



IBN AL-QAYYIM'S LETTER TO A FRIEND

IMĀM MUHAMMAD IBN ABI BAKR IBN AL-QAYYIM



Al-Isnad

Speaker Profile

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Born and bred in Birmingham, UK, Shaykh Ahsan is well known in his community as the young Qari who memorised the Qur'an at the tender age of 13 and who delivered regular halaqaat in Birmingham.

In the year 2000, he gained a scholarship to enter the Islamic University of Madinah. After completing his Arabic diploma, he graduated from the Faculty of Shari'ah in 2006 with honours. He obtained ijazah in the Qur'an as well as studying under a number of well-known scholars, such as

Sh. Abdul Muhsin al-Abbad and Sh. Muhammad ibn Muhammad Mukhtar al-Shinqiti.

Upon his return to the UK he attained his PhD from the University of Birmingham. He is currently an imam at Green Lane Masjid, Birmingham as well as the head of the Qur'an & Hadith Studies Department for AlMaghrib Institute.

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رسالة ابن القيم إلى أحد إخوانه

Ibn al-Qayyim's Letter to a Friend

الإمام محمد بن أبي بكر ابن القيم الجوزية

ت 751 هـ))

Imām Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr ibn al-Qayyim

(d. 751 AH)

الله المسؤول المرجو الإجابة أن يُحسِّنَ إلى الأخ علاء الدِّين في الدُّنيا والآخرة، وينفع به، ويجعله مباركًا أينما كان. فإن بركة الرجل تعليمه للخير حيث حل، ونصحه لكلِّ من اجتمع به،

قال الله -تعالى- إخبارًا عن المسيح عليه السلام: ﴿وَجَعَلَنِي مُبَارَكًا أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُ﴾ [مريم: ٣١] أي معلمًا للخير، داعيًا إلى الله، مذكّرًا به، مرغّبًا في طاعته، فهذا من بركة الرجل،

ومن خلا من هذا فقد خلا من البركة، ومَحقت بركة لقائه والاجتماع به، بل تُمحق بركة من لقيه واجتمع به، فإنه يضيع الوقت في الماَجَرِيَّاتِ، ويفسد القلب.

وكل آفة تدخل على العبد، فسببها ضياع الوقت وفساد القلب، وتعود بضياع حظه من الله، ونقصان درجته ومنزلته عنده؛

ولهذا وصى بعض الشيوخ فقال: احذروا مخالطة من تُضيع مخالطته الوقت، وتُفسد القلب، فإنه متى ضاع الوقت وفسد القلب انفرطت على العبد أموره كلها، وكان ممن قال الله فيه: ﴿وَلَا تُطِعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُ عَن ذِكْرِنَا وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ وَكَانَ أَمْرُهُ فُرُطًا﴾ [الكهف: ٢٨]

We ask Allah, He who is sought and from whom an answer is hoped, that He deal kindly with our brother 'Alā' al-Dīn in this world and the next, make him beneficial to others, and make him blessed wherever he may be. For a man's blessing lies in teaching what is good wherever he settles, and in offering sincere counsel to everyone with whom he meets.

Allah says, speaking of Isa: "And He has made me blessed wherever I may be" [Maryam: 31], that is, one who teaches good, calls to Allah, reminds others of Him, and encourages obedience to Him. This is part of a person's blessing.

Whoever is devoid of this is devoid of blessing, and the blessing of meeting him and sitting with him is erased. Rather, the blessing of those who meet him is diminished, because he wastes time in idle exchanges and corrupts the heart.

Every affliction that enters upon a servant has as its cause; wasted time and a corrupted heart, and this returns upon him as a loss in his connection with Allah and a diminishing of his rank and station before Him.

For this reason one of the elders advised: Beware of keeping company with one whose companionship wastes time and corrupts the heart; for once time is lost and the heart is corrupted, all a person's affairs unravel, and he becomes among those of whom Allah said: "Do not obey one whose heart We have made heedless of Our remembrance, who follows his own desire, and whose case has gone beyond all bounds" [Al-Kahf: 28]

ومن تأمل حال هذا الخلق، وجدهم كلهم -إلا أقل القليل- ممن غفلت قلوبهم عن ذكر الله -تعالى-،
 واتبَعوا أهواءهم، وصارت أمورهم ومصالحهم ﴿فُرْطًا﴾ أي: فرطوا فيما ينفعهم ويعود بصالحهم،
 واشتغلوا بما لا ينفعهم، بل يعود بضررهم عاجلاً وأجلاً

وهؤلاء قد أمر الله -سبحانه- رسوله ألا يطيعهم، فطاعة الرسول لا تتم إلا بعدم طاعة
 هؤلاء، فإنهم إنما يدعون إلى ما يشاكلهم من اتباع الهوى، والغفلة عن ذكر الله

والغفلة عن الله والدَّار الآخرة متى تزوجت باتباع الهوى، تولد ما بينهما كل شر. وكثيراً ما يقتزن أحدهما
 بالآخر ولا يفارقه

ومن تأمل فساد أحوال العالم عموماً وخصوصاً، وجده ناشئاً عن هذين الأصلين، فالغفلة تحول بين
 العبد وبين تصور الحق ومعرفته والعلم به فيكون من الضالين. واتباع الهوى يصدّه عن قصد الحق وإرادته
 واتباعه، فيكون من المغضوب عليهم

Whoever reflects on the condition of people will find that all of them, except for a very few, are among those whose hearts have become heedless of the remembrance of Allah, and who follow their own desires, and whose affairs and interests have fallen into disorder, that is, they have neglected what benefits them and leads to their well-being, while occupying themselves with what does not benefit them, but rather brings them harm, sooner or later.

These are the people whom Allah, commanded His Messenger not to obey; for obedience to the Messenger cannot be complete except by refusing obedience to such people, since they only call others to what resembles their own state: following desire and neglecting the remembrance of Allah.

When heedlessness of Allah and of the Hereafter joins itself to following desire, every kind of evil is born from the two of them. Very often one is found together with the other, and they rarely part company.

Whoever reflects on the corruption found in the state of the world, generally and specifically, will see that it arises from these two roots: for heedlessness prevents a servant from perceiving the truth, knowing it, and gaining knowledge of it, so he becomes among those who are astray; while following desire turns him away from seeking the truth, willing it, and following it, so he becomes among those who incur wrath.

وأما المنعم عليهم فهم الذين مَنَّ اللهُ عليهم بمعرفة الحق علمًا، وبالانقياد إليه وإيثاره على ما سواه عملاً، وهؤلاء هم الذين على سبيل النجاة، ومن سواهم على سبيل الهلاك.

ولهذا أمرنا الله - سبحانه - أن نقول كل يوم وليلة عدة مرات: ﴿اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ﴾ الفاتحة: ٦، ٧

فإن العبد مضطر كل الاضطرار إلى أن يكون عارفاً بما ينفعه في معاشه ومعاده، وأن يكون مؤثراً مريداً لما ينفعه، مجتنباً لما يضره.

فبمجموع هذين يكون قد هُدي إلى الصراط المستقيم. فإن فاته معرفة ذلك سلك سبيل الضالين، وإن فاته قصده واتباعه سلك سبيل المغضوب عليهم. وبهذا يُعرف قدر هذا الدُّعاء العظيم، وشدة الحاجة إليه، وتَوْفُّقُ سعادة الدنيا والآخرة عليه

As for those who are blessed with favour, they are the ones upon whom Allah has bestowed His grace: granting them knowledge of the truth, and granting them, in action, submission to it and preference for it over all else. These are the people upon the path of salvation; all others are upon the path of ruin.

For this reason, Allah commanded us to say many times each day and night: "Guide us to the straight path: the path of those You have blessed, not those who incur wrath, nor those who go astray." [Al-Fatihah: 6-7].

The servant is in complete and unavoidable need of knowing what benefits him in his worldly life and in his final return, and of choosing and desiring what benefits him while avoiding what harms him.

Through the union of these two things, he is guided to the straight path. If knowledge of this escapes him, he follows the way of those who have gone astray; and if he fails to seek it and follow it, he follows the way of those who incur wrath.

In this way the immense worth of this great supplication becomes clear, as does the intensity of our need for it, and the fact that the happiness of this world and the next depends upon it.

والعبد مفتقر إلى الهداية في كل لحظةٍ وَنَفْسٍ، في جميع ما يأتيه ويذره، فَإِنَّه بين أمور لا ينفكُّ عنها: أحدها: أمور قد أتاه على غير وجه الهداية جهلاً، فهو محتاج إلى أن يطلب الهداية إلى الحق فيها. أو يكون عارفاً بالهداية فيها، فأتاه على غير وجهها عمداً، فهو محتاج إلى التوبة منها. أو أمور لم يعرف وجه الهداية فيها علماً ولا عملاً، ففاتته الهداية إلى علمها ومعرفتها، وإلى قصدها وإرادتها وعملها.

أو أمور قد هُدي إليها من وجه دون وجه، فهو محتاج إلى تمام الهداية فيها.

أو أمور قد هُدي إلى أصلها دون تفاصيلها، فهو محتاج إلى هداية التفصيل.

A servant is in need of guidance at every moment and with every breath, in all that he does and all that he leaves undone, for he is constantly between matters from which he cannot escape:

Firstly: there are matters he has undertaken without guidance, out of ignorance, and so he is in need of seeking guidance to what is right concerning them.

Or he may already know the right guidance in a matter, yet act contrary to it deliberately, and so he is in need of repentance from it.

Or there are matters in which he has not known the way of guidance, neither in knowledge nor in action, so guidance has escaped him both in knowing them and understanding them, and in intending them, willing them, and acting upon them.

Or there are matters in which he has been guided in one respect but not in another, and so he is in need of complete guidance concerning them.

Or there are matters whose general principle he has been guided to, but not their details, and so he remains in need of guidance in their particulars.

أو طريق قد هُدي إليها، وهو محتاج إلى هداية أخرى فيها، فالهداية إلى الطريق شيءٌ والهداية في نفس الطريق شيءٌ آخر، ألا ترى أن الرجل يعرف أنّ طريق البلد الفلاني هو طريق كذا وكذا، ولكن لا يحسن أن يسلكه، فإن سلوكه يحتاج إلى هداية خاصة في نفس السلوك، كالسير في وقت كذا دون وقت كذا، وأخذ الماء في مفازة كذا مقدار كذا، والنزول في موضع كذا دون كذا.

