasure), the caliph of the believers, Umar ؓ, was giving a sermon with his patched robe, at a height of heart that remained detached



from this degree of prosperity. He was sometimes in debt and lived in poverty because he preferred to take a very small amount from the treasury which was barely enough to live off.

The Companions could no longer bear his predicament. They considered increasing the Caliph's salary. However, because they were unwilling to present it openly, they sought Hafsa ؓ, Umar's daughter who had been one of the honored wives of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. They wanted her to deliver this proposition to her father while keeping their identities hidden. Hafsa ؓ accepted this offer and disclosed it to her father. Umar ؓ, who saw several days when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ went hungry and couldn't find a single date to feed his stomach, exclaimed to his daughter Hafsa¹³:

"My daughter! How was the Messenger of Allah's eating, drinking, and dressing?" he inquired.

"It was just sufficient." When he received her response, Umar ؓ proceeded as follows:

"The two friends (the Prophet and Abu Bakr) and I are like three travellers on the same path. The first of us (the Prophet) attained his position. The other (Abu Bakr) took the same route and reached the first one. Being the third, I'd like to reach my friends. I can't keep up with them if my burdens get too heavy! Don't you want me to be the third person on this road?"¹⁴

Without a doubt, Umar's ؓ attitude is the result of a pure heart. The countless virtues of Umar ؓ, who dispensed justice to the world, are among the most outstanding examples to be taken in spiritual education.

13 See. Muslim, Zuhd, 36.

14 Şehbenderzade Ahmed Hilmi, Tarih-i İslam, c. I, s. 367.

People appreciate artists and geniuses. However, they don't appear inclined to follow the way they live and their personal behavior. Imitated people have powerful, dignified, and independent personalities. However, even after their deaths, the top personalities of such people are conveyed to the ummah as a lesson and an exercise in virtue.

"He has succeeded who accepts Islam and is provided with what is sufficient and is made content by Allah." (Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 35) The Companions, who adored and followed the personality of Allah's Messenger, were aware that this exalted class could not be attained until they allowed the Light of Being, to reassert this principle in their own lives. As a result of their Prophetic education, they became guiding individuals who demonstrated virtuous measures to the ummah. They taught humanity to renounce their egos when they came across someone in need, to regard their believing brother as more deserving of favors, and to transfer their wealth to him.

Aisha رضي الله عنها said, "In the house of the Messenger of Allah, we never ate until we were full. We could have had enough but the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ demonstrated *ithar* and preferred giving to his ummah before himself." (See, Bayhaki, Shu'ab, III, 61/1396)

Jabir رضي الله عنه recalls the difficult times prior to the Battle of the Trench:

"While digging the trench, we came upon a really hard rock. When the Companions brought the circumstances to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ himself descended into the ditch. And when he struck the firm rock with a pick axe, it crumbled like sand. We saw that the Messenger of Allah had a stone attached to his stomach due to hunger while this miraculous manifestation was taking place because we had not eaten anything for the previous



three days. "O Messenger of Allah! Please let me go home." I said. He gave me permission. So I returned home and told my wife,

"I can't stand the state of the Messenger of Allah. Don't we have anything to eat at home?"

My wife replied, "There's a little barley and a lamb."

My family milled the barley and baked bread as I slaughtered the animal. We put the meat in the pot. I went to the Prophet ﷺ while the bread was being baked and the pot was boiling, and said: "We have some food. Please bring one or two people with you and come to eat at my house."

He asked, "How many men should go there?" I told him the number. The Messenger of Allah said, "It will be better if they are more in number. Tell your wife not to remove the pot from the hearth nor the bread from the oven till I arrive."

Then he said to the Muhajirun and the Ansar: "Let us go to eat." They all rose (and went with him). I went to my wife and said,

"Bless you, the Prophet ﷺ, the Muhajirun, the Ansar and the whole community are coming." She said, "Did he ﷺ ask you?" I replied in the affirmative.

When they arrived the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to his Companions, "Enter, but do not crowd in." Then he started breaking up the bread and putting meat on it. He would take from the pot and the oven then would cover them up, approach his Companions and hand it over to them. He would then go back and uncover the pot and the oven. He continued to break up the bread and put meat on it till all had eaten to their fill and still some of the food remained. Then he said to my wife,



“Eat from it, and send it as a present to your neighbors, for the people have been afflicted with severe hunger.” (Imam Nawawi, *Islam Through Hadiths*, p. 363)

According to this hadith, the Prophet ﷺ, despite being invited to dinner with only a few people, took his all of Companions with him, demonstrating the altruistic aspect of his heart full of mercy and compassion. Furthermore, when they arrived at the home of invitation, despite the desire of all the Companions to eat first, the Messenger of Allah first served his Companions, and when he had fed all the Companions, he asked the people of the house to share the rest of the food. This is just one of the many occasions like this. And we too seek refuge in his compassion, exclaiming, “Intercession, O Messenger of Allah!”

Our Prophet ﷺ, who was sent as a mercy to the world, was always content with the few in abundance as he was in poverty, with the asceticism and piety he practiced, and he sought refuge in Allah by saying: “O Allah! Give enough (kifaf) food to Muhammad’s family.” (Bukhari, *Riaqaq*, 17)

According to Aisha رضي الله عنها, when a woman from Ansar came to see her and discovered that the Messenger of Allah’s bed was a folded mattress, she went to her house and brought a bed filled with wool. When the Prophet ﷺ noticed that his bed had been changed, he expressed his displeasure and remarked to Aisha رضي الله عنها,

“O Aisha! Give that bed back. If I wanted to, Allah would move mountains of gold and silver with me and put them at my command.” (Ahmed bin Hanbal, *Kitab al-Zuhd*, p. 30)

“Zuhd” and “taqwa,” the realities of those who embrace this Prophetic way of life and events, are sometimes misunderstood. These are about withdrawing from worldly benefits and wealth. However,



giving sadaqa from one's material wealth is likewise extremely valuable in Allah's eyes. The word infaq appears 200 times in the Qur'an. The Hajj and Zakat, two of Islam's five pillars, are made feasible by owning the sum of nisab, which means the bare minimum of wealth. Furthermore, the understanding that the hand that gives is over the hand that takes advocates having the nisab (bare minimum of being wealthy) in order to be able to carry out these righteous deeds.¹⁵ In this circumstance, zuhd (asceticism) cannot be opposed to a religiously encouraged matter.

It is a prerequisite of zuhd and taqwa to behave independently of worldly rewards in order to avoid sliding into heedlessness. This istighna, however, is in the heart and not actual or apparent. That is, zuhd and istighna are to be preoccupied with worldly blessings but not allow them to enter the heart. In this sense, asceticism is not poverty but a heart-felt attitude expected of all believers, whether they are rich or poor.

If the heart is dragged after worldly desires, a person who lives in poverty as a result of divine providence cannot be regarded as a person of zuhd and istighna. For, zuhd and istighna do not mean being content with what destiny implies. They mean to voluntarily prevent the heart from becoming enslaved to the world.

In fact, the following occurrence exemplifies this principle perfectly:

On his way to pilgrimage, Imam Muhammad Parsa, one of the great students of Shah Naqshband, came across a young money changer in Baghdad, where he stopped on his way to pilgrimage. He was disturbed to think that the young man was continuously trad-

15 See. Bukhari, Zakat, 18.



ing with many consumers and spending all of his time on worldly interests, and said:

“What a shame! This young man has lost himself to preoccupation with worldly affairs precisely at the age when he is best able to worship!” However, when he paused for a moment and examined the young man’s heart, he was astounded to observe that his body was busy with the world, while his heart was with his Lord and in a state of dhikr (remembrance).

“Mashallah!” he said this time. “His hands are busy in trade, but his heart is with the Beloved!” and admired his condition.

When he arrived at the Hijaz, he encountered an old man with a white beard who was weeping while wrapped in the cover of the Kaaba. First, he said, looking at the man’s pleading to God and his outward appearance,

“I wish I could find refuge in God by crying like this,” and he envied the man’s state.

When he examined the heart of the old man, he saw that all of his prayers and cries were for a mortal worldly demand. As a result, his illuminated heart became sad.

As the story shows, the most important thing is to be able to work toward worldly goals without neglecting the afterlife.

In his worldly life, Jalaluddin Mawlana ﷺ compares man to a ship floating in the ocean of existence and says:

“If the sea is beneath the ship, it will provide support. However, if the waves begin to enter the ship, it will be destroyed.”

The spiritual danger of the blessings of this world in diverting the heart away from Allah and toward themselves cannot be overstated. In fact, the term “fitna” (tribulation, temptation), which is used



in the Qur'an for "property" and "children," warns every believer of this peril. According to this, while being busy with the world, the heart should be shielded against heedlessness. Even one iota of the world is not welcomed if the heart cannot be shielded from the love of the world.

Our Prophet ﷺ said:

"The joys of this life (sensory joys) are the miseries of the hereafter. The world's sufferings (as a test) are the delights of the after-life." (Mustadrak, Hakim, v. IV, p. 345)

And in another Hadith;

"This world is sweet and looks beautiful. Without a doubt, Allah will grant you the authority of the world and will observe your behavior and the type of work you undertake. So beware of the world..." (Muslim, Dhikr, 99)



When I was preparing to leave the house to go to morning prayer one day, I heard the cries of two cats. When I went out into the garden to have a look, I saw that the two cats were confronting one another while standing still, glaring at one another without moving and growling like small tigers getting ready to attack. They had made up their minds to rip each other to shreds at the slightest move. While I was considering the factors that led to this intense confrontation, I noticed that there was a mouse in the middle; a dead little mouse. It seems that the cats went through all this trouble and conflict in order to get their paws on that mouse carcass. The small mouse in the middle was the cause of the damage that they risked against each other.



This particular scene demonstrated a very valuable lesson. It was a reflection of the negative effects of being unable to resist a dead mouse. This lesson was for those who prefer the disappointment of the afterlife for the sake of their bodily desires. It explained that the mortal desires and inclinations that many heedless people followed, as well as the cases of temporary position and leadership, were nothing but a shambles, and it pointed out that they were not worth wasting an eternal reign on.

The misdirection of istighna and demand on the part of the servant is the root cause of this waste. The Quran has this to say about certain kinds of people:

كَأَلَّا إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لِرَبِّهِ لَكَنَّا فَرِحَ, أَن رَّءَاهُ أَتَغْنَىٰ, إِنَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ الْرُجْعَىٰ

“No indeed! Truly man is unbridled seeing himself as self-sufficient. Truly it is to your Lord that you will return.” (Al-'Alaq, 6-8)

A spiritually dull person continues to strive selfishly in pursuit of material pursuits and when he achieves something, he becomes boastful and heedless. Another time if he can't obtain it, he'll wallow in grief. Worrying excessively about income, rank, and sustenance makes the heart a slave to the world.

The following Prophetic statement is a major caution in this regard: “Whoever focuses all his concerns on one thing, the Hereafter, Allah will relieve him of worldly concerns; but whoever has concerns scattered among a number of worldly issues, Allah will not care in which of its valleys he dies.” (Ibn-i Majah, Zuhd, 2)

When the world becomes a barrier between the servant and his Lord, the servant is spiritually destroyed. As the servant's heedlessness continues, even if he does not show it outwardly, in actuality he



becomes such that, as the Messenger of Allah said: "...Their honor is their wealth, their religion is their money, and their qibla is their ladies. They are the most heinous of all beings. Nor do they have any share in the sight of Allah." (Ali al-Muttaqi, Kanzul Ummal, v. XI, p. 192) May Allah protect all of us from resembling them!

The Prophet ﷺ said to his Companions:

"...By Allah, I am not afraid that you will become poor, but I am afraid that worldly wealth will be given to you in abundance as it was given to those before you, and you will start competing with each other for it as the previous nations competed for it, and then it will divert you as it diverted them." (Bukhari, Riqaq, 7)

As a result, we should give the mortal world the attention it deserves and avoid overburdening the heart with it.

The entire earth is a drop in the ocean compared to what the Lord possesses. In Prophetic terms, the life of this world is not even as much as the water left on the finger of someone who dips his finger into the ocean when compared to the life of the hereafter.¹⁶ Our Almighty Lord says:

وَمَا هَذِهِ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا لَهُوٌّ وَلَعِبٌ
وَإِنَّ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ لَهِيَ الْحَيَوَانُ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ

"The life of this world is nothing but a game and diversion. The life of the akhira – that is truly life if they only knew." (Al-'Ankabut, 64)

¹⁶ See. Muslim, Paradise, 55.

Indeed, the world is small in the eyes of those who realize this fact. Their only desire is Allah's pleasure. Yunus Emre explains it so beautifully:

I find no great joy in being alive,
If I cease to exist, I would not grieve,
The only solace I have is your love,
You're the one I need, you're the one I crave.

Money, fame and the lust of the world, which dazzles and frequently misleads heedless people, are of no worth to those with a sound heart. The Awliyallah or friends of Allah and the righteous believers alike, always seek Allah's pleasure and do not stray from the path, even an inch. They are constantly on guard against the deceptions of the world. Yahya Ibn Muaz رحمہ اللہ says:

"The wise man holds the afterlife in his right hand, this world in his left hand, and devotes his heart to God. Nothing but Allah can now keep him occupied."

And Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi, says in his Mathnawi:

"The world represents being heedless of God. It is not just about having money, clothing, women, or children. Whatever distracts you and keeps you away from your Lord, that is your world."

In other words, istighna is not just being against property and wealth. All existence and preoccupations that divert the servant's attention away from his Lord must be avoided.

Hubb al-riyasat, or love of leadership, is one of the most dangerous things that can blind the heart. History is littered with oppressors who sought to reign or commit crimes in order to keep their position of power. However, throughout history, there have been monumental figures whose hearts are devoted to the Truth,



who are not enslaved by the need to reign, and who have matured enough to relinquish their power and authority with their own will and desire when necessary. There are three people in history who, by demonstrating invincible renunciation for the cause of Islamic unity, left behind mirages of kindness and virtue.

The first of these is Hazrat Hasan ؓ, the Prophet's grandson. After serving as caliph for six months in order to keep the state from being divided, renounced his position and passed it to Muawiya may Allah be pleased with him, minimizing political tensions and the risk of spilling more blood.

The second is Idris Al-Bitlisi, who joined the Ottoman Empire's eastern territories in a flood of love without using a sword.

The third is Barbaros Hayreddin Pasha, who changed the country under his charge into a state dependent on the Ottoman sultan for the unity and integrity of the ummah, and he preferred being an officer of that vast state than rulership of a country.

The Prophet Sulayman ؑ regarded himself as a faqir (needy) since he abandoned his desire for wealth and sultanate. When he woke up in the morning, he would go to the poor and sit with them with great humility, saying, "The poor befits the poor."

In short, working hard so that you don't need anyone in the world and earning legitimately is a virtue, according to the hadith: "It is better for you to take a rope and cut the wood and carry it over his back and sell it than to ask a person for something and that person may give him or not." (Bukhari, Zakat, 50-53; Nasa'i, Zakat, 85-86) For example, a wealthy and devout believer spends more, provides more job possibilities, and runs more for charity, and as a result, he achieves the secret of the following hadith:



“The best of mankind are those who are of most benefit to mankind.” (Suyuti, Jami al-Shaghir, II, 8) The incorrect behavior is to fall in love with the world, to abandon religious and conscientious obligations, to be stingy, and to be a prisoner of the world. It should not be forgotten that the safe and wallet are the proper places for money, not the heart!

In that case, the Prophetic principle that we must abide by is as follows:

“Be indifferent towards this world, and Allah will love you. Be indifferent to what is in people’s hands, and they will love you.” (Ibn Majah, Zuhd, 1)

May Allah Almighty make us all beloved both by Him and by others! May He instill in our hearts a Prophetic indifference toward masiwallah, (anything other than Allah), and provide us the ability to devote all of our love, attention and interest to His sublime love and commandment!

Amin!

Business Ethics



We are obligated to acquire wealth in legitimate ways and to spend it in legitimate places. A wise businessman will not ignore the higher profit in the hereafter, and in the pursuit of eternal happiness, he will never abandon the divine path.



BUSINESS ETHICS

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ happened to pass by a heap of eatables (corn). He thrust his hand in that heap and his fingers were moistened. He said to the owner of that heap of eatables (corn): What is this? He replied: Messenger of Allah, these have been drenched by rainfall. The Prophet ﷺ remarked:

Why did you not place this the moist part at the top so that the people could see it? He who deceives one of us is not of us. (Muslim, Iman, 164)

Trade, defined as the selling of goods to the people and needs both work and capital and has the potential to result in both a loss and a profit, has been declared halal and even encouraged, as it promotes the usefulness of the goods. The degree of this encouragement can be better grasped by considering the statement of the Prophet ﷺ; “nine-tenths of the earnings are in trade...”¹⁷ On the other hand, two of the five major practical principles on which Islamic belief is based, such as “Hajj” and “Zakat,” are reserved for wealthy believers, with the intention of encouraging them to become wealthy legitimately. The following Hadith can also be considered in this sense:

“The upper hand is better than the lower hand.” (Bukhari, Zakat, 18)

However, the following hadith should not be forgotten:

“Verily, every nation has a trial, and the trial of my nation is wealth.” (Ibn Hanbal, IV, 160)

17 See. Suyuti, Al-Jamiu Saghir, I, 113.



Because one of the worst handicaps on which the ego is dependent is the urge to make money. An ambitious man is like a jar; when his stomach is full, his mouth does not close. Whereas, if you try to empty the seas in a jug, what can it take more than its capacity? Similarly, he is like a stove that, as fuel such as wood and coal are stacked up for it, does not go out; on the contrary, its flame and heat rise.



The Prophet ﷺ describes the state of the ambitious person as follows:

“If the son of Adam had two valleys of gold, he would want a third one, for nothing can fill the belly of the son of Adam except dust, and Allah forgives who repents to Him.” (Bukhari, Riqaq, 10; Muslim, Zakat, 116)


Because of this lust for wealth, manipulations and deceptions in trade are infinite. As a result, several tribes have been wiped out by Allah Almighty. Nonetheless, there are many careless travellers in this world who steal their privileges with a vampire appetite, rather than taking care of the poor, strangers, orphans, widows, orphans, and the needy. This kind of people have always been around throughout history.


The purpose of the religion is not to bring happiness and satisfaction to the body at the expense of the soul. On the contrary, it tries to make the soul man's dominant force. After a certain point, trade should be used to restrain our egos and desires so that we do not exceed the bounds of pain in this world and the next... Seeking peace in a society where control mechanisms are filled with thieves and bribes, with a merchant class of profiteers, would be nothing but an empty dream.



According to the Qur'an, Allah Almighty annihilated the nation of Madyan and Eyke, the people of the Prophet Shuayb , because their commercial morals had degenerated significantly, in order to serve as a lesson for the nations that would come after them until the end time. As a result, committing trade fraud, earning illegitimately, and exploiting the vulnerable are such heinous crimes that they will destroy nations. The Messenger of Allah  says:

“Perish the slave of gold and silver, thick soft clothes and garments that raise pride, for if he is given, he is pleased; otherwise, he is dissatisfied.” (Bukhar, Riqaq, 10; Ibn Majah, Zuhd, 8)

Umar  asked three things when someone was praising another:

“Have you ever been his neighbor, or traveling companion or trading partner?” When the man said no. Umar  said:

“I think you saw him shaking his head while reciting the Quran in the mosque!” The man said:

“Yes, O Umar! That was what I saw.”

Umar  replied:

“Then don't praise him! Because sincerity is not on the neck of the servant.”

Umar 's discrimination here is that it is vital not to be misled by appearances and to form an opinion based on one's deeds and human relations.

As observed, trade mirrors the individual's inner world to the outside. In other words, as the individual's inner world is, so is his trade.



According to Islam, buyers and sellers should not purposefully criticize a thing while purchasing it, nor should they employ terms that make it appear superior to its value when selling it. It should not surpass the pricing norm by taking advantage of the people's ignorance and vulnerability. They shall not engage in ghabnal-fahish (deception), usury, weighing and measuring or buying and selling illegal items to the detriment of society.

The Prophet ﷺ determines the principles of trade beautifully as follows:

“O people of trade! Indeed, the Shaytan and wrongdoing are present in the sale so clean your sales with charity.” (Tirmidhi, Buyu', 4/1208)

“Indeed the merchants will be resurrected on the Day of judgment with the wicked, except the one who has Taqwa (fearful awareness of Allah), who behaves charitably and is truthful.” (Tirmidhi, Buyu', 4/1210)

“The swearing (by the seller) may persuade the buyer to purchase the goods but that will be deprived of Allah's blessing.” (Bukhari, Buyu', 26)

A seller who does not know the value of his goods, must be acknowledged about the value of his goods honestly. Cheating is attempting to take advantage of his ignorance, inexperience, and naivety. Those who fear Allah and seek His approval are extremely meticulous and sensitive in this regard.

When Imam Abu Hanifa رحمه الله inquired about the cost of a silk garment brought to him by a woman, the woman replied,

“One hundred dirhams, O Imam!” He objected, saying, “No, that would be more...”



The woman, who was surprised by this answer, raised the price by a hundred dirhams. The Imam refused it again. The woman added a hundred dirhams, then another hundred... “No, that is more than 400 dirhams,” said Imam Abu Hanifa. The woman couldn’t help but exclaim, “O Imam! Are you making fun of me?”

The Imam then summoned someone with experience in trading that type of material to inform him of the true value of the goods. The price of the dress was determined by the person who came, as five hundred dirhams, and Imam Abu Hanifa purchased it at that price.

Because he knew that deviating from the truth, concealing flaws in the goods, and failing to pay attention to the measure and weight could all lead to disaster.

Ottoman society was also kneaded in this morality, which ensured the society’s peace and happiness at a level that even astounded the disbelievers. Following Fatih’s conquest of Istanbul, the following incident occurred while two priests were wandering around inspecting Ottoman shopkeepers:

Early in the morning, the priests went to a grocery store to buy something. The owner of the grocery store told them:

“I already made my first sale. Get what you need from my neighbor, who has yet to sell anything today!”

They then went to the other store, where the owner of that store also told them,

“I’ve already made my first sale. Get it from my neighbor, who is yet to make a sale today!”



As a result, the priests went to the other shop but the response was always the same. They finally ended up in the first grocery store and purchased what they needed from him.

Our forefathers were raised on a moral foundation that made them altruistic and self-sacrificing. Cheating is a serious crime for a Muslim. A Muslim cannot deceive or lie. While being deceived is an indication of stupidity. It is not appropriate for a Muslim. The Prophets sent as guides to humanity are righteous, possessing “sidq,” that is, truthfulness, and “fatanah,” which means wisdom. A Muslim who follows in their footsteps must be smart and vigilant. Allah Almighty warns His servants not to be misled by deceivers, saying:

“Do not hand over to the simple-minded any property of theirs for which Allah has made you responsible.” (An-Nisa, 5)

As for the deceivers, when Abu Dharr رضي الله عنه heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saying: there are three with whom Allah will not speak to on the Day of Resurrection, nor look at nor will absolve them and there is a painful chastisement for them. And repeated it three times. He said:

They failed and they lost; who are these people, Messenger of Allah? the Prophet said:

They are: the dragger of lower garment (out of arrogance), the recounter of obligation, the seller of goods by false oath. (Muslim, Iman, 171)

In the Islamic economic system, however, it is also not accepted to store goods and wait for them to become more expensive in order to engage in iddihar, or black market. It is societal material exploitation. Those who do so are cursed by the Prophet ﷺ. It is commanded in the following Hadith:

“The importer is blessed with provision and the hoarder is cursed.” (Ibn Majah, Tijarat, 6)

The Qur’an forbids transactions other than commercial activities carried out with the mutual consent of both parties, and states:

“You who believe! do not consume one another’s property by false means, but only by means of mutually agreed trade. And do not kill yourselves. Allah is most Merciful to you.” (An-Nisa, 29)

The phrase “Do not kill yourselves!” has an important meaning. There is a warning here about destroying spiritual life and becoming people of the Fire. On the other hand, attention is drawn to the fact that some of the fights and murders are motivated by an unjust desire to win. To be safe from these dangers, adhere to the rules of trade established by Islam. The most important issue in this regard is avoiding riba (usury), which is a manifestation of capital abuse. It only makes the wealthy more powerful and the poor more oppressed. The Prophet ﷺ has hadiths about riba that are extremely severe. In his Farewell Khutba, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Every kinds of riba are under my feet!” and declared every kinds of riba haram.

