

English إنجليزي

APHORISTIC SPEECH OF PROPHET MUḤAMMAD

جوامع الكلم



Written by:

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Translated by:

Al-Andalus Group for Islamic Translation

مَعْمَدٌ جَامِعٌ عَيْسَى بْنُ سَلْمَانَ
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Aphoristic Speech
of Prophet Muḥammad

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Aphoristic Speech

of Prophet Muḥammad

Written by:

The one seeking his Lord's pardon

Rāshid ibn Muḥammad ibn Faṭīs Al-Hājirī

May Allah forgive him and his parents!

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Preface

All praise be to *Allāh*, The Lord of the Worlds. May peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon Prophet *Muḥammad*, his family, and Companions.

Allāh, Exalted be He, honored and distinguished His Messenger, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, endowing him with distinct qualities, gifts, and bestowals that befit his refined status and the exceptional position he holds among the Prophets of *Allāh*. An example of such great bestowals is the gift of “eloquent aphoristic speech”. In other words, he, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, was given the distinctive ability to produce concise statements that eloquently conveyed a multitude of insightful meanings. In fact, this great bestowal was an aspect of the divine aid provided for the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, to shoulder his mission.

﴿ وَمَا يَطُوقُ عَنِ الْهُوَيِّ ۚ ﴿٣﴾ إِنَّ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَىٰ ﴿٤﴾ ﴾ [النجم: 3-4]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {*Nor does he speak from [his own] inclination. * It is not but a (divine) revelation revealed.*} [*An-Najm*, 53:3-4]

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, informed us of such a great favor conferred upon him. He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“I have been favored over the other Prophets in six respects: I have been given the gift of producing aphoristic statements; I have been aided with terror (cast into the hearts of my enemies); spoils of war have been made lawful to me; the earth has been made for me a substance to purify with and a place of worship; I have been sent to all humankind, and the line of prophets has been concluded by me.”**

In this *Ḥadīth*, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, underlined the distinct ability of producing aphoristic statements. *Al-Bukhārī*, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, elaborated on this *Ḥadīth* saying: “It has reached me that the gift of ‘aphoristic speech’ means that Allah, Exalted be He, sums up, through the concise speech of His Prophet, numerous points that were revealed in the previous heavenly Books, in only one or two points.”

The Arab poet *Al-Āthārī* said about the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him (what means): “No matter how vast in number are the words of praise composed for any other human being, those composed for Prophet *Muḥammad*, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, immensely surpass them in greatness. By the grace of *Allāh*, his speech was distinguished by exceptional eloquence, terseness, and richness in insightful meanings. How could not it be as such when he, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, was granted the gift of “aphoristic speech”. He eloquently produced concise phrases rich in meaning. The illumination of his eloquent speech can be likened to that of the moon in the dim night, in harmony with the miraculous eloquence of the Quran that is similar to the bright light of the sun. He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, keenly ushered his people to righteousness and goodness, enjoining good and forbidding evil. His handsomeness, kindness, generosity, graciousness, and firm resolve have spoken for themselves. The grace of *Allāh* overwhelmingly encompassed his noble character, statements, and actions.”

Praise be to *Allāh*, Exalted be He, who guided me through my earnest endeavor to compile thirty *Ḥadīths* that best clarify the gift of “aphoristic speech” conferred upon our Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him. I meticulously selected these thirty *Ḥadīths* to be used as a useful source of material for *Khuṭbah* (Friday sermons), each *Khuṭbah* discusses one *Ḥadīth*. I have delivered thirty *Khuṭbahs* (covering these thirty *Ḥadīths*) at the mosque of His Royal Highness the

late Prince of Bahrain, Shaykh *'Isa ibn Salmān Āl Khalīfah* in the city of West Riffa, Bahrain over the year 1437 AH.

I delivered those *Khuṭbahs* on the spur of the moment from memory, relying primarily on the help of *Allāh*, Exalted be He, and then the articles, *Khuṭbahs*, and writings I have previously read. I have been advised to compile these *Khuṭbahs* in one book to preserve the knowledge they include, and make it easier for anyone to refer to them and avail himself of them.

Therefore, I am honored to present the *Khuṭbah* series on the gift of aphoristic speech of Prophet *Muḥammad*, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, imploring *Allāh*, Exalted be He, to render it a source of benefit and abundant rewards for the writer and readers and to be an ongoing charity, which continues to benefit my parents and myself in the worldly life and the Hereafter.

By: *Rāshid ibn Muḥammad ibn Faṭīs Al-Hājirī*

West Riffa, Bahrain

1439 AH – 2018 AD

Ḥadīth no. 1

The Prophet, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said: “Whoever lags behind in doing good deeds, his nobility of lineage will not make him go forward.”

O slaves of *Allāh*! The remarkable eloquence of the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, is one of the most distinctive aspects of the greatness bestowed upon him and most indicative signs of his Prophethood. He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, was endowed with clear language, sound reason, profound wisdom, truthful speech, and eternal miracle (i.e. the Quran).