فهذه هداية في نفس السير قد يهملها من هو عارف بأن الطريق هي هذه، فيهلك وينقطع عن المقصود.

وكذلك أيضًا ثمّ أمورٌ هو محتاج إلى أن يحصل له فيها من الهداية في المستقبل مثل ما حصل له في الماضي.

Or he may already have been shown a path, yet still require another kind of guidance within it; for being shown the path is one thing, while being guided along the path itself is another. Do you not see that a man may know that the road to a certain town is such-and-such a road, yet not know how to travel it properly? To travel it requires a particular guidance within the journey itself: to set out at one time rather than another, to carry a certain amount of water across a given desert stretch, and to stop in one place rather than another.

This is guidance within the journey itself, something that may be neglected even by one who knows that this is indeed the road, and so he perishes and fails to reach his destination.

Likewise, there are matters in which he needs guidance in the future just as he was granted guidance in the past.

وأمر هو خال عن اعتقاد حق أو باطل فيها، فهو محتاج إلى هداية الصواب فيها.

وأمر يعتقد أنه فيها على هدى وهو على ضلالة ولا يشعر، فهو محتاج إلى انتقاله عن ذلك الاعتقاد بهداية من الله.

وأمر قد فعلها على وجه الهداية، وهو محتاج إلى أن يهدي غيره إليها ويرشده وينصحه، فإهماله ذلك يُفوّت عليه من الهداية بحسبه كما أن هدايته للغير وتعليمه ونصحه يفتح له باب الهداية، فإنّ الجزء من جنس العمل، فكُلما هدى غيره وعلمه هداة الله وعلمه فيصير هادياً مهدياً، كما في دعاء النبي ﷺ الذي رواه الترمذي وغيره (اللهم زينا بزينة الإيمان، واجعلنا هداة مهتدين، غير ضالين ولا مضلّين، سلماً لأوليائك، حرباً لأعدائك، نُحِبُّ بِحُبِّكَ مِنْ أَحِبِّكَ، وَنُعَادِي بِعَدَاوَتِكَ مِنْ خَالَفِكَ).

There are matters in which a person is entirely unaware whether the truth or falsehood prevails; he is in need of guidance toward what is correct.

There are matters in which he believes he is rightly guided, while in fact he is astray, and he is unaware of it; he is in need of Allah's guidance to bring him out of that mistaken belief.

There are matters he has carried out correctly, following the right guidance, yet he still needs to guide others toward them, to instruct, advise, and counsel them. Neglecting this responsibility deprives him of part of the reward of guidance, just as guiding others, teaching them, and advising them opens for him the door of guidance. For the reward corresponds to the deed: the more he guides and teaches others, the more Allah guides and teaches him, so he becomes a guide who is rightly guided.

As the Prophet ﷺ prayed, as narrated by al-Tirmidhi and others: "O Allah, adorn us with the beauty of faith, and make us guides who are rightly guided, neither astray nor leading others astray. Make us at peace with Your allies, and in opposition to Your enemies; let us love, through Your love, those whom You love, and let us be hostile, through Your enmity, toward those who oppose You."

وقد أثنى الله - سبحانه - على عباده المؤمنين الذين يسألونه أن يجعلهم أئمة يُهتَدَى بهم، فقال تعالى في صفات عباده: ﴿وَالَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّاتِنَا قُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ وَاجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا﴾ الفرقان: ٧٤،

قال ابن عباس: يُهتَدَى بنا في الخير. وقال أبو صالح: يُقْتَدَى بحدانا. وقال مكحول: أئمة في التقوى، يُقْتَدَى بنا المتقون.

وقال مجاهد: اجعلنا مؤتمين بالمتقين، مقتدين بهم. وأشكل هذا التفسير على من لم يعرف قدر فهم السلف وعمق علمهم، وقال: يجب أن تكون الآية على هذا القول من باب المقلوب، على تقدير: واجعل المتقين لنا أئمة، ومعاذ الله أن يكون شيء من القرآن مقلوب عن وجهه.

وهذا من تمام فهم مجاهد؛ فإنه لا يكون الرجل إماماً للمتقين حتى ياتم بالمتقين، فنبه مجاهد على هذا الوجه الذي ينالون به هذا المطلوب، وهو اقتداؤهم بالسلف المتقين من قبلهم فيجعلهم الله أئمة للمقين من بعدهم، وهذا من أحسن الفهم في القرآن وألطفه، ليس من باب القلب في شيء. فمن اتتم بأهل السنة قبله؛ اتتم به من بعده ومن معه.

Allah has praised His believing servants who ask Him to make them leaders whom others may follow in guidance. He says of such servants: "And those who say, 'Our Lord, grant us from our spouses and our offspring the delight of our eyes, and make us leaders for the righteous.'" [Al-Furqan 25:74]

Ibn 'Abbas explained: "They are guided through us in goodness." Abu Salih said: "They follow our guidance." Makhul commented: "Leaders in piety, whom the righteous may follow."

Mujahid added: "Make us those who follow the righteous, taking them as our model." This interpretation may appear puzzling to those unfamiliar with the depth of the understanding of the early scholars and their insight, and they might suggest that the verse should be read in reverse: "Make the righteous for us leaders." But Allah forbid that any part of the Qur'an is in reverse.

Mujahid's understanding is, in fact, precise and profound: a person cannot truly be a leader for the righteous except by first following the righteous themselves. Mujahid highlights the principle by which this is achieved: by following the pious predecessors, one is made by Allah a leader for the righteous who come after. This is one of the finest and most subtle understandings of the Qur'an, and nothing to do with reversing the meaning. Whoever follows the people of the Sunnah before him, others will follow him in turn, together with those who with him.

وَوَحَّدَ - سُبْحَانَهُ - لَفْظٌ ﴿إِمَامًا﴾ وَلَمْ يَقُلْ : وَاجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ أئِمَّةً،

فَقِيلَ : الْإِمَامُ فِي الْآيَةِ جَمْعُ أُمَّ، نَحْوُ : صَاحِبٍ وَصَحَابٍ، وَهَذَا قَوْلُ الْأَخْفَشِ، وَفِيهِ بُعْدٌ، وَلَيْسَ هُوَ مِنْ
اللُّغَةِ الْمَشْهُورَةِ الْمُسْتَعْمَلَةِ الْمَعْرُوفَةِ حَتَّى يُفَسَّرَ بِهَا كَلَامُ اللَّهِ.

وَقَالَ آخَرُونَ : الْإِمَامُ هُنَا مُصَدَّرٌ، لَا اسْمٌ، يُقَالُ : أُمَّ إِمَامًا، نَحْوُ : صَامٌ صِيَامًا، وَقَامَ قِيَامًا، أَيَّ : اجْعَلْنَا
ذَوِي إِمَامٍ، وَهَذَا أَوْعَفُ مِنَ الَّذِي قَبْلَهُ.

وَقَالَ الْفَرَاءُ : إِنَّمَا قَالَ : ﴿إِمَامًا﴾، وَلَمْ يَقُلْ أئِمَّةً، عَلَى نَحْوِ قَوْلِهِ : ﴿إِنَّا رَسُولُ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾
﴿الشعراء: ١٦﴾، وَلَمْ يَقُلْ : رَسُولًا، وَهُوَ مِنَ الْوَاحِدِ الْمُرَادِ بِهِ الْجَمْعُ، لِقَوْلِ الشَّاعِرِ :

يَا عَاذِلَاتِي لَا تُرْذَن مَلَامَتِي ... إِنَّ الْعَوَاذِلَ لَيْسَ لِي بِأَمِيرٍ

أَيَّ : لَيْسَ لِي بِأَمْرَاءَ.

Allah used the singular term "Imām" in the verse and did not say, "make us leaders of the righteous" in the plural.

Some have suggested that "Imām" here is the plural of "Āmm", similar to the relationship between *ṣāhib* and *ṣiḥāb*, as proposed by Al-Akhfash. However, this interpretation is remote and not consistent with the commonly understood usage of the language, and thus it is unlikely to be the intended meaning of Allah's words.

Others argued that "Imām" here is a verbal noun, not a proper noun: one could say, "amma imāman," in the sense of "make us possessors of leadership", similar to expressions such as *ṣāma ṣiyāman* (he fasted fasting) or *qāma qiyāman* (he stood standing). Yet, this explanation is weaker than the first.

Al-Farrā' explained that Allah said "Imām" in the singular rather than "ā'imah" (plural) just as He said: "Indeed, I am the Messenger of the Lord of the Worlds." [Ash-Shu'arā' 26:16] He did not say "Messengers", in the dual, meaning that the singular here is used in a way that conveys the sense of the collective. Al-Farrā' illustrates this usage with the poet's words:

O reproachers, do not seek to blame me for the reproachers are not for me a leader meaning "they are not for me leaders" (umara'), showing that a singular form can imply a collective.

وهذا أحسن الأقوال، غير أنه يحتاج إلى مزيد بيان، وهو: أن المتقين كلهم على طريق واحد، ومعبودهم واحد، وأتباع كتاب واحد، ونبي واحد، وعبيد ربّ واحد. فدينهم واحد، ونبيهم واحد، وكتابهم واحد، ومعبودهم واحد، فكأنهم كلهم إمام واحد لمن بعدهم، ليسوا كالأئمة المختلفين الذين قد اختلفت طرائقهم، ومذاهبهم، وعقائدهم، فالإتتمام إنما هو بما هم عليه، وهو شيء واحد، وهو الإمام في الحقيقة

This is the strongest interpretation, though it requires further explanation. It is that all the righteous (*al-muttaqīn*) are on a single path: they have one way, follow one book, obey one Prophet, and serve one Lord. Their faith is one, their Prophet is one, their scripture is one, and their God is one. Thus, it is as if they form a single *Imām* for those who come after them. They are not like different leaders whose paths, schools of thought, or beliefs may diverge. Following them (*al-ittimām*) is to follow what they embody – a unified truth, and this is the real meaning of “*Imām*” in this context.