The divine threat to this issue is expressed in the verses as follows:

“Those who practise riba (take interest) will not rise from the grave except as someone driven mad by Shaytan’s touch. That is because they say, ‘Trade is the same as riba.’ But Allah has permitted trade and He has forbidden riba. Whoever is given a warning by his Lord and then desists, can keep what he received in the past and his affair is Allah’s concern. But all who return to it will be the Companions of the Fire, remaining in it timelessly, for ever. Allah



obliterates riba but makes charity grow in value! Allah does not love any persistently ungrateful wrongdoer.” (Al-Baqarah, 275 - 276)

The threat in the following verse, which states that the divine wrath will be manifested due to interest, is also terrifying:

“You who believer! Have taqwa of Allah and forgo any remaining riba if you are believers. If you do not, know that it means war from Allah and His Messenger. But if you make tawba, you may have your capital without wronging and without being wronged.” (Al-Baqarah, 278-279)

Who can fight with the Creator of the Universe and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, for whom the universe was created, and be victorious?!

A believer who engages in riba will either lose his property or have his faith weakened. A sinner, on the other hand, increases his wealth in order to receive the punishment he deserves for his actions. As a result, that path has been made profitable for him in this world. Because Allah Almighty does not neglect, He gives respite. Such individuals will be granted a reprieve until the time of their punishment. It is essential to pay close attention to the divine threat in this verse. Otherwise, the situation is very critical.

Jabir رضي الله عنه said that the Messenger ﷺ cursed the acceptor of riba and its payer, and one who records it, and the two witnesses, and he said: They are all equal. (Muslim, Musaqat, 106)

How beautiful is the state of Imam Abu Hanifa. That great imam did not rest in the shadow of the creditor's tree in order to avoid a similar situation.

Of course, the prohibition of riba has many reasons. One of the most important of these is because riba increases unemployment,



leads to artificial price increases, weakening of human and moral virtues such as solidarity, love, and compassion, and the ambition of selfishness to gain money and influence.

Islam has always encouraged people to borrow for Allah as much as they can, and giving someone in need a loan is a good deed.

Despite this, unfortunately we see that the honest and reliable trader is always in the minority in society. Perhaps it was for this reason that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ held honest traders in such high regard and spoke of great rewards for them. It is commanded in the Hadith:


“The truthful, trustworthy merchant is with the Prophets, the truthful, and the martyrs.” (Tirmidhi, Buyu’, 4; Ibn Majah, Tijarah, 1)

Imam Abu Hanifa was a wealthy trader and a very rich individual. However, because he was a scholar, he would delegate his commercial affairs to his deputy and verify that the trade was halal. In this regard, he was so sensitive that he once sent his partner Hafs Ibn Abdurrahman to sell fabric and instructed him:

“Oh Hafs! These are the defects of these goods. So tell the customer this, and sell it cheaply!”

Hafs sold the goods at the Imam’s stipulated price, but he forgot to inform the customer about the defects in the goods. Abu Hanifa, who discovered the situation, said to Hafs:

“Could you recognize the person who bought the goods?”

For he lived in accordance with the order of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to Amr  saying: “O Amr, lawful wealth is excellent for a righteous man.” (Ahmed ibn Hanbel, Musnad, IV, 197, 202) and acted with the measures of the halal and haram in every case.



My late father, Musa Efendi, would explain the significance and blessing of avoiding haram trade in conjunction with the following event:

Our Armenian neighbor converted to Islam. When I asked him one day why he converted to Islam, he replied, “I became a Muslim because of the exemplary business ethics of my neighbor, Rabi Molla. He was selling milk for a living. One evening, he came to us and said, “Take this milk!”

I was surprised and inquired: “Why? I didn’t ask for milk from you!” This sensitive and refined individual replied, “I observed one of my animals grazing in your garden one day. Therefore, the milk is yours. I will also bring you milk until the end of that animal’s milk cycle (when its body is completely cleansed of what it consumed).”

I said “Didn’t it consume only grass? May it be halal! .. Molla Rebi said: “No, no way! It is your right to its milk!.. He delivered milk to us until the end of that animal’s milk cycle.

This behavior of that blessed person profoundly affected me. As a result, he removed the blindness from my eyes, and the sun of guidance was born within me. I thought to myself, “The religion of a supremely moral individual is definitely a supreme religion. The religion that produced such good, righteous, and faultless people is undeniably correct! I attested by reciting the shahadah and converted to Islam.

In a Muslim society, as well as the existence of these beauties, unfortunately, the heedless states mentioned in the following hadith are also present. “A time will come when one will not care how one gains one’s money, legally or illegally.” (Bukhari, Buyu’, 7, 23)


However, while the punishments for violating religious precepts primarily affect individuals in the hereafter, the calamity resulting



from the acquisition of haram wealth affects future generations who did not even participate in its acquisition. Moreover, this suffering endures not only in the afterlife, but also in this world. People conceived the saying “The grandfather ate sour grapes, and his grandson’s teeth hurt!” upon recognizing this wit. Those who inherit haram wealth are frequently unable to follow the right path because there is a secret to money; it always returns to the source. A property from an illegal route leads its inheritor along the wrong path. This wealth is comparable to a snake. Just as the snake returns to the hole from whence it comes out, the place where wealth is spent relies on how it was acquired.

How beautifully does Musa explain in the following verse that property that is not used on the way of Allah would result in wrongdoing and a loss of faith?

Musa prayed, “Our Lord! You have granted Pharaoh and his chiefs luxuries and riches in this worldly life, ‘which they abused’ to lead people astray from Your Way! Our Lord, destroy their riches and harden their hearts so that they will not believe until they see the painful punishment.” (Yunus, 88)

Strangely, some believe that honest business cannot be profitable. These are the thoughts of heedlessness, blindness to truth, and defiance of the divine plan of distribution. According to people who fall into this mistake, Abu Bakr , who reduced his riches to zero by spending them in the path of Allah and His Messenger and who never abandoned honest trade, should have been one of the poorest Companions. Nevertheless, it is a historical fact that he was always among the wealthiest of the Companions. Despite the numerous instances in which he gave away everything for Allah, he regained riches and property through numerous heavenly favors.



In this regard, we are obligated to obtain property through lawful means and to spend it in lawful ways. A wise merchant, while pursuing worldly trade, will not ignore the bigger reward in the afterlife; he will consider eternal happiness and will not depart from divine principles. How well the following verse captures the hearts of such individuals:

رَجَالٌ لَا تُلْمِهِمْ تِجَارَةٌ وَلَا بَيْعٌ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَإِقَامِ الصَّلَاةِ وَإِيتَاءِ
الزَّكَاةِ يَخَافُونَ يَوْمًا تَتَقَلَّبُ فِيهِ الْقُلُوبُ وَالْأَبْصَارُ

“Men who are not distracted by trade or commerce from Allah’s remembrance and the establishment of salat and the payment of zakat. They fear a Day when hearts and eyes will be in turmoil.” (An-Nur, 37)

Those who are qualified in commerce in this manner are those who live the secret of “tjaratan lan-tabur” (an income that never suffers a loss), which is instructed in another verse, i.e., those who have participated in real commerce. In reality, Allah Almighty describes the true trade as follows:

“Those who recite the Book of Allah and establish prayer, and give of what We have provided for them, secretly and openly, hope for a trade that will not prove profitless..” (Fatir, 29-30)

May Allah Almighty make us live these passages. May He provide us with the opportunity to read the divine book with the eyes of the heart, to prostrate to Him with reverence that will elevate us to a Mi’raj, to earn from the halal, and to spend the blessings He has bestowed upon us in accordance with His approval without wasting.



Dear Lord! Make our traders good individuals, from whose hands and tongue the believers will be protected and will profit. Grant them success in performing good deeds that will result in kindness and benefits in both worlds!

Amin!



The Qard Hasan Given to Allah *(Beautiful Loan - Infaq)*



This entrusted body, life and property will not remain in our possession forever. Surely, one day we shall abruptly say farewell to them all, and everything will be returned to Allah, the true and sole owner of everything. So, now that we have been given the gift of life, we must return these trusts to their place in the path of Allah in order to be rewarded eternally.



THE QARD HASAN GIVEN TO ALLAH (BEAUTIFUL LOAN - INFQAQ)

This universe, which was created by the hand of might and adorned with a thousand and one embroideries, is a generic and temporary abode. The days we will spend in this world, which is a world of trials, require a sensitive soul, profound comprehension, and deep reflection. Because the eternal blessings for us are the beauties that we will carry into eternity. The Almighty, who desires that His servants appear before Him with such eternal beauties, frequently emphasizes in the Qur'an the tremendous recompense in His sight and the value He places on good deeds.

Allah the Exalted, insists primarily on charity and infaq, which are manifestations of His exalted attributes of generosity, mercy and benevolence. In this context, He commands wealthy people to pay zakat. In addition to this obligatory action, there are supererogatory good deeds of giving, one of which is qard al-hasan, or a beautiful loan.

Allah Almighty accepts every good action carried out for His sublime pleasure as a loan (qard al-hasan) and guarantees that He will pay it back many times over. It is stated by the verse:

مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يُقْرِضُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا فَيُضْعِفَهُ لَهُ وَلَهُ أَجْرٌ كَرِيمٌ

“Who will make a generous loan to Allah so that He may multiply it for him? He will have a generous reward.” (Al-Hadid, 11)

We should be aware that Allah's will determines whether or not there is distress or relief in the world. People who are heedless, get



arrogant and proud as Allah bestows blessings upon them, and do not spend these blessings granted by Allah for His sake cannot be counted among the perfect believers. For the perfect believers, they grasp and apply both meanings of qard al-hasan. They both lend to needy servants and to Allah through their charity and infaq.

Yes, according to the Qur'an, one of the meanings of qard al-hasan is to lend a loan to Allah. This consists of donating to those in need and supporting activities and services in Allah's way. He, the Exalted, indicates that this deed is favored, encouraged, and rewarded; He refers to it as "a loan given to Him." In other words, Allah Himself asks for a loan from His people. It is indicated by the verse:

"Establish salat, pay zakat and lend a generous loan to Allah. Whatever good you send ahead for yourselves, you will find it with Allah as something better and as a greater reward. And seek forgiveness from Allah. Allah is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful."

(Al-Muzzammil, 20)

By accepting the infaq of a servant as a qard al-hasan (a beautiful loan) in the direction of His sublime delight, Allah Almighty bestows a unique favor on humanity. Certainly, provided that it is offered with sincere intentions and without anticipation of any worldly gain, ostentation, or renown. One should not anticipate gratitude for this, and it should be spent solely for the sake of Allah. Regarding Ali and Fatima's ﷺ donation, the Quran commanded the following:

"They give food despite their love for it, to the poor, the orphan, and the captive, saying to themselves, "We feed you only for the sake of Allah, seeking neither reward nor thanks from you. We fear from our Lord a horribly distressful Day." So, Allah will deliver them from the horror of that Day, and grant them radiance and joy." (Al-Insan, 8-11)



In these verses, the following points are made about donations:

1. Opting for one's believing brother over oneself, which is *ithar*.
2. To spend for Allah's sake, not for mortal or worldly purposes.
3. By doing *infaq*, one is safeguarded from the severity of the Day of Judgment.
4. Donations made in good faith and sincerity will be acceptable in the sight of Allah.
5. That Allah Almighty expects such deeds from His followers.

The loan given to Allah in this manner will be repaid many times over by Allah Almighty. Allah Almighty illustrates the value of such a loan in another verse as follows:

“If you establish the prayer, pay zakat, believe in My messengers, support them, and lend to a generous loan to Allah, I will forgive your sins and admit you into Gardens with rivers flowing under them.” (Al-Ma'idah, 12)

Abu Darda al-Ansari, according to the narration of Ibn Mas'ud رضي الله عنه, said to the Messenger of Allah, upon the revelation of the verses concerning lending Allah a magnificent loan, “O Messenger of Allah! Does God wish to borrow from us?” The Messenger of Allah ﷺ stated, “Yes, Abu Darda, Allah desires a loan!”

In response, Abu Darda رضي الله عنه asked the Prophet ﷺ to extend his hand. The Prophet ﷺ grabbed Abu Darda's hand and declared, “I lend my vineyard to Allah (*qard al-hasan*)!”

According to the narration of Ibn Mas'ud رضي الله عنه, upon the revelation of the verses concerning lending to Allah, Abu Darda رضي الله عنه said to the Messenger of Allah, “O Messenger of Allah! Does Allah ask for a

loan from us?” The Messenger of Allah ﷺ stated, “Yes, Abu Darda, Allah asks for a loan!”

In response, Abu Darda ؓ asked the Prophet ﷺ to extend his hand. He grabbed the hand of the Prophet ﷺ and declared, “I lend my vineyard to Allah (qard al-hasan)!”

Abu Darda had 600 date trees in his vineyard and he resided with his family in a house within the vineyard.

After this donation, which was a commitment to lend to Allah, Abu Darda returned home and addressed his wife, “We will vacate this vineyard and residence. Because I lent them to Allah...”

His wife appealed to him: “O Abu Darda! You have made a very profitable trade!” Then they took their belongings and children, and they vacated the house in the vineyard. (Tabari, Tafsir, II, 803; Hakim, Mustadrak, II, 24)

At all times when this consciousness and virtue was at its pinnacle, the community of believers lived in harmony and protected both their lives in this world and the hereafter. The subsequent event is a spectacular illustration of this reality:

According to an appendix in Elie Kedourie’s book on Britain’s Middle East strategy during the latter years of the Ottoman Empire, a catastrophic drought broke out in Eastern Anatolia at the close of the nineteenth century. Due to the drought, the British deployed a spy to the region to assess whether they could incite a revolt against the Ottomans. The reality that the spy discovered as a result of his investigation was surprising. His report read, “There is drought here, but there is no hunger! Everyone looks out for and assists one another. Consequently, drought does not result in hunger. Therefore, it is impossible for a drought-based uprising to occur inside such a robust social framework!”



Certainly, this great status is a worldly reward and gift for being able to live in accordance with the verse that emphasizes the significance of infaq in times of need, hardship and difficulty. Allah Almighty admonishes us, His servants, not to be careless or negligent in this matter:

“And how is it with you that you do not give in the Way of Allah, when the inheritance of the heavens and the earth belongs to Allah? Those of you who gave and fought before the Victory are not the same as those who gave and fought afterwards.

They are higher in rank. Allah All-Aware of what you do.”

(Al-Hadid, 10)

In other words, Allah Almighty requires sacrifice from His servants, particularly during difficult times. These servant sacrifices are referred to in the Qur'an as “qard al-hasan.” In fact, when the sacrifices of the servants in the Gallipoli and Independence Wars manifested as a “qard al-hasan” for Allah, He bestowed upon them victory in return.

This entrusted body, life and property will not remain in our possession forever. Surely, one day we shall abruptly say farewell to them all, and everything will be returned to Allah, the true and sole owner of everything. So, now that we have been given the gift of life, we must return these trusts to their place in the path of Allah in order to be rewarded eternally. Even if we do not donate and share these blessings with others, their true owner, Allah Almighty, will take everything back from us at the time of our departure from this world. There will be a significant change, however. In the first instance, that is, if we donate, even though all the riches of the world belong to Allah, He will take it as a loan given to Himself, and He will multiply the reward accordingly. When we do not donate, we



will not receive anything and we will be questioned about the wealth we spent.

The Prophet ﷺ issues the following admonition to people who do not donate and give charity:

“The son of Adam claims: My wealth, my wealth... O son of Adam! Is there really any such thing as your wealth except that which you consumed, which you utilized, or which you wore and then it was worn out or you gave as charity and sent it forward?” (Muslim, Zuhd, 3-4; Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 34)

How accurately Mawlana Rumi states in his Mathnawi, “When the angel of death awakens a heedless rich man from his dream of life by plucking his ear, he will laugh at the rich man’s fear of loss of a possession he does not even truly own.”

Aishah ؓ narrated that they had slaughtered a sheep and donated most of it to others. When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ asked what remained of it. Aisha ؓ said:

“We have nothing except its shoulder.” He said: “We have everything except its shoulder.” (Tirmidhi, Sifat-ul Qiyamah, 35)

Truly man’s most valuable asset is only that which he acquires for his eternal life through his good deeds.

Charity is specifically mentioned by Allah Almighty as one of the acts of worship that human beings would wish for at the time of their departure from the world, and the state of mind that those who fail to perform it will experience while leaving this world:

“You who have iman! do not let your wealth or children divert you from the remembrance of Allah. Whoever does that is lost. Give from what We have provided for you before death comes to one of you and he says, ‘My Lord, if only you would give



me a little more time so that I can give sadaga and be one of the salihun!” (Al-Munafiqun, 10)

Therefore, if we avoid infaq due to stinginess and worldly ambitions and leave our entire existence to those who come after us one day, let's not become bankrupt people who endure their heavy reckoning and punishment in the hereafter!

For the topic of where property is earned and where it is spent is one of the first concerns of the final accounting. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ stated:

“The feet of the slave of Allah shall not move on the Day of Judgement until he is asked about five things: about his life and what he did with it, about his knowledge and what he did with it, about his wealth and how he earned it and where he spent it, about his body and for what cause what did he wear it out.” (Tirmidhi, Qiyamah, 1)

Our forefathers, who grasped all of these facts to the greatest extent possible, established a massive “foundation of civilization” through their extraordinary works and endeavors. They formed organizations and foundations capable of meeting a variety of requirements. In addition, the charity stones that they placed in certain neighborhoods of old Istanbul so as not to upset the hearts of people who could not ask for anything because of their modesty and shame and so as not to force them to beg are quite well-known.

Sadly, these charity stones are no longer in existence, with the exception of the one-meter-tall, thirty-centimeter-diameter historical monument that stands at the intersection of Üsküdar Doğancılar Street and the pavement beside the Marriage Office.

However, they had an outstanding service. Those in good financial standing would place their donations in the hole at the top



of this stone at night so that “the right hand does not know what the left hand provides.”

Later, the district’s poor folk would only take what they needed, leaving the remainder for others. Those who did not want to beg despite their need would come to the stone at night to take as much as they required. A French traveler describing Istanbul in the 17th century reports that he observed a donation stone for an entire week, but did not see anyone taking from it.

According to the narrations, there were charity stones in every part of Istanbul, including the courtyard of the Gülfem Hatun Mosque in Üsküdar, Doğancılar, Karacaahmet districts in Üsküdar as well, and Kocamustafa Paşa...

It is known why our ancestors performed this service... However, in every community and era, there will always be some who are in need and who are impoverished. Consequently, it is declared in a verse:

“The poor have a rightful share in the wealth of the rich.”¹⁸

We should adopt this principle in our hearts and continue the charity race from “donation stones to foundations” to defend the dignity of the poor. We must protect the sincerity of the hands that stretched out to give or to take. And as the servants of our Lord, who is Ar-Razzaq (the Provider) we should prostrate in gratitude. Our worldly and otherworldly measurements are:

“The best of mankind is the one of most benefit to mankind”

(Suyuti, al-Jami’ al-Saghir, II, 8) and;

¹⁸ Al-Dharyat, 19; Ma’arij, 24-25.



“Say: ‘My Lord expands the provision of any of His slaves He wills or restricts it. But anything you expend will be replaced by Him. He is the Best of Providers.’” (Saba, 39)

Consequently, good worship and acts in the form of donations and loans are possible due to the blessings that Allah Almighty has bestowed upon us. Allah Almighty views the good deeds we are to perform with the blessings He has bestowed upon us as a loan to Him. In a sense, this manifestation represents the apex of the bounties given to us by Allah Almighty.

In other words, Allah is the one who bestows many bounties, but His servants are the ones who utilize them. Accordingly, man is the primary debtor, and Allah Almighty is the creditor.

Mawlana Rumi says, “Those in heaven and on earth ask God for everything. Because they owe Him their entire wealth.”

In this regard, we are indebted to Allah for the attribute of being human beings who are the most honorable amongst all beings. We can never be thankful enough for the blessing of Islam and belief, the favor and honor of being included in the umma` of the Prophet ﷺ, and countless more bounties and blessings that cannot be enumerated. In addition, every heart is indebted to the Prophet ﷺ, who is the sole guide to the right path of eternal happiness and the cause of the entire creation of the universe. We owe him for the - outward and inward - blessings to humanity, the Companions and the great scholars over the many centuries, who reflect to the hearts like stars of perfection, worship, and beauty. We owe our parents and families gratitude as well.

Living as a breathing Qur'an, moralized with the moral principles of Allah and the Prophet ﷺ, growing in the environment of the Sunnah, and entering the realm of reunion rose, is the only way to



repay these debts. In addition, it is the responsibility of every servant to express gratitude to Allah Almighty.

Humanity will begin to lose its honor and dignity if our hearts get caught in traps of lower desires and drift away from Allah's pleasure. Consequently, people who live outside of the divine norms and magnify temporary beauty in their eyes will always find themselves in a position of inferiority. In a sense, they forget the secret of "Ah-sani Taqwim" (the best of creation) in their essence, and they become poor people who seek loans from beings far lower than themselves, who are poorer, needier and more defenseless. Consequently, they destroy their original, unknown substance. Perplexed by the suffering of such individuals, Mawlana Rumi رحمہ اللہ remarks:

"How strange is that? Does the sun ask for debt from an atom? Does the Zuhra star (Venus) ask for wine from a tiny cup?"

"You are an unknown soul; one whose traits are unknown to the fullest extent. You are imprisoned in the realm of conditions and attributes. You are a sun, yet you're still stuck in a knot; how unfortunate! .."

In these couplets, Mawlana compares man to a spiritual sun. The universe is analogous to particles that shine, reflect and vibrate with the light of that sun. Therefore, the pursuit of ephemeral pleasures without thinking of receiving inspiration from Allah, in a way, represents the sun's request for a debt from the atom. How could the sun need an atom?

In a Qur'anic statement, Allah Almighty describes the human soul as divine light with the statement, "**I breathed a secret from My Power.**"¹⁹ However, the majority of people are oblivious to the greatness and worth of the soul and live in ignorance of its truth.

19 See. Sad, 72; Al-Hijr, 29.



By abandoning this great purpose, for material and temporal pleasures, they want to dwell solely on the physical plane. They have been swept up in a vortex of lust, fame, and sensual desires. They have developed a taste for delicious food and entertaining activities. It is as if the sun of meaning was entangled in the “ukda-i dhanb” (knot of sin) and was unable to shine after a celestial event.

In this situation, each servant should be aware of his position! He must be aware of the countless blessings Allah has placed on him, particularly the “ahsani taqwim” secret! He should not be a slave to transient pleasures that cannot be satisfied! Happiness should not be sought through sensual desires. The servant should look at himself, in his own heart, for everything!

In short, before we are forcibly removed from the world, we must be in preparation for the journey to the hereafter by the favour of our Lord, with the peace of faith ...

Oh Lord! Bestow upon our hearts a portion of Your inexhaustible generosity in order to perform the worship of infaq and the virtue of qard al-hasan, which you demand of your servants as a loan! Make it possible for each of us to meet all of our material and spiritual obligations! Grant us an ear that hears the mute screams of orphans, the poor and the lonely, and a heart that feels!