﴿ وَمَا يَنْطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ ۚ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَىٰ ﴾ [النجم: 3-4]

Allāh, Exalted be He, praised his eloquence saying (what means): {*Nor does he speak from [his own] inclination. * It is not but a (divine) revelation revealed.*} [*An-Najm*, 53:3-4]

He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, praised himself saying: **“I was granted aphoristic speech...”** [*Al-Bukhārī: Ṣaḥīḥ*] He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, also underlined the aspects in which he was favored over all the Prophets of *Allāh*, as he said: **“I have been favored over the other Prophets in six respects: I have been given the gift of aphoristic speech ...”** [*Muslim: Ṣaḥīḥ*] In this *Ḥadīth*, he, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, listed the six aspects in which he was favored over the rest of the Prophets, peace be upon them.

The *Ḥadīth* means that one of the great bestowals conferred upon the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, was the gift of “aphoristic speech”. *Al-Bukhārī*, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, elaborated on this

Ḥadīth saying: “It has reached me that the gift of ‘aphoristic speech’ means that *Allāh*, Exalted be He, sums up, through the concise speech of His Prophet, numerous points that were revealed in the previous heavenly Books, in only one or two points.”

This means that he, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, would say only one statement that addressed numerous issues, rulings, teachings, directives, and admonition.

In this *Khuṭbah*, we shall ponder over one compendious statement uttered by the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, and do the same each *Khuṭbah* onward.

Today, we shall address the *Ḥadīth* reported on the authority of *Abū Hurayrah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, where the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**Whoever lags behind in doing good deeds, his nobility of lineage will not take him forward.**” [*Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*]

It is concise as far as structure is concerned. However, it is very rich in meaning. Numerous lessons can be derived from it, some of which are the following:

• **Lesson 1:**

In their spiritual journey towards *Allāh*, Exalted be He, people seek various means to reach their desired destination. Some opt for performing righteous deeds, while others misguidedly rely on their lineage and family status, assuming that it may avail them in this regard.

Those who rely on good deeds as a means to reach their desired destination shall succeed in their endeavors and shall be led to a good outcome. On the contrary, those who mistakenly rely merely on their lineage and family status, without doing righteous deeds, their endeavors shall lead them to an evil outcome.

It has been narrated on the authority of *Abu Mālik Al-Ash‘arī*, may *Allāh*

be pleased with him, that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “Every person starts his day as a vendor of his soul, either freeing it or causing its ruin.” [Muslim] That is, he may either save it from the punishment of Hellfire, or cause its destruction by being thrown therein.

O slave of *Allāh*! You should consider the type of means on which you are relying, making sure that you opt for doing good deeds rather than relying merely on your refined lineage.

• **Lesson 2:**

Allāh, Exalted be He, created humankind in variation and distinction. They are from different lineages, multiple origins, and variant ethnicities. He created them as such so that they would not be disunited. Rather, this was intended to urge them to know one another, celebrate mutual benevolence and compassion, and foster the natural bond between them as human beings.

﴿يَأْتِيهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاهُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْفُسُكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ﴾ [الحجرات: 13]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of *Allāh* is the most righteous of you. Indeed, *Allāh* is Knowing and Acquainted.} [Al-Ḥujurāt, 49:13]

• **Lesson 3:**

In Islam, there is no room for nepotism, preferential treatment, or caste.

This is evidenced by the following verse:

﴿وَأَنْذِرْ عَشِيرَتَكَ الْأَقْرَبِينَ﴾ [الشعراء: ٢١٤]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {And warn, [O Muhammad],

your closest kindred.} [Ash-Shu‘arā’, 26:214]

Abū Hurayrah, may Allāh be pleased with him, reported that when the Messenger of Allāh stood on Mount Ṣafā, when the following was revealed to him: “**And warn, (O Muḥammad) your closest kindred,**” and said: ‘**O Quraysh! Buy your souls from Allāh.**’ [Muslim] That is, sell it to Allāh in return for Paradise, as Allāh, The Exalted, says (what means):

﴿فَإِنْ تَابُوا وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَعَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ فَإِخْوَانُكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَنُفَصِّلُ
الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ﴾ [التوبة: 11]

{*Indeed, Allāh has purchased from the believers their lives and their properties [in exchange] for that they will have Paradise.*} [At-Tawbah, 9:111]

The Prophet further said, “**O Assembly of the Quraysh! Buy yourselves from Allah! I cannot avail you anything before Allāh. O Banū ‘Abdul Muṭṭalib! I cannot avail you anything before Allāh! O ‘Abbās ibn ‘Abdul Muṭṭalib! I cannot avail you anything before Allāh. O Ṣafīyyah, paternal aunt of the Messenger of Allāh! I cannot avail you anything before Allāh. O Fāṭimah, daughter of the Messenger of Allah! Ask me for whatever you want (in the worldly life), I cannot avail you anything before Allāh!**” [Muslim] That is because there is no favoritism in Islam.

• **Lesson 4:**

Genuine praise is that which is received from Allāh and His Messenger, and he who is worthy of praise is the one declared as such by Allāh and His Messenger, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him. On the contrary, whoever is dispraised by Allāh and His Messenger, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, is the true blameworthy.