فصل

Section

وقد أخبر سبحانه أن هذه الإمامة إنما تُنال بالصبر واليقين فقال تعالى: ﴿وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا لَمَّا صَبَرُوا وَكَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يُوقِنُونَ﴾ [السجدة: ٢٤]
 فبالصبر واليقين تُنال الإمامة في الدين.

ف قيل: بالصبر عن الدنيا.

وقيل: بالصبر على البلاء.

وقيل: بالصبر عن المناهي.

والصواب: أنه بالصبر عن ذلك كله، بالصبر على أداء فرائض الله، والصبر عن محارمه، والصبر على أقداره.

Allah has made clear that this leadership is attained only through patience and certainty. He says: "We made leaders among them, guiding by Our command, because they were steadfast and had firm faith in Our signs" [As-Sajdah: 24].

It is through patience and certainty that leadership in religion is attained.

Some have said: through patience in turning away from worldly attachment.

Others have said: through patience in enduring affliction.

Others have said: through patience in refraining from what is forbidden.

The soundest understanding is that it includes patience in all of these together: patience in fulfilling Allah's obligations, patience in keeping away from what He has forbidden, and patience in bearing what He decrees.

وجمع - سبحانه - بين الصبر واليقين؛ إذ هما سعادة العبد، وفقدتهما يُفقد سعادته، فإن القلب تطرقه طوارق الشهوات المخالفة لأمر الله، وطوارق الشبهات المخالفة لخبره، فبالصبر يدفع الشهوات، وباليقين يدفع الشبهات.

فإن الشهوة والشبهة مضادتان للدين من كل وجه، فلا ينجو من عذاب الله إلا من دفع شهواته بالصبر، وشبهاته باليقين.

ولهذا أخبر - سبحانه - عن حبوط أعمال أهل الشهوات والشبهات فقال - تعالى -: ﴿كَالَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ كَانُوا أَشَدَّ مِنْكُمْ قُوَّةً وَأَكْثَرَ أَمْوَالًا وَأَوْلَادًا فَاسْتَمْتَعُوا بِخَلْقِهِمْ فَاسْتَمْتَعْتُمْ بِخَلْقِكُمْ كَمَا اسْتَمْتَعَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ بِخَلْقِهِمْ وَخُضْتُمْ كَالَّذِي خَاضُوا﴾ [التوبة: ٦٩]، فهذا الاستمتاع بالخلق هو استمتاعهم بنصيبتهم من الشهوات.

ثم قال: ﴿وَخُضْتُمْ كَالَّذِي خَاضُوا﴾، وهذا هو الخوض بالباطل في دين الله وهو خوض أهل الشبهات .

ثم قال: ﴿أُولَئِكَ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ﴾ (٦٩) [التوبة: ٦٩]، فعلق - سبحانه - حبوط الأعمال في الخسران باتباع الشهوات الذي هو الاستمتاع بالخلق، واتباع الشبهات الذي هو الخوض بالباطل.

Allah has joined patience and certainty together because they are the foundation of a servant's happiness; when they are absent, his happiness is lost. The heart is continually confronted by impulses of desire that oppose Allah's command, and by doubts that oppose His revelation. By patience, desires are resisted; by certainty, doubts are repelled.

Desire and doubt are opposed to religion in every respect, and no one is saved from Allah's punishment except the one who resists his desires through patience and overcomes his doubts through certainty.

For this reason, Allah speaks of the ruin of the deeds of those given over to desire and doubt, saying: "Like those before you: they were stronger than you in power, richer in wealth and children. They enjoyed their share, and you have enjoyed your share just as those before you enjoyed theirs, and you have engaged in idle talk as they did" [At-Tawbah: 69].

Their enjoying their share refers to their indulgence in the portion allotted to them of worldly desires.

Then He says: “and you have engaged in idle talk as they did”, this is false discourse concerning Allah’s religion, the discourse of those driven by doubt and confusion.

Then He says: “Such people—their deeds have come to nothing in this world and the next; they are the losers”. Thus, Allah links the nullification of deeds and utter loss to two things: following desires, which is indulgence in one’s allotted pleasures, and following doubts, which is false engagement in matters of religion.

فصل

Section

وكما أنه - سبحانه - علّق الإمامة في الدين بالصبر واليقين فالآية متضمنة لأصلين آخرين:

أحدهما: الدعوة إلى الله وهداية خلقه.

الثاني: هدايتهم بما أمر به على لسان رسوله ﷺ، لا بمقتضى عقولهم، وآرائهم، وسياساتهم، وأذواقهم،

وتقليد أسلافهم بغير برهان من الله؛ لأنه قال: ﴿يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا ...﴾ [السجدة: ٢٤]

Just as Allah has made leadership in religion dependent upon patience and certainty, this verse also contains two further principles:

The first is calling people to Allah and guiding His creation.

The second is that such guidance must be according to what He has commanded through His Messenger ﷺ, not according to people’s own reasoning, opinions, political calculations, preferences, or imitation of their forefathers without proof from Allah. For He says: “They guided by Our command” [As-Sajdah: 24].

فهذه أربعة أصول تضمنتها هذه الآية:

أحدها: الصبر، وهو حبس النفس عن محارم الله، وحبسها على فرائضه، وحبسها عن التسخط والشكاية لأقداره.

الثاني: اليقين، وهو الإيمان الجازم الثابت الذي لا ريب فيه ولا تردد ولا شك ولا شبهة بخمسة أصول، ذكرها سبحانه في قوله - تعالى - : ﴿لَيْسَ الْبِرُّ أَنْ تُولُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالْكِتَابِ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ﴾ [البقرة: ١٧٧]، وفي قوله: ﴿وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا﴾ [النساء: ١٣٦]، وفي قوله ﴿آمَنَ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ كُلٌّ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ﴾ [البقرة: ٢٨٥]، والإيمان باليوم الآخر داخل في الإيمان بالكتب والرسول.

وجمع بينها النبي ﷺ في حديث عمر، في قوله: "الإيمان أن تؤمن بالله، وملائكته، وكتبه، ورسوله، واليوم الآخر"

فهذه الأصول الخمس، من لم يؤمن بها فليس بمؤمن واليقين: أن يقوم الإيمان بها حتى تصير كأنها معاينة للقلب مُشَاهَدَةً له، نسبتها إلى البصيرة كنسبة الشمس والقمر إلى البصر، ولهذا قال من قال من السلف: [اليقين: الإيمان كله]

This verse, then, contains four foundational principles.

The first is patience: restraining the self from what Allah has forbidden, keeping it steadfast in fulfilling His obligations, and holding it back from resentment and complaint regarding His decrees.

The second is certainty: firm and settled faith, free from doubt, hesitation, uncertainty, or confusion, grounded in five essential foundations which Allah mentions in His words: "True righteousness does not consist in turning your faces towards east or west, but true righteousness is in one who believes in Allah, the Last Day, the angels, the Scripture, and the prophets" [Al-Baqarah: 177], and in His words: "Whoever denies Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, and the Last Day has gone far astray" [An-Nisa: 136], and also: "The Messenger believes in what has been sent down to him from his Lord, and so do the believers: all believe in Allah, His angels, His books, and His messengers" [Al-Baqarah: 285].

Faith in the Last Day is included within faith in the revealed books and the messengers.

The Prophet ﷺ gathered these together in the hadith of Umar ibn al-Khattab when he said: "Faith is to believe in Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, and the Last Day."

These are the five essential foundations: whoever does not believe in them is not a believer. Certainty means that faith in these truths becomes so firmly established that they are as though directly witnessed by the heart and seen before it, their relation to inward insight being like that of the sun and moon to physical sight. For this reason some of the Salaf said: "Certainty is faith in its entirety."

الثالث: هداية الخلق ودعوتهم إلى الله ورسوله:

قال تعالى: ﴿وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ قَوْلًا مِّمَّنْ دَعَا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا وَقَالَ إِنَّنِي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ﴾ [فصلت: ٣٣]
[قال الحسن البصري: هذا حبيب الله، هذا ولي الله، أسلم لله، وعمل بطاعته، ودعا الخلق إليه. فهذا النوع أفضل أنواع الإنسان وأعلاهم درجة عند الله يوم القيامة.

وهم ثنية الله - سبحانه - من الخاسرين، قال تعالى: ﴿وَالْعَصْرُ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ﴾ [العصر: ٣]، فأقسم - سبحانه - على خسران نوع الإنسان، إلا من كَمَّل نفسه بالإيمان والعمل الصالح، وكَمَّل غيره بوصيته له بهما؛ ولهذا قال الشافعي: "لو فكر الناس كلهم في سورة العصر لكفتهم.

Third: Guiding creation and calling them to Allah and His Messenger

Allah says: "And who can speak better than one who calls to Allah, does good, and says: 'I am of those who submit'?" [Fussilat 41:33] Al-Hasan al-Basri commented: "This is the beloved of Allah, this is a friend of Allah, one who has submitted to Him, acted in obedience, and called others to Him." This type of person is the highest and best of human beings in Allah's sight on the Day of Judgment.

These are the exceptions to those He describes as losers, for Allah says: "By time, indeed mankind is in loss—except those who have believed and done righteous deeds, and enjoin one another to truth and enjoin one another to patience." [Al-Asr 103:1–3] Allah has thus sworn by time regarding the loss of humankind, except for those who complete themselves with faith and righteous action and complete others by guiding them to both. As Al-Shafi'i said: "If all people reflected on Surah Al-Asr, it would suffice them."

ولا يكون من أتباع الرسول على الحقيقة إلا من دعا إلى الله على بصيرة، قال الله - تعالى - : ﴿قُلْ هَذِهِ سَبِيلِي أَدْعُو إِلَى اللَّهِ عَلَىٰ بَصِيرَةٍ أَنَا وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِي﴾ [يوسف: ١٠٨]، فقوله: ﴿أَدْعُو إِلَى اللَّهِ﴾ تفسير لسبيله التي هو عليها، فسبيله وسبيل أتباعه: الدعوة إلى الله، فمن لم يدع إلى الله فليس على سبيله.

وقوله: ﴿عَلَىٰ بَصِيرَةٍ﴾، قال ابن الأعرابي: البصيرة الثبات في الدين.