Amin!



Borrowing and Debt in Social Relationships



As with other Islamic values, we must preserve the worship of lending. When we are relocated to our permanent residence tomorrow, neither such an opportunity nor such a necessity will stay in the hands of the wealthy or the needy. Those who are able should not refuse this noble act of social worship that is lending for whatever reason, and those who borrow money should not neglect to repay their loans.



BORROWING AND DEBT IN SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

Regardless of the type of good deed, its true beauty is shown when it is executed with sincerity. Therefore, the following is said in the verse:

وَأَحْسِنُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

“...And do good, truly Allah loves the good-doers.” (Al-Baqarah, 195)

Consequently, every good deed, behavior and speech must reflect the beauty of sincerity in them, and sincerity originates from a pure heart. If not, even what seems to be the best behavior and worship could be swept away by the ego’s whirlpool, which would cause harm and disappointment.

Sensitive measures regarding debt and loans are, without a doubt, one of the most crucial issues for which strict compliance with this reality is needed. Because the continuation of the worship of lending is contingent on the borrower’s and lender’s adherence to the mandatory principles, which ignite the springs of virtue in the souls. Consequently, it leads to a set of behaviors that will result in winning Allah’s pleasure. The following hadith narrated by Abu Hurayra رضي الله عنه is exemplary in reflecting this truth:

The Prophet ﷺ said, “A man of the Bani Israel asked a man to lend him one thousand dinars. The second man required witnesses. The former replied, ‘Allah is sufficient as a witness.’ The second said, ‘I want a surety.’ The former replied, ‘Allah is sufficient as a



surety.’ The second said, ‘You are right,’ and lent him the money for a certain period. The debtor went across the sea. When he finished his job, he searched for a ship so that he might reach in time for the repayment of the debt, but he could not find any. So, he took a piece of wood and made a hole in it, inserted the one thousand dinars into it and a letter to the lender and then sealed the hole tightly. He took the piece of wood to the sea and said, ‘O Allah! You know well that I took a loan of one thousand dinars from so-and-so. He demanded a surety from me but I told him that Allah’s Guarantee was sufficient and he accepted Your guarantee. He then asked for a witness and I told him that Allah was sufficient as a Witness, and he accepted You as a Witness. No doubt, I tried hard to find a conveyance so that I could pay his money but could not find one, so I hand over this money to You.’ Saying that, he threw the piece of wood into the sea till it went out far into it, and then he went away. Meanwhile he started searching for a conveyance in order to reach the creditor’s country. (Bukhari, Kafalah; Buyu’, 10)

This hadith reveals the truth about how the pledge made in the name of Allah and the tremendous sincerity with which its fulfillment is accepted and preserved by Allah Almighty. This demonstrates the need for bilateral understanding, sincerity and balance in the issue of paying loans. As long as abuse is not involved, Allah treats both parties with mercy. How beautiful and wise is the following story, which illustrates this truth:

It was iftar time when a noble individual, whose radiant face could not be seen by everyone, approached the door of the bakery. Getting closer to the bakery after the crowd dispersed, he told the baker,



“My son, I was unable to make any money today. Will you give me a quarter loaf of bread to pay for tomorrow, if God grants me life?” with a voice that was wavering and a flushed face.

The baker responded, “Of course; I’ll give you an entire loaf instead of a quarter. Take it and you do not have to pay.” This strange man said, “No, my dear, a fourth of it is sufficient... Perhaps three more poor people will come after me. Furthermore, I can only eat a quarter of it. However, my condition for accepting the loan is that I must present my debt tomorrow.”

The baker, bewildered, gave him a quarter of a loaf. The man kissed the bread and left the place with slow and silent steps. Up ahead, on the corner, a dog appeared in front of him. He was looking at the old man with pleading eyes. The old man with a bright face said:

“So half of it is yours!” He gave half of the quarter loaf to the dog. Then he walked towards the mosque. He broke his fast with a bite of bread and a few sips of water, and thanked Allah who bestowed these blessings.

The next day, a shopkeeper said:

“Fill our bottles from the fountain across the street, and then carry these newly arrived materials inside!” and gave him a lira in return.

The strange man immediately rushed to the bakery and offered 25 cents, which was the price of a quarter of a loaf of bread. No matter how much the baker did not want to take it, he could no longer resist the insistent request of that bright-faced person, and had to accept the price with tears in his eyes.



In this example, Allah provides ease of payment for a person who takes a loan with the intention of paying sincerely. If the debtor strives to pay his debts sincerely, without falling into abuse, by being patient with difficulties, Allah grants him ease and a way out in proportion to this effort.

A person in possession of property will be held accountable if he fails to sell it and pay his debt. In other words, if the debtor is unable to find a solution, he should sell non-essential assets and real estate to settle his debt. If a person is indebted and lives in luxury and extravagance without paying his debt, he is guilty of violating the rights of others. The debtor should limit his spending, avoiding extravagant expenditures, and save money until he pays off his debt in order to respect the creditor's rights. If this is not the case and self-interest is involved, divine kindness has been revoked and the servant's rights have been violated, which Allah Almighty does not forgive. In accordance with the Qur'an, "Indeed, Allah accepts repentance,"²⁰ Allah Almighty, the owner of forgiveness, excludes the violation of servants' rights from this pardon. Conversely, the food of the one who delays payment is tainted with haram. In particular, incurring debt with the goal of not paying it back is a calamity in the hereafter. The Prophet ﷺ said that people who do something like this will be punished as follows:

"Any Man who takes out a loan, having resolved not to pay it back, will meet Allah ﷻ as a thief." (Ibn Majah, Sadaqat, 11/2410) An in another hadith, the importance of this issue in the sight of Allah is clearly stated:

²⁰ See. Shuara, 25; Al-Tawba, 104.



“Whoever takes the money of the people with the intention of repaying it, Allah will repay it on his behalf, and whoever takes it in order to spoil it, then Allah will spoil him.” (Bukhari, Istiqrâdh, 2)

Regarding debt, the Prophet ﷺ following advice and practice is exemplary:

On his way back from the expedition of Dhat-ur-Riqâ', the Prophet ﷺ was speaking with Jabir ﷺ. When he found that he had recently been married and incurred numerous debts as a result, he inquired about his assets. He said that he had just one camel. The Prophet ﷺ then requested that Jabir sell him his camel. An agreement was reached and Jabir ﷺ sold the camel when they arrived in Medina. Upon this, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ paid the agreed-upon fee. After the conclusion of this trade, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ returned the camel back to Jabir. This wonderful kindness so impressed Muslims that they named the night of the incident “laylatu'l-bair” (the night of the camel). That night, the Prophet ﷺ also prayed 25 times for Jabir's forgiveness. (Riyad as-Salihin, v. 1, p. 104-105)

Jabir ﷺ is said:

“I met a Jew on the way. I told him about this incident. He was shocked and kept saying: ‘He bought the camel, paid for it; then he gave it straight back to you?’ I said yes.” (Ibn Hajar, Fath al-Bari, 5/317)

In conclusion, in the context of this magnificent and sublime morality:

1. The person in debt must pay back his debt as soon as possible by selling his goods and possessions.
2. Those who can should assist the debtor.
3. Request forgiveness and pray for the debtor.



It is indicated in the hadith:

“If Allah gives a blessing to a servant and completes it in the best way, then assigns the needs of people to him, and if he feels uncomfortable about it, he will lose the blessing in his hand...” (Mundhiri, At-Tarhib, 4/170)

One day the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Do you know who is the bankrupt?” The Companions of the Prophet said: “A the bankrupt man amongst us is one who has neither dirham with him nor wealth.” The Prophet said: “The bankrupt of my Umma is he who will come on the Day of Resurrection with prayers and fasts and Zakat but since he hurled abuses upon others, brought calumny against others and unlawfully consumed the wealth of others and shed the blood of others and beat others, his virtues will be credited to the account of those who suffered at his hand. And if his good deeds fall short to clear the account, then his sins would be entered in his account and he would be thrown into the Hell-Fire.” (Muslim, Birr, 59; Ahmad bin Hanbal, II, 303, 324, 372)

And he also said in another hadith:

“Whoever dies owing a dinar or a dirham, it will be paid back from his good deeds, because then there will be no dinar or dirham.” (Ibn Majah, Sadaqat, 12/2414)

In this regard, the Prophet ﷺ commanded that people who have broken the right of servants, especially in the case of debt, seek forgiveness from those whose rights they abused while they are still alive:

“Whoever has oppressed another person concerning his reputation or anything else, he should beg him to forgive him before the Day of Resurrection when there will be no money but if he has good deeds, those good deeds will be taken from him according to his



oppression which he has done, and if he has no good deeds, the sins of the oppressed person will be loaded on him.” (Bukhari, Madhalim 10, Riqaq, 48; Tirmidhi, Qiyamah 2)

Obviously, asking for forgiveness entails observing the rights and laws of the creditor and paying the debt in this world, rather than in the afterlife. Such is the Prophet’s practice ﷺ. When a debtor’s funeral was brought to him, he would not conduct his prayer; he would only do so if his debts were paid. Abu Qatada ؓ narrates:

“A dead person was brought to the Prophet ﷺ so that he might lead the funeral prayer for him. However, the Prophet ﷺ refused to lead his prayer and said:

“Pray for your companion; for indeed he had a debt upon him.” So, I said:

“I will undertake his debt.” He asked, “To pay it off?” I said, yes. So, he led the prayer.” (Tirmidhi, Jana’iz, 69; Nasai, Jana’iz)

It is within these measures that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to say:

“After the grave sins which Allah has prohibited, the greatest sin is that a man dies while he has debt due from him and does not leave anything to pay it off, and meets Him with it.” (Abu Dawud, Buyu’, 9)

If we briefly outline the aspects on which the borrower and the lender should focus, the focus points of the lender are:

1. He should aim to relieve his brother’s distress just for the sake of Allah. As it is indicated in the hadith:

“Whoever fulfilled the needs of his brother, Allah will fulfill his needs; whoever brings his brother out of a discomfort, Allah will bring him out of the discomforts of the Day of Resurrection.” (Bukhari, Madhalim, 3; Muslim, Birr, 58)

2. Worldly and egoistic interests should not be pursued.

3. Facilitation should be provided as much as possible, especially if the debtor tries to pay sincerely but cannot be successful, and respite should be provided. It is indicated in the hadiths:

“Whoever gives respite to one in difficulty, he will have the reward of an act of charity for each day. Whoever gives him respite after payment becomes due, will have the reward of an act of charity equal to the amount of the loan for each day.” (Ibn Majah, Sadaqat, 14/2418)

“Before your time the angels took the soul of a man and asked him, ‘Did you do any good deeds?’ He replied, ‘I used to order my employees to grant time to the poor person to pay his debts at his convenience.’ So Allah said to the angels; “Excuse him.” Rabi said that the dead man said, ‘I used to be easy to the poor and grant them extra time to pay their debts.’” (Bukhari, Buyu’, 17-18; Muslim, Musaqat, 26-31)

4. If the person is well-off, and the debtor is poor and needy. The creditor should consider the debt he has given as charity.

5. The creditor should not offend the debtor and he should treat him nicely as ordered in the hadith:

“Whether the person pays his debt or not, the one who claims a right should claim it within the boundaries of chastity.” (Ibn Majah, Sadaqat, 15) And in another hadith, the Prophet ﷺ said:

“Allah forgave a man who was before you: He was tolerant when selling, tolerant when purchasing, and tolerant when repaying.” (Tirmidhi, Buyu’, 75)

In the face of all this, the borrower should also pay attention to the followings:

1. He should only incur debt when absolutely necessary.



2. However, one should borrow in the face of essential needs and the quantity of sufficiency.

3. He should not spend money on excess and luxury.

4. The debtor's intention, effort and determination in paying back his debt must be genuine.

5. The debtor should not abuse or take advantage of the creditor's goodwill and behavior. Because those who behave in this manner prevent the truly poor from obtaining loans and cause harm to others.

6. He should not borrow in a manner that depreciates the amount he receives, particularly for long-term obligations.

7. If the debtor is able to pay, he should not delay the payment and should pay it on time. If the opportunities are unavailable, he should provide an explanation and request a delay. It is required by a hadith:

“Procrastination in repaying debts by a wealthy person is injustice.” (Bukhari, Istiqradh 12, Hawalat 1-2; Muslim, Musaqat 33)

8. The debtor should never leave his debt to the hereafter.

Nevertheless, Allah Almighty pledges to pay the debtor's debt in the following three cases where the debt is transferred to the hereafter without the debtor's ability to pay for extremely significant reasons. It is required by a hadith:

“A debt will be settled on the Day of Resurrection if the one who owes it dies, apart from three:

1. A man who lost his strength fighting in the cause of Allah, so he borrows in order to become strong again to fight in the cause

of Allah, so he borrows in order to become strong again to fight the enemy of Allah and his enemy.

2. A man who sees a Muslim die and he cannot find anything with which to shroud him except by taking a loan.

3. A man who fears Allah if he stays single, so he gets married for fear of losing his religious commitment.

Allah will pay off the debt for these people on the Day of Resurrection.” (Ibn Majah, Sadaqat, 21)

Unquestionably, Allah Almighty’s settlement of that debt on the Day of Judgment signifies that the creditor will receive an ever-increasing reward with the bounty of the Hereafter, and an eternal profit. Without any doubt, this settlement is more valuable than treasures for the creditor..

Whether the debtor belongs to one of the categories listed in the hadith will be the most relevant criterion in this regard. As a result, regardless of the reason, the borrower should be satisfied with the amount of sufficiency and make an effort to repay his obligation, and the creditor should demonstrate tolerance as if adding a new virtue to the virtue of the loan. It is critical to consider the debt in a way that takes both the creditor and the debtor into account. Because the protection of the creditor’s rights is the most critical component in ensuring this good behavior continues. Otherwise, the continuation of the social virtue of generosity will be impossible.

The following hadith is quite insightful regarding the treatment of creditors:

“Leave him, no doubt, for he (the creditor) has the right to have a voice until he gets his right.” (Bukhari, Istiqradh, 7; Muslim, Musaqat, 118-122/1600-1601)



Abu Said Al-Khudri رضي الله عنه narrates another example of this incident as follows:

“A Bedouin came to the Prophet ﷺ to ask him to pay back a debt that he owed him, and he spoke harshly, saying:

‘I will make things difficult for you unless you repay me.’ His Companions rebuked him and said:

‘Woe to you, do you know who you are speaking to?’ He said: ‘I am only asking for my rights.’

The Prophet ﷺ said: ‘Why do you not support the one who has a right?’ Then he sent word to Khawlah bint Qais, saying to her:

‘If you have dates, lend them to us until our dates come, then we will pay you back.’ She said: ‘Yes, may my father be ransomed for you, O Messenger of Allah ﷺ!’ So she gave him a loan, and he paid back the Bedouin and fed him. The Bedouin said:

‘You have paid me in full, may Allah ﷻ pay you in full.’ The Prophet ﷺ said:

‘Those are the best of people. May that nation not be cleansed (of sin) among whom the weak cannot get their rights without trouble.’ ” (Ibn Majah, Sadaqat, 17)

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ always acted in favor of creditors, even if they tried to collect their money early, and demonstrated a sense of justice and law that no other leader in the history of humanity could have even imagined. He issued a warning to the Companions who backed him:

“Why do you not support the one who has a right?”

This is a human rights lecture that will bring tears to your eyes and sow the seeds of justice in your hearts. Numerous instances

are provided by the Prophet ﷺ in this regard, probably due to the Prophet's ﷺ wisdom in setting an example for the ummah, as it will be one of the greatest hindrances for those who follow him:

In fact, one of the Jewish scholars, Zayd Ibn Sa'na, was investigating if the Prophet ﷺ possessed the characteristics mentioned in the Torah concerning the attributes of the Messengers of Allah. One day, he saw the Prophet ﷺ leaving his house with Ali ؑ and followed them. At that time, a man dressed as a bedouin approached the Messenger of Allah and said,

“O Messenger of Allah! I informed the inhabitants of that tribe that if they converted to Islam, Allah will provide them with abundant sustenance. So they converted to Islam. Sadly, starvation broke out amongst their tribes. They are in a very difficult situation. I am concerned that these people, who converted to Islam in pursuit of worldly riches, may revert to their former religion if they are unable to attain what they hoped for. If you want to provide them with assistance, I can take it.”

Upon hearing this discourse, Zayd Ibn Sa'na thought he had the opportunity to test the Prophet ﷺ and joined the conversation by saying:

“O Muhammad! If you are considering assisting them, I can lend you a loan with a contract.”

The Prophet ﷺ borrowed eighty dinars from him and handed them to that Companion in order for him to get the necessary assistance and commanded him:

“Go quickly to them and help them!”

Another day, the Prophet ﷺ accompanied Abu Bakr, Umar and a few Companions to Al-Baqi Cemetery for a funeral. When



the Prophet ﷺ conducted the funeral prayer, Zayd approached him and, with all his strength, ripped his robe off his blessed back. While the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was looking at the garment that had fallen to the ground and the sullen face of Zayd, Zayd began to speak as he had planned in advance:

“Will you not repay your loan, Muhammad? You sons of Abdulmuttalib clan always delay your debts anyway! “

However, the debt owed by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to Zayd was not due.

When narrating the incident, Zayd states:

At that moment, I turned and looked at Umar. When I saw his chest rise and fall like a bellow, my heart almost stopped. Umar gave me a harsh look and shouted at me:

“O enemy of Allah! Are you saying these words to the Messenger of Allah? You’re both disrespectful and rude to him, huh! I swear by the One who sent him as a Prophet, if the Messenger of Allah did not owe you anything, I would have cut off your head! ..”

Umar ؓ could not tolerate a Jew insulting the Messenger of Allah in his sight. As Umar ؓ was enraged, the Prophet smiled and said:

“Calm down, Umar! Right now, both I and this person require different behavior from you. You should have urged me to pay my debt in a courteous manner and instructed him to use more suitable words. Even though there are still three days till the debt is due, rise up and give him the money. Give him extra for frightening him!”

After having collected more than his due, Zayd revealed the following to Umar:



“Look, Umar! Whenever I glanced at the face of the Messenger of Allah, I observed all the characteristics of a Prophet in him. But until now, I was unable to determine whether he possessed these two attributes: Does he forgive people who treat him rudely? And does his benevolence and tolerance increase in proportion to the hostility he experiences? So I tested him today and discovered he was the expected Prophet. Witness that I have accepted Allah as my Lord, Islam as my religion, and Muhammad ﷺ as my Prophet, and that I have donated half of my possessions to Muhammad’s ﷺ Ummah!”

Umar رضي الله عنه, pleased with Zayd’s conversion to Islam, advised him: “Your wealth is insufficient to support all Muslims. At the very least, say that you donated it for some of them.”

Zayd corrected his statement and said:

“You are right, I donate half of my wealth to some Muslims.”

(Hakim, Mustadrak, III, 700/6547)

This hadith is a Prophetic example of the divine blessings and beauties manifested as a result of the borrower’s heartfelt love for Allah and observance of the creditor’s rights. A second reason why the Messenger of Allah ﷺ occasionally borrowed money was to set an example for his ummah in his benevolence toward the creditor.

All of these cases demonstrate that the subject of borrowing and lending is a delicate one. It is important for people with this kind of devotion to follow certain criteria so they don’t miss out on the benefits and blessings that come with it.

Unfortunately, today, virtuous worship such as lending is steadily declining. It is viewed as a loss or harmful to the lender and many individuals do not engage in this auspicious worship because they do not meet the aforementioned criteria. In other words, disloyalties such as the elimination of security in trade, the proliferation of

lies and disloyalty in promises, and the normalization of not paying on the agreed-upon date all contribute to the near-forgetting of this extremely important devotion. However, given the issue's governing principles and regulations, these obstacles must be overcome. In other words, individuals who are able should not quit the noble social worship of lending for any reason, and those who borrow money should not fail to repay their debts by alleging a variety of excuses and difficulties. As a result, they should avoid harming this worship. Otherwise, the wealthy will not be thankful for the blessings Allah Almighty has bestowed upon them, and the needy will not be able to find a loan due to the measures they have neglected and even if their need is severe, they will not be able to avoid falling into a state of desperation that leads them to feel obligated to fall into crimes like theft or *riba* (usury) which is even worse.

However, numerous verses and hadiths demonstrate the immense virtue of lending. Those who prevent the realization of this great virtue due to their misbehavior and non-compliance with the required manners will bear a great burden. Because the act of lending that is performed due to observing the manners and rules are the believer's capital in the hereafter.

Anas Ibn Malik narrates that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "On the night on which I was taken on the Laylatul-Isra (night journey), I saw written at the gate of Paradise: 'Charity brings a tenfold reward and a loan brings an eighteen fold reward.' I said:

'O Jibril! Why is a loan better than charity?' He said:

'Because the beggar mostly asks even when he has something, but the one who asks for a loan does so only because he is in need.'

(Ibn Majah, Sadaqat, 19/2431)

Certainly, giving alms is an act of devotion that is encouraged in our religion. However, it is more acceptable to lend than to give alms in situations where the poor's dignity could be hurt by receiving charity. In fact, there is a hadith stating:

“Lending something is better than giving it as charity.” (Al-Azizi, As-Sirajul Munir, III, 57)

Due to Prophetic motivations in this regard, when certain virtuous believers collected their debts, they would never touch that money again and would cheerfully lend it to the needy if they requested another loan. In other words, they would allocate a “qard al-hasan budget” that was exclusive to them.

As a matter of fact, Qays Ibn Rumi ؓ narrates as follows:

“Sulayman Ibn Udhunan lent ‘Alqamah one thousand dirhams until he got his salary. When he got his salary, he demanded that he pay him back. Several months passed, al-Qamah again came to him and said:

‘Lend me one thousand dirham until my salary comes.’ He said ‘Yes, it would be an honor. Suleyman lent his money twice due to the following hadith: ‘Narrated from Ibn Mas’ud that the Prophet ﷺ said:

“There is no Muslim who lends something to another Muslim twice, but it will be like giving charity once.” (Ibn Majah, Sadaqat, 19/2430)

My respected Father Musa Efendi ؒ, likewise exemplified this noble conduct. In addition to his many good actions, he had a qard hasan budget. It would be distributed to those in need. He would view the debt of those who were unable to repay as a form of charity and use the returned amount for the same purpose and thus recycle

this beautiful debt he had incurred for Allah. This virtuous behavior is among the remarkable manifestations of excellence in behavior.

The loan is both a desirable virtue for the lender and an incentive for the borrower. In the absence of a loan the likelihood of a needy person engaging in wrongdoing and sin increases if he or she slips into a dire situation and is unable to borrow money. In reality, there are always a significant number of people in need in our society who fall involuntarily into the swamps of wrongdoing because of their dire circumstances. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ says the following to encourage these people to borrow money instead of doing wrong and sinning:

“Allah will be with the borrower until he pays off his debt, so long as it is not for something that Allah dislikes.” (Ibn Majah, Sadaqat, 10)

As with other Islamic virtues, we are obligated to preserve this act of generosity by attending to all of its nuances. To ensure the survival of this Islamic beauty, it is vital to thoroughly comprehend and apply its measures and principles. Do not forget that when we are transferred to our everlasting home tomorrow, neither the wealthy person nor the poor person will have an opportunity to practice this lovely virtue.



This fleeting world we have arrived in is the realm of action. At all times we must take action to put things right and also during the specific times of Ramadan and Eid²¹ because these times are times of great blessings and reward for acts of generosity. They are moments of significant opportunity to make amends for our mistakes and recover what we have lost.

21 This article was published in Ramadan.



The wisdom and secrets contained in the days of Ramadan and Eid can be tasted by hearts that reach out to the poor, the lonely and the orphans. Particularly, being pardoned for wrongdoings and being able to reach Eid after Ramadan is a celebration of a spiritual victory. It is the combination of personal spiritual happiness and social joy.