Abu Naḍrah, may Allāh be pleased with him, said: “Our Prophet, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said: “**O People, Indeed, your Lord**

is one and your father is one. No Arab has any superiority over a non-Arab, nor does a non-Arab have any superiority over an Arab. A white man has no superiority over a black one, nor does a black man have any superiority over a white one; the sole criterion of superiority is Taqwa (righteousness and mindfulness of Allāh)." The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, then asked: **"Have not I conveyed the message to you?"** The Companions remarked, "Yes, you have, O Messenger of Allāh." [*Aḥmad*]

Ibn Taymiyyah, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, wrote: "Based on that *Hadīth* (the above cited), there is no verse in the Quran praising or dispraising someone merely for his or her lineage. Instead, people are praised for their faith and piety and dispraised for their disbelief and disobedience." [*Majmū' Al-Fatāwā*]

He, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, wrote in another book: "Superiority is determined based on the praiseworthy attributes stated in the Quran and Sunnah such as Islam, faith, righteousness, *Taqwā*, knowledge, good deeds, kindness and the like, not merely on account of being an Arab or non-Arab, black or white, villager or Bedouin." [*Iqtidā' Aṣ-Ṣirāt Al-Mustaqīm*]

In brief, this great lesson can be eloquently summarized by the statement of *'Umar*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, as he said: "By *Allāh*, were the non-Arab Muslims to meet their Lord with greater righteous deeds and we (the Companions) meet our Lord empty handed, they would be worthier of being attributed to our Prophet *Muḥammad*, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, on the Day of Judgment." [*Ibn Sa'd in Aṭ-Ṭabaqāt Al-Kubrā*]

● **Lesson 5:**

Adherence to Islam is the only path to supremacy.

Ibn Shihāb Az-Zuhrī, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, who was a senior leading Muslim scholar, and the teacher of great scholars like *Mālik*, *Al-*

Awza'ī and others, may *Allāh* have mercy upon them, once entered upon Caliph *'Abdul Malik ibn Marwān* who asked him: "Where have you come from, O *Zuhrī*?" He replied, "I have come from *Makkah*." He further inquired: "Whom did you entrust with their leadership?" He replied: "*Atā' ibn Abū Rabāh*." The Caliph asked: "Is he an Arab or a non-Arab?" (Notice how the Caliph did not ask about how vast his knowledge was or inquire about his righteousness!) He replied: "He is a non-Arab." The Caliph inquired: "What entitled him to leadership?" He replied: "His religiosity and narration of *Ḥadīth*." The Caliph remarked: "Indeed, those endowed with greater shares of religiosity and narration of *Ḥadīth* are worthier of leadership." The Caliph then asked: "Whom did you entrust with leadership over the people of Yemen?" *Az-Zuhrī* answered: "*Ṭawūs ibn Kayṣān*." The Caliph asked: "Is he an Arab or a non-Arab?" *Az-Zuhrī* answered: "A non-Arab." The Caliph further asked: "Whom did you entrust with leadership over the people of Egypt?" *Az-Zuhrī* replied: "*Yazīd ibn Abū Ḥabīb*." The Caliph asked: "Is he an Arab or a non-Arab?" *Az-Zuhrī* replied: "A non-Arab." The Caliph, then, asked: "What about the people of *Shām*?" *Az-Zuhrī* said: "*Mak-ḥūl*." The Caliph asked: "Is he an Arab or a non-Arab?" *Az-Zuhrī* replied: "A non-Arab; he was a freed slave who previously belonged to a woman from *Hudhayl* tribe." The Caliph further asked: "Whom did you entrust with leadership over the people of the *Ḥijāz*?" *Az-Zuhrī* replied: "*Maymūn ibn Mihrān*." The Caliph inquired: "Is he an Arab or a non-Arab?" *Az-Zuhrī* replied: "A non-Arab." The Caliph Asked: "What about the people of *Khurāsān*?" He replied: "*Aḍ-Ḍah-hāk ibn Muzāhim*." The Caliph asked: "Is he an Arab or a non-Arab?" *Az-Zuhrī* replied: "A non-Arab." The Caliph further asked: "What about the people of *Baṣrah*?" *Az-Zuhrī* replied: "*Al-Ḥasan ibn Abū Al-Ḥasan*." The Caliph asked: "Is he an Arab or a non-Arab?" *Az-Zuhrī* replied: "A non-Arab." The Caliph further asked: "Woe to you! What about the people of *Kūfah*; whom did you entrust with their leadership?" He replied: "*Ibrāhīm An-Nakha'ī*."

The Caliph asked: “Is he an Arab or a non-Arab.” *Az-Zuhrī* replied: “An Arab.” The Caliph remarked with relief: “At last!” *Az-Zuhrī* then made this precious statement: “Whoever abides by the commands of *Allāh* and adheres to Islam as due shall be worthy of supremacy and whoever neglects such a duty shall ultimately decline ...” [*Ibn ‘Asākir*]

This is the ultimate lesson we should learn about the worldly life: whoever wishes to tread the path towards genuine supremacy, dignity, and empowerment should keenly strive to uphold and adhere to this religion, or else he would inevitably fall into the abyss of utter loss.

An Arab poet said (what means): “By *Allāh*, the true value of a person lies in his adherence to his religion; one should keenly hold on to *Taqwā* rather than finding false pride in his noble lineage. Islam has elevated the status of *Salmān Al-Fārisī* (the non-Arab) and disbelief caused the noble Arab *Abū Lahb* to fall into the abyss of disgrace and loss.” [*Ar-Rāghib Al-Aṣfahāni* in his book *Muḥaḍarāt Al-Udabā’*]

Ḥadīth no. 2

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “The wealth of a man shall never be diminished by giving in charity.”