وقيل: البصيرة: العبرة، كما يُقال: أليس لك في كذا بصيرة؟ أي: عبرة، قال الشاعر:

في الداهيين الأوليـن من القرون لنا بصائر

والتحقيق: العبرة ثمرة البصيرة، فإذا تبصر اعتبر، فمن عُدِمَ العبرة فكأنه لا بصيرة له.

One cannot truly be among the followers of the Messenger except by calling to Allah with insight. Allah says: "Say: This is my way; I call to God with insight, I and those who follow me." [Yusuf 12:108] Here, "I call to Allah" explains the way He follows. His way, and the way of His followers, is to call to Allah. Whoever does not call to Allah is not truly on His path. The phrase "with insight" (*'alā baṣīrah*) is explained by Ibn al-'Arabī as steadfastness in religion. Others interpret it as reflection, as in the expression, "Do you not have insight into such-and-such?" meaning reflection or consideration.

As the poet said:

In the early generations we have insights

The reality is that reflection (*'ibrah*) is the fruit of insight (*baṣīrah*). Whoever lacks reflection is as if they have no insight at all.

وأصل اللفظ من الظهور والبيان، فالقرآن بصائر، أي: أدلةٌ وهدى وبيان يقود إلى الحق، ويهدي إلى الرشد، ولهذا يقال للطريقة من الدَّم التي يُسْتَدَلُّ بها على الرِّمِيَّةِ: بصيرة.

فدلَّت الآية أيضًا على أنَّ من لم يكن على بصيرة فليس من أتباع الرسول، وأن أتباعه هم أولو البصائر، ولهذا قال: ﴿أَنَا وَمَنْ اتَّبَعَنِي﴾ فإن كان المعنى: أدعو إلى الله أنا ومن اتبعني، ويكون ﴿مَنْ اتَّبَعَنِي﴾ معطوفًا على الضمير المرفوع في ﴿أَدْعُو﴾ - وَحَسَّنَ العَطْفَ؛ لأجل الفصل - فهو دليل على أن أتباع الرسول هم الذين يدعون إلى الله وإلى رسوله.

وإن كان معطوفًا على الضمير المجرور في ﴿سَبِيلِي﴾ أي: هذه سبيلي وسبيل من اتَّبَعَنِي فكذلك. وعلى التقديرين فسبيله وسبيل أتباعه الدعوة إلى الله.

The root of the word *baṣīrah* comes from *zuhūr* (appearance) and *bayān* (clarity). The Qur'an itself is called *baṣā'ir* "insights", meaning evidence, guidance, and clear explanation that lead to truth and direct one to right conduct. For this reason, in other contexts, the word *baṣīrah* is used for a blood trail that guides one to a target.

The verse also indicates that whoever is not guided by insight is not truly among the followers of the Messenger. His followers are those endowed with insight. This is why the verse says: "I and those who follow me." If the meaning is "I call to Allah, and those who follow me also call to Allah," and "those who follow me" is connected to the pronoun in "I call", and this is acceptable due to the pause, then it shows that the followers of the Messenger are those who actively call to Allah and to His Messenger.

If, instead, it is connected to the pronoun in "my way", i.e. "this is my way and the way of those who follow me", then likewise, the way of the Messenger and of His followers is the call to Allah. In both cases, the essential point is clear: the true way of the Prophet and his followers is the calling to Allah.

الأصل الرابع: قوله: ﴿يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا﴾ [السجدة: ٢٤]، وفي ذلك دليل على اتّباعهم ما أنزل الله على رسوله، وهدايتهم به وحده، دون غيره من الأقوال والآراء والنّحل والمذاهب، بل لا يَهْدُونَ إلا بأمره خاصة.

فحصل من هذا: أن أئمة الدين الذين يَقتدون بهم هم الذين جمعوا بين الصبر واليقين والدعوة إلى الله بالسنة والوحي لا بالآراء وبالبدع، فهؤلاء خلفاء الرسول ﷺ في أمته، وهم خاصته وأولياؤه، ومن عاداهم أو حاربهم فقد عادى الله - سبحانه - وأذنه بالحرب.

The fourth principle is indicated by the words: “they guide by Our command” [Sajda: 24]

This shows that their guidance is strictly based on what Allah has revealed to His Messenger. They guide solely by Allah’s instruction, not by human opinions, philosophies, schools of thought, or personal whims. Their guidance is purely divine in origin.

From this it follows that the true leaders (*a’immah*) of religion and those whom others follow are precisely those who combine patience and certainty with calling to Allah according to the Prophet’s guidance and the revelation, not according to personal opinions or innovations. They are the successors of the Messenger ﷺ in his community, his special companions, and his allies. Anyone who opposes or fights them is considered to oppose Allah Himself, and Allah permits conflict against such opposition.

قال الإمام أحمد في حُطبة كتابه في الرد على الجهمية:

الحمد لله الذي جعل في كل زمانٍ فترةٍ من الرسل بقايا من أهل العلم، يدعون من ضل إلى الهدى، ويصبرون منهم على الأذى، يُحيون بكتاب الله الموتى، وَيُبصِّرونَ بنور الله أهل العمى، فكم من قتيل لإبليس قد أحيوه، وكم من ضال تائهٍ قد هدوه، فما أحسن أثرهم على الناس! وما أقبح أثر الناس عليهم! ينفون عن كتاب الله تحريف الغالين، وانتحال المبطلين، وتأويل الجاهلين، الذين عَقَدُوا أُلوية البدعة، وَأَطْلَقُوا عِنانِ الفتنة مما فهم مختلفون في الكتاب، مخالفون للكتاب، مجتمعون على مفارقة الكتاب، يقولون على الله وفي الله وفي كتاب الله بغير علم، يتكلمون بالمتشابه من الكلام، وَيَخْدَعُونَ جهال الناس بما يُشَبِّهُونَ عليهم، فنعوذ بالله من فتن المضلِّين"

Imam Ahmad, in the preface to his book refuting the Jahmiyya, said:

Praise be to Allah, who, in every era of no Prophets, has left behind a remnant among His people of knowledge, those who call the misguided to guidance, and patiently endure their harm. They bring the dead to life with the Book of Allah, and illuminate the blind with the light of Allah. How many of the slain of Satan have they revived, and how many lost and wandering souls have they guided! How excellent is their influence upon people! And how ugly is the effect of the people upon them!

They protect Allah's Book from the distortions of extremists, the claims of the false, and the misinterpretations of the ignorant, who have raised the banners of innovation and unleashed the chaos of dispute over matters that are debated among people, contrary to the Book, and agreed in departing from it. They speak of Allah, in Allah, and about Allah's Book without knowledge, twisting its ambiguous verses, and deceiving the ignorant by their confusing explanations. We seek refuge in Allah from the trials of those who mislead.

فصل

Section

ومما ينبغي الاعتناء به علمًا ومعرفة وقصدًا وإرادةً: العلم بأن كل إنسان، بل كل حيوان، إنما يسعى فيما يُحَصِّلُ له اللذة والنعيم وطيب العيش، ويندفع به عنه أضرار ذلك، وهذا مطلوب صحيح يتضمن ستة أمور:

أحدها: معرفة الشيء النافع للعبد، الملائم له، الذي بحصوله لذته وفرحه وسروره وطيب عيشه.

الثاني: معرفة الطريق الموصلة إلى ذلك.

الثالث: سلوك تلك الطريق.

الرابع: معرفة الضار: المؤذي المنافر الذي ينكد عليه حياته.

الخامس: معرفة الطريق التي إذا سلكها أفضت به إلى ذلك.

السادس: تجنب سلوكها.

فهذه ستة أمور لا تتم لذة العيد وسروره وفرحه وصلاح حاله إلا باستكمالها، وما نقص منها عاد بسوء حاله، وتنكيد حياته.

What must be attended to with knowledge, understanding, intention, and resolve is this: every human being, indeed every creature, naturally strives for what brings pleasure, comfort, and a good life, and instinctively avoids what brings its opposite. This sound principle entails six essential elements:

1. Knowing what is truly beneficial for the servant, that which suits him, and by attaining it he experiences delight, joy, satisfaction, and a good life.
2. Knowing the path that leads to that benefit.
3. Walking that path.
4. Knowing what is harmful, that which injures, repels, or corrupts one's life.
5. Knowing the path that leads to the above harm.
6. Avoiding that harmful path.

Only by completing these six elements can one fully enjoy the happiness, joy, and delight of life, and achieve well-being. Any deficiency in these elements leads inevitably to a state of misfortune, difficulty, and the disruption of one's life.

وكل عاقل يسعى في هذه الأمور، لكن أكثر الناس غلط في تحصيل هذا المطلوب المحبوب النافع :

إما في عدم تصوره ومعرفته،

وإما في عدم معرفته الطريق الموصلة إليه.

فهذان غلطان سببهما الجهل، وَيُتَخَلَّصُ منهما بالعلم.

وقد يحصل له العلم بالمطلوب، والعلم بطريقه، لكن في قلبه إرادات وشهوات تحول بينه وبين قصد هذا المطلوب النافع وسلوك طريقه، فكلما أراد ذلك اعترضته تلك الشهوات والإرادات، وحالت بينه وبينه .

Every rational person strives in these matters, yet most people go astray in attaining what is desirable and truly beneficial. This misguidance arises:

Either from not perceiving or knowing the object of desire,

Or from not knowing the path that leads to it.

These two errors are rooted in ignorance and are remedied through knowledge.

One may acquire knowledge of both the desired goal and the path to it, yet still find in the heart inclinations and desires that obstruct the pursuit of this beneficial goal and prevent walking the path correctly. Whenever one seeks the goal, these desires and inclinations intervene and come between the person and what he aims to achieve.

وهو لا يمكنه تركها وتقديم هذا المطلوب عليها إلا بأحد أمرين:

إما حب مُتَعَلِّقٌ،

وإما فَرْقٌ مُزَعَجٌ

فيكون الله ورسوله والدار الآخرة والجنة ونعيمها أحب إليه من هذه الشهوات، ويعلم أنه لا يمكنه الجمع بينهما، فيؤثر أعلى المحبوبين على أدناهما، وإما أن يحصل له عِلْمٌ ما يترتب على إثارة هذه الشهوات من المخاوف والآلام التي أَلَمُّها أشدُّ من ألم فوات هذه الشهوات وأبقى.