On the other hand, with the understanding that the life of this world is practically as short as the month of Ramadan, we must be able to carry the sublime meanings of Ramadan throughout our entire lives. These are the most significant opportunities of our mortal lives. Taking into account the blessings and spirituality of Ramadan, there is no question that tomorrow will be a true and eternal Eid for us on the Day of Judgment, which is, of course, the most beautiful Eid.

Dear Lord! Make us experience such Eids in this world and the eternal realm! Grant us the ability to evaluate and make use of the divine opportunities and possibilities You have granted us in this ephemeral world in accordance with Your pleasure! Include us in the group of fortunate people who escape the tribulations of the hereafter by relieving the tribulations and sorrows of their fellow believers!

Amin!

Friendship



“O traveler of truth, make friendship with the Real King, before that Day, before the Final Day, and He will hold your hand on the Day of Calamity. On that Day, no one will be permitted to grasp your hand without His permission. Man will flee from his brother, mother, father and sons. Then, understand the friendship with God well and recognize that friendship is the seed of the last breath.”

(Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi)



FRIENDSHIP

According to the narration, the Prophet ﷺ fell ill one day. Abu Bakr As-Siddiq ؓ, rushed to the Prophet ﷺ upon hearing this to inquire about his condition. When he witnessed the Master of the Universe in distress, he was unable to endure it and upon returning home, he fell on his bed in despair.

A few days later, the Prophet ﷺ regained his health, learned that Abu Bakr ؓ was also ill, and went to see him. When they informed Abu Bakr ؓ that the Messenger of Allah would be visiting him, that lover of the Prophet sprung out of bed and went to the door with incredible vitality and indescribable joy. He suddenly recovered from his ailment and welcomed the Master of the Universe inside after greeting him at the door. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said with astonishment, “They said you were ill, Abu Bakr!” upon observing his happiness and good health.

Abu Bakr, who had the greatest amount of love and affection for the Prophet ﷺ more than anybody else, responded to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ as follows:

“O Messenger of Allah! My friend got sick, because of my sadness for him, I got sick too! He got healed, so did I! ..”

These and other such displays of friendship and affection by Abu Bakr ؓ have earned him the distinction of being referred to as the “second of the two” in the Qur’an. For him, the whole objective is to deepen the heart’s relationships with which Allah is pleased and with which He guides us, with the most real bonds of friendship and therefore to partake in the happiness of divine love. Only these kinds of bonds can lead to genuine affection and love.



How accurately Ali al-Rida said, “There is a spiritual wine that Allah offers to his friends and when they drink it they pass out; they are overjoyed when they pass out; they become clean when they pass out; they melt down when they become clean; and they reach sincerity when they melt down. Consequently, they reunite with their friends, and when they do, there is no longer any separation between them and their beloved.”

This is the stage of nothingness or annihilation. Abu Bakr, who resided in this state, was more content with his disease than with his health since he shared it with his friend. Because of love, even the most bitter fruits turn pleasant. Using the words of Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi:

“The person sitting with friends feels he is in a rose garden, even though he is surrounded by flames of fire”


“O friends! If you pass beyond the form and shape and enter the realm of spirituality, you will discover that this garden is more lovely than heaven with its rose gardens.

Friendship is based on sharing either good or bad characteristics. Only realized souls may show true friendship. This characteristic exists at the highest levels of human personality. Friendship is maintained when two people react to every occurrence with the same emotions. True friendship is the line that connects two hearts. Every condition of the beloved is transmitted to the lover with the current of this line. The heart’s oceans of love begin to overflow, and its suns begin to ignite.


When Mawlana ﷺ was the head professor in the Seljuk madrasah, the physical books lost their value to him and the cosmos became a book due to the spark lit by a love-filled dervish named Shams. As a result, the Mathnawi, which so brilliantly and eloquent-



ly makes plain the mysteries of the human condition, the universe and the Qur'an, came into existence. In order for a believer to become a friend of Allah at this stage, he must be able to focus his love towards none but his Lord.

Otherwise, even though the servant is externally in a rose garden, he is internally ablaze because of his separation from his friend. In this regard, the perceived proximity between individuals who do not share common emotions, such as kinship and brotherhood, has nothing to do with friendship. While Abu Lahab was the Prophet's  uncle, he was one of the most distant individuals from him.

The spiritual realm is riddled with mysteries that do not conform to the body and social norms. The heavenly love and friendship of the Prophet, who encountered the first revelation in the Cave of Hira, eventually brought him to the highest presence through ascension (Miraj).

The friendship that rescues us from loneliness is a divine gift. Through a separation of forty years following their descent to earth, Adam  and Eve were given a longing for friendship. It is as if friendship is a state of finding the other half of the same soul. The hadith says:

“A person is on the religion of his intimate friend. Everyone should look to who they take as an intimate friend.” (Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, II, 303, 304) And it is also stated in another hadith:

“A man will be with those whom he loves.” (Bukhari, Adab, 96) These hadiths sufficiently illustrate the impact of friendship on the soul. On the other hand, these hadiths also suggest the following:

Being with the beloved entails being on the same page and the sameness is a compatibility and togetherness that mirrors the beloved. How plausible would it be for a person whose words and



behavior are usually associated with thorns to assert that he loves roses? Similarly, individuals who are unable to be with Allah (SWT) and His Beloved Messenger in their words, deeds and behavior are not regarded as sincere lovers.

Therefore, we should regard being with our beloved from this perspective and not think that we will obtain the good news mentioned in the hadiths if we lead a heedless life and say, "I love Allah and His Messenger," without any sincerity or proof. We should recognize that the unification of love comes only when the state is united. Allah Almighty fosters the growth of spiritual ties and gardens in the hearts of such friends. The state of Abu Bakr ؓ, who is one of the best examples of how to receive this blessing.

He was in such a state of ecstasy at his friendship with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ that his love and desire intensified rather than abated. One day, the Prophet ﷺ praised Abu Bakr ؓ for spending his entire wealth in Allah's service. However, Abu Bakr ؓ said:

"O Messenger of Allah! Doesn't my property and my life belong to you and only you?" (Ibn Majah, Muqaddimah, 11)

In order to describe these exalted souls, Mawlana says:

"Whoever desires to be with Allah should sit in the presence of the saints, who are Allah's friends."

"Because when two friends sit down together, tens of thousands of secrets are revealed and recited!"

And a poet says:

"If a couple of individuals come together and talk about the truth, even for a moment, the heavens will kneel down and prostrate!"



Shaykh Sadi, who was bestowed with divine manifestations and entirely renounced his worldly desires, wrote the following: “Seeing the faces of friends is like an ointment for the people of the heart whose wounds are still bleeding.”

Allah Almighty characterizes the members of this circle of friends as follows:

إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ
وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَهُمْ رَاكِعُونَ

“Your friend is only Allah and His Messenger and those who believe: those who establish salat and pay zakat and bow.” (Al-Ma'idah, 55)

How fortunate is the person who, while still in this world, escapes the clutches of self-centered friends and meets Allah, the eternal friend and develops a profound attachment to the Prophet ﷺ, and becomes a firm believer.

Mawlana Rumi addresses the hearts deprived of this truth as follows: “Know that the mortal and phony friends and false loves of this world will all become your enemies in the end. They will be your worst enemy.”

However, you will beseech Allah in the grave, wailing, “O Lord, do not abandon me!” “

It is the task of the heroes of divine love and ecstasy, who can attain true friendship by entering the realm of the heart, gaining a degree of vision and perspective, and comprehending the mystery and wisdom of the cosmos in its truest sense.



Since Prophet Ibrahim ؑ was the Khalilullah (the intimate friend of Allah) he was in a state of tremendous submission and trust, and he did not feel the slightest bit of fear or concern despite being in very difficult situations. When he was about to be cast into the enormous fire, he told the angels who offered him help, “Do not come between me and my Friend! I am pleased with whatever my Lord desires; if he saves me, it is because of his grace; if he burns me, it is because of my faults. I shall be patient, by the favour of God...” and added: “He is aware of my situation! Tell me; Who orders the fire to burn, and who is its originator?”

With the command from that great friend, that is Allah, the fire became coolness for Ibrahim ؑ. In this way, the splendor of divine friendship was displayed. As a result of his faithfulness, Allah Al-mighty praised Prophet Ibrahim ؑ with the following expressions in the Mighty Qur’an:

“And Ibrahim, who fulfilled his covenant...” (Al-Najm, 37)

This faithfulness and loyalty is reflected in everyone and everything. Observance of the requirements of friendship between individuals also depends on this condition. Religiously and historically, the most notable figures in the history of humanity are those who have internalized the characteristics of friendship. According to historical accounts, Shahzada Korkut, who was slain owing to his insurrection, had a close friend named Piyale who was exceedingly loyal. Yavuz Sultan Selim Han, cognizant of this trait, called him and said, “As a reward for your loyalty, allow me to appoint you to the post you desire. If you wish, serve as my vizier!” He thanked the Sultan and stressed his loyalty by stating, “My Sultan, it is now my job to be a guard for Prince Korkut’s tomb!”



This state of Piyale Bey constitutes the pinnacle of his understanding of friendship! It is the embodied teaching of friendship. It is an example of wisdom for all friends and friendships.

Abu Uthman al-Hiri states, "Friendship with Allah is through good manners and constant inspection, that is, feeling oneself under divine observation at all times; friendship with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is through following his Sunnah and embracing obedience and submission to him with love; friendship with saints is through respect and service; friendship with friends is through showing a smile; friendship with the family is through good manners, friendship with the ignorant is through praying for them and wishing them to receive Allah's mercy."

Every friendship has its own unique conditions and manners and if these are honored, the relationship will last and the heart's palace of love will not be disturbed. However, if the manners of friendship are ignored, any link of affection becomes entangled in animosity. In this regard, we should communicate with friends with extreme care and caution because certain words are as sharp as a sword, they can cut and kill friendships. They cause irreparable damage to the heart. They cause the heart's love to wither and die. There are also phrases that, like spring rain, make everything come to life and blossom.

Contrary to this, it is erroneous to regard the unceremonious intimacy as genuine friendship and affection, or to live the closeness in the form of unceremonious intimacy. Because unceremonious friendships are comparable to a thin thread rubbed against the blade of a sharp knife, they will inevitably sever after three or four encounters. Without a doubt, such friendships are useless in both this world and the next. Furthermore, it harms its owners in both dimensions. It is crucial for us to be friends with people who merit it.



Even if love begins with certain transient compassions and associations, like a blossoming flower, it tends to become spiritual when it reaches a degree that permeates all creatures due to the Creator.

Those who are obstructed by the ephemeral barrier, however, cannot reach this point. A servant can only taste the joy of love and friendship if he overcomes the worldly obstacles. Otherwise, this cannot be possible. Shaykh Ziya'addin Nakhshabi uses the following narrative as an illustration for those who are stuck in such obstacles:

“A young man approached the door of the Sultan’s daughter and declared his love for her. When the news was sent to the sultan’s daughter, she walked to the door and told the young man, “Take one thousand dirhams and don’t say anything like this again that will harm me and you!” When the young man refused to give up, she offered him extra money, adding, “Take 2,000 dirhams!”

Finally, when the price reached 10,000 dirhams, the young man agreed to the deal. In the face of this, the daughter of the Sultan said, “How can you love me when your eyes are blinded by money and you cannot see me? Do you know what the punishment is for someone who prefers something else over me? It is being decapitated!” And she drove him away due to his false love.

A scholar who witnessed this collapsed and passed out. When he woke up, he exclaimed, “O people! Look at what happens to fake love in the world! What will happen to those who claim to love God and turn to someone other than Him, in the hereafter!”

The measure of love’s greatness is the willingness to make sacrifices and take risks for the sake of the beloved when necessary. A person who loves deeply would offer his life for a friend if required and not even consider it a sacrifice. A person who does not recognize love and friendship and who is deprived of love and friendship



has not entered the path and is living according to his ego. The heart of a person who does not know how to love is like uncultivated soil. In love, there is knowledge because love is the reason for existence. According to the hadith qudsi, Allah Almighty states:

“I was a hidden treasure, and I wished to be known, so I created the creation in order to be known.”²²

Consequently, the manifestation of divine secrets is a characteristic of friendship and affection. Those who achieve real friendship with God perceive the face of friendship not only in people but also in animals and plants that are dispersed across the world as forms of life.

My Father Musa Efendi described an incident that happened to them about being friends with creatures as follows:

“About forty years ago, we rented a house in al-Madinah al-Munawwarah (the illuminated city) with my Master Sami Efendi رحمته الله. At that time the houses were still made of the traditional adobe. When Sami Efendi entered the room we had prepared for his resting, we were startled to discover a snake curled up in the corner. Sami Efendi was completely serene and at ease and he instructed, “Leave this creature of Allah alone and do not disturb it.” Finally, after some time, the snake disappeared.”

This shows that those who find the source of friendship with Allah become friends of all creatures. Yunus Emre’s incident with the yellow flower is one of the classic examples of this friendship.

Hopeless are the hearts that cannot catch a glimpse of the friendly face concealed in nature. Mute is the human soul that cannot communicate with nature. Hearts seeking companionship discov-

22 See. al-’Ajkuni, *Kashfal Khafa*, II, 132; Bursevi, *Kanz al-Makhfi*.



er it in nature, even if they cannot find it among humans. Streams, greenery, mountains, flowers and rose gardens speak numerous friendship poetry to the heart of a person seeking friendship. The hearts stirred by these chants are affected by the aesthetic marvels of the divine artist and converse with them in the language of state. So many secrets are revealed in the depths of the heart, and this magnificent reunion eventually becomes apparent. Thus, it is hoped that the expatriate's illness will be treated and the deep yearning will be alleviated. Being acquainted with the mysteries and enigmas of nature thins the emotions. The heart is the fertile ground of friendship with Allah. Because the countless wonders in nature and creatures is a stairway leading to the Great Friend, who is also the Friend of these friends, the Creator of all beauty. Those who scale this ladder reach the Lord's discourse. A believer who reaches this state is always with his Lord and the divine light of this unity always illuminates his face.

It is such luminous and happy faces that become a source of material and spiritual mercy and blessings for the ummah and the worlds.

Malik Ibn Dinar رحمہ اللہ relates: "When Umar Ibn Abdulaziz became caliph, shepherds in the mountains said, 'An upright person has assumed control of the governance of the people.' They inquired, 'How do you know this?' They responded, 'Even the animals are at ease... (not afraid of the wolves)'" Muhammed Ibn Uyaynah رحمہ اللہ also stated, "When Umar Ibn Abdulaziz was caliph, I used to herd sheep in Kirman. As a result of the caliph's spiritual station and justice, it appeared to me that lambs and wolves were wandering together. One night, I saw wolves attacking sheep. It appeared as though the world had lost all of its tranquility. I thought to myself, 'This fair friend of God, the caliph, must have died!' Indeed, later I discovered that Umar Ibn Abdulaziz passed away that night."



It is vital for a person to fill his spiritual realm with such exemplary individuals who adorn the pages of human perfection, and from time to time he should look at the sun, which fills the horizon with the foresight opened in the hearts by these friends of God. He should observe the vibrant and diverse paintings created in the heavens. We all admire great artist's paintings. We are interested in their depictions and we value their work. Allah, the supreme artist of all the scenes and shapes in the universe, paints a picture of the cosmos in front of our eyes that is indicative of his brushstrokes of power and brilliant embroidery. Consider a rose or a violet... Where do these colors come from in the black soil? There are innumerable additional charms and artistic marvels in our universe... The whole universe is an exhibition of marvels for those who can see with the eyes of the heart. Because all of these splendors mirror the beauty of Allah Almighty. Consequently, the eyes and souls that contemplate this cosmos will be astonished!

But, unfortunately, reason and logic often pollute our appreciation of these wonders, like hard cliffs that can't benefit from the raindrops rolling over them.

May our Lord grant our hearts a depth of contemplation and emotion from the manifestations of the power and grandeur of his divine artistry in this universe.

When seriously contemplating, it can be seen that although the manifestations of power in the universe surround us every moment, hearts are deprived of divine love and friendship because they are veiled by the barrier of the ego. The poet warns those who cannot be freed from this deprivation as follows:

If you are not able to say 'friend' in this exile,
The day of reunion will turn into another exile!

Seyri



In this regard, Mawlana Rumi states the following:

“O traveler of truth, make a friendship with the King of truth before that Day, before that Final Day, and He will take you be the your hand on the Day of Calamity. On that Day, no one will be permitted to grasp your hand without His permission. Man will flee from his brother, mother, father and sons.”

“Then, understand the friendship with God well and recognize that friendship is the seed of the last breath.”

Yunus Emre, who lived a lifetime with this secret of love, calls out to the “Highest Friend” with a passionate cry of love:

Let's go before this life is over,
Before our bodies disappear,
Before enemies come between us
Let's go to the Friend, my soul.

Let's not be bewildered by the world.
Let's not be deceived, it's temporal.
Let's not separate while we are one.
Let's go to the Friend, my soul.

Let's give up this transient world
and fly to the lasting land of the Friend.
Let's give up all our desires and aspirations.
Let's go to the Friend, my soul.

Before the news of death reaches us,
Before the hour when he grabs us by the collar,
Before Azrail makes his sudden move,
Let's go to the Friend, my soul.



In fact, this invitation is a reflection of the love and affection in the expression that came out of the blessed tongue of the Prophet ﷺ at the time of his death:

“O Allah! Rafiqul A’la is “ Rafiqul A’la (the Highest Friend, the Highest Friend).

On their journey to eternity, hearts appropriately graced by this reflection reach the peak of divine friendship and receive the following divine promise:

أَلَا إِنَّ أَوْلِيَاءَ اللَّهِ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ

“Yes, the friends of Allah will feel no fear and will know no sorrow.” (Yunus, 62)

Dear Lord! Make our hearts prosper with a friendship that will lead to Your high pleasure! Love us and make us love You!

Amin!

Loyalty!



Loyalty to God is only possible by observing His orders. This loyalty is the peak of feelings and actions connected to Him because He is the One that creates, sustains life, and is the only one we always need. He holds our life and death in His hands. In this way, loving Him and being connected to Him with every breath is the highest goal of service and the greatest loyalty.



LOYALTY!..

Mehmed Akif had invited one of his beloved friends, Bosnian Ali Shawqi Efendi, to his daughter's wedding. The old hodja arrived a little later than expected for this invitation and said that the slope of loyalty was to blame. The late Akif said the following in a meaningful way, combining this valid excuse with an appropriate truth:

“Which slope of loyalty are you talking about, Hodja? That slope has already been leveled by the current generation.”

Mehmed Akif rousingly emphasized the reality that loyalty is the most essential quality that people require. How the late Akif, who compared achieving this trait to ascending a slope due to its difficulty, would have wept if he saw our society today! Today, people do not even remember the favors whose traces have been erased.

Loyalty is fundamental to Islam. However, the most fundamental principle of Islam is faith. But it is undeniable that loyalty is also a manifestation of faith because it means keeping your word. While faith, which is confirming in the heart and on the tongue the oneness of Allah and the final messenger peace and blessings upon him, is actually also a form of loyalty.

Loyalty, however, goes beyond simply adhering to the terms of the covenant, or the quality of fulfilling the commitment made. Being aware of our obligation to care for our parents, siblings and fellow believers, does not diminish the sincerity and love we have toward God. It is a state of mind to retain for a lifetime, through both joyous and hard times. It is not a seasonal state of mind.



The concept of loyalty encompasses all virtues like thankfulness, fidelity and steadfastness. It also conveys the expression of similarity and even oneness, such as being one of two sides of a fabric. This fundamental perspective holds that every attitude and deed demanded by faith is a manifestation of loyalty, and the reverse of these attitudes and deeds is considered “disloyalty.”

As a spiritual characteristic shared by Prophets, saints and righteous individuals, loyalty crowns human life at its ultimate level. In this regard, some scholars have characterized Iman (trust or belief) as both acknowledgment with the tongue and affirmation with the heart through submission and loyalty to Allah in destiny.

The hearts of those who have chosen loyalty have transformed their souls into rose gardens. There are roses of dhikr, nightingales of recitation, grass of wisdom and trust, blooms of heavenly grace, and rivers of good deeds in these rose gardens. The reward of such a heart is also suitable for its own state, which is Jannatul-A’la (the highest realms of paradise) and Jamalullah (the Beauty of Allah). Even the fire changes its characteristics and transforms into roses in front of such hearts. As a matter of fact, when Nemrud threw Prophet Ibrahim ؑ into flames that were as high as mountains, the fire turned into a rose garden with the following order from Allah Almighty:

“Fire! Be coolness and peace for Ibrahim!” (Al-Anbiya, 69)

Because Ibrahim ؑ was a Prophet who, before he was thrown into the fire, put out the fire in his soul with the waters of faithfulness and demonstrated his commitment to God Almighty regardless of the circumstances.

The life of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, who is the Uswatun Hasanah, or the most beautiful example, is a demonstration of loy-

alty from start to finish. After the conquest, he remained in Mecca for fifteen days. Some of the Ansar then began to worry and consider if the Prophet ﷺ would ever return to Medina, and they began to discuss it among themselves in sorrow. Allah had given him the conquest of the blessed and holy land where he was born and raised. Sensing the Ansar's unease, the Prophet ﷺ went to them and asked:

“What are you talking about?”

After he learned their concern, through a great manifestation of loyalty he said:

“O you assembly of the Ansar! I made hijra to Allah and to you. I will live with you and will die with you.” (Muslim, Jihad, 86; Ahmad bin Hanbal, Musnad, II, 538)

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ ascended the mimbar (pulpit) of the mosque for the last time during his final illness and said to the Muhajirun:

“I request you to take care of the Ansar as they are my near companions to whom I confided my private secrets. They have fulfilled their obligations and rights which were enjoined on them but there remains what is for them. So, accept the good of the good-doers amongst them and excuse the wrongdoers amongst them.” (Bukhari, Manaqib al-Ansar, 11) and showed his loyalty to them during his last days.

All Prophets are guides who impart the highest level of loyalty to humanity. In order to be a servant that earns Allah's love, it is vital to live the principles of our guide, Our Master Muhammad Mustafa ﷺ, on loyalty, in the most exceptional dimensions of our hearts. These principles can be listed briefly as follows:

1. Loyalty to Allah, the Creator of the Universes:



The closest relationship and the resulting loyalty belong to Allah ﷻ. Because Allah Almighty gave the following instructions to the souls He created in pre-eternity:

أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ

““Am I not your Lord?” They replied, “Yes, indeed You are! We testify.”” (Al-A’raf, 172)

This acknowledgment is a contract that expresses acceptance of the divinity of Allah Almighty and the servitude of people. A person who accepts this shows loyalty through his acknowledgment and continuing his servitude in the best way throughout his life. Because only acknowledgment is not enough for this loyalty. There are some mental and conscientious obligations arising from this acceptance. These are the observance of Allah’s orders and avoiding His prohibitions.