O slaves of *Allāh*! Let us ponder over these invaluable words of the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, who never speaks out of his own inclination. He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**The wealth of a man shall never be diminished by giving in charity.**” [*At-Tirmidhī*] It is a concise statement abounding in great insightful meanings.

Whenever a person spends in charity, his wealth is not reduced in the slightest with *Allāh*, neither in this worldly life nor shall it be in the Hereafter. In this *Ḥadīth*, our Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, is teaching us that giving in charity can never decrease one’s wealth, because whatever one spends in charity in the worldly life is credited to his account of good deeds; no loss has been incurred. It is a mere transfer from one’s worldly account to his other account in the Hereafter; his wealth is not diminished the slightest. This is the point to be understood from the *Ḥadīth*.

The righteous predecessors best understood this concept and its essence, as reflected in their actions. This is why whenever they saw a needy person approaching, they would warmly welcome him saying, “O the one who has come to transfer our wealth from the worldly life to the Hereafter! Welcome!” They fully comprehended that the wealth they were spending in charity was merely transferred to their accounts of good deeds, and accordingly nothing was lost.

Upon pondering over the texts of the Quran and Sunnah this regard, we come to realize that they do not only highlight this unique perspective on charity. Rather, they even state that giving in charity actually increases one’s wealth!

﴿مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يُقْرِضُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا فَيُضَاعِفَهُ لَهُ أَضْعَافًا كَثِيرَةً وَاللَّهُ يَقْبِضُ وَيَبْصُطُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ﴾ [البقرة: 245]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {Who is it that would loan Allāh a goodly loan so He may multiply it for him many times over? And it is Allāh who withholds and grants abundance, and to Him you will be returned.} [Al-Baqarah, 2:245]

﴿مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَنْبَتَتْ سَبْعَ سَنَابِلٍ فِي كُلِّ سُنْبُلَةٍ مِائَةٌ حَبَّةٌ وَاللَّهُ يُضَاعِفُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ﴾ [البقرة: 261]

Allāh, Exalted be He, also says in another verse of the same Sūrah (what means): {The example of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allāh is like a seed [of grain] which grows seven spikes; in each spike is a hundred grains. And Allāh multiplies [His reward] for whom He wills. And Allāh is all-Encompassing and Knowing.} [Al-Baqarah, 2:261]

﴿وَمَا تَنْفِقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يُؤْتِ إِلَيْكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تُظْلَمُونَ﴾ [البقرة: 272]

In a third verse of the same Sūrah, Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {And whatever you spend of good - it will be fully repaid to you, and you will not be wronged.} [Al-Baqarah, 2:272]

﴿وَمَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَهُوَ يُخْلِفُهُ، وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الرَّزَاقِينَ﴾ [سبأ: 39]

Allāh, Exalted be He, also says (what means): {But whatever thing you spend [in His cause] - He will compensate it; and He is the best of providers.} [Saba', 34:39]

Hence, truthful is the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, as he said: “**The wealth of a person shall never be diminished by giving in charity.**”

How could wealth possibly be diminished by giving in charity when the

Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Every morning, two angels descend and one of them says, ‘O *Allāh*! Compensate (more) to the person who gives (in charity)’; while the other one says, ‘O *Allāh*! Destroy the one who withholds (charity)!”** [*Al-Bukhārī* and *Muslim*] This happens every day, all year long!

Whenever a person spends in charity, he shall be compensated by virtue of the supplication of this angel.

Moreover, the Mother of the Believers, *‘Āishah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with her, related that they slaughtered a sheep and distributed its meet among the poor. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, asked: **“What remains of it?”** She, may *Allāh* be pleased with her, said: “Nothing remains of it except its shoulder.” He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, remarked, **“Rather, all of it remains except its shoulder!”** [*Aḥmad* and *At-Tirmidhī*] They withheld the shoulder of the sheep knowing that he, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, used to like it.

In this *Ḥadīth*, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, is teaching us that what we give in charity is never lost; rather, it is what is really preserved of our wealth by being credited to our accounts in the Hereafter. The wealth we spend in this worldly life to buy food, clothes and meet our worldly needs is what is lost. Our savings shall be the right of the eligible heirs after we pass away. This means that what really benefits us is the wealth we spend in charity.

Moreover, *Abū Mas‘ūd Al-Anṣārī*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that a man came to the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, and gave him a bridled camel in charity (to be used for *Jihād* purposes). The Messenger of *Allāh*, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“On the Day of Resurrection, you shall get seven hundred bridled camels in return.”** [*Muslim*]

This Companion offered this she-camel in charity, decreasing the number of his herd, yet the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, is teaching us that his herd has not been diminished in the slightest. Rather, he shall be compensated with one hundred bridled she-camels on the Day of Judgment.