فإذا تمكن من قلبه هذان العِلْمَانِ أنتجا له إثارة ما ينبغي إثارة، وتقديمه على ما سواه؛ فإنَّ خاصة العقل: إثارة أعلى المحبوبين على أدناهما، واحتمال أدنى المكروهين ليتخلص به من أعلاهما.

وبهذا الأصل تَعْرِفُ عُقُولُ النَّاسِ، وَتُمَيِّزُ بَيْنَ الْعَاقِلِ وَغَيْرِهِ، وَيَظْهَرُ تَفَاوُثُهُمْ فِي الْعُقُولِ.

A person cannot leave these desires and give precedence to what is truly necessary except through one of two means:

Either through a love that is firmly fixed

Or through a repulsion that is keenly felt.

In the first case, Allah, His Messenger, the Hereafter, Paradise, and its blessings become more beloved to the heart than these lower desires. The person realises that he cannot have both, so he chooses the higher beloved over the lower.

In the second case, one comes to know the consequences of pursuing these base desires: the fears, pains, and suffering they entail, which are harsher and longer-lasting than the temporary pleasure lost by abandoning them.

When either or both of these forms of knowledge take hold in the heart, they produce the natural inclination to prefer what ought to be preferred, and to give it precedence over everything else. The particular function of reason is thus: to prefer the highest of the beloved over the lowest, and to endure the least of what is disliked in order to avoid the greatest.

Through this principle, one can discern the minds of people, distinguish the intelligent from the less intelligent, and observe the diversity in human intellect.

فأين عقل من آثر لذة عاجلة منغصة منكدة - إنما هي كأضغاث أحلام، أو كطيف تمتع به من زائره في المنام - على لذة هي من أعظم اللذات، وفرحة ومسرة هي من أعظم المسرات، دائمة لا تزول ولا تفتنى ولا تنقطع؛ فباعها بهذه اللذة الفانية المضمحلة التي حُشيت بالآلام، وإنما حصلت بالآلام، وعاقبتها الآلام؟

فلو قايى العاقل بين لذتها وألمها، ومضرتها ومنفعتها؛ لاستحيا من نفسه وعقله، كيف يسعى في طلبها! ويُضيع زمانه في اشتغاله بها! فضلاً عن إيثارها على "ما لا عين رأت، ولا أذن سمعت، ولا خطر على قلب بشر" !

And where is the reason of the one who prefers an immediate pleasure, a fleeting delight that is full of disturbance and discomfort, like a confused dream, or a phantom of enjoyment glimpsed in a visitor's vision during sleep, over a pleasure that is among the greatest of pleasures, and a joy and delight among the greatest of joys, enduring, never fading, never vanishing, never interrupted? He sells it for this transient, vanishing pleasure, which is itself filled with pain, obtained only through suffering, and whose consequence is suffering.

If a rational person were to weigh its enjoyment against its pain, its harm against its benefit, he would be ashamed before himself and his reason at how he pursues it, and how he wastes his time engrossed in it. Let alone preferring it over that which "no eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no heart of man has conceived."

وقد اشترى - سبحانه - من المؤمنين أنفسهم، وجعل ثمنها جنته، وأجرى هذا العقد على يد رسوله وخليئه وخيرته من خلقه.

فسلعة ربُّ السموات والأرض مشتريها، والتمتع بالنظر إلى وجهه الكريم وسماع كلامه منه في داره ثمنها، ومَنْ جرى على يده العقد رسوله، كيف يليق بالعاقل أن يُضيعها ويهملها ويبيعها بثمن بخس، في دار زائلة مضمحلة فانية! وهل هذا إلا من أعظم الغبن؟

وإنما يظهر له هذا الغبن الفاحش يوم التغابن، إذا ثقلت موازين المتقين وخفَّت موازين المبطلين.

And Allah has purchased from the believers their very selves, and set as the price Paradise, executing this covenant through His Messenger, His intimate friend, and the choicest of His creation.

So the commodity belongs to the Lord of the heavens and the earth; its price is the delight of gazing upon His noble face and hearing His words in His abode. And the covenant was carried out by His Messenger. How then could a rational person waste it, neglect it, and sell it for a paltry price in a fleeting, perishing, transient world?

Is this not one of the greatest forms of loss and deception? Its enormity will only be revealed on the Day of Mutual Deception (*Yawm al-Taghabun*), when the scales of the righteous are heavy, and the scales of the wrongdoers are light.

فصل

Section

إذا عرفت هذه المقدمة فاللذة التامة، والفرح والسرور، وطيب العيش، والنعيم، إنما هو في معرفة الله، وتوحيده والأُنس به، والشوق إلى لقائه، واجتماع القلب والهَمِّ عليه. فَإِنَّ أَنْكَدَ الْعَيْشِ عَيْشَ مَنْ قَلْبُهُ مُشْتَتٌ، وَهَمُّهُ مُفَرَّقٌ، فليس لقلبه مستقر يستقر عنده ولا حبيب يأوي إليه ويسكن إليه، كما أفصح القائل عن ذلك بقوله:

وما ذاق طعمَ العيشِ مَنْ لم يكن له حبيبٌ إليه يطمئن ويسكنُ
فالعيش الطيب، والحياة النافعة، وَفُرَّةُ الْعَيْنِ فِي السَّكُونِ وَالطَّمَأِينَةِ إِلَى الْحَبِيبِ الْأَوَّلِ، وَلَوْ تَنَقَّلَ الْقَلْبُ فِي الْمَحْبُوبَاتِ كُلِّهَا لَمْ يَسْكُنْ وَلَمْ يَطْمَئِنْ إِلَى شَيْءٍ مِنْهَا، وَلَمْ تَقَرَّ بِهِ عَيْنُهُ حَتَّى يَطْمَئِنَ إِلَى إِلَهِهِ وَرَبِّهِ وَوَلِيِّهِ، الَّذِي لَيْسَ لَهُ مِنْ دُونِهِ وَلِيٌّ وَلَا شَفِيعٌ، وَلَا غِنَى لَهُ عَنْهُ طَرْفَةَ عَيْنٍ، كَمَا قَالَ الْقَائِلُ:

نَقِلْ فَوَادِكَ حَيْثُ شِئْتَ مِنْ الْهَوَى مَا الْحُبُّ إِلَّا لِلْحَبِيبِ الْأَوَّلِ
كَمْ مَنْزِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَأْلَفُهُ الْفَتَى وَحَنِينُهُ أَبَدًا لِأَوَّلِ مَنْزِلِ

If you understand this prelude, then perfect delight, joy, and pleasure, as well as wholesome living and true bliss, are found only in knowing Allah, in His Oneness, in intimacy with Him, in longing for His presence, and in uniting the heart and attention upon Him.

For the most wretched life is the life of one whose heart is scattered and whose concern is divided; such a person's heart finds no resting place, no beloved to whom it may turn and dwell in peace. As the poet has eloquently expressed:

He has not tasted the sweetness of life who has no

Beloved to whom he may feel secure and at rest.

Good living and beneficial life and the delight of the eye, lie in tranquility and reassurance in the first and foremost beloved. If the heart wanders among all other beloveds, it finds neither rest nor assurance in any of them, and the eye is not content until it rests in its Lord, its God, its Guardian—who has no peer, no intercessor, and whose absence leaves him utterly needy. As the poet said:

Move your heart wherever you will among desires;

Love is only for the first beloved.

How many homes on earth may a young man grow familiar with,

Yet his longing remains always for the first home.

فاحرص أن يكون همك واحدًا، وأن يكون هو الله وحده، فهذا غاية سعادة العبد، وصاحب هذه الحال في جنة معجلة قبل جنة الآخرة وفي نعيم عاجل، كما قال بعض الواجدين: "إنه ليمر بالقلب أوقات أقول: إن كان أهل الجنة في مثل هذا إنهم لفي عيش طيب". وقال آخر: "إنه ليمر بالقلب أوقات يرقص فيها طربًا". وقال آخر: "مساكين أهل الدنيا! خرجوا منها وما ذاقوا أطيب ما فيها. قيل له: وما أطيب ما فيها؟ قال: معرفة الله، ومحبته، والأنس بقربه، والشوق إلى لقائه". وليس في الدنيا نعيم يشبه نعيم أهل الجنة إلا هذا.

So strive to make your concern one single concern, and let that concern be Allah alone. This is the height of a servant's happiness. The one who attains this state lives in an immediate garden before the Garden of the Hereafter, and enjoys a present bliss even before the lasting bliss to come.

As one of those who deeply experienced this said:

"There are moments that pass over the heart when I say: if the people of Paradise are in a state like this, then truly they are living in a good life."

Another said: "There are moments that pass over the heart in which it almost dances with joy." And another said: "How poor are the people of this world—they left it without tasting the finest thing in it." He was asked, "And what is the finest thing in it?" He replied: "Knowing Allah, loving Him, finding intimacy in nearness to Him, and longing to meet Him." There is no joy in this world that resembles the joy of the people of Paradise except this.

ولهذا قال النبي ﷺ: "حُبِّبَ إِلَيَّ مِنْ دُنْيَاكُمْ: النِّسَاءُ، وَالطِّيبُ. وَجُعِلَتْ قُرَّةُ عَيْنِي فِي الصَّلَاةِ، فَأَخْبِرْ أَنَّهُ حُبِّبَ إِلَيْهِ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا شَيْئَانِ": النِّسَاءُ وَالطِّيبُ، ثُمَّ قَالَ: "وَجُعِلَتْ قُرَّةُ عَيْنِي فِي الصَّلَاةِ"

وَقُرَّةُ الْعَيْنِ فَوْقَ الْمَحَبَّةِ، فَإِنَّهُ لَيْسَ كُلُّ مَحْبُوبٍ تَقَرُّ بِهِ الْعَيْنُ، وَإِنَّمَا تَقَرُّ الْعَيْنُ، بِأَعْلَى الْمَحْبُوبَاتِ، الَّذِي يُحِبُّ لِدَاتِهِ، وَلَيْسَ ذَلِكَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ، وَكُلُّ مَا سِوَاهُ فَإِنَّمَا يُحِبُّ تَبَعًا لِمَحَبَّتِهِ فَيُحِبُّ لِأَجَلِهِ. وَلَا يُحِبُّ مَعَهُ، فَإِنَّ الْحُبَّ مَعَهُ شِرْكٌ، وَالْحُبُّ لِأَجَلِهِ تَوْحِيدٌ.