In that case, loyalty to God is only possible by observing His commandments. This loyalty is the peak of feelings and actions connected to Him. Because He is the one being that creates and sustains life, and is the only one we always need. He holds our life and death in His hands. In this way, loving Him and being connected to Him with every breath is the highest goal of service and the greatest loyalty. In the face of this situation, the magicians whom Pharaoh had hung on palm branches by cutting their arms and legs crosswise with great cruelty because of their belief didn’t say:

“O Lord, save us from this trouble and give us peace!” but with a great sense of loyalty they said:

“Our Lord! Pour down steadfastness upon us and take us back to You as Muslims.” (Al-A’raf, 126) Allah Almighty says the following concerning these kinds of loyal and faithful servants:



لِيَجْزِيَ اللَّهُ الصَّادِقِينَ بِصِدْقِهِمْ

“Allah will reward the loyal for their loyalty” (Al-Ahzab, 24) And they are praised in another verse as follow:

مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ رِجَالٌ صَدَقُوا مَا عَاهَدُوا اللَّهَ عَلَيْهِ فَمِنْهُمْ مَّن قَضَىٰ نَحْبَهُ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّن يَنْتَظِرُ وَمَا بَدَّلُوا تَبْدِيلًا

“Among the believers are men who have been true to the contract they made with Allah. Some of them have fulfilled their pact by death and some others are still waiting to do so, not having changed in any way at all.” (Al-Ahzab, 23)

Because of this reality, Mawlana uses the following metaphor to address travelers of wisdom who are patient and loyal to God in the face of difficulties in this world:

“Nightingale, awake! How much longer will the dark winter make you cry? Oh nightingale! Is it necessary to continuously talk about suffering? Open your eyes, express gratitude, and speak of loyalty if your heart is truly devoted to your beloved. Talk about the rose instead of the thorn. Leave the stem and root, and think about the essence of the rose. Why do you spend so much time in this fleeting world or isn't the place you want to reach beyond the beyond?”

Therefore, following fleeting and temporary desires leads to forgetting the everlasting destination, which is a great disappointment, as Mawlana said. Allah Almighty warns His servants from falling into this heedlessness as follows:

“Do not be like those who forgot Allah, so He made them forget themselves. Such people are the deviators.” (Al-Hashr, 19)



“But whoever turns away from My Reminder will certainly have a miserable life, then We will raise them up blind on the Day of Judgment.” They will cry out, “My Lord! Why have you raised me up blind, when I used to see?” Allah will respond, “just as you neglected Our Signs when they came to you, so today you are neglected.”” (Taha, 124-126)

Those who show loyalty to Allah, the Lord of the worlds in this ephemeral world, will find loyalty in the hereafter. Because the highest loyalty belongs to Allah Himself, as it is indicated in the following verse:

“...And whose promise is truer than Allah’s?” (At-Tawbah, 111)

A person who neglects his Lord by living carelessly in this life will pay a very painful price for his disloyalty on that horrible Day of Judgment, when even the smallest help and assistance will be required. Fidelity is a quality that is sought for and desired in all circumstances, but it is especially valued in friendship and service. As Mawlana Rumi said:

“All things, including love, affection and friendship, depend on loyalty, and people seek out faithful people constantly. They will never approach a disloyal heart.”

“The pen wrote that the reward for loyalty is loyalty, and the reward for betrayal is suffering and its ink dried.”

“A sultan cuts off the head of a person who betrays him, even if he is his own son. However, hands will applaud an Indian slave who demonstrates loyalty to the sultan. And even a hundred viziers cannot reach his reputation.”

“Leave the slave aside. Even if a dog at the door shows loyalty, hundreds of feelings of contentment and satisfaction for that dog



will sprout in the heart of his owner. The owner caresses that dog with affection...”

2. Loyalty to the Prophet ﷺ:

Loyalty to the Prophet ﷺ who is the Master of the Universe, is the most exalted and essential loyalty after that to Allah. This loyalty is to the Prophet ﷺ, who in his prayers and supplications to Allah Almighty first requested for his nation by calling out “ummati, ummati.”

This loyalty, which will begin with a deepening of respect and love for the Prophet, is possible by being able to be a moth circling around his Sunnah. He is the only lamp that leads us to Allah and illuminates the endless roads of delight by guiding us through this life. How admirable are the following instances that show loyalty to him and his response to this loyalty:

At the stage when the Battle of Uhud turned against the believers, the disbelievers attacked with all their might with the intention of killing the Prophet ﷺ. So much so that they broke the blessed tooth of the Master of the Universe. The sacrifices and loyalty of the Companions, who were with the Prophet ﷺ in that terrible turmoil, were realized in the form of incredible bravery. Some were shielding him with their bodies, some were blocking the incoming arrows with their hands, and some were trying to repel them by shooting arrows at the enemy. Sa’d Ibn Abi Waqqas ؓ, who is reported to have shot up to a thousand arrows at the disbelievers while standing next to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ that day, the Master of the Universes expressed his satisfaction by saying:

“Throw (the arrows)! Let my parents sacrifice their lives for you Sa’d.”

Imam Ali ؓ says:



I never saw the Prophet ﷺ saying, “Let my parents sacrifice their lives for you,” to any man after Sa’d. (Bukhari, Jihad, 80; Muslim, Fadha’il ul-Sahabah, 41/1876)

Another example is:

On the day of Hdaybiya, the Prophet ﷺ sent Uthman ؓ to Mecca as a representative. He told the disbelievers that their intention was to perform Umrah and return. However, the disbelievers didn’t give permission and said to Uthman:

“You can perform Tawaf by yourself if you want!” However, Uthman ؓ who dedicated himself to Allah and His Prophet told them:

“I cannot until the Prophet does first! I will only visit the Baytullah (the House of Allah) behind him. I have no place where he is not accepted!” and declared his loyalty to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

At the same time, the Messenger of Allah was accepting the renewed pledge of allegiance due to the developing events and because Uthman wasn’t present, the Messenger of Allah put his other hand on the top and said:

“This is the pledge of Uthman!” (Bukhari, Ashab al-Nabi, Tirmidhi, Ma-naqib, 18)

This compliment of the Prophet, for which Uthman ؓ was praised, applies to the entire Ummah as long as we maintain our allegiance and commitment. With loyalty in our hearts, we can sincerely join the company in Bayatur-Ridwan and get the following glad tidings:

“Those who pledge you their allegiance, pledge allegiance to Allah. Allah’s hand is over their hands. He who breaks his pledge only breaks it against himself. But as for him who fulfills the con-

tract he has made with Allah, We will pay him and immense reward.” (Al-Fath, 10)

The way of being loyal to the Messenger of Allah is described in the Quran as:

النَّبِيُّ أَوْلَىٰ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ

“The Prophet has a stronger affinity to the believers than they do to themselves.” (Al-Ahzab, 6)

The lovers of the Prophet crowned every trust of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, from his blessed hair and beard to his footprints, within the framework of these and numerous other gestures of devotion and loyalty. From his cardigan to his staff, from his sword to his arrows and his blessed seal, all the trusts that have come down to the present day have always continued with this feeling, and everything connected to him has been considered as a blessed trust. The Ottomans’ devotion, loyalty, and care is legendary in this regard. So much more that, some historians believe that the Ottoman Empire’s six hundred years’ life is due to observing the Qur’an and Sunnah.

3. Loyalty to the Great Religious Figures:

Every believer is required to have a sense of loyalty toward the great figures in the religion. They are the ones who conveyed to us the two worlds’ mutually illuminating laws, commands, and prohibitions as conveyed by Allah and His Messenger. Societies are led by their instruction and direction, and they advance by enhancing their spiritual spheres. Therefore, they say:

“The death of the scholars is like the death of a universe...”



On the other hand, some interpreters state that the word truthful in the following verse refers to people of loyalty and fidelity, Allah Almighty says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَكُونُوا مَعَ الصَّادِقِينَ

“You who believe! have taqwa of Allah and be with the truthful.” (Al-Tawbah, 119) and they interpreted this verse as; “Be with those who are loyal in the way of faith and Islam, and be loyal too, so that you can achieve salvation in this world and in the hereafter!”

4. Loyalty to Parents and Relatives:

One of the problems that needs to be emphasized the most is the rights of parents. The greatest fidelity of children is to serve them, compliment them, and give them gifts, especially as they age. In the Qur’an, after not associating any partners with Allah, it is mentioned the good behavior towards parents. Allah Ta’ala says:

“For your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him and honor your parents. If one or both of them reach old age in your care, never say to them ‘ugh,’ nor yell at them. Rather, address them respectfully. And be humble with them out of mercy, and say, “My Lord! Be merciful to them as they raised me when I was young.”” (Al-Isra, 23-24)

The life of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is filled with examples of loyalty and fidelity:


Fatima bint Asad ؓ, the mother of Ali ؓ, served the Prophet as if she was his real mother in his youth. When this righteous woman passed away, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ came to the funeral, sat by her side, and complimented her committed service in the presence of Allah by saying:

“Oh, my mother! May Allah grant you mercy. After my own mother, you became a mother to me. You would starve and feed me, you would neglect yourself and clothe me, you would refrain from eating good foods and feed me, and while you were doing all these, your sole desire was the pleasure of Allah and the eternal home.”

Then Allah’s Messenger ﷺ commanded that the body be washed three times. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ doused her with water that had a pleasant aroma called camphor. Then he took off his own shirt and put it on her. The corpse was shrouded over this shirt.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ used his own hands to dig the earth when the grave was opened and it was time to dig the sarcophagus. After finishing this work, he lay there on his side and said:

“Allah is the one who gives life and causes death. He is the living who never dies. Oh Allah! Forgive my mother, Fatima bint Asad. Make her say Kalima Tawhid, and enlarge the place she entered (her grave). For the sake of your Prophet and the Prophets who came before me accept my prayer. You are without a doubt the most merciful of the merciful...”

Then, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ recited four Takbirs for the funeral and he personally placed the body into the grave with Abbas and Abu Bakr .” (Tabarani, Al Mu’jam Al Kabir, XXIV, 351-2)

From the great life of the Messenger of Allah, there have grown so many unique examples of special virtue that they will serve as a lesson for all people until the end of time.

In fact, following the Hunayn Incident, a delegation from the tribe of Hawazin approached the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and asked for the release of their prisoners, claiming to be Muslims. And one among them said:



“We have your foster mothers among us!”

Then the Messenger of Allah ﷺ replied, “I will deliver back to you the captives who fell to me and the sons of Abdulmuttalib,” with great loyalty.

The Blessed Companions declared, “We also surrender our captives to the Messenger of Allah,” in order to share in the same virtue.

So, on that day, 6,000 prisoners were released without any worldly retribution because of this unique virtue, the entire tribe of Hawazin joined Islam as a whole.



The affection for and fidelity to family members comes next to that towards parents. There are two types of kinship. One is the closeness of belief and virtue in the general sense. The other is kinship, which is characterized by a special affinity. In Islamic terminology, family is referred to as “ulu-l arham”, and visiting relatives is referred to as “silat al-rahim.” Cutting off ties with family members is considered a major sin. Based on this, it is commanded that:

“Mercy does not descend on a council where a person who has lost contact with his relative is present.”

Our religion has also ordered us not to keep our relatives away from any goodness or closeness, and to respect the rights in a gradual way from close relatives to distant relatives.

The family institution and the manifestations of kinship are among the wondrous manifestations of Allah. One of the ways in which the mercy of our Lord is shown is through connections and kinship traits that give strangers a heart and soul for one another in the context of marriage and unite them like branches of love in the shape of kinship. A very unpleasant kind of disloyalty is severing



family relationships. The Prophet Adam and Eve's human encounter unites the seemingly distant bonds. It is certain that the feelings and virtues of loyalty and piety are above lineage.

Happiness is strengthened by the bond of Islamic family and kinship in this world. The happiness of the hereafter is found in the sincerity of the world and the loyalty that results from that same sincerity.

It's not just the things we've stated that require loyalty; there are other matters as well. We should provide special consideration to our brothers and sisters in Islam. On the other hand, among the traits of strong personalities and characters are allegiances to society, our friends and deceased loved ones, and our ancestors.

It should be understood that taqwa and loyalty do not consent to the breaching of divine boundaries. The ego travels in numerous ways that are hypocritical and heedless, pulling the heart from one abyss to another. The truth is that many nations that provoked divine wrath were destroyed because they frequently broke their promises to God. They refused it, despite it being humanity's responsibility and requirement to be loyal to the divine covenant. Thus, they were destroyed by being deprived of comprehension, insight, knowledge and understanding. Their situation has been turned into a lesson for those who are able to see and those who came after them, as well as a warning for the people who possess taqwa and therefore are able to pay heed. As it is stated in the verse:

"We did not find most of them true to their covenant..." (Al-A'raf, 102)

How well the following story by Fariduddin Attar depicts the condition of individuals who forget the blessings Allah has given them and show disloyalty as prisoners of self-inclination:



A royal hunt was organised. The monarch called for someone to bring the greyhound, and the handler brought a dark, sleek dog, intelligent and well-trained; A jeweled gold collar sparkled at its throat, its back was covered with a satin coat; gold anklets clasped its paws; its leash was made of silk threads twisted into a glistening braid. The king thought of him as a dog who would understand and took the silk leash in his royal hand; the dog ran just behind his lord, then found a piece of bone abandoned on the ground. He stooped to sniff, and when the king saw why, a glance of fury flashed out from his eye. "When you're with me," he said, "your sovereign king, how dare you look at any other thing?" He snapped the leash and to his handler cried: "Let this ill-mannered roam far and wide. He's mine no more, better for him if he had swallowed pins than found such liberty!" The handler stared and tried to remonstrate: "The dog, my lord, deserves an outcast's fate; but we should keep the satin and the gold." The king said: "No, do just as you are told; drive him, exactly as he is, away and when he comes back to himself someday, he'll see the riches that he bears and know that he was mine, a king's, but long ago."

How admirable is this story, which reflects the plight of disloyal people fleeing in their evil pursuits and not knowing how to appreciate the innumerable blessings of Allah Almighty! Eventually, whoever enters this state will realize that these temporal ties are meaningless, but everything will be over by then.

Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi says:


"How is it that you, as a human being, show disloyalty when disloyalty is a disgrace and a shame even for dogs?"


In this respect, the wise people addressed the travellers of truth as follows:




“Take a lesson from both the heedless and righteous people and try to be a loyal servant to Allah!”

Yes, that’s the whole point: Being a loyal servant.

We are eternally grateful to Allah Almighty for providing us with the chance to be so close to such a servant, which has made us feel grateful and fortunate. This outstanding person is our Father Musa Efendi , who is buried in the Sahra al-Jadid cemetery and was entrusted to the mercy of Allah in July 1999.

The term “Sahibul-Wafa” (the owner of loyalty) was used by his followers to refer to our father and master, who in our time served as the ideal embodiment of Abu Bakr Siddiq . Without a doubt, there was a reason why this expression was employed to describe that amazing individual. He was a friend of God, the sun of our days and the crescent of our nights, and he had a heart that exhibited great commitment and fidelity throughout his entire life. He was the sultan of the sages and a symbol of guidance.

He was a union bud who, in his heart, accumulated all the manifestations of loyalty that we have so far discussed, and for this, he deserved to be referred to as “Sahibul-Wafa.” Nothing Could mend the rifts of separation in our hearts despite the passage of time following his passing. On the contrary, it got more intense because of his spiritual realm, which was affected by an incomparable loyalty, he was always an exceptional teacher of loyalty and devotion, affection and love to us.

When Allah  assigns a servant to a noble task, He also bestows upon him the merit of that position. Musa Efendi’s interior and exterior perfection could be seen in all of its facets from this vantage point. He had great insight, understanding and sensitivity, which



let him figure out even the hardest and worst events down to the smallest details.

The priceless blooms that he displays in his loyalty, such as the roses, carnations, daffodils, and hyacinths, are what keep our hearts gardens lush. He was always the best example of how to keep the promise of pre-eternity by sticking to the truth in it, following the Book and the Sunnah, keeping the trust of his ancestors through the donations he made, paying close attention to family and friends, even friends of friends, working hard at foundation services, etc.

We can illustrate only a few of Musa Efendi's many loyalties as follows:


In the presence of the elderly who had been left alone he became quite upset and said, "It is vital for us to host these poor people in our house. However, we are not able to do that. Then we are obligated to establish a hospice for them." So they put this lovely idea into practice with a few of their relatives. They would occasionally pay a visit and show a keen interest in their needs.

Even the cats in the garden felt his love, and he treated each one differently based on how much they loved and cared for their kittens. He did this by giving them names that matched their personalities.

When a little child I was hospitilased, even after 55 years, my father Musa Efendi looked for and found the nurse who saved my life, and he honored her.

His devotion to his master, Sami Efendi, in particular, was legendary. On Eid days, Sami Efendi's home was the first place to visit. He would slaughter the first sacrifice for him. His devoted heart would be especially pleased by the Qur'anic recitals that his followers performed for the blessed soul of his master every year.



In essence, he taught us love and affection through his actions and way of living during his entire life, much like Abu Bakr  taught us about “what and how the devotion of lovers should be.” Now, the mission of the people of love is to develop into a bud that blooms in the loyal land that was rejuvenated by that loving and devoted shah.

Oh my God! Give us the lovely state of that “Sahibul-Wafa” in our hearts, and include us among the people of righteousness! Make us all the heirs of the Garden of Delight (Jannatun-Na’im) by blessing our deeds with loyalty and sincerity! Give us descendants who will shine with the joy of their hearts and be the crown of the righteous! Make us all loyal to you, Your Messenger, our parents, relatives, all faithful ones, to our homeland, nation, and all the other trusts! Let us live in accordance with Your pleasure!

Amin!..



Being an Exemplary Person of Faith



The friends of God are experiencing the love and affection of the All-Powerful God, just like a piece of paper that burns in the limelight, their selfish tendencies vanish. So since they become the center of bright attention, other people are drawn to their radiant beauty without even knowing it.



BEING AN EXEMPLARY PERSON OF FAITH

Allah ﷻ appoints righteous individuals with exceptional character and personality as guides in order to help his servants achieve happiness. Character and personality are naturally admired by people. To put it another way, we need a real-life example that will have an impact on the intellect and heart as we pursue the truth and develop spiritually. This is why Allah Almighty sent not only books, but also sent human being that He made Prophets, who left lasting marks and influences in every way, as well as saints who followed in their footsteps, and other morally upstanding scholars and righteous believers to guide humanity.

The Prophets and saints were such personalities that even their enemies could not attribute an unpleasant quality to them. Thanks to them, many people have become familiar with the truth and have been honored with faith.

In fact, the Companions believed in and gathered around the Prophet ﷺ as a result of their admiration for his outstanding personality and character. As a result, the half-savage people who buried their daughters alive were gone, and the highest monumental figures of Islamic history appeared in their place.

In this regard, the most significant trait of individuals who pursue the road of faith, honesty, and taqwa should be the development of a personality worthy of our Prophet. Those who possess such qualities become a magnet for guidance. Those who are deprived of this, on the other hand, unknowingly play a role that harasses and misleads people. Mawlana describes this state as follows:



“During the time of Bayazid Bastami, there was a fire worshiper. One day, a believer said to him:

«Why don’t you convert to Islam, attain peace, and gain honor... »

The fire worshiper provided the following response.

«O you who desire my redemption! Although I have a strong seal on my mouth, that is, I cannot outwardly speak my faith, I secretly hold the same faith as Bayazid; because it possesses a certain beauty and depth. Although I am not yet entirely devoted to the religion and belief, I admire the profundity of his faith. He is unlike everyone else; he is an elegant, refined, compassionate, luminous, and exceedingly sublime human being.

However, if the faith to which you have invited me is your own, I cannot embrace it... Because I have neither the desire nor the inclination for your religion. Even if a person’s heart has hundreds of tendencies to believe, he becomes rigid and frigid due to your hardness and rigidity. His tendency to believe also diminishes. Because he sees in you an empty title in the name of Islam and an almost lifeless form. This position is as nonsensical as considering deserts to be suitable for growing roses, fruits and vegetables...

As far as I can tell, Bayazid’s faith possesses all the delight and ecstasy of faith. If even a grain of his faith touches a single drop, it would turn it into an ocean.

Your faith, on the other hand, has been enslaved by deceit and vanity due to the fact that it has remained within its shell. A fleeting belief is comparable to an ugly-voiced and soulless mu’adhin that drives people away rather than attracts them to prayer. In other words, if your faith enters a rose garden, it becomes a thorn and dries up the roses.



Nevertheless, if Bayazid's light of faith rises from the heaven of his beautiful soul and shines in this world, this useless world will be cut into emeralds, and a source of riches for the believers. Therefore, Bayazid's faith and loyalty generated in my heart and mind an incredible yearning, desire, and thirst for faith...»

Here is the prominent personality of Bayazid Bistami, which impacted a fire worshiper and a lesson for those who will inculcate religion! ..

How did that excellent friend of Allah develop this character? Certainly, with love and allegiance to Allah and His Messenger... The way of looking at creatures with the inner eye with compassion for the creatures...

The following examples are quite illustrative since they portray the inner life of Bayazid, the friend of God:

One day Bayazid Bistami ﴿ﷺ﴾ resumed his journey after taking a break under a tree.

On the way, he noticed some ants crawling on the bags where he had been sitting. He went back to his resting place and left the ants where they were in order to avoid taking them away from their home and disturbing their lives.

Bayazid Bistami would suddenly become so delicate and kind as a result of divine love that he would feel the agony of every creature.

One day, they beat a donkey so severely in front of him that blood appeared on the poor animal's back. At the same time, blood began to leak from Bayezid Bistami's calves...

This state is a reflection of the Prophet's perfect manners:

In Medina, the Prophet ﴿ﷺ﴾ visited the garden of one of the Ansar for repose and meditation among the date palms. A camel that was



there groaned and shed tears when it saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, just like a human would. The Prophet ﷺ approached the camel, wiped away its tears, petted it, and comforted it. Then he warned the camel's owner:

“Don't you fear Allah about this beast which Allah has put in your possession. It has complained to me that you keep it hungry and load it heavily which fatigues it.” (Abi Dawud, Jihad, 44)

People like Bayazid Bistami, who were kneaded with these and similar manifestations of the Prophet's morality, follow in the Prophet's ﷺ footsteps in every circumstance, since they have acquired a pure heart. Therefore, they and their followers are exemplary religious individuals in every way.

Their smiles flood hearts with the joy and tranquility of spring. The spirits are refreshed by their sight. Their radiant faces always remind us of Allah. Because they continually receive guidance and reflections from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. The following example beautifully depicts these reflections and blessings:

The pasha husband of the Gurju Khatun, who was a disciple of Mawlana, was appointed to Kayseri. Gurju Khatun sent the famed painter and muralist of the Seljuk palace, Aynuddawla, to Mawlana to discreetly sketch a portrait of him and deliver it to her. The painter hesitantly approaches Mawlana and explains the issue. Mawlana smiled at him and said, “Fulfill what you were ordered as you wish!”

The artist begins to sketch. In the end, though, he sees that the face in front of him has taken on a form unrelated to the image he has drawn, and he begins to draw again. Thus, he witnessed that Mawlana changed shape twenty times while his picture was being drawn. He realizes his weakness and is obliged to give up this task. Because his art became entangled in its own lines.



This incident stirs the painter's emotions, propels him into profound contemplation, and transforms him into a wanderer of the spiritual realm. In this condition, the painter ponders, "If the saint of a religion is like this, imagine how the Prophet was?" and falls into Mawlana's hands to kiss them.

Here is another example:

We were returning to Istanbul from Bursa in the company of the late Sami Efendi and my late father, Musa Efendi ﴿﴾ to Istanbul. We planned to wait in line with our vehicle to board the Yalova ferry. While directing our car to a parking spot, one of the individuals tasked with directing the cars in order to avoid chaos, caught sight of Sami Efendi and Musa Efendi, who were seated in the back. He paused in shock. Then he approached. He glanced more closely through the car window, exhaled deeply, and exclaimed,

"God, what a strange world! There are faces resembling angels and others resembling Nimrod..."

Without a doubt, this event is a wonderful embodiment of an invitation to Allah, without letters or words, with just a face.

As believers, it is our responsibility to reconstruct our character by gaining inspiration from the fortunate hearts of such noble people. Those who are pioneers of societies should focus more on this issue, that is, having a character that acts as a magnet for guidance. Because, much like the rear wheel of a car follows the front wheel, people are formed by the examples they see in front of them and live their lives accordingly.