In addition, *Allāh*, Exalted be He, says in the *Ḥadīth Qudsī*: **“Spend, O son of Adam, and you will also be spent on.”** [*Al-Bukhārī* and *Muslim*]

Al-Bayhaqī, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, cited the *Ḥadīth* narrated by *Abū Hurayrah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, reading: **“A man does not open the door to spend of his wealth in charity or to uphold ties of kinship except that *Allāh* increases his wealth.”** [*Al-Bayhaqī* and *Aḥmad*]

It has been narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, saw a pile of dates at the house of *Bilāl*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, and asked him: **“What is this, Bilāl?”** He, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, replied, “These are some dates that I have saved for you.” He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“O Bilāl! Spend in charity and do not fear any decrease from the Lord of the Throne.”** [*Aṭ-Ṭabarānī*]

As we fully comprehend this unique perspective on charity, a Muslim finds himself highly motivated to spend in charity more. Knowing the great reward giving in charity yields urges the Muslim to devote himself to giving and helping others. *‘Umar*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him said: “I have been informed that good deeds (prayer, fasting, and charity) boasted about the rewards they yield. Charity said: ‘I am the most rewardable!’” [*Al-Ḥākim*]

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, also said: **“The upper hand is better than the lower one; the upper being the one which gives and the lower one which begs.”** [*Al-Bukhārī* and *Muslim*]

Indeed, giving in charity is of a great standing. Many *Sunnah* texts have

been reported underlining the great virtues and merits of spending in charity. The greatest statement said about charity is that it is a means for having one's sins and misdeeds removed and wiped away.

﴿إِنْ تَبَدُّوا الصَّدَقَاتِ فَنِعِمَّا هِيَ وَإِنْ تُخْفُوهَا وَتُؤْتُوهَا الْفُقَرَاءَ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ وَيُكَفِّرُ عَنْكُمْ مِنْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ خَيْرٌ﴾ [البقرة: 271]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{If you disclose your charitable expenditures, they are good; but if you conceal them and give them to the poor, it is better for you, and He will remove from you some of your misdeeds [thereby]. And Allāh, with what you do, is [fully] Acquainted.}*
[*Al-Baqarah*, 2:271]

Moreover, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Indeed charity extinguishes sins just like water extinguishes fire.”**
[*Aḥmad, At-Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah*]

One of the great merits of charity is that it shall keep the person company in his grave and serve as a shade for them on the Day of Judgment. It has been reported on the authority of ‘*Uqbah ibn ‘Āmir*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Verily, charity will protect people from the heat in their graves. Verily, only a believer will be shaded on the Day of Resurrection under the shade of his charity.”** [*Aṭ-Ṭabarānī*]

Charity shall accompany the person inside his grave, serve as a source of coolness and safety, with breezes of goodness and blessings, regardless of its amount, as long as it is offered sincerely and exclusively to *Allāh*, and shall shade him on the Day of Judgment.

In addition, giving in charity is a means of having one's affairs be facilitated and made easy. When a person is experiencing difficulties and having trouble in his life, it is advised that he should give in charity, with firm

conviction in the promise of his Lord.

﴿ فَأَمَّا مَنْ أَعْطَىٰ وَاتَّقَىٰ ﴿٥﴾ وَصَدَّقَ بِالْحُسْنَىٰ ﴿٦﴾ فَسَنِيَرُهُ لِلْيُسْرَىٰ ﴿٧﴾ وَأَمَّا مَنْ بَخِلَ وَاسْتَغْنَىٰ ﴿٨﴾ وَكَذَّبَ بِالْحُسْنَىٰ ﴿٩﴾ فَسَنِيَرُهُ لِلْعُسْرَىٰ ﴿١٠﴾ ﴾ [الليل: ٥-١٠]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {*As for he who gives and fears Allāh* And believes in the best [reward],* We will ease him toward ease.* But as for he who withholds and considers himself free of need * And denies the best [reward], * We will ease him toward difficulty.*} [*Al-Layl*, 92:5-10]

This helps us have a better understanding of our *Ḥadīth*: “**The wealth of a man shall never be diminished by giving in charity.**” You give in charity from your wealth in the worldly life to be credited to your account in the Hereafter.

Ibn Al-Qayyim, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, underlined one of the greatest merits of charity. He wrote, “Giving in charity has a remarkable effect in warding off an array of tribulations and misfortunes even if it (charity) were to come from a wicked person or an oppressor – rather even from a disbeliever.” [*Al-Wābil Al-Ṣayyib*]

When a person spends in charity, even if he is wicked, an oppressor, or even a disbeliever, his righteous act wards off the worldly affliction in proportion to the amount of the charity spent. This is one of the great merits of charity.

However, there is one condition required for a person to avail himself of such great merits and virtues. The person giving in charity should firmly believe in the reported Quran and Sunnah texts in this regard. The more a person believes in these statements, the more he will spend, because he shall anticipate the return from *Allāh*. *Al-Ḥasan Al-Baṣrī*, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, said: “Whoever believes with certainty that he will be compensated for giving in charity shall spend more generously.”⁽¹⁾

(1) *Ibn Ḥibbān*, *Al-Quḍā’i*, and *Al-Fattānī*.

Ḥadīth no. 3

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “Islam is (founded on) the exchange of sincere advice...”

