

Light Upon Light

Towards Correcting Our Beliefs and Practices

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The Four Principles of Worship

The *Aayah*, "You alone do we worship." (Soorah al-faatihah, 1:5) is built upon four principles as explained by **Ibnul-Qayyim** [*rahimahullah*].

- Ascertaining what Allaah and His Messenger love and are pleased with, from,
 1. the sayings of the heart,
 2. of the tongue,
 3. the actions of the heart, and,
 4. of the limbs.

So *al-'uboodiyyah* [servitude and slavery to Allaah] is a comprehensive term for all these four stages. The one who actualizes them has indeed actualized, "You alone do we worship."

The sayings of the heart,

- It is *i'tiqaad* [belief] in what Allaah - the Most Perfect - informed about His Self; concerning His Names, His Attributes, His Actions, His Angels, and all that He sent upon the tongue of His Messenger [*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*].

The saying of the tongue,

- It is to inform and convey [what Allaah has revealed], to call to it, defend it, to explain the false innovations which oppose it, to establish its remembrance and to convey what it orders.

The action of the heart,

- Such as love for Him, reliance upon Him, repenting to Him, having fear and hope in Him, making the Deen purely and sincerely for Him, having patience in what He orders and prohibits, having patience with what He decrees and being pleased with it, having allegiance and enmity for His sake, humbling oneself in front of Him and having humility in front of Him, becoming tranquil with Him, and other than this from the actions of the heart which are actually connected to the action of the limbs ... and actions of the limbs without the action of the heart is of little benefit if any benefit at all.

The action of the limbs,

- Such as Prayer and Jihad, attending the *Jumu'ah* and being with the *Jama'ah*, aiding those who are unable and displaying goodness and kindness to the creation, and other than this. (Ref: Madaanjus-Saalikeen, Vol. 1, pages 100 - 101)

(Source: Miscellaneous Points of Benefits by **Ibnul Qayyim al-Jawziyyah** [*rahimahullah*])

Quran

But, for those who fear their Lord, are Gardens under which rivers flow (in Paradise); therein are they to dwell (for ever), an entertainment from Allah; and that which is with Allah is the Best for Al Abraar (those who are obedient to Allah and follow strictly His Orders).

[3:198]

Hadith

Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Be prompt in doing good deeds (before you are overtaken) by turbulence which would be like a part of the dark night. A man would be a believer in the morning and turn to disbelief in the evening, or he would be a believer in the evening and turn disbeliever in the morning, and would sell his Faith for worldly goods."

[Muslim].

A WAY OUT

Ibn al-Jawzi said: "Something was causing me a great deal of grief and distress, and I started to think long and hard about how to get out of this situation by any means, but I could not find any way out. Then I came across this verse:

'...And whosoever fears Allah and keeps his duty to Him, He will make a way for him to get out [of every difficulty].' (65:2)

I realized that Taqwa (Piety, fearing Allah) is the way out of every kind of grief and distress. As soon as I followed the path of taqwa, I found the way out."

I say: for the wise men, taqwa is the way that leads to everything good, for calamity happens only as a result of sin, and it can only be lifted through repentance. Sadness, grief and worry are punishments for sins that you have committed, by falling short in your prayers, or backbiting about a Muslimah, or taking the matter of hijab lightly, or committing a haram (forbidden) action. Whoever goes against the laws of Allah, the Almighty, has to pay the price for that shortcoming. The One Who created happiness is the Most Gracious Most Merciful, so how can you seek happiness from anyone other than Him? If people had control over happiness, there would be no deprived or grieving person left on earth."

The Calamity of Time Wasting

Allah describes the discourse between Himself and the reckless and negligent on the Day of Judgement: **'[And] He will ask [the doomed]: "What number of years have you spent on earth?" They will answer: "We have spent there a day, or part of a day; but ask those who [are able to] count time... [Whereupon] He will say: "You have spent there but a short while: had you but known [how short it was to be]! Did you then think that We created you in mere idle play, and that you not have to return to Us? [Know,] then, [that] God is sublimely exalted, the Ultimate Sovereign, the Ultimate Truth: there is no deity save Him, the Sustainer, in bountiful almightiness enthroned!" (23:112-16).**

One of the righteous predecessors noted: life is short, do not shorten it with negligence. This is, certainly, true. Negligence shortens the hours and consumes the night. Hence the Prophet sallallahu `alaihi wa sallam said: **'Two favours that many people are deceived by: health and spare time.'** The lesson being that many people are healthy and have a lot of time on their hands yet their lives pass by quickly before them without their using them or benefiting anyone. He also warned: **'The foot of a believer will not move on the Day of Judgement until he is asked about four things and mention his life span and how he utilized it.'** Life is, undoubtedly, a treasure, whomsoever spends it in obedience to Allah will find his treasure on the Day when wealth and sons will be of no avail but instead only those who returned to Allah with clean hearts. Thus, those who spent their lives in negligence, disobedience and play will on that Day regret in such a manner that will never be equaled thereafter. They will say: 'Alas for us, that we disregarded our lives.'