فَالْمُشْرِكُ يَتَّخِذُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ أُنْدَادًا يُحِبُّهُمْ كَحُبِّ اللَّهِ، وَالْمُؤَحِّدُ إِنَّمَا يُحِبُّ مَنْ يُحِبُّهُ اللَّهُ، وَيَبْغِضُ مَنْ يَبْغِضُهُ فِي اللَّهِ، وَيَفْعَلُ مَا يَفْعَلُهُ اللَّهُ، وَيَتْرِكُ مَا يَتْرِكُهُ اللَّهُ. وَمِدَارُ الدِّينِ عَلَى هَذِهِ الْقَوَاعِدِ الْأَرْبَعِ، وَهِيَ: الْحُبُّ وَالْبَغْضُ، وَيَتَرْتَبُ عَلَيْهِمَا الْفِعْلُ وَالتَّرْكُ وَالْعَطَاءُ وَالْمَنْعُ. فَمَنْ اسْتَكْمَلَ أَنْ يَكُونَ هَذَا كُلَّهُ اللَّهُ اسْتَكْمَلَ الْإِيمَانَ، وَمَا نَقَصَ مِنْهَا أَنْ كُونَ لِلَّهِ عَادَ بِنَقْصِ إِيْمَانِ الْعَبْدِ.

For this reason, the Prophet ﷺ said: "From your worldly life, women and perfume have been made beloved to me, but the delight of my eyes has been placed in prayer."

He thus explained that two things from this world were made beloved to him: women and perfume, then he said: "the delight of my eyes has been placed in prayer."

The delight of the eye is greater than mere love, for not everything that is loved brings true repose to the eye. The eye finds rest only in the highest of beloved things, what is loved for its own sake, and that is none other than Allah, besides whom there is no god. Everything else is loved only as a consequence of loving Him, and is loved for His sake. It is not to be loved alongside Him, for loving something alongside Him is shirk, while loving for His sake is tawhīd.

Thus, the idolater takes rivals besides Allah, loving them as Allah should be loved; whereas the one who affirms divine oneness loves whoever he loves for Allah's sake, hates whoever he hates for Allah's sake, does what he does for Allah's sake, and refrains from what he refrains from for Allah's sake.

The whole of religion revolves around these four foundations: love and hatred, and from them follow action and restraint, giving and withholding. Whoever perfects all of this for Allah has perfected faith; and whatever falls short of being for Allah results in a corresponding deficiency in the servant's faith.

والمقصود أنّ ما تقرُّ به العين أعلى من مجرد ما يجبه، فالصلاة قُرَّةُ عيون المحبين في هذه الدنيا؛ لما فيها من مناجاة من لا تقر العيون، ولا تطمئن القلوب، ولا تسكن النفوس إلا إليه، والتنعم بذكره، والتذلل والخضوع له، والقرب منه، ولا سيما في حال السجود، وتلك الحال أقرب ما يكون العبد من ربه فيها، ومن هذا قول النبي ﷺ "يا بلال أرحننا بالصلاة"، فأعلم بذلك أن راحته ﷺ في الصلاة كما أخبر أن قرة عينه فيها. فأين هذا من قول القائل: نصلي ونستريح من الصلاة!

فالمحب راحته وقرة عينه في الصلاة، والغافل المعرض، ليس له نصيب من ذلك، بل الصلاة كبيرة شاقة عليه، إذا قام فيها كأنه على الجمر حتى يتخلص منها، وأحبُّ الصلاة إليه أعجلها وأسرعها، فإنه ليس له قرة عين فيها، ولا لقلبه راحة بها، والعبد إذا قرَّت عينه بشيء واستراح قلبه به فأشقى ما عليه مفارقتة، والمتكليف الفارغ القلب من الله والدار الآخرة المبتلى بمحبة الدنيا أشقى ما عليه الصلاة، وأكره ما إليه طولها، مع تفرغه وصحته وعدم اشتغاله!

The point is that what truly brings delight to the eye is higher than what is merely loved. Prayer is the delight of the eyes of those who love Allah in this world, because within it is intimate converse with the One in whom alone eyes find rest, hearts find reassurance, and souls come to peace. It is the joy of remembering Him, humbling oneself before Him, drawing near to Him—especially in prostration, for that is the moment when the servant is nearest to his Lord.

This is why the Prophet ﷺ said: "Bilal, give us comfort through prayer." By this he made clear that his comfort was in prayer, just as he had said that the delight of his eyes was in it. How far this is from the attitude of one who says: "Let us pray so that we may be finished with prayer and rest from it."

For the one who loves Allah, prayer is rest and delight; but the heedless person, turning away, has no share in this. Prayer weighs heavily upon him, burdensome and difficult: when he stands in it, it is as though he were standing on burning coals until he can be free of it. The prayer most beloved to him is the shortest and quickest, because he finds no delight in it and no rest for his heart through it.

When a person's eye finds delight in something and the heart finds rest through it, the hardest thing for him is to part from it. But the one who forces himself through worship, whose heart is empty of Allah and the Hereafter, and who is consumed by love of this world, finds prayer among the hardest of burdens and its length among the most disliked things—even when he is free, healthy, and unoccupied.

ومما ينبغي أن يُعلم: أنَّ الصلاة التي تَقَرُّ بها العين ويستريح بها القلب هي التي تجمع ستة مشاهد:

المشهد الأول: الإخلاص

وهو أن يكون الحامل عليها والداعي إليها رغبة العبد في الله، ومحبه له، وطلب مرضاته، والقرب منه، والتوحد إليه، وامتثال أمره، بحيث لا يكون الباعث له عليها حظاً من حظوظ الدنيا ألبتة، بل يأتي بها ابتغاء وجه ربه الأعلى، محبةً، له وخوفاً من عذابه، ورجاء لمغفرته وثوابه

Among the things that should be understood is that the prayer through which the eye finds delight and the heart finds rest is the prayer that gathers six inward states.

The First State: Sincerity

This means that what drives a person to prayer, and what calls him to it, is his desire for Allah, his love for Him, his seeking His good pleasure, drawing near to Him, seeking His affection, and obeying His command. Nothing of worldly gain should motivate him in it whatsoever. Rather, he performs it seeking only the face of his Lord Most High, out of love for Him, fear of His punishment, and hope for His forgiveness and reward.

المشهد لثاني: مشهد الصّدق والنصح

وهو أن يفرّغ قلبه لله فيها، ويستفرغ جهده في إقباله فيها على الله، وجمع قلبه عليها وإيقاعها على أحسن الوجوه وأكملها ظاهراً وباطناً، فإنّ الصلاة لها ظاهر وباطن، فظاهرها الأفعال المشاهدة والأقوال المسموعة، وباطنها الخشوع والمراقبة وتفريغ القلب لله، والإقبال بكليته على الله فيها، بحيث لا يلتفت قلبه عنه إلى غيره.

فهذا بمنزلة الروح لها، والأفعال بمنزلة البدن، فإذا خلت من الروح كانت كبدن لا روح فيه، أفلا يستحي العبد أن يُواجه سيده بمثل ذلك! ولهذا تُلْفُ كما يُلْفُ الثوب الخلق ويُضرب بها وجه صاحبها، وتقول: ضيعك الله كما ضيعتني.

والصلاة التي كمل ظاهرها وباطنها تصعد ولها نور وبرهان كنور الشمس حتى تُعْرَض على الله فيرضاهما ويقبلها، وتقول: حفظك الله كما حفظتني.

The Second State: Truthfulness and Sincere Devotion

This means that the worshipper empties his heart for Allah during prayer, exerts his utmost effort in turning wholly towards Him, gathers his heart fully into the prayer, and performs it in the finest and most complete manner, outwardly and inwardly.

Prayer has an outward form and an inward reality: its outward form consists of visible actions and audible words, while its inward reality consists of humility, watchfulness, emptying the heart for Allah, and turning completely towards Him, so that the heart does not turn away to anything else.

This inward reality is to prayer what the soul is to the body, while the outward actions are like the body itself. If prayer is stripped of its soul, it becomes like a body without life. How could a servant not feel ashamed to stand before his Master with something like that?

For this reason such a prayer is folded up like a worn-out garment and struck back against the face of the one who offered it, saying: "May Allah neglect you as you neglected me." But the prayer whose outward and inward dimensions are complete rises with light and clear proof, shining like the sun, until it is presented before Allah, who is pleased with it and accepts it. Then it says: "May Allah preserve you as you preserved me."

فصل: المشهد الثالث: مشهد المتابعة والافتداء

وهو أن يحرص كل الحرص على الافتداء في صلاته بالنبي ﷺ ويصلي كما كان يُصلي؛ ويُعرض عما أحدث الناس في الصلاة، من الزيادة والنقصان، والأوضاع التي لم يُنقل عن رسول الله شيء منها ولا عن أحد من أصحابه؛ ولا يقف عند أقوال المرخصين الذين يقفون مع أقل ما يعتقدون وجوبه، ويكون غيرهم قد نازعهم في ذلك وأوجب ما أسقطوه، ولعل الأحاديث الثابتة والسنة النبوية من جانبه ولا يلتفتون إلى ذلك، ويقولون: نحن مقلدون لمذهب فلان. وهذا لا يُخلص عند الله ولا يكون عذراً لمن تخلف عما علمه من السنة عنده، فإن الله - سبحانه - إنما أمر بطاعة رسوله وأتباعه وخذّه ولم يأمر باتباع غيره، وإنما يُطاع غيره إذا أمر بما أمر به الرسول، وكل أحد سوى الرسول ﷺ فمأخوذ من قوله ومتروك.

Section: The Third State — Following and Emulating

It is that the worshipper exercises the utmost care to emulate the Prophet ﷺ in his prayer, performing it exactly as he did. He turns away from what people have innovated in prayer, additions, omissions, or postures that have no basis in what was transmitted from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ or from any of his companions.

He does not rely on the opinions of those who grant concessions, who limit themselves to what they consider the minimal obligation, while others dispute them and enforce what they omit. Perhaps, the authentic narrations and Sunnah is with him, but they pay it no mind, instead stating that they follow only such and such madhab. This will not save them before Allah, nor is it a valid excuse for the one who leaves a Sunnah that reaches him.