Dear fellow Muslims, the spirit of brotherhood in faith among Muslims entails mutual love, which in turn entails offering sincere advice to those whom we love. It is a highly rewardable good deed abounding in great merits. In this *Khuṭbah*, we shall carry on with our series on “aphoristic speech” of the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, and contemplate the following Ḥadīth: **“Islam is (founded on) the exchange of sincere advice.”**

It is a concise statement from which numerous lessons can be deduced. The Ḥadīth was narrated on the authority of *Tamīm Al-Dārī*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Islam is (founded on) the exchange of sincere advice.”** We said, “To whom?” He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said, **“To *Allāh*, His Book, His Messenger, and to the Muslim leaders and their common folk.”** [*Muslim*]

One of the due rights of a Muslim over his fellow Muslims is to offer him sincere advice whenever he or she needs it. It has been narrated on the authority of *Abū Hurayrah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“The rights of your fellow Muslim over you are six: when you meet him, offer him greetings; when he invites you to a feast accept his invitation; when he seeks your advice, offer him your advice; when he sneezes and says: “All praise be to Allāh,” you say “May Allāh show mercy to you”; when he falls ill, visit him; and when he dies, follow his bier (funeral procession).”** [*Muslim*]

Offering one's fellow Muslims sincere advice is a great righteous deed that yields abundant rewards. This is why the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, rendered offering advice to one's fellow Muslims one of the conditions of the oath of allegiance as cited in *Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī. Jarīr ibn 'Abdullāh*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, said: "I swore allegiance to the Messenger of *Allāh*, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, on the observance of prayer, payment of *Zakāh*, and offering sincere advice to every Muslim." [*Al-Bukhārī*]

In fact, the exchange of sincere advice is the key to realizing social safety in any given community. The exchange of advice and acceptance of advice are both essential for community members to relish a sense of safety and enjoy a socially safe environment. *Ibn Taymiyyah*, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, said: "Human beings cannot live apart; and whenever two or more persons come together, the need arises for enjoining one another to do good and forbidding one another from committing evil and sinful acts."⁽²⁾ This means that the religious duty of exchanging sincere advice is essential.

In essence, the person giving sincere advice is ushering the advised person to the path of doing good. This is the very refined mission entrusted with the Messengers and Prophets of *Allāh*. All the Messengers and Prophets of *Allāh* shouldered the task of offering advice to their people as stated in the Quran.

﴿أَبْلِغْكُمْ رَسُولَاتِ رَبِّي وَأَنْصَحْ لَكُمْ وَأَعْلَمْ مِنْ اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ﴾ [الأعراف: ٦٢]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says about Prophet *Nūh* (Noah), peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, (what means): {*I convey to you the messages of my Lord and advise you; and I know from Allāh what you do not know.*} [*Al-A' rāf*, 7:62]

﴿أَبْلِغْكُمْ رَسُولَاتِ رَبِّي وَأَنَا لَكُمْ نَاصِحٌ أَمِينٌ﴾ [الأعراف: 68]

He also says about Prophet *Hūd*, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, (what means): {*I convey to you the messages of my Lord, and I am to you a trustworthy adviser.*} [*Al-A' rāf*, 7:68]

(2) *Majmū' Al-Fatāwa* 28/168.

﴿فَتَوَلَّى عَنْهُمْ وَقَالَ يَاقَوْمِ لَقَدْ أَبْلَغْتُكُمْ رِسَالَاتِ رَبِّي وَنَصَحْتُ لَكُمْ وَلَكِنْ لَا تُحِبُّونَ النَّصِيحَةَ﴾ [الأعراف: 79]

As for Prophet *Ṣālih*, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, *Allāh*, Exalted be He, says (what means): {*And he turned away from them and said, “O my people, I had certainly conveyed to you the message of my Lord and advised you, but you do not like advisors.”*} [Al-A‘rāf, 7:79]

﴿فَتَوَلَّى عَنْهُمْ وَقَالَ يَاقَوْمِ لَقَدْ أَبْلَغْتُكُمْ رِسَالَاتِ رَبِّي وَنَصَحْتُ لَكُمْ فَكَيْفَ ءَأَسَىٰ عَلَىٰ قَوْمٍ كَافِرِينَ﴾ [الأعراف: 93]

As for Prophet *Shu‘ayb* (Jethro), peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, *Allāh*, Exalted be He, Says (what means): {*And he turned away from them and said, “O my people, I had certainly conveyed to you the messages of my Lord and advised you, so how could I grieve for a disbelieving people?”*} [Al-A‘rāf, 7:93]

Moreover, offering advice is a very noble deed and highly encouraged in Islam. It has been reported on the authority of *Ma‘qil ibn Yasār*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**Any man whom Allāh has given the authority of ruling some people and he does not look after them in sincere manner, he will not perceive even the smell of Paradise.**”⁽³⁾ [Al-Bukhārī]

A Muslim is given authority over his family in the sense that he is entrusted with the duty of taking care of them and tending to their needs. Accordingly, he is required to “offer sincere advice” to them in the broader sense of the word. The one entrusted with the responsibility of being in charge of others is required to shoulder this duty or else bears a sin for it.

(3) Al-Bukhārī, Book On Judgments, Chapter: The ruler not ruling in an honest manner, *Ḥadīth* no. (7150). A similar version was cited in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Book of Faith, Chapter: One in charge of a matter, who cheats his subjects, deserves Hellfire, *Ḥadīth* no. (142).