In effect, both the night and day are like riding animals that transport man to either eternal happiness or loss. Our righteous forbears used to take every initiative to preserve their time. There are strange stories about them concerning this matter. There were among them those who used to read the Quran and they were on the threshold of death. Such an example was Junaid ibn Muhammad. His sons said to him, 'You are exhausting yourself.' He replied, 'And should there be among the people one who exerts himself more than me?'

Al Aswad ibn Yazid used to stand in prayer for most of the night. Some of his friends advised him to relax at least for a small portion of the night. He told them it is this very relaxation he is in search of; meaning in the Hereafter.

Sufiyan at-Thawri once sat in the Sacred Mosque speaking to some people. Then suddenly he arose terrified and said; we are sitting here and the day is doing its work. There were among our forbears those who used to divide their days and nights into hours. Hence they allocated specific hours for prayers, recitation, remembrance, meditation, acquisition of knowledge, work and sleep. They ascribed no time for merriment.

As for their successors, they have been afflicted by the calamity of time-wasting. Except, of course, those to whom Allah has shown mercy. They indulge in excessive sleep, idleness, aimless wandering, spending on amusements and sittings in which there is no benefit; or in meetings which, if they do not involve disobedience, are definitely the cause of disobedience.

Among the greatest things that organize time and work are the five daily prayers. Allah the Sublime and Most Excellent Speaker affirms in the Quran: **'Verily, for all believers prayer is indeed a sacred duty linked to particular times [of day]' (4:104).**

The month of Ramadan was a school in which the Muslim's time was organized and invested in matters that led to closeness to Allah. Notwithstanding, some people still do not know the meaning of fasting. They engage in ample negligence and deep slumber. They spend their days sleeping and their nights in wasted wakefulness. We seek refuge from being among them and ask that we are able to take heed of the meaning of fasting, and apply the lessons we learned from it in the rest of our lives.

O Allah! Preserve for us our lives. Plant our feet firmly on Your path, and make us obey You always. O Lord of all the worlds.

*Adapted from Article by Shaykh `Aa'id Abdullah al-Qarne
Thirty Lessons for those who Fast*

He Stole My Heart !!

It was a dark night on which the burglar scaled the wall of Malik bin Dinar's house and stealthily made his way inside. To his utter disappointment, the thief found nothing in the house that was worth stealing; what's more, the occupant of the house was actually inside and was busy praying.

Malik bin Dinar sensed the movement of the burglar, but without becoming alarmed, he turned around with perfect composure and extended greetings of peace to him. He then said, "My brother, may Allah forgive you. You entered my home and found nothing worth taking, but I will not allow you to leave without gaining some benefit."

Malik stood up, approached the burglar with a jug of water in his hands, and said, "Here, perform ablution and perform two units of prayer. If you do so, you will take away with you that which is better than what you came to find in the first place."

"Yes, how generous of you," said the burglar, somewhat stupefied and, more than anything else, humbled. He stood, made ablution, and performed two units of prayer. Upon completing them, he turned and said, "O Malik, will I be imposing upon you if I perform two more units of prayer?"

"Perform as much as Allah decrees for you," said Malik. The burglar turned worshipper continued to pray until the morning, at which time Malik said, "Go, and be good."

"Will I be imposing upon you if I stay here with you today, for I have made the intention to fast today."

"Stay as long as you want," said Malik. The man stayed with Malik for a number of days, spending the days fasting, and the nights standing up for prayer. Finally deciding to leave, the man said, "O Malik, I have made up my mind to repent."

"That (i.e., Allah forgiving you and guiding you to repent) is in the Hands of Allah 'Azza wa-jal (the Possessor of might and majesty)," said Malik.

And in fact, the man did mend his ways and repented for his previous wayward existence. When the man left Malik's home, he came across another burglar he knew. Seeing the happy and serene expression on the man's face, the burglar said, "I think you have finally found your treasure?"

"My brother," he answered, "I found Malik bin Dinar. I went to steal from him, but it was he who stole something of mine-**my heart**. Indeed I have repented to Allah 'Azza wa-jal (the Possessor of might and majesty), and I will remain at the door (of His Mercy and Forgiveness) until I achieve what His obedient, loving slaves have achieved." [2]

[1] Al-Mawa'iz Wal-Majalis, pg 65

[2] Al-Mawa'iz Wal-Majalis, pg 85