Rather, he understands that true guidance is in following the Prophet ﷺ alone, and obedience to anyone else is only valid if they follow what the Messenger ﷺ commanded. Anything else outside the Prophet ﷺ is taken from their words and left as is; it is not binding.

وقد أقسم الله - سبحانه - بنفسه الكريمة أنا لا نؤمن حتى نُحْكِمَ الرسول فيما شجر بيننا، وبقاد لحكمه ونُسَلِّمَ تسليمًا. فلا ينفعنا تحكيم غيره والانتقياد له، ولا ينجينا من عذاب الله، ولا يقبل منا هذا الجواب إذا سمعنا نداءه - سبحانه - يوم القيامة: ﴿مَاذَا أَجَبْتُمُ الْمُرْسَلِينَ﴾ [القصص: ٦٥]، فإنه لا بد أن يسألنا عن ذلك، ويطالبنا بالجواب، قال تعالى: ﴿فَلَنَسْأَلَنَّ الَّذِينَ أُرْسِلَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَنَسْأَلَنَّ الْمُرْسَلِينَ﴾ [الأعراف: ٦]، وقال النبي ﷺ "أُوحِيَ إِلَيَّ أَنْكُمْ بِي تُفْتَنُونَ وَعَنِي تُسْأَلُونَ"، يعني المسألة في القبر، فمن انتهت إليه سنة رسول الله ﷺ وتركها لقول أحد من الناس فَسِيرُدُ يوم القيامة ويعلم.

Allah has sworn by His noble Self: We do not truly believe until we submit disputes to the Messenger and follow his judgment fully and unconditionally. Obeying anyone else or submitting to anyone else does not benefit us, nor will it save us from Allah's punishment. On the Day of Judgment, when we hear His call: "What did you answer the messengers?" [Al-Qasas: 65] we will be required to answer regarding this.

Allah says: "We will surely question those to whom [the messengers] were sent, and We will surely question the messengers." [Al-A'raf: 6] The Prophet ﷺ said: "It was revealed to me that you will be tested through me and questioned about me." This refers to the questioning in the grave.

If a person has had the guidance of the Prophet ﷺ and abandons it for the opinion or saying of anyone else, it will come back to them on the Day of Judgment, and they will be held accountable.

فصل: المشهد الرابع: مشهد الإحسان

وهو مشهد المراقبة، وهو أن يعبد الله كأنه يراه. وهذا المشهد إنما ينشأ من كمال الإيمان بالله وأسمائه وصفاته، حتى كأنه يرى الله - سبحانه - فوق سمواته، مستويًا على عرشه، يتكلم بأمره ونهيه، ويُدبّر أمر الخليقة، فينزل الأمر من عنده ويصعد إليه، وتُعرضُ أعمال العباد وأرواحهم عند الموافاة عليه. فَيَشْهَدُ ذلك كله بقلبه، وَيَشْهَدُ أسماءه وصفاته، وَيَشْهَدُ قيوماً، حياً، سمياً، بصيراً، عزيزاً، حكيماً، آمراً، ناهياً، يحب ويبغض، ويرضى ويغضب، ويفعل ما يشاء، ويحكم ما يريد وهو فوق عرشه، لا يخفى عليه شيء من أعمال العباد ولا أقوالهم ولا بواطنهم، بل يعلم خائنة الأعين وما تخفي الصدور.

Section: The Fourth State –Excellence

This aspect is the state of God-consciousness, where a servant worships Allah as if he sees Him. This state arises from the perfection of faith in Allah, His Names, and His Attributes, such that it is as if he sees Allah, above the heavens, established on His Throne, commanding and forbidding, and governing the affairs of creation.

From Him and to Him do all matters descend and ascend; the deeds and souls of His servants are presented to Him upon accountability. The servant witnesses all of this with his heart: He witnesses Allah's Names and Attributes; He acknowledges that Allah is Self-Subsisting, Living, Hearing, Seeing, Mighty, Wise, commanding and forbidding, loving and disliking, approving and disapproving, doing what He wills, ruling as He desires, seated above His Throne. Nothing of the servants' deeds, words, or inner states is hidden from Him. Indeed, He knows even the treachery of the eyes and what the hearts conceal.

ومشهد الإحسان أصل أعمال القلوب كلها، فإنه يوجب الحياء، والإجلال، والتعظيم، والخشية، والمحبة، والإنابة، والتوكل، والخضوع لله - سبحانه -، والذل له؛ وَيَقْطَعُ الوسوس وحديث النفس، وَيَجْمَعُ القلب والهم على الله.

فحظ العبد من القرب من الله على قدر حظّه من مقام الإحسان، وبحسبه تتفاوت الصلاة، حتى يكون بين صلاة الرجلين من الفضل كما بين السماء والأرض، وقيامهما وركوعهما وسجودهما واحد.

The state of Iḥsān is the foundation of all the actions of the heart. It brings about: modesty, reverence, glorification, fear, love, turning to Him, trust, humility and submission and complete servitude. It also cuts off whispers and vain talk of the soul, and unites the heart's focus and attention upon Allah.

The servant's share of closeness to Allah is proportional to his share of the station of Iḥsān. According to this, the merit of prayer varies: two people may perform the same acts of standing, bowing, and prostration, yet the difference in their spiritual reward can be as vast as the difference between heaven and earth.

فصل: المشهد الخامس: مشهد المنّة

وهو أن يشهد أن المنّة لله - سبحانه-، كونه أقامه في هذا المقام وأهله له . ووفقه لقيام قلبه وبدنه في خدمته. فلولا الله - سبحانه - لم يكن شيء من ذلك، كما كان الصحابة يَحْدُونَ بين يدي النبي ﷺ فيقولون:

والله لولا الله ما اهتدينا . . . ولا تصدقنا ولا صلينا

قال الله - تعالى - : ﴿يَمُنُونَ عَلَيْكَ أَنْ أَسْلَمُوا قُلْ لَا تَمُنُوا عَلَيَّ إِسْلَامَكُمْ بَلِ اللَّهُ يَمُنُّ عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْ هَدَاكُمْ لِلْإِيمَانِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ﴾ [الحجرات: ١٧]، فالله - سبحانه- هو الذي جعل المسلم مسلماً، والمصلي مصلياً، كما قال الخليل ﷺ ﴿رَبَّنَا وَاجْعَلْنَا مُسْلِمِينَ لَكَ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِنَا أُمَّةً مُسْلِمَةً لَكَ﴾ [البقرة: ١٢٨] ، وقال : ﴿رَبِّ اجْعَلْنِي مُقِيمَ الصَّلَاةِ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي﴾ [إبراهيم: ٤٠]

فالمنّة لله وحده في أن جعل عبده قائماً بطاعته. وكان هذا من أعظم نِعَمِهِ عليه.

Section: The Fifth State –Divine Favour (Al-Minnah)

This state is that the servant acknowledges that all favour belongs to Allah, for having placed him in this station and made him worthy of it, and for granting him the ability to engage both heart and body in His service. Without Allah, none of this would have been possible. As the Companions used to say before the Prophet ﷺ:

By Allah, if it were not for Allah, we would not have been guided

nor would we have believed, nor would we have prayed

Allah says: “They show favour to you by embracing Islam. Say: ‘Do not show favor to me for your Islam; but Allah has shown favor to you by guiding you to faith, if you are truthful.’” [Al-Hujurat 49:17] Thus, it is Allah alone who makes a person a believer and enables one to pray. As the Prophet Ibrahim supplicated: “Our Lord, make us submissive to You, and from our descendants a community submissive to You.” [Al-Baqarah 2:128] And, “My Lord, make me steadfast in prayer, and [make] from my descendants.” [Ibrahim 14:40]

So the favour is solely Allah’s for having made His servant steadfast in obedience. This is among the greatest of His blessings upon him.

وقال تعالى: ﴿وَمَا بِكُمْ مِنْ نِعْمَةٍ فَمِنَ اللَّهِ﴾ [النحل: ٥٣] وقال: ﴿وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ حَبَّبَ إِلَيْكُمُ الْإِيمَانَ وَزَيَّنَهُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ وَكَرَّهَ إِلَيْكُمُ الْكُفْرَ وَالْفُسُوقَ وَالْعِصْيَانَ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الرَّاشِدُونَ﴾ [الحجرات: ٧]

وهذا المشهد من أعظم المشاهد وأنفعها للعبد وكلما كان العبد أعظم توحيداً كان حظه من هذا المشهد أتم.

وفيه من الفوائد أنه يحول بين القلب وبين العجبِ بالعمل ورؤيته، فإنه إذا شهد أن الله - سبحانه - هو المأْنُ به، المَوْقَّقُ له، الهادي إليه، شَعَّلَهُ شهود ذلك عن رؤيته، والإعجاب به، وأن يصول به على الناس، فَيُرْفَع من قلبه؛ فلا يعجب به، ومن لسانه؛ فلا يَمُنُّ به ولا يتكثر به، وهذا شأن العمل المرفوع.

Allah says: "And whatever blessing you have is from Allah." [An-Nahl 16:53]
"But Allah has made faith beloved to you and has beautified it in your hearts, and He has made disbelief, wickedness, and disobedience hateful to you. Those are the rightly guided." [Al-Hujurat 49:7]

This scene is among the greatest and most beneficial for the servant. The more a servant's Tawhīd is perfected, the fuller is his share of this scene.

One of its key benefits is that it prevents the heart from arrogance regarding one's deeds and their display. When the servant witnesses that Allah is the One who grants success, bestows guidance, and enables the act, this awareness occupies his heart and prevents him from becoming proud of what he does. His heart is lifted above self-admiration, his tongue does not boast and he does not exaggerate in speech about his deeds. This is the mark of deeds that are accepted and elevated before Allah.

ومن فوائده أنه يضيف الحمد إلى وليه ومستحقه، فلا يشهد لنفسه حمداً بل يشهده كله لله، كما يشهد النعمة كلها منه، والفضل كله له، والخير كله في يديه، وهذا في تمام التوحيد فلا يستقر قدمه في مقام التوحيد إلا بعلم ذلك وشهوده، فإذا علمه ورسخ فيه صار له مشهداً، وإذا صار لقلبه مشهداً أثمر له من المحبة والأنس بالله والشوق إلى لقائه والتنعيم بذكره وطاعته ما لا نسبة بينه وبين أعلى نعيم الدنيا ألبته.