The continuation of the global order and the integrity of the moral framework are only feasible through spiritual knowledge and with the depth of the heart. The righteous are the suns of mercy on the horizon of a nation's happiness and harmony. Heedless people,



on the other hand, are pits of oppression and darkness. The following argument from Ahmed Jawdat Pasha shows this issue clearly:

“One of the Umayyad caliphs, Walid Ibn Abdulmalik, was interested in new buildings and farmland. People were also interested in building new houses and farms. Construction and agriculture were always discussed in meetings and gatherings. While, Sulayman Ibn Abdulmalik was prone to debauchery and enjoyed the pleasures of life and eating. In his time, there were ornaments, grandeur, magnificent feasts, debauchery, and enthusiasm in entertainment. Entertainment became the fashion of the time. As for Umar Ibn Abdulaziz, this great caliph was a devout man. The people of his time followed the path of devotion and obedience. In the assemblies, there would be spiritual talks such as, “What was your recitation tonight? How many Quranic verses have you memorized and how many days have you fasted this month? (How many sick and lonely people did you visit?)” (*Qisas al-Anbiya wa Tawarikh al-Khulefa*, v. I. p. 717)

The reason that perfect sufis have such a great effect on people is that they are filled with Allah’s love, like butterflies orbiting around the light. In this respect, Allah is their seeing eye and hearing ear.

In other words, because the friends of God are under the manifestation of God Almighty’s love and affection, their selfish tendencies have vanished just like a piece of paper that has burnt up under a spotlight. Thus, since they become a center of luminous attraction, other people involuntarily fall in love with their radiant beauty. Since they are no longer enslaved by transient compliments and worldly interests, they strive not to slip into the whirlpool of negative characteristics like pride, arrogance, and self-conceit.

All of their aspirations and objectives are for Allah’s pleasure. In this regard, there is no distinction between few and many, cold and



heat, prosperity and poverty, mortal ranks and relative circumstances. Because they are all like the vanishing shadows.

These fortunate individuals maintain themselves under constant observation by transforming each breath into remembrance. They have no regard for the flaws and errors of others.

Although they are sometimes condemned by others for living an independent life and not submitting their hearts to the world's fleeting pleasures, their only response is as the verse states:

وَعِبَادُ الرَّحْمَنِ الَّذِينَ يَمْشُونَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ
هَوْنًا وَإِذَا خَاطَبَهُمُ الْجَاهِلُونَ قَالُوا سَلَامًا

“The slaves of the All-Merciful are those who walk lightly on the earth and, who, when the ignorant speak to them, say, ‘peace’.” (Al-Furqan, 63)

The world has been ordered to serve such servants and submit to them.

As it is indicated in the hadith:

“Whoever makes the Hereafter his goal, Allah makes his heart rich, and organizes his affairs, and the world comes to him whether it wants to or not. And whoever makes the world his goal, Allah puts his poverty right before his eyes, and disorganizes his affairs, and the world does not come to him, except what has been decreed for him.”

(Tirmidhi, Sifat al-Qiyamah, 30)

Great characters have possessed such a high moral nature that they never hurt anyone, except for the sake of Allah, and they are not hurt by anyone. They are as described in the following verse:



الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ فِي السَّرَّاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَالْكُظُمِينَ الْغَيْظِ
وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

“Those who give in times of both hardship and ease, and who control their anger, and pardon others. Allah loves the good-doers.” (Ali ‘Imran, 134)

By embodying the reality of this verse, Jafar As-Sadiq forgave his servant for spilling meal on him, set him free. Hasan Al-Basri also pardoned people who slandered him and educated them by sending gifts to them.

Yunus Emre beautifully depicts the beautiful states of the great Muslims as follows:

Fasting, Praying and Hajj
Will not be enough, oh scholar
To be a perfect human being
Divine wisdom is needed!

In short, the righteous servants, who serve as an example for the entire human race, are characterized by compassion, goodness, kindness toward creatures, and reverence for the Creator. Their very breath is a state of remembrance. Those who are with them are in ecstasy due to the wonderful pleasures they enjoy. The hearts of these unique servants are filled with love for Muhammad.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ says the following on being with the friends of Allah in the everlasting realm beyond this world, in order to profit from them:

“Bury your dead among righteous people.” (Daylami, Musnad, I, 102)



As a result of their character and merits, Allah Almighty does not allow their corpses to decompose in the earth after death. Jabir Ibn Abdullah ﴿﴾ narrates:

When the time of the Battle of Uhud approached, my father called me at night and said, “I think that I will be the first amongst the Companions of the Prophet ﴿﴾ to be martyred. I do not leave anyone after me dearer to me than you except the Messenger of Allah ﴿﴾ and I owe some debt and you should pay it and treat your sisters well.” So in the morning he was the first to be martyred and was buried next to another martyr. I did not like to leave him with another martyr so I took him out of the grave after six months of his burial and he was in the same condition as he was on the day of burial, except a slight change near his ear. (Bukhari, Janaiz, 78)

This is the exemplary and lofty condition of the righteous believer!

A recent example of this was a muadhin from Adana, a person of faith and a hafiz. One of Allah’s friends, Mahmud Sami Ramazanolu ﴿﴾, said that the grave of a hafiz who died in Adana with this description was opened for transport after 30 years due to the need to build the road, but they witnessed that the body of this person was intact and his shroud was sparkling.

This and related narrations and observations are quite prevalent in Islamic history. These are Allah Almighty’s extraordinary manifestations to certain of his righteous servants that serve as lessons of guidance and warning. Otherwise, the bodies of righteous servants who die would decompose just like the rest. Divine favors, such as the fact that some righteous people’s bodies do not decompose after their death, are a quality that belongs to Allah’s supreme will as a source of wisdom.



Important is our eternal gain, which entails, on the one hand, attempting to emulate these individuals and, on the other hand, being able to teach our children to be righteous. It is required by a hadith:

“A man will be raised in status in Paradise and will say: ‘Where did this come from?’ And it will be said: ‘From your son’s praying for forgiveness for you.’” (Ahmad bin Hanbal, II, 509; Ibn Majah, Adab, 1)

Another hadith related to this issue is as follows:

“When a man dies, all of his actions are cut off except three: ongoing charity, knowledge that people benefit from and righteous son who prays for him.” (Muslim, Wasiyah, 14; Tirmidhi, Ahkam, 36)

A spiritually-centered life transforms the world into a paradise. Allah’s grace and mercy are bestowed on the righteous. Being able to live in the Messenger of Allah’s spiritual climate with his affection is the summit of worldly joy and the beginning of eternal happiness. It is our lifelong responsibility to uphold the honor of being a member of his ummah and to follow in the footsteps of his successors.

May Allah Almighty bless us with the ability to accomplish his noble mission. May He include us all among the fortunate people who, like Umar Ibn Abdulaziz, Bayazid Bistami, Sami Efendi, and their peers, exemplified the religion throughout their lives.

Amin!



Destiny and its Secrets



The eye's vision and the ear's hearing are limited to a particular distance. From that distance, it is hard to see or hear what is far away. Likewise, the correct grasp of fate is beyond our capacity. Because we know and attempt to explain the worldly events and occurrences with rational explanations and justifications. Most of the time, we cannot perceive the underlying wisdom.



DESTINY AND ITS SECRETS

All occurrences in the universe, from atoms to spheres, from “micro” to “macro” worlds are meticulously planned with regards to time, place, form and cause. The destiny program that is carried out at the appropriate time with a divine precision.

Allah Almighty endows all living things with a purpose and guides them to fulfill it. The traces of the events on the paths of life are, in fact, the lines of destiny. The course of all entities, including the moon, sun, stars, plants, people and animals, are contained in this destiny program. This program doesn't omit anything, not even a leaf that falls from its branch. In the absence of the program of destiny, there would be an immense disorder across the universe.

Every piece of art is produced in accordance with the ability and potential of the artist. A painter, for instance, paints his own paintings, and a calligrapher writes his own calligraphy pieces in accordance with his own will and skills. Allah ﷻ has planned and decided from the beginning of time how the universe's power will flow from its creation to its end, as well as the mysteries and knowledge of man, who is a wonder of creation, and the traits that all living things will have from the time they are born until they die.

This order characteristic, which is the result of divine will, is known as destiny. This truth is stated by Allah, the Almighty, in the following verses:

إِنَّا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَاهُ بِقَدَرٍ

“We have created everything, in due measure.” (Al-Qamar, 49)



مَا أَصَابَ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مِّنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ نَبْرَأَهَا إِنَّ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ

“Nothing occurs, either in the earth or in yourselves, without being in a Book before We make it happen. This is something easy for Allah.” (Al-Hadid, 22)

In short, it is “qadhar” (destiny) for Allah to know and arrange the events that have not happened yet and to determine them in lawh mahfudh (the preserved tablet) and it is “qadr” (decree) to realize them as He has determined.

The attribute of “knowing” is the law of God’s divinity, according to which Allah Almighty is aware of impending events before they take place. Given that Allah is not limited by time or space, His understanding of this is perfectly natural. Allah is not constrained by the circumstances that make it difficult for us to understand destiny and decree.

You have to think that everything in the universe happens in accordance with the preordained divine plan. In this sense, even agnostics accept the influence of a power over them that makes things happen, referring to it as “destiny.” In fact, the expressions of deniers such as “I was lucky” or “I was unlucky” demonstrate that every person subtly and indirectly confirms the validity of destiny.

The following passages from a play by Necip Fazıl illustrate how a contemplative person affirms themselves in the face of the unknowable truth of destiny:

“For instance, a man got run over by a car in Eminönü Square. Ten minutes before, the man is in front of Gülhane Park. Let’s say the vehicle is coming from Taksim. Can you see the scenery? It is



coming! One man in a hundred thousand men and one vehicle in a thousand cars. Neither does the man know that he will get hit by a car, nor the car driver know that he will have an accident... Through a series of seeming coincidences, they both approach one another without realizing it. For instance, the man is standing in front of a store. He grabs a box of matches. He takes one or two steps. He talks with a friend. He looks at a display window. Even these seemingly benign behaviors contribute to the catastrophe that will occur in a short while. Finally, that disastrous moment is born as a result of all these occurrences somehow interacting with one another. At that moment, it is caused by a single, basic reason. A distraction, a heedless moment, this or that... Who knows how and where these coincidences are managed in a very complicated and complex way?

(Page 43 of Creating a Man)

A person who is able to fully reflect on life's occurrences cannot help but believe that the infinite possibilities shown on the stage of the universe follow the strokes of a divine pen.

The secret of the great characteristics of decree and destiny, however, cannot be completely understood by human perception, which is bound by the impressions of the sensory world and is subject to time and space, just as color cannot be adequately described to a blind person. The wisdom behind it is to prevent people from falling into unrest by knowing secrets that they cannot bear.

Indeed, all of Allah Almighty's creatures have an unknown destiny, making it nearly impossible to discern it before it becomes a decree. In this field, only those whom Allah Almighty has given *ilm ladunni* knowledge (knowledge directly from Allah) can have some share of it.

Due to Allah's boundless benevolence, the mystery and unpredictability of fate stand in the way of human thought like an im-



passable barrier. But by His favor, there are some unique situations where this barrier is surmounted, one of which is true dreams. In fact, it has frequently been seen that the predictions of the future made by righteous people come true. These are the gleams that reflect on their hearts from the “lawh mahfuz” (the preserved tablet).



The authority of human beings to make choices about whether or not to do things that are positive or negative, good or evil, is called the partial will. The universal will, on the other hand, is reserved for Allah alone. As a result, the servant cannot have complete freedom. Matters such as being born, dying, life span, gender, nationality and ability that people cannot interfere with are included in the absolute content of destiny. Mankind is not responsible for these subjects, to which he is bound out of necessity.

Allah Almighty holds His servant responsible in proportion to the capacity He has given to him. Therefore, there is neither reward or punishment for actions that occur outside of human will. As a matter of fact, if a fasting person eats and drinks out of his will, by forgetting that he was fasting, no penalty is incurred and his fasting will still be valid according to the school of Imam Abu Hanifa.

Almighty God states in the verse; **“Allah does not burden any self with more than it can bare.”** (al-Baqara, 286) He has made every person responsible for only as much as their capacity but if a person doesn’t do what he’s obliged to do, can’t blame destiny because anything that is obligatory on us is therefore by definition inside our capacity.

Allah has implanted the principles of *fisk* and *taqwa* in the human soul and granted him the freedom to use his free will on both sides because man is a being who is being tested and who is ulti-



mately accountable for all his actions. In other words, in this fleeting universe, the servant has been granted limited freedom. This is equivalent to giving a child the option to spend his father's money for good or evil. This decision is the most crucial determinant of eternal bliss or destruction.

Not a single leaf in the universe can move unless its moving has been predestined by Allah. Everything that happens, sweet or bitter, is what Allah wills but not everything is what Allah likes and is pleased with. A teacher's objective is for his students to achieve success and pass the course. If the student does not work, the teacher has no recourse. Again, a doctor's obligation is to cure the patient. If the patient does not take the prescribed medication, he will be held accountable for any adverse effects. No crime can be attributed to the doctor.

A person's decision to follow a bad route and declare, "What should I do? This is my fate" is only the result of his own heedlessness and self-deception. For those who desire to pray, Allah Almighty bestows the reasons for doing so, while for those who do not desire to pray, He gives them impedimental reasons. Therefore, it is an injustice committed against the truth for a person to attempt to justify his actions by blaming fate.

It is stated in the verse:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ

"Allah doesn't wrong anyone even so much as an atom's weight." (An-Nisa, 40)

وَمَا أَصَابَكُمْ مِّنْ مُّصِيبَةٍ فَبِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَيَعْفُوا عَنْ كَثِيرٍ

“What every affliction befalls you is because of what your own hands have earned. And He pardons much.” (Ash-Shuraa, 30)

Mawlana Rumi رحمہ اللہ writes in his Mathnawi that people are responsible to the extent of their partial will and not to blame fate: “If you were pricked by a thorn, realize that you planted that thorn! If you are wrapped in beautiful and delicate clothes, remember that you are the one who weaved them!”

The eye’s vision and the ear’s hearing are limited to a particular distance. From that distance, it is hard to see or hear what is far away. Likewise, the correct grasp of fate is beyond our capacity. Because we know and attempt to explain the occurrences with explanations and justifications. Most of the time, we cannot perceive the underlying wisdom. Ali رحمہ اللہ told a person who inquired about the secret of decree and fate, “That subject is a vast ocean!”

Many of those who attempt to swim in that ocean, relying on their intellect, get caught in false whirlpools, such as the “Jabriyah,” who assert that the servant has no will, or the “Qadariyah,” who assert that they have an absolute will in all matters. In the end, they perish in that endless, shoreless sea.

Therefore, we cannot avoid falling into error unless we clearly define the limits of the will, which is the basis of man’s responsibility. As idolizing the power of will and choice by viewing the servant as the originator of his actions is opposed to our religion’s fundamental principles, so is dismissing the partial will and considering man as a completely independent being. Man does have a will and a choice, but they are bestowed by Allah Almighty.

Although it is possible to travel a bit further in the spiritual realm where the mind and intellect are incapable, it is not possible to unravel the riddle of this issue in an absolute sense. Recognizing



your limits and not exceeding them is a requirement for the perfect servant.



In his Mathnawi, Mawlana Rumi states eloquently that it is impossible to understand and comprehend the secret of destiny with the intellect, and that this inability is in fact a wonderful blessing:

“A man came to Musa ؑ and said: “O Kalimullah! Teach me the languages of the animals! Permit me to comprehend their words so that I may learn from their predicament and comprehend divine majesty!”

Prophet Musa remarked to him, “You should abandon this zeal; do not attempt to learn what is beyond your capacity! If an ant attempts to drink more water than it can hold, it will drown and die. Therefore, do not go beyond the knowledge you have been given! Because this can bring many risks! Take as many lessons as you can from the divine reign that spans the entire universe! Orient your hearts toward Allah! Know that the secrets of heavenly manifestations are obvious to those with a sound heart! »

Then the man responded, “At least teach the housekeeper’s dog and the chickens laying in front of the door their language!”

Musa ؑ saw that no matter what he did, he could not convince the man to give up what he desired, so he granted his request. However, he cautioned, “Be careful; do not drown in this ocean of secrets!”

In the morning, the man said, “Let’s see if I’ve truly learnt the language of these animals.” And he stood in the doorway to try.

Suddenly, when the maid shook the tablecloth, a piece of stale bread dropped to the ground.



This slice of bread was promptly snatched by the rooster that was there. The dog said, "You have oppressed me! Because you can also eat wheat grain. However, I cannot! Why are you stealing this loaf of bread that is mine?" The rooster responded to the dog: "Do not fret! The owner's horse will die tomorrow, and you will have a feast of meat!"

When the owner of the house heard these words from the rooster, he quickly sold his horse. So, the rooster felt embarrassed towards the dog.

This dispute between the rooster and the dog lasted for three days in a row. The master, having learned from the rooster that his horse would die on the first day, his mule on the second, and his slave on the third, sold his mule and slave, just as he had sold his horse before he died. Consequently, the dog wasn't able to benefit from any of them. The rooster appeared to consistently mislead the dog. The rooster, who was humiliated three times as a result of the incident, finally told the dog on the fourth day:

"The truth is that the cunning master saved his property. However, by this behavior, he deceived himself. Now he will die tomorrow! His descendants will wail and slaughter an ox, which will benefit everyone, including us and you!"


The deaths of the horse, mule and slave were the bulwark and shield against the misfortune that befell this immature man. However, he averted the loss of possessions and the trouble of being harmed by putting himself forward."

The foolish man overheard the rooster's words. In response to hearing the truth, he became pale. A large ember dropped on his heart, and he ran to the Prophet Musa and exclaimed, "O Kalimullah! Help me and alleviate my suffering!" he pleaded.



Prophet Musa  said:

“You have been entangled in matters that are beyond your capacity. Now you’re lost and walking in circles. Did you think you’d make a profit by selling those animals? I urge you not to force the secret of fate and destiny. What will be seen in the end is revealed beforehand to the wise, but the fool realizes when it is too late. Since you have mastered commerce and sales, sell your life and escape!”

Prophet Musa  responded to the man’s remorseful pleading by declaring, “The arrow is now released from the bow!” There is no recourse. However, I pray to the gracious God that you will die with faith!”

Prophet Musa took refuge in Allah. Thus, the death of the man with faith in exchange for his life was accepted through the prayer of the Kalimullah may Allah’s peace be upon him. Also, Allah Almighty said to Prophet Musa, “O Musa! If you so desire, I will revive him.” Nonetheless, Prophet Musa said, “Dear Lord! Praise be unending to You! Revive him in the hereafter, in that luminous and magnificent place! Because fate and destiny’s mysteries are revealed in that eternal realm!”

According to the story, people sometimes desire things that are harmful to them and that result in disaster. A person who has fallen into such a consequence, even if he desired it inadvertently, cannot help but feel remorse and weep in the end. Realizing and submitting to divine majesty is, therefore, the most appropriate means of attaining peace of mind in this world and eternal bliss in the next. This, however, is not for everyone. The servant’s ability to recognize his own weakness is the capital of eternity. Thus, the sole antidote is submission to God. Trust and reliance in God is a door of mercy leading to eternal joy.



In fact, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

“Faith in destiny removes all kinds of sorrow and sadness.”

(Suyuti, Jami’ul Saghir, I, 107)

It is very important not to equate trust in God with apathy, laziness, and failing to take action to prevent potential problems. Tawakkul (reliance in Allah) is surrendering to Allah about the outcome and taking refuge in Him, after taking every precaution. Otherwise, tawakkul without recourse to reasons is unacceptable and opposed to the spirit of genuine tawakkul.

Umar Ibn Al-Khattab ؓ departed for Sham and when he arrived, the commanders of the army, Abu Ubayda Ibn Al-Jarrah ؓ and his companions met him and told him that an epidemic had broken out in Sham. So he changed his mind about going to Sham. Although this decision was more conformable with the order of Allah and His Messenger in terms of taking measures and precautions, Abu Ubayda Ibn Al-Jarrah said, “Are you running away from what Allah has ordained?” Umar ؓ who wasn’t expecting this reaction from such a knowledgeable and blessed companion responded as:

“I wish someone else had said such a thing instead of you, O Abu Ubayda! Yes, we are running from what Allah had ordained to what Allah has ordained. Don’t you agree that if you had camels that went down a valley having two places, one green and the other dry, you would graze them on the green one only if Allah had ordained that, and you would graze them on the dry one only if Allah had ordained that?” (Bukhari, Tib, 30)

As is evident, it is impossible to escape destiny. Therefore, the servant is responsible for exercising prudence and exertion. Then,

one must accept the outcome that Allah has predetermined whatever it is the happens.

For those who view the world through the lens of knowledge, the secret of destiny and the servant's inability to fully comprehend it are not causes for regret, but rather a source of great blessing. Because it is an irrefutable fact that if man understands his fate, he will fall into numerous insurmountable perils and catastrophes, he cannot escape.

For instance, a person who suffers from an incurable sickness for which there is no known cure and is destined to die can avoid anxiety until he dies due to this uncertainty of fate. But if anyone knew when he was going to die, he would suffer from sadness, be unable to work, and die multiple times in the years leading up to his death. A mother who knew that her child would die before her would experience years of sorrow. Consequently, this circumstance would contradict the requirement for harmony in life, and equilibrium would be lost.

Recent increases in stress, depression and suicide are the unfortunate results of spiritual deprivation. Because it is normal for an untrained heart to be subject to selfish impulses and passions. Believing in fate, which leads people to the "unseen," is the only way to reach a state of surrender that lets you deal with life's surprises with strength and calm.

Happiness is achieved through submitting one's mind to revelation, adorning one's heart with good principles, and therefore submitting to the surprises of life. Again, true pleasure is accepting the ups and downs of life, enduring its difficulties, finding beauty in everything, and submitting to the Lord of all the worlds.



Allah Almighty can occasionally present a blessing in the form of sorrow and a curse disguised as a favor. Due to the fact that this world is the zone of trails, all of these attributes remain hidden from man.

Allah Almighty is saying:

وَعَسَىٰ أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ وَعَسَىٰ أَنْ تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا
وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَّكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

“Perhaps you dislike something which is good for you and like something which is bad for you. Allah knows and you do not know.” (Al-Baqarah, 216)

And in another verse:

قُلْ لَنْ يُصِيبَنَا إِلَّا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَنَا هُوَ مَوْلَانَا
وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ

“Say, ‘Nothing can happen to us except what Allah has ordained for us. He is the Master.’ It is in Allah that the believers should put their trust.” (At-Tawba, 51)

In fact, in terms of worldly existence, being blind appears to be a big loss. It is believed that no blessing can replace a functioning eye. Nonetheless, if a person born with a disability is able to avoid slipping into the marshes of sin due to this impairment, this state, which appears to be a source of sorrow, will become a source of joy in the Hereafter. The same holds true for poverty and prosperity. If a poor person does not complain about his circumstances and instead submits to Allah’s will, he may attain eternal wealth. Nonetheless, if



that impoverished person were wealthy in this life, it is possible that the wealth he possessed could excite his ego and create an illusion of power in his spirit, and he might squander eternal happiness by engaging in debauchery and complacency. Obviously, the opposite is also possible. In conclusion, a believer should view every situation as beautiful, be content with divine approval and control, and strive to live with patience, gratitude and submission.

As it is indicated in the hadith:

“Strange is the affair of the believer for there is good in every affair of his and this is not the case with anyone else except the believer for if he has an occasion to feel delight, he shows thanks, thus there is a good for him in it, and if he gets into trouble he endures it patiently, there is a good for him in it.” (Muslim, Zuhd, 64)

When the basic principles of destiny mentioned so far are deepened, so many problems are encountered that they do not go beyond being a capital for philosophical discussions. For this reason, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ commanded us to be content with believing in fate and forbade us from engaging in pointless debates on this subject. So much so that when he came across a group arguing about destiny, he told them:

“Is this what I ordered you to do? Or is this what I have been sent to you with? The people before you were only ruined when they differed about this matter. I order you to not debate about it.” (Tirmidhi, Qadar, 1)

The poet Ziya Pasha states the following regarding facts that transcend human capacity:

It is not required for this small brain to comprehend supreme matters,
as this scale cannot bear that much weight!