The great position offering advice enjoys in Islam is best clarified by the statement of the Leader of the Believers, ‘Umar ibn Al-Khattāb, may Allāh be pleased with him, when he said: “There is no good in people who do not offer advice, and there is no good in people who do not like to be advised.”⁽⁴⁾

Advice is offered to realize a wide array of objectives, some of which are as follows:

First, to uphold the concept of true servitude to Allāh, Exalted be He, so that people worship their Creator as He is to be worshipped. This is the most refined objective for offering sincere advice to one’s fellow human beings.

﴿وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ﴾ [الذاريات: 56]

Allāh, Exalted be He, Says (what means): {*And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me.*} [Adh-Dhāriyāt, 51:56]

Offering advice is classified as one of the tasks of *Ihtisāb* (enjoining good and forbidding evil as a form of public authority in the Muslim state) in Islam. In fact, the ultimate objective of all forms of public authority is to uphold the religion of Allāh. *Ibn Taymiyyah*, may Allāh have mercy upon him, said: “The ultimate objective of all public authorities (*Wilāyāt*) in Islam is upholding the religion of Allāh and raising aloft the word of truth so that worship is devoted exclusively to Allāh, Exalted be He.”⁽⁵⁾

Second: advice is offered to deter those who make mischief and to purify the Muslim communities of them, because no community can attain true safety except when such people are prevented from committing evil through the effective mutual “advice-giving” mechanism.

There is an erroneous, misguided culture suggesting that one must not interfere in people’s affairs by offering advice, enjoining good, or

(4) See *Risālat Al-Mustarshidīn* by Al-Hārith Al-Muḥāsabī p. 71.

(5) *Majmū‘ Al-Fatāwā* 28/61.

forbidding evil on the pretext of respecting their privacy. People turn down advice on the pretext of defending their privacy! Indeed, this is a wrong and misguided culture. Rather, *Allāh*, Exalted be He, commands us to exchange sincere advice.

The Arabic word *Naṣīḥah* (advice) is derived from the word *Manṣaḥah* (a sewing device e.g. a needle) because the transgressors and mischief-makers undermined their religiosity by committing evil actions. The one offering them advice is trying to rectify their religiosity through sincere advice, like a tailor using a needle to repair a torn garment.

The rightly guided Caliph *Abū Bakr*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, once delivered a speech in which he underlined the following, “O people! You recite this verse and misplace it.”

﴿يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا عَلَيْكُمْ أَنفُسَكُمْ ۖ لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ مَن ضَلَّ إِذَا أُهْتَدَيْتُمْ ۗ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٠٥﴾﴾ [المائدة: ١٠٥]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {*O you who have believed, upon you is [responsibility for] yourselves. Those who have gone astray will not harm you when you have been guided. To Allāh is you return all together; then He will inform you of what you used to do.*} [*Al-Mā'idah*, 5:105]

Abū Bakr, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, added, “Indeed, I have heard the Messenger of *Allāh*, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, say: **“When the people see the wrongdoer and they do not forbid him from wrongdoing, then soon Allāh shall envelop them all in His punishment.”**” [*Aḥmad*, *Abū Dāwūd*, *At-Tirmidhī* and *Ibn Mājah*]

Sadly, as you offer an advice to your fellow Muslim nowadays, he may bring forth this verse and ask you to respect his privacy and refrain from advising him! *Abū Bakr*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, corrected this misinterpretation. Contrary to the misunderstanding that people have about it,

the verse does not call for giving up the duty of enjoining good and forbidding evil. The Messenger of *Allāh*, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, explained it and highlighted that were people to refrain from forbidding evil and wrongdoing in any given community, *Allāh*, Exalted be He, would afflict His punishment on them all. This is why the exchange of advice is vital.

A Muslim should offer advice to his fellow Muslim if he happened to witness him or her committing any sinful act; it is one of the religious duties required of a Muslim as per the Sharia.

In fact, this exchange of advice serves as a safety tool for the reformation of communities.

Thereafter, it should be noted that the one offering advice must adhere to a set of etiquettes and regulations.

One of the most important etiquettes in this regard is that advice should be given for the sake of Allah, and not for the purpose of gaining fame or winning people's admiration or praise; so that people would call the person "an honest and righteous advice-giver" or to have his statement highlighted in the media.

Rather, one should offer advice while exclusively dedicating this act to *Allāh* whether the advice is given in private or public and should make sure that his heart is aspiring to attain reward from none by *Allāh*.

Secondly, one should keenly practice what he is preaching.

[44] ﴿أَتَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبِرِّ وَتَنْسَوْنَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لَتَكُنْتُمْ أَفَلًا تَعْقِلُونَ﴾ [البقرة: 44]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {**Do you order righteousness of the people and forget yourselves while you recite the Scripture? Then will you not reason?**} [*Al-Baqarah*, 2:44]

It is unreasonable that one advises others to perform good deeds, yet himself does not perform them! He should follow the example of the righteous man, Prophet *Ṣālih*, whose story was related in the following verse.