وما للمرء خير في حياته إذا كان قلبه عن هذا مصدوداً، وطريق الوصول إليه عنه مسدوداً، بل هو كما قال تعالى: ﴿ذَرَهُمْ يَأْكُلُوا وَيَتَمَتَّعُوا وَيُلْهِمُ الْأَمَلُ فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ﴾ [الحجر: ٣]

One of its benefits is that it attributes all praise to its rightful Owner, so the servant does not witness any praise for himself. Rather, he acknowledges that all praise belongs to Allah, that all blessings are from Him, that all virtue is His, and that all goodness is in His hands.

This is the essence of perfect Tawhīd: a servant's footing in the station of Tawhīd is not firm except with this knowledge and witnessing. When he knows it and it becomes firmly established in his heart, it becomes a state for him.

Once this scene is established in his heart, it yields for him: love for Allah, closeness to Him, longing to meet Him and a delight in His remembrance and obedience. This bliss bears no comparison with the highest pleasures of the worldly life whatsoever.

Indeed, a person has no real good in his life if his heart is turned away from this and the path to reach it is blocked. In such a state, he is as Allah described: "Leave them to eat and enjoy, and let hope delude them; soon they will know." [Al-Hijr 15:3]

فصل: المشهد السادس: مشهد التقصير

وَأَنَّ الْعَبْدَ لَوْ اجْتَهَدَ فِي الْقِيَامِ بِالْأَمْرِ بِغَايَةِ الْجَاهِدِ وَبَذَلَ وَسْعَهُ فَهُوَ مُقْصِرٌ، وَحَقَّ اللَّهُ -سُبْحَانَهُ- عَلَيْهِ أَعْظَمُ، وَالَّذِي يَنْبَغِي لَهُ أَنْ يُقَابَلَ بِهِ مِنَ الطَّاعَةِ وَالْعِبَادَةِ وَالْخِدْمَةِ فَوْقَ ذَلِكَ بِكَثِيرٍ، وَأَنَّ عَظَمَتَهُ وَجَلَالَهُ -سُبْحَانَهُ- يَقْتَضِي مِنَ الْعِبَادَةِ مَا يَلِيْقُ بِهَا.

وإذا كان خدام الملوك وعبيدهم يعاملونهم في خدمتهم بالإجلال لهم، والتعظيم، والاحترام، والتوقير، والحياء، والمهابة، والخشية، والنصح، بحيث يُفَرِّغُونَ قلوبهم وجوارحهم لهم، فمالك الملوك ورب السموات والأرض أولى أن يُعَامَلَ بذلك، بل بأضعاف ذلك.

Section: The Sixth State — Shortcoming (Taqṣīr)

Even if a servant exerts himself to the utmost in fulfilling a duty and does his utmost effort, he is still falling short, for the right of Allah over him is far greater. What is required in return in terms of obedience, servitude, and worship is far beyond what the servant can ever accomplish. The greatness and majesty of Allah demand worship befitting Him, which is beyond any human capacity.

Consider how the servants of kings treat their masters: they serve them with reverence, respect, awe, fear, and humility, directing their hearts and limbs entirely to their service. How much more is Allah, the Sovereign of Sovereigns, the Lord of the heavens and the earth, deserving of such treatment, indeed, far beyond it.

وإذا شهد العبد من نفسه أنه لم يُوفِّ ربه في عبوديته حقه، ولا قريباً من حقه، علم تقصيره، ولم يسعه مع ذلك غير الاستغفار والاعتذار من تقصيره وتفريطه وعدم القيام بما ينبغي له من حقه، وأنه إلى أن يغفر له العبودية ويعفو عنه فيها أحوج منه إلى أن يطلب منه عليها ثواباً، وهو لو وقَّأها حقها كما ينبغي لكانت مُستحقَّةً عليه بمقتضى العبودية، فإنَّ عمل العبد وخدمته لسيده مُستحقٌّ عليه بحكم كونه عبده ومملوكه، فلو طَلَبَ منه الأجرَ على عمله وخدمته لعدّه الناس أحمقَ وأخرقَ، هذا وليس هو عبده ولا مملوكه على الحقيقة، وهو عبد الله، ومملوكه على الحقيقة من كل وجه.

فعمله وخدمته مُستحقٌّ عليه بحكم كونه عبده، فإذا أثابه عليه كان ذلك مجرد فضلٍ ومِنَّةٍ وإحسانٍ إليه لا يستحقه العبد عليه.

When the servant witnesses in himself that he has not fulfilled the right of his Lord in His servitude, nor even approached it, he becomes aware of his shortcoming. With this awareness, all he can do is seek forgiveness and excuse himself for his deficiency, negligence, and failure to perform what is due to his Lord. Until Allah pardons him and absolves him of this deficiency, the servant is in greater need of forgiveness than of any reward for it.

If the servant had fulfilled the right of servitude as it ought to be, it would have been rightfully due to him by virtue of his servitude. A servant's work and service are owed by virtue of his being a servant and owned by his Lord; if a master were to demand payment for such service, people would consider him foolish and absurd, for the servant is not truly a servant to any other than Allah.

Indeed, the servant is truly the servant and property of Allah, in every respect. His work and service are owed by virtue of being His servant; if Allah rewards him for it, this is merely favour, grace, and bounty from Allah, not something the servant has any rightful claim to.

ومن ههنا يُفهم معنى قول النبي ﷺ: "لن يدخل أحد منكم الجنة بعمله." قالوا: "ولا أنت يا رسول الله؟ قال": "ولا أنا إلا أن يتغمدني الله برحمته منه وفضل."

وقال أنس بن مالك: "يُخْرَجُ للعبد يوم القيامة ثلاثة دواوين: ديوان فيه حسناته، وديوان فيه سيئاته، وديوان النعم التي أنعم الله عليه بها. فيقول الرب - تعالى - لنعمه: خذي حَقَّك من حسنات عبدي. فيقوم أصغرهما فتستنفد حسناته، ثم تقول: وَعِزَّتْكَ ما استوفيت حقي بعد. فإذا أراد الله أن يرحم عبده وهبه نعمه عليه، وغفر له سيئاته، وضاعف له حسناته." وهذا ثابتٌ عن أنس. وهو أدلُّ شيء على كمال علم الصحابة بربهم وحقوقه عليهم، كما أنهم أعلم الأمة بنبيهم وسنته ودينه، فإنَّ في هذا الأثر من العلم والمعرفة ما لا يدركه إلا أولو البصائر العارفون بالله وأسمائه وصفاته وحقه.

ومن هنا يُفهم قول النبي ﷺ في الحديث الذي رواه أبو داود، والإمام أحمد، من حديث زيد بن ثابت وحذيفة وغيرهما: "إن الله لو عَذَّبَ أهل سمواته وأهل أرضه لعذبهم وهو غير ظالم لهم، ولو رحمهم لكانت رحمته خيراً لهم من أعمالهم."

From this, one understands the meaning of the Prophet ﷺ's statement: "None of you will enter Paradise by his deeds alone." They asked: "Not even you, O Messenger of Allah?" He ﷺ replied: "Not even me, unless Allah envelops me in mercy and favor."

And Anas ibn Malik said: "On the Day of Resurrection, three registers will be brought out for the servant: a register of his good deeds, a register of his sins, and a register of the favors that Allah has bestowed upon him. Allah will say to His favours: 'Take your due from the servant's good deeds.' They will begin with the smallest favor, exhausting his good deeds. Then the favours will say: 'By Your Might, my due has not been fulfilled yet.' If Allah wills to have mercy on His servant, He grants him His favors, forgives his sins, and multiplies his good deeds." This is established from Anas.

It demonstrates the perfect knowledge the Companions had of their Lord and their duties toward Him, as well as their deep understanding of the Prophet ﷺ, his Sunnah, and the religion. Only those possessing insight and knowledge of Allah, His names, attributes, and rights truly grasp the depth of this narration.

From this, one also understands the meaning of the hadith narrated by Abu Dawood and Imam Ahmad, from Zayd ibn Thabit, Hudhayfah, and others: "If Allah were to punish the inhabitants of His heavens and His earth, He would do so without being unjust to them. If He were to show them mercy, His mercy would be better for them than their deeds."

فصل

Section

وملاكُ هذا الشأن أربعة أمور:

نية صحيحة، وقوةٌ غالبية، يقارنهما: رغبة، ورهبة.

فهذه الأربعة هي قواعد هذا الشأن. ومهما دخل على العبد من النقص في إيمانه وأحواله وظاهره وباطنه فهو من نقصان هذه الأربعة أو نقصان بعضها.

فليتأمل اللبيب هذه الأربعة الأشياء، وليجعلها سيره وسلوكه، ويبنى عليها علومه وأعماله وأقواله وأحواله، فما نَتَجَّ من نَتَجِّ إلا منها، ولا تخلف من تخلف إلا من فقدها.

والله أعلم، والله المستعان، وعليه التكلان، وإليه الرغبة، وهو المسؤول بأن يوقفنا وسائر إخواننا من أهل السنة لتحقيقها علمًا وعملاً، إنه ولي ذلك والمأنُ به، وهو حسبنا ونعم الوكيل.

And the key pillars of this matter are four things:

1. A correct intention (niyyah).
2. A high level of strength (quwwah).
3. Desire to achieve it.
4. Fear of falling short.

These four form the foundations of this matter.

Whatever deficiency a servant experiences in his faith, in his inner or outer state, or in his actions, stems from a deficiency in one or more of these four.

Let the discerning person reflect deeply on these four aspects, make them the guiding principle of his path and conduct, and build upon them his knowledge, actions, speech, and states. Everything that emerges comes from them, and whoever fails does so because he lacks them.

And Allah is the Most Knowing, the One whose help is sought, the One upon Whom reliance is placed, and to Him is all desire. He is the One who grants success to us and to all our brothers among the Ahl al-Sunnah in realizing this, both in knowledge and practice. Truly, He is the Guardian and the Bestower of success, and He is sufficient for us and the Best Trustee.