Dear Lord! Make us among the people of tawakkul, and allow us the ability to perform actions consistent with your approval! Make it possible for us to reach the stage of accepting and submitting to our fate and destiny.

Amin!



Mûsâ Efendi ﷺ

from Faith to Ihsan

(1917-1999)



“One of the greatest gifts of the Almighty God to a servant is the knowledge of his weaknesses. Seeing my mistakes was maybe the greatest blessing I received on this spiritual path. I realized my insolvency towards my Lord. Thus, I am unable to observe or deal with the mistakes of others. Praise be, I am thankful for all this...”

(Musa Efendi ﷺ)



MUSA EFENDI ﷺ FROM FAITH TO IHSAN (1917-1999)

Ihsan refers to the believer's awareness that Allah is watching him and, is also the practicing of good deeds in the most perfect way.

The life of Musa Efendi ﷺ, whom we entrusted to divine mercy on July 16, 1999, was exemplary in terms of human relations and behavior, replete with acts of kindness and grace. His life was an example of "ihsan".

Even when he was making jokes, he was careful not to lose sight of the fact that Allah was watching him. This beautiful state of his meant that he was always a source of benevolence towards those around him.

In all of his deeds and utterances, this great man was resolved to realize his faith to an impeccable manner. His life was one of the most exemplary examples of this grace and moral purity in our time. He always spread the blessings of his faith around him, like the sun always shining and warming up its surroundings without interruption.

Those who have a more or less intimate or distant relationship with him would know how he would feel uncomfortable by the disruption of the harmony required by the divine order in the universe. He would act with considerable care and consideration to rectify any errors and flaws he observed. For instance, he would feel uneasy if a picture frame on the wall was misaligned or if a prayer rug was arranged haphazardly. He would immediately fix it or ask someone do it. In a meeting or conversation, he would be bothered by the



disarray of the space, the haphazard seating of the guests, or their clustering in the doorway.

How beautifully the following words illustrate the perfection and elegance of the behavior of Allah's friends:

وَعِبَادُ الرَّحْمَنِ الَّذِينَ يَمْشُونَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا وَإِذَا خَاطَبَهُمُ
الْجَاهِلُونَ قَالُوا سَلَامًا، وَالَّذِينَ يَبِيتُونَ لِرَبِّهِمْ سُجَّدًا وَقِيَمًا

“The slaves of the All-Merciful are those who walk lightly on the earth, and who, when the ignorant speak to them, they say, ‘peace’; those who spend the night bowing and prostrating before their Lord.” (Al-Furqan, 63-64)

In these verses and the ones that come after them, Allah Almighty lists eight traits that righteous believers have:

1. Their walk on earth gently and with manners, not with pride and arrogance. If ignorant people attack them, they will say something that will result in peace. They instill confidence and tranquility in others by being kind and resilient. (See Al-Furqan, 63)
2. They bring their nights to life with worship. Their sleep and awaking are all for the sake of Allah. (See Al-Furqan, 64)
3. Their prayer is: Our Lord! Avert from us the punishment of Hell away from us, its punishment is inescapable pain. (See Al-Furqan, 65)
4. Their spending is neither extravagant nor mean, but moderate in between. (See Al-Furqan, 68)
5. They do not invoke any other god besides Allah, nor take any life made sacred by Allah, nor commit fornication. (See Al-Furqan, 68)



6. They don't bear false witness and when they come across falsehood, they pass by with dignity. (See Al-Furqan, 72)

7. When reminded of the revelation of their Lord, they don't turn a blind eye or a deaf ear to it. (See Al-Fuqan, 73)

8. They pray to Allah Almighty, "Our Lord! Bless us with righteous spouses and offspring who will be the joy of our hearts and make us models for the righteous." They demand that their family life and their offspring be in faith, wisdom and morality, free from disgrace in this world and the next, and their desire for them consists of being at the forefront of taqwa. (See Al-Furqan, 74)

Allah Almighty reveals the eternal result that such righteous believers will attain as follows:

"Such people will be repaid for their steadfastness with the Highest Paradise, where they will be meet with welcome and with peace." (Al-Furqan, 75)

When the heart is purified by the favor of Allah at the conclusion of the sufi path, it becomes such that it elevates its owner to the level of angels. Some individuals in this state, like any of the immortal stars in the universe, inhabit their own realm in utter secrecy. Such people cannot be known. According to a hadith qudsi, the following statement describes this group as follows:

"My friends are under my domes; no one knows them except Me." (Abdurrahman Jami, Nafkhatul Uns, p. 45)

Some of Allah's friends are known—to a certain extent—due to their role of guiding people, and they receive their part of the secret of baqa' (subsistence) in order to continue their service in human existence as a torch of guidance from their own time into the future. They perceive the hidden meaning, divine purpose and wisdom be-



hind events. Therefore, they live in tranquility and peace. They are immune to many human flaws, including haste and worry.

They no longer possess any “vanity.” As part of their spiritual growth, they start out on their journey loving, admiring and being in awe of the whole world in accordance with the measure of tolerating the created because of their Creator.

Musa Efendi, whose lofty states and traits we observed throughout his life, exemplified the perfection of kindness and grace in his daily interactions with all living creatures. To the point that the cats in the neighborhood and even the birds flying over his garden would get their share of his mercy through his generosity.

We should also say that we put the idea of “faith to excellence” (ihsan), which was the way that God’s friend lived his life and is one of the real causes of our intellectual and physical blessings, into the title of our most recent book, “Sufism,” and called it “From Faith to Excellence Sufism.” This is how we put this idea into the title of our most recent book.

On this occasion, we feel compelled to honor that friend of Allah, on behalf of all his admirers and students, with our greatest respect, affection, prayers and appreciation.

And we request that our readers recite a Fatiha for him...

Some of His Advice:

We will share a collection of Musa Efendi’s advice from letters he wrote to some of his students.

“A believer’s deeds reflect his heart and perfection. Some of these beauties are as follows: always being humble, knowing the value of their time and breath and not wasting them, loving Allah’s servants and not quarreling with them, treating people according to



their religious level, covering up faults, paying attention to what is haram and halal, and being very scrupulous about avoiding even minor sins because whoever belittles his sin despises Allah Almighty's orders and prohibitions.

“Let us embellish the morning hours with prayers, dhikr and prayers in accordance with our Lord's pleasure. Let us be of service to our family members and seniors. Let us minimize our intimacy with the people of the world, that is, those who are heedless, and instead sit with the righteous. Let us be of assistance to our families and the needy, both verbally and materially. Most importantly, let us be mindful of the haram and the halal. Furthermore, let us be cautious in our transactions so that we do not waste our servitude.”

“A servant's proximity to his Lord is proportional to his compassion and morality. A servant who is close to his Lord will also be privy to this secret in the following hadith:

أدبني ربي فأحسن تأديبي

“My Lord has educated me and so made my education most excellent.” (Suyuti, Jami'ul Saghir, I, 12) In other words, he is moralized with the morality of Allah Almighty, and there can be nothing more honorable and virtuous than this.

“All error, resentment and failure comes when we are negligent of dhikr, when we neglect our Lord. Those who preserve the spiritual state of dhikr do not experience excessive worldly anguish, sadness or even worldly delight. This void is filled by permanent peace, tranquility, and compassion for all creatures. In other words, love takes over... Allah Almighty immerses His devoted servant in an ocean of love. Therefore, that individual loves those who deserve to be loved in proportion to what Allah Almighty has caused him to love.”



“The more a wise person considers the divine majesty of Allah Almighty and the worldly and otherworldly bounties he has showered upon him, the more his modesty and humility will increase. He loves everyone based on their respective degrees. Even if he is right, he does not argue with others.”

“Conversely, the knowledgeable individual is aware that life is transient. Thus, he always searches for the approval of his Lord. Therefore, while he is still in the world, the distress and anguish in his heart are transformed into serenity and joy. In summary, he enters Paradise while on earth.”

“Serving one’s community well for the sake of Allah should be viewed as a very important duty. An individual who contributes to the life, order and well-being of a society is an extremely important asset to that society. Consequently, his rewards are equally significant.”

As it is stated in a hadith:

“The servant is the master of a people.” (Daylami, Musnad, II, 324)

“Although many people are inclined to worship and obedience, they remain indifferent to the “Sattar al-Uyub” attribute of Allah Almighty, which is to cover and pardon sins. Because of this, they cannot advance as desired. However, the ability to forgive and conceal faults is one of the most essential moral virtues. We should be forgiving just as Allah covers and forgives His servants’ numerous flaws and errors. Because those who possess Allah’s love know how to forgive. Insha’Allah, let us forgive so that we may be forgiven.”

“Submission is the sole route to comfort and relief. In other words, it entails contentment with divine division and observance of the halal and haram.”



“The saliks (spiritual travelers) may be classified into groups. Some of them undertake their actions for obedience, and they are rewarded accordingly. Another group recognizes that they are continuously in Allah’s presence. They follow the rules of the Qur’an and submit to Allah in the face of destiny. Their entire activities are in accordance with God’s pleasure. Their heart and soul realms are evaluated accordingly. Nonetheless, this group is small.”

“The sole aim is to be with Allah Almighty in this worldly turmoil and in all kinds of preoccupations. This is such a pleasant state that it is a sublime gift from Allah Almighty to His servant. If we can devote ourselves to this very lofty duty, we will be freed from being deceived by the ebb and flow of the world’s games.”

“One of the greatest gifts of the Lord to a servant is the knowledge of his weaknesses. Seeing my mistakes was maybe the greatest blessing I received on this spiritual path. I realized my insolvency towards my Lord. Thus, I am unable to observe or deal with the mistakes of others. Praise be to Allah, I am thankful for all this...”



All these warnings and advice, which are full of love, mercy and guidance, are droplets of blessings that reflect on us from his life in the consistency of “**ihsan**”.

May Allah’s mercy be upon him.



On the Work Titled
“Sufism from Iman to Ihsan”...-1-
This is a Drop of Heart...



Sufism is the ability to live servitude in the most ideal manner, with profound contemplation and ihsan, within the framework of the Qur'an and Sunnah. Sufism consists solely of removing obstacles that prevent servitude and providing opportunities that will lead to servitude.

** This article is an interview with the author of Altınoluk Magazine.*



On the Work Titled “Sufism from Iman to Ihsan”... -1- THIS IS A DROP OF HEART...

Altınoluk: You have written a book entitled “Sufism from Iman to Ihsan”. Why did you feel the need to write a new book on Sufism when so many have already been written?

–It is true. Numerous books have been written on Sufism. However, tides and ebbs in the flow of dynamic life, that is, periods when society is indulged in materialism and social peace and tranquility are disrupted, bring new needs to people every day. Although the core concerns remain the same, fresh perspectives and needs emerge over time. To analyze them and address such needs, it is necessary to rewrite sufi concerns as a requirement of spiritual education in every era, as is done in religious texts and historical works. In other words, the constant expression and correction of sufi truths and facts, as well as the correction of errors and excesses, is an essential requirement. Of course, not only for this necessity but also to reveal the immense beauty of Sufism to all hearts according to the conditions of time and place. The field of Sufism is like a vast ocean.

Consequently, we endeavored to provide a humble drop from this vast ocean for the same reason. A drop, because sufism is a “state” and not a set of words. We consider ourselves fortunate if our work can serve as a bridge, guiding hearts to the greatest serenity. In other words, we did not intend for our work to transcend what has already been written. We are ashamed of such a claim. What we have done is to reintroduce Sufism in line with the conditions of our time, in general and in accordance with the interests based on the sufi works written up to the present day and the flourishing lives of



God's friends. This work is actually a jug of water, refined from the sufi heritage of God's friends and delivered to the people of today.

Friends of Allah, they gaze in awe at the rising sun and the vibrant paintings showing the setting of the light beams, flapping their wings to lofty heights of marifatullah (knowledge of Allah). Since they even look at a snake with affection instead of the fright of others, they are fascinated by the skin of this animal and the speed and agility in its movements despite its lack of feet. Thus, these unique servants view all creatures with an eye of wisdom and compassion.

Again, this work was written to demonstrate that the movement of Sufism as a different discipline and concept from Islam is incorrect and to communicate clearly the imperative of living in peace and prosperity in both the external and internal aspects of the faith. To underscore this objective, we titled our work "Sufism from Iman to Ihsan."

The objective of this work is to ensure that Islam and Iman are crowned with "ihsan," that the consciousness of being under divine supervision is set in the heart.

Because authentic sufism entails living the Qur'an and Sunnah with depth of understanding and knowledge. Every state, speech, and action that exceeds the content of the Quran and Sunnah is erroneous. To express this truth, they said, "The fixed foot of the compass is the sharia."

Mawlana Rumi is saying:

"Like a compass I stand firm with one leg on the shariah and I roam with the other leg all over the seventy two nations."

"Shariah is like a candle, it sheds light and guides. The road is not traversed by keeping the candle in your hands. But it is also not



possible to set out before it is handled. Sufism begins when one starts to go down the path illuminated by the Shariah.”

On the other hand, the spiritual miraj of the servants who are close to Allah is ihsan, which is expressed as the servant organizing his life such that he sees his Lord constantly, and the awareness of divine observation becomes present in the heart and mind. The objective of sufis is to arrive at this truth, which demonstrates the spiritual and inner relationship with Allah. Whoever establishes this relationship in a healthy manner becomes a friend of Allah. Consequently, he becomes moralized with divine morality.

Also, this state is a serious preparation for serving Allah in the best way and for the eternal realm. In other words, Sufism is the ability to live the most beautiful form of servitude. Because Allah created man to serve Him. Therefore, Sufism is nothing but the elimination of obstacles that prevent obedience and the provision of opportunities that lead to servitude. In addition to healing many wounds, it also transforms many barren places into lush and fertile rose gardens and many desolate hearts into magnificent palaces.

Sufism is a luminous path that will earn its servants the rank and honor of “نعم العبد” (“a beautiful servant”) in the sight of Allah on their journey from this world of separation to the world of eternal union. This is undoubtedly possible when iman (faith) reaches the consistency of ihsan.

Altinoluk: What you said probably also reflects the content and framework of the book. What does your book discuss in general regarding this perspective? What was brought up in particular?

After we have given the general content of Sufism in our work, the main subjects that we tried to explain are marifatullah (direct knowledge of Allah), mahabbatullah (love of Allah), tazkiyatu-nafs



(purification of the self), cleansing the heart and other sufi practices. We tried to present examples from the great Islamic personalities, the heirs of the Prophet ﷺ. We have provided information in response to some doubts on the deep and intricate subjects of Sufism—not by targeting individuals, but only on the basis of ideas.

In addition, in the work, we touched on the fact that the practices of some people who are far from the spiritual aims desired by Sufism, either with good intentions but with ignorance or because of their negligence, have nothing to do with this blessed way. Sufism aims to make people mature and thus attain eternal bliss by purifying the self, which is specifically stated in the Qur'an and hadiths. This is a fact that Almighty Allah draws attention to by swearing repeatedly. It is commanded in Surah Al-Shams:

**“By the sun and its morning brightness,
and the moon when it follows it,
and the day when it displays it,
and the night when it conceals it
and the sky and what erected it
and the earth and what extended it.
and the self and what proportioned it
and inspired it with depravity or taqwa,
he who purifies it has succeeded,
he who covers it up has failed.!”** (Al-Shams, 1-10)

While Allah Almighty's taking an oath displays the value and honor of the beings to whom the oath is sworn, its true aim is to demonstrate the grandeur and significance of the di-



vine purpose and will expressed after that oath. The same holds true for the oaths in these verses. But with this distinction:

In these verses, Allah Almighty swears seven times in succession, then employs the preposition “قد” (Indeed) to emphasize the meaning, and only then does He declare:

“Successful indeed is the one who purifies their soul, and doomed is the one who corrupts it!”

It is important to note that in the Qur’an, Allah Almighty does not swear seven times in a row on any issue other than the purification of the soul. This fact alone is enough to express how important and indispensable self-purification is for the salvation of man.

Sufism from Iman to Ihsan, consists of the explanation of this truth of the friends of God, that is, the purification of the soul, with the beauties of speech, state and behavior.

Altınoluk: All of these are undeniably a response to the question “What type of Sufism?”. Consequently, how should we define Sufism in an inclusive manner? This question could also be read as “a description of Sufism or an evaluation of it in this context.”

Since Sufism is a science that is tasted and understood via experience, everyone has explored its elements based on what they have generally tasted and understood. As a result, several recipes have emerged naturally. We can say that the leaders of this path chose to explain only the portion of a crystal that reflects different colors of light from every facet.

The following are a few of the many definitions of sufism by God’s friends based on the spiritual manifestations they have attained:

- Sufism is good morals and good manners.



- Sufism is purification of the soul and purification of the heart.
- Sufism is a spiritual war without peace.
- Sufism is sincerity (ikhlas).
- Sufism is contentment and submission to Allah .
- Sufism is to be a lover and not to be a burden. In other words, it is to bear the burden of everyone and not to be a burden to anyone.

From beginning to end, the famous “sufi poem” of the Aksaray Olanlar Sufi Lodge Shaykh Ibrahim Efendi is full of beautiful definitions of Sufism. Here are a few of them:

*A Sufi is the one who sacrifices his life in the beginning,
And becomes a Sultan of the heart's throne in the end.*

“The beginning of Sufism is to become a Sufi who abandons his material life and sees no existence in himself; in other words, one who has submitted his will to God. The purpose is to become the sultan of the heart's throne by acquiring all divine beauties in the end.”

*Sufism is to bear the burden of divine trust with one's soul.
Sufism is to become the manifestation of the verses of forgiveness.*

“Sufism is to carry the Qur'an, which is the divine trust that Allah has entrusted to man with and the responsibilities it brings with one's heart. Sufism is to become the manifestation of the verses that give good tidings of divine forgiveness.”

*Sufism is acting with Al-Ismul Adham (the Greatest Name) in
the whole universe,
Sufism is being able to carry all the provisions of the Qur'an.*



“Sufism is to act with the greatest name in the whole universe. And to gather all the provisions of the Qur’an, in other words, to become a living Qur’an.”

In light of these definitions, Sufism is an effort to purify the heart of material and spiritual impurities, to acquire excellent morals and qualifications, and to live the religion in a manner consistent with its essence, with sincerity and wisdom. In this regard, Sufism is maturing into a perspective that incorporates the mysteries, wisdom and majestic enigmas of material and spiritual occurrences that the mind cannot answer. It is trying to eliminate the obstacle of the self, which is hindering your heart, by being infatuated with endless spiritual pleasures. In other words, the primary objective of Sufism is to transcend the egocentric tendencies of the body, which imprisons the soul. Then there is information, spiritual states, heart feelings, practices, and manifestations that help us see the hidden truths in the essence of all things, as well as the phases of learning and wisdom that happen behind those truths.

In this regard, Sufism entails merging with the blessed life of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, both externally and internally, and merging with his state with profound love. Therefore, it involves receiving a portion of the Prophet’s ﷺ character and being spiritually united with him.

In other words, Sufism is belief combined with love, worship and beauty of behavior. In short, Sufism is the splendor of blessings, reflecting on hearts full of love, which started with the soul that was blown into Prophet Adam ﷺ to the manifestation of perfection in the Prophet of the Akhiri zaman (the end of times).

Altınoluk: Can we assume that the tremendous interest in the topic of Sufism throughout history is due to a life of sincere faith and enlightenment centered on your descriptions? Sufism is, as it was



yesterday, an Islamic field that is gaining ever-increasing attention, despite attempts to discredit it with malicious allegations. This topic, which we can term the “Ihsan” is of great interest to Muslims and non-Muslims alike. What could be the possible causes?

Sufism leads individuals to the spirit. The soul reveals a path to spiritual fulfillment according to the individual’s will. Therefore, it addresses all issues concerning the soul and spirit of man. In other words, all the distances the servant travels on his spiritual journey, all the realms he encounters, the tens of thousands of conditions he lives in, and finally being able to find Allah, the Lord of the Worlds, to know Him through the heart, and to serve Him with a heart consistency that is acceptable.

As a result, Sufism, which can appeal to all segments of society, on the one hand, maintained spiritual vitality by preventing slackness in times of economic and social comfort, and on the other hand, it opened sublime windows to the hearts that had become constricted during turbulent periods of occupation and persecution. It has been a salve for broken hearts, a source of vitality for weary minds and parched spirits. It provided protection against pride, arrogance and frivolity by instilling humility and selflessness in those who excelled in good morals and worship. And also, it extended life preservers such as forgiveness, tolerance, mercy and compassion to the servants who were drowning in the pit of sin. During the chaotic time of the Mongol invasions, when the whole Anatolian region was in turmoil and pain, Sufi currents grew stronger and many famous Sufis appeared as a way of comfort and calm for people.

Because Sufism continues its journey by including the heart in issues where the mind is insufficient. It clarifies the heart’s manifestations and inspiration, in accordance with the Qur’an and Sunnah. Thus, the individual achieves complete satisfaction. One of the most



important Islamic scholars of the 20th century, Muhammad Hamid-ullah, said the following wise and insightful statements:

“My upbringing is rational. Legal studies have taught me to reject anything that cannot be adequately defined and proved. I certainly do pray and fast, and perform my Islamic obligations for legal, not sufi, reasons. I tell myself:

“Allah is my Lord, my owner. He has ordered me to do these things. So I have to do it. Moreover, right and duty are interconnected. Allah has ordered me to benefit from these, so I am responsible for giving thanks to Him.”

Since I began living in a neighborhood of Paris in Western civilization, I have been astounded to observe that it is not the opinions of fiqh and kalam scholars, but famous Sufis like Ibn Arabi and Mawlana, who convince Christians to convert to Islam. I also have personal observations regarding this matter. When I was asked to explain an Islamic issue, my response based on rational facts did not satisfy the interrogator; however, sufi explanations did not take long to get results. I have lost influence on this topic over time. I now feel that neither the sword nor the mind will serve Islam today, at least in Europe and Africa, as they did in the period of Ghazan Khan following the destructive invasions of Hulagu; rather, sufism will be the driving force.

After making this discovery, I began to explore several Sufism-related books. This enlightened me. I realized that the approach of Sufism and the great Islamic mystics during the time of the Prophet was not to deal with words or to be preoccupied with worthless things, but to travel on the shortest path between man and Allah and to seek the path of ennobling the character.



Man seeks the reasons for the duties assigned to him. In the spiritual realm, material explanations distract us from the objective, whereas spiritual answers satisfy individuals.”²³

These expressions also demonstrate that in our day, Sufism is of tremendous significance in the face of heavy industry, technological advancement, and social and economic despair where man becomes the gear of the machine.

23 M. Aziz Lahbabi, *Islamic Personalism*, trans. I. Hakki AKIN, p. 114-115, footnote 8. St. 1972. This footnote is the text of the letter of Muhammad Hamidullah to the translator dated 27 September 1967. (Reported from Mustafa Kara, *Contemporary Sufi Movements with Texts*, pp. 542-543.)



On the Work Titled
“Sufism from Iman to Ihsan”...-2-
Is Sufism Necessary?



To view Sufism as unnecessary is to view ihsan, taqwa, wisdom, self-purification, and heart cleansing as needless; in short, to regard serving Allah in the position of ihsan as unnecessary.



On the Work Titled “Sufism from Iman to Ihsan”... -2- IS SUFISM NECESSARY?

Altınoluk: Sufism’s significance in conveying Islam is evident from what you have said. Then, what is the key to the success of sufism in communicating Islam and, simultaneously, in the attainment of guidance and moral development of individuals?

– Another aspect of Sufism is the approach and method it employs to reform individuals. The objective of the sharia’s external norms is to guide individuals with rewards and penalties for the hereafter and the world. In addition to these, the esoteric rules of Sufism, which we can call its esoteric rules, uses love, compassion and affection in addition to these norms.

People are in a spiritual depression because they are abandoning the religion and committing terrible sins due to their animal desires. No one can argue that offering such people a chance for improvement and salvation via love, tolerance and compassion is easier and more feasible. In this way, our time is characterized by the significance of the sufi method. Those that focus on forgiveness, tolerance and compassion are seen to be more capable and successful at spiritual conquest in our country and the western world.

It is always a better method to display compassionate and merciful behavior towards the souls who are overwhelmed by the dominion of the mind, instead of approaching them with anger and with the intention of showing them up or refuting them.

Because, regardless of how far a person is from his true purpose, he still possesses enormous honor and dignity as a “human.” Being



mired in sins, oblivious to the transcendence of his nature, is comparable to the Hajar al-Aswad on the blessed Kaaba, falling to the earth from there, and getting covered with dust. It is inconceivable that a believer's conscience would be indifferent to this predicament. Even in this condition, believers continue to respect Hajar al-Aswad. Its deterioration to this state does not diminish its value in the eyes of believers. In contrast, believers would quickly pick it up, clean it with their own tears, and compete to return it to its previous position of prominence with pride. They rely on the essence of this greatest value, believing it to have originated from paradise. On the other hand, man is a creature that Allah Almighty "breathed from His own spirit," meaning that man possesses numerous secrets of Allah's supreme power and is therefore the center of all creatures. In this regard, regardless of how much his value drops owing to his faults, his essence retains its value.

According to Mevlana Rumi, a person's spirit is like clear water. The pearls of spirituality and the beams of truth become invisible if the soul is clouded with sins and misdeeds. Therefore, the purpose of Sufism is to eradicate egoistic and self-centered sentiments, as well as to provide tranquility and peace to people and to the society. In this regard, no one can be excluded from receiving an invitation to guidance, regardless of how far astray he has drifted. The following is one of the innumerable examples of this in the age of bliss:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent one of his Companions to invite Wahshi to Islam. Wahshi was the one who caused him great sorrow by killing his uncle Hamza. In the face of this invitation Wahshi said:

O Muhammed! You are the one who said: **"Those who kill, or associate partners with Allah, or commit adultery, will be punished twice on the Day of Judgment and remain humiliated in Hell eternally."** (Al-Furqan, 68-69) How can you invite me to Islam



when you have declared Allah's decree? I've done all these ugly deeds. Where will there be a way out for me?"

Upon this, Allah Almighty revealed the following verse:

قُلْ يٰعِبَادِىَ الَّذِيْنَ اَسْرَفُوْا عَلٰى اَنْفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوْا مِنْ رَّحْمَةِ اللّٰهِ
اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوْبَ جَمِيْعًا اِنَّهٗ هُوَ الْغَفُوْرُ الرَّحِيْمُ

"Say: 'My slaves, you who have transgressed against yourselves, do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Truly Allah forgives all wrong actions. He is the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Merciful.'"

(Al-Zumar, 53)

Wahshi, finally relieved by the good news in the verse, exclaimed, "How vast is your mercy, my Lord!" And embraced Islam with his friends through a definite repentance.

The most significant aspect of Sufism, which is inspired by such and other realities, is the way in which people are viewed. According to this, man has gained the divine address and the perfect expressions of divine qualities, and he was created with the intention of serving as a representative of his Lord. As *zubdatul alam* (the essence of the universe), he carries a secret from his Lord in this regard. Consequently, as we have just expressed, regardless of how much his value drops owing to his faults, his essence retains its value. However, Sufism is not without measure when it says this. What it promotes can be summarized as:

"Not to let the tolerance of the sinner transfer to tolerance of the sin, and not to let the enmity towards the sin become enmity towards the sinner."



In this respect, Sufism constitutes the most productive means of Islamic communication today. Because people always long for the love of God's friends, such as Shaykh Abdulqadir Al-Jilani, Aziz Mahmud Hudayi, Yunus Emre, Bahauddin Naqshiband, and Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi.

Altınoluk: With the information you provided, you demonstrated how Sufism can transform a person's character from flawed to perfection. Given this, what role should Sufism play in the life of a Muslim? Or in other words, is sufism necessary?

- You have asked a really vital question.

Sufism, with its broad and profound content, is an essential Islamic manifestation, it is a blessing for the maturity of the faithful. In this regard, it is crucial for the perfection of Muslims, the guiding of non-Muslims, and the accurate representation of Islam to them.

Because all book knowledge is like a seed in the real world. The scenario is identical when the book's information is merely on the rows or shelves, much like when seeds are not planted in the ground and only stored in a barn, they remain nothing more than seeds even after many years have passed. On the other hand, the seeds placed in the soil grow and prosper according to their individual features, and some of them develop into enormous trees. In the same way, the seeds of knowledge planted in the soil of the heart turn hearts into spiritual gardens that make it possible to find secrets and wisdom, which are the real fruits of knowledge.

From this perspective, the fatwa (legal ruling) aspect of the religion is analogous to the foundational pillars of a building, and the taqwa (fearful awareness of Allah) aspect is analogous to the complementary parts and features of beauty and grace around those pillars. Sufism, which combines these two characteristics on the one



hand, explains man, the Qur'an, and the universe, in addition to the perfection of good acts and morality, and therefore ensures that obligations are comprehended and carried out with a deeper level of wisdom. Sufism is like a spiritual window that opens from the hearts of servants to love and marifatullah.

Therefore, Sufism is an essential requirement for the soul and heart. As such, it should play a central role in the lives of every Muslim. More specifically, wherever there are humans, there is Sufism.

Leaving aside this reality, asking "Is sufism necessary?" is equivalent to asking "Are tafsir, hadith, kalam, fiqh, and other Islamic-based disciplines necessary?" To view Sufism as superfluous is to view sincerity, taqwa, wisdom, self-purification, and purification of the heart as superfluous, when they are actually right in the center of the matter. Therefore, according to us, a person who lives these principles, even if he does not accept the term Sufism, is living Sufism. Because taqwa, zuhd (asceticism), ihsan, and sufism are closely related terms that share the same reality and content in terms of their meaning and purpose. The name is merely a label. In the midst of all these utterances stands the only example who is *uswatun hasana* (the best example) as the supreme guide of the entire human race: the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions, each of whom is a majestic personality and spiritual star.

On the other hand, the spiritual degree attained by the heart determines its contentment, serenity, tranquility and joy. For this reason, the servant is required to undertake spiritual instruction because the heart can only be filled with knowledge and wisdom, the greater truths of religion can be understood, and the servant can only grow spiritually by performing certain activities.

As a matter of fact, even the Prophets who were sent to humanity as examples went through a period of preparation before they



were addressed by the revelation. Because, in order to be receptive to subtle spiritual manifestations, the heart must be cleansed of density, gained sensitivity, and reach a certain consistency.

Before being appointed as a Prophet, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ would enter retreat in the Cave of Hira. Before Prophet Musa ﷺ spoke to God Almighty, he had spent forty days engaging in a form of self-mortification and fasting in Mount Sinai. Prophet Yusuf ﷺ spent twelve years in prison prior to becoming Egypt's ruler. There, he experienced every level of suffering, poverty and difficulty. Thus, his blessed heart was purified of all references to and interests other than Allah.

Before rising being taken up on the Miraj, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was exposed to the secret of Suratul Inshirah. His chest was opened, and his heart was cleansed. It was filled with spiritual knowledge and wisdom. Because he would encounter unusual occurrences in the Miraj, and he would witness divine secrets and other beautiful scenes that human nature could not perceive.

If the hearts of the Prophets, who are Allah's most illustrious servants, are subjected to purification, it becomes clear how much purification other people's hearts require. One cannot approach the Latif (the most Gentle and Subtle) with a cold heart. A person with a desensitized nose cannot smell the flowers or cloves. One cannot see clearly through a misted window. A single haram act is analogous to adding a drop of poison to a jug of spring water, which ruins its cleanliness, acceptability and prosperity.

To strengthen the spiritual sensitivity of the heart and make it compatible with heavenly wisdom and knowledge, it is vital to purify the heart. Because Allah Most High has stated:



يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ مَالٌ وَلَا بَنُونَ، إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَى اللَّهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ

“The Day when neither wealth nor children will be of any benefit. Only those who come before Allah with a sound and flawless heart.” (Ash-Shu’ara, 88-89)

Purification of the heart can only be achieved via spiritual training.

Because prior to spiritual instruction, the heart is as cold as iron. To get the required form, it must first be tempered in fire, cleaned of rust and dust, softened, and pounded out of its brittleness. Only after these processes can the material take the intended form. Similarly, the perfection of the heart is impossible without the execution of all these procedures. The realm of truths, which cannot be seen with the eye of the head and cannot be comprehended by the mind, is recognized as a joy and felt by the heart after the perfection of the heart. This requires the development of heart strength and resilience.

To explain the significance of this maturation, Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi says he was “raw” when he was a top student in the Seljuk Madrasah while studying external sciences, and he says he became “cooked” after the universe full of divine manifestations became a book for him, and finally he expresses that he became burnt in the state of divine love.

This shows that since the servant’s acceptance in the sight of Allah is more dependent on the development of the heart, a spiritual education is needed in itself for the heart to mature. The Companions have shown countless concrete examples of this fact. As a matter of fact, many of them were coldhearted creatures like stones who buried their daughters alive, but under the spiritual training of the Prophet ﷺ, they became monuments of compassion and mercy.



They spent their lives and property for the sake of Allah and the Messenger of Allah.

In summary, we want to say that there can be Islam without Sufism, but it would be a Muslim without the consistency of ihsan. In other words, an Islamic life isolated from Sufism, which is a spiritual education, cannot lead a person to “a state of worshipping Allah as if he sees Him”.

Altınoluk: Altınoluk readers are your heartfelt friends. They love listening your spiritual advise. What would you like to say to them about Sufism?

– In addition to what has already been said, I’d like to bring up a few recommendations that the people of Allah insist on:

Sufism is a spiritual education that entails attempting to attain the morality of Muhammad ﷺ, the Messenger of Allah. Ecstasy in worship is a state of virtue. This, in turn, is a loving orientation toward the Creator of the universe and His Messenger. For this reason, the friends of Allah, who placed God and His Messenger at the center of friendship with real love, have become the friends of the entire human race for eternity.

The believer becomes righteous by associating and conversing with righteous people. Because spiritually advanced characters possess a magnetic quality. The righteous who will impart order and spirituality to the spirits are those who have purified their souls and forsaken worldly pleasures. Their hearts are brimming with divine blessings. Companionship with them transforms the servant into one whose hand and tongue assist all living things.

The current of connection between two hearts is love. A person becomes enamored and admired by what he gives his heart to and



starts to mimic it. In this regard, a believer should employ the elixir of “love” in all fields and on all occasions.

The evolution of knowledge into wisdom by gaining a personality causes the recognition of Allah Almighty in the heart. The universe is a riddle of knowledge and mysteries. To know is not to watch, but to familiarize oneself with the wisdom and the secret.

The purity and elegance of the heart are in proportion to its proximity to God. A believer with a revitalized heart attains immortality. In contrast to this, one who adopts the ego loses humanity to the extent that they worship the ego.

Morality in Islam is based on turning to God with love and sincerity, and “service” is the only thing that can prove this.

Love is the most powerful tool that transforms troubles into mercy. A service done with love, no matter how heavy, is performed with ease and peace. At the same time, the value of a service depends on the greatness of the sacrifice made for its realization and its performance with the ecstasy of worship. Sincere and genuine service are a masterpiece of heart maturity. Hearts that have attained this perfection are the centers of the “divine gaze”.

The names “Rahman and Rahim”, which Allah Almighty mentions a lot in the Qur’an, are among the names that express His mercy. Mercy and compassion should also become the nature of a believer.

The one who is devoid of compassion has lost the greatest treasure, the key that opens the door to all happiness. The most compassion should be shown to those who have been deprived of mercy and do not know how to show compassion.



The reason for cruelty is deprivation of love. A person who does not love can become a cruel creature. The fruit of true love is compassion and mercy. There is no heart or place on earth that cannot be conquered with compassion and mercy. It is impossible for strong spirits not to feel pity for creatures, just as it is impossible for the sun not to be warm.

While Hallaj, who has an exceptional place in the hearts of lovers, was stoned, he said: “O my Lord! Forgive those who stoned me before me!” and showed great altruism.

If we want to know our level on the spiritual path, we need to analyze our state and behavior.

“Selfishness” and “claiming perfection” are the cancers of the spiritual path. While the devil once had a superior position, he became frustrated because of this.

Mawlana says:

“It is essential to possess a rose nature. In other words, it is not to see the thorns in the garden of the world and be injured by them, but to be a rose to the entire world by embracing them like a spring, even if winter intervenes.”

The following significant advice of Abdul Khaliq al-Ghujdawan regarding spiritual quality and behavior are also very valuable principles of the way of Sufism:

“O son! I leave you with this wish: May you always walk in wisdom, decency, and taqwa! .. Read the works of the past, follow the path of the Ahl-Bayt and the Ahl-Sunna wal Jama’at! Learn fiqh and hadith and run away from ignorant sufis!

Make sure to pray in congregation! Don’t become an imam or mu’adhin if you have a penchant for fame! Get as far from fame as



possible! There is peril in fame. Never look at the posts; always keep yourself down!

Don't promise a task you can't handle! Do not interfere in the affairs of the people that do not concern you! Do not interfere with the sinful administrators! Maintain equilibrium in everything! Do not become so captivated by a lovely voice that you lose balance; doing so darkens the soul and eventually produces disharmony. However, do not ignore the beauty of the voice since the adhan and Qur'an recited with it refresh the souls.

Eat less, talk less and sleep less. Flee from heedless and foolish individuals as you do from a lion! In times of great confusion, seclusion is preferable. Stay clear of the arrogant, and uneducated individuals who cause the faith to be mocked by issuing fatwas for their own advantage.

Consume halal, avoid questionable deeds, and focus on taqwa in marriage. Otherwise, you will become attached to the world, which will harm your religion...

Do not laugh too much; Especially pay attention not to laugh out loud! Laughing too much kills the heart. But do not give up smiling completely. Because smiling is charity. Treat everyone with the eyes of compassion and do not insult anyone!

Do not overembellish your appearance; Dress elegantly and simply. Because excessive care for external appearance comes from internal destruction.

Do not argue, do not ask for anything from anyone, be independent, get rich with contentment, protect your dignity!

Be loyal to those who have contributed to you and those who have educated you, serve them with your wealth and your life, and



be like them! Heedless people who criticize them will not be successful.

Do not incline towards the world and the heedless people of the world! Your heart should always be sad, your body should be strong for servitude, your eyes should be tearful and your heart should be delicate.

May your doings be sincere, may your prayers be your asylum, your clothing be humble, your companions be righteous, external and internal religious sciences be your capital, turn your house into a prayer house and keep the friends of Allah close to you!..”

Amin...

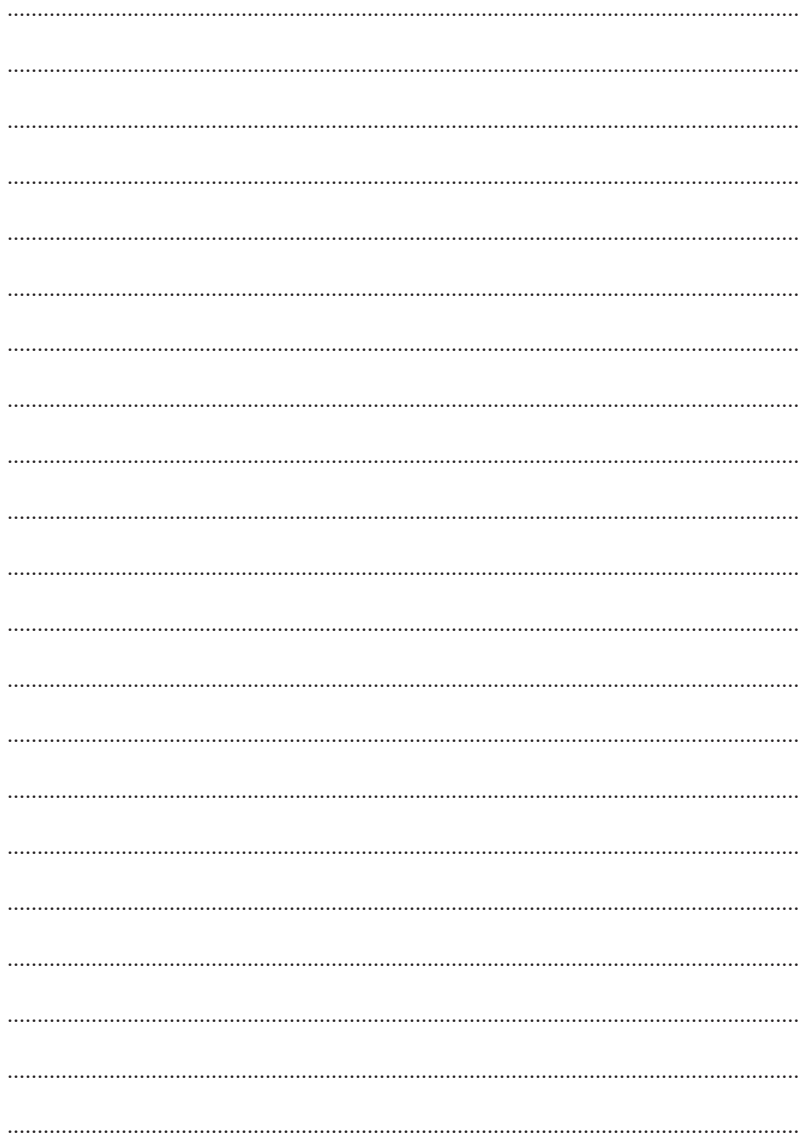


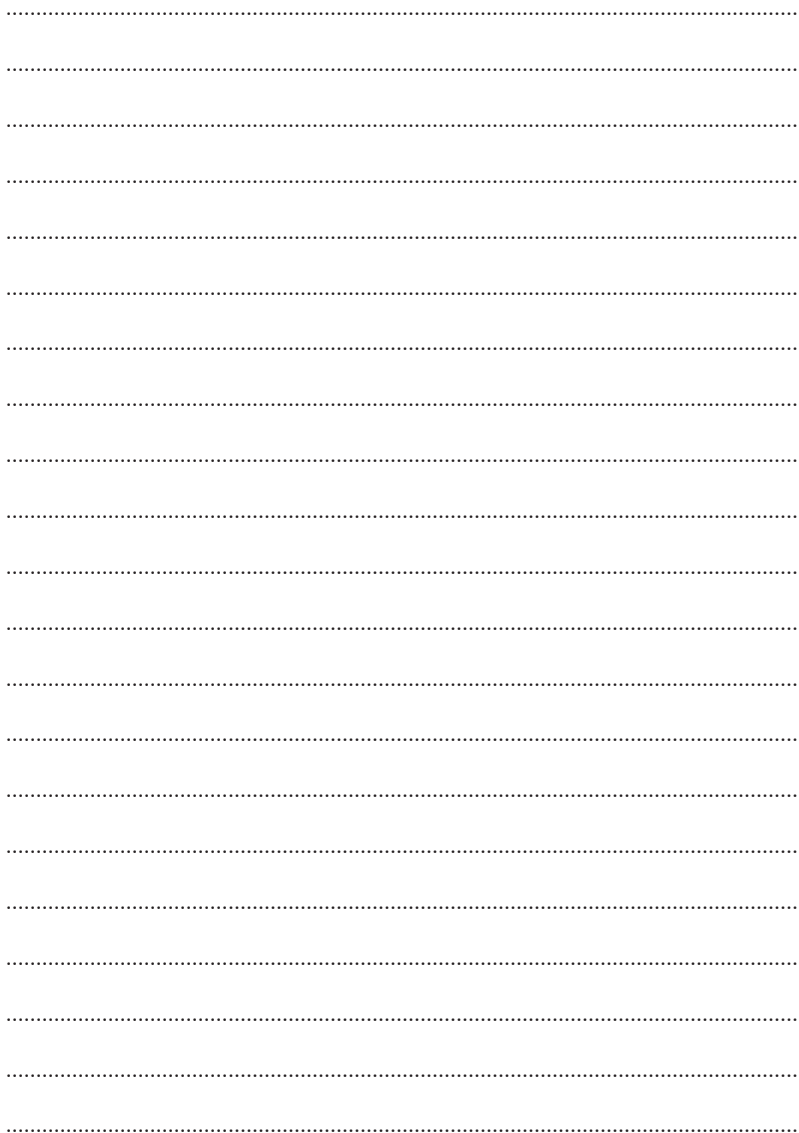
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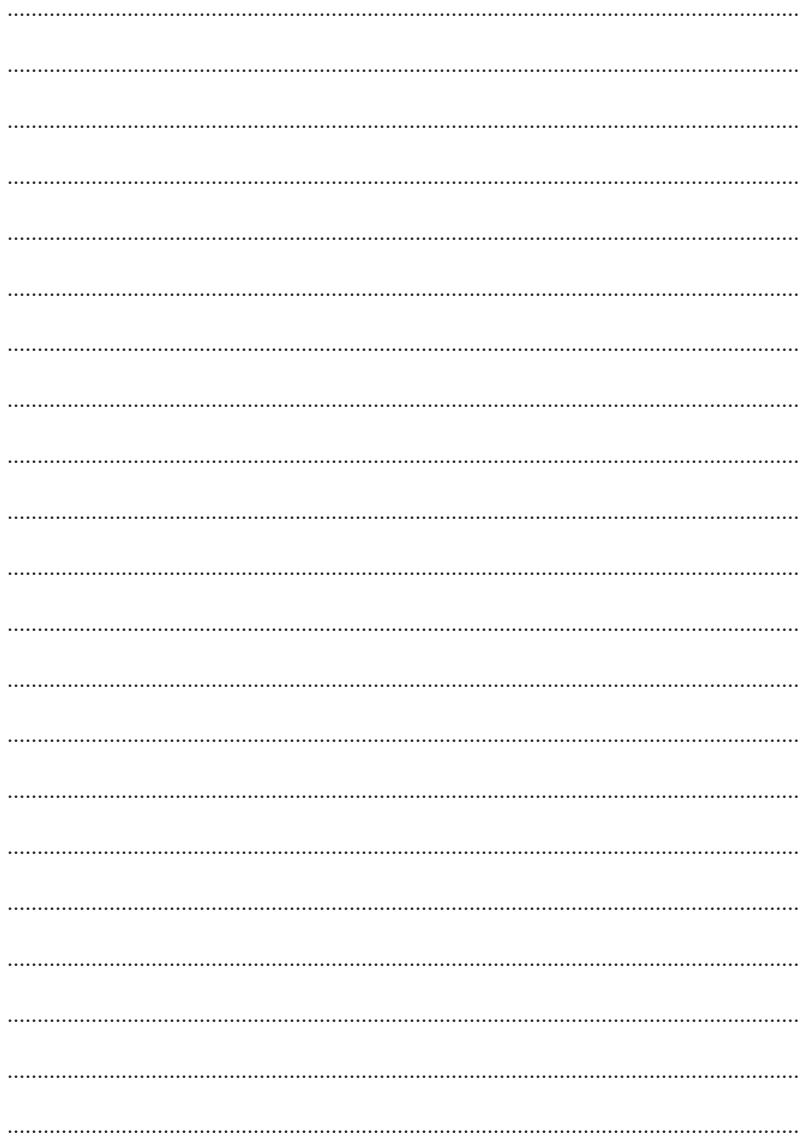
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