﴿وَمَا أُرِيدُ أَنْ أَخَالِفَكُمْ إِلَّا بِمَا أَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ وَمَا تُنْفِقُونَ إِلَّا بِأَمْرِ اللَّهِ﴾ ﴿٨٨﴾ [هود: ٨٨]

Allāh, Exalted be He, quotes (what means): {*And I do not intend to differ from you in that which I have forbidden you; I only intend reform as much as I am able. And my success is not but through Allāh.*} [Hūd, 11:88]

Let us also ponder over the following verse:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لِمَ تَقُولُونَ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ كَبُرَ مَقْتًا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ﴾ ﴿٣﴾ [الصف: ٣-٢]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {*O you who have believed, why do you say what you do not do?** Great is hatred in the sight of Allāh that you say what you do not do.} [Aṣ-Ṣaff, 61:2-3]

A poet said (what means): “O you who preach others! You should keenly practice what you preach. It is unreasonable that you prescribe a remedy to others while you suffer from the same illness and do not avail yourself of it! You should not forbid an evil deed and commit it; how shameful of you to do such a thing!”⁽⁶⁾

Another important etiquette for offering advice is to offer it in private to the best of one’s ability. One should keenly try to give advice privately even if he is advising his own child; because people are innately inclined to dislike being advised in public. Even if the advised person is younger, you should strive to advise him in private. Our Prophet, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, used to advise people in private most of the time. Thoughtfully, he, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, would say during his *Khuṭbah* “**What is the matter with some people who do so-and-so?**” without specifying the doer in public to spare him of any embarrassment or inconvenience.⁽⁷⁾

(6) See *Adab Ad-Dunya wad Dīn* by Al-Māwardī p. 34, *Jāmi’ Bayān Al-’Ilm* by Ibn ‘Abd Al-Barr, *Tarīkh Dimashaq*, and *Sharḥ Shudhūr Ad-Dhahab* by Ibn Hishām and he attributed it *Abū Al-Aswad Al-Du’ali*.

(7) *Al-Bukhārī*, and *Muslim*.

Al-Fuḍayl ibn 'Iyād, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, aptly said: “A believer conceals the faults of others and graciously offers them sincere advice, whereas the wicked one embarrasses and disgraces others.”⁽⁸⁾ Sadly, some people deliberately advise others in public with the intention of exposing their faults and embarrassing the wrongdoer. Verily, only a wicked person would intentionally advise a wrongdoer in public in order to expose his faults and embarrass him as such. The intent of such people is far from offering advice; they seek to turn the spotlight on the wrongdoer and propagate his sinful act under the pretense of advising.

As we examine our situation today, we come to realize that people are commonly exchanging advice in public, on the internet and social media. Instead, a Muslim should compassionately offer advice to his fellow Muslims in private while showing keenness on concealing their faults.

The righteous scholar, *Imām Ash-Shāfi'ī*, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, said: “Whoever admonishes his brother in private has been sincere to him and protected his reputation. Whoever admonishes him in public has humiliated and disgraced him.”⁽⁹⁾

He also composed the following poem to the same effect (which means): “Support me by offering me advice in private, and avoid advising me in public. Surely, giving advice in public is a kind of reproach, which I would rather disregard. If you disobey and ignore my wish, do not be saddened if you are not obeyed.”⁽¹⁰⁾

In brief, the edifice of Islam is founded on the exchange of sincere advice; this religion can only be upheld through offering sincere advice to one’s fellow Muslims in order to foster the safety and purity of the broader Muslim community.

(8) See *Jāmi' Al-'Ulūm wal-Ḥikam* by *Ibn Rajab*.

(9) *Abu Nu'aym* in his book *Ḥilyat Al-Awliyā'*.

(10) *Diwān Ash-Shāfi'ī*.

Ḥadīth no. 4

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “Be tolerant and you will be shown tolerance [in return].”

There is no doubt that tolerance is a praiseworthy quality that illuminates the path for people in their spiritual journey towards *Allāh*, The Exalted.

It befits noble people to extend tolerance towards others, and only noble people possess such a refined quality. Tolerance is a great righteous deed that yields abundant rewards; like a cloud filled with blessings. It comprises of victory, true strength, determination, and dignity in defiance of one’s evil-enjoining self. It serves as a great source of empowerment for the travelers in the journey of life.

In this *Khuṭbah*, we shall discuss this concise *Ḥadīth* narrated on the authority of *Ibn ‘Abbās*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**Be tolerant and you will be shown tolerance.**” [*Aḥmad*]

It is a compendious statement that abounds in great lessons and teachings.

Tolerance is highly praised in the Quran and Sunnah; it enjoys a great status in Islam. When the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, was asked, “Which religion is dearest to *Allāh*, the Almighty?” He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him said: “**The tolerant upright monotheistic religion (I.e. Islam).**”⁽¹¹⁾ [*Aḥmad* and *Al-Bukhārī* in *Al-Adab Al-Mufrad*]

Tolerance denotes leniency, easiness, forgiveness, overlooking the mistakes and faults of others, and graciously turning a blind eye on people’s lapses.

(11) *Aḥmad*, *Al-Bukhārī* in *Al-Adab Al-Mufrad*. *Al-Bukhārī* narrated it as *Mu‘allaq* (without its chain of narrators) in *Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī*.

It is the distinct trait of the strong, righteous, and gracious people. This is why people often say: “The tolerant is gracious by nature.” This is because the tolerant person cordially gives up his rights and forgives transgressions committed against him because he aspires to gain the reward of his Lord in the Hereafter.

Why is tolerance that important? Why are we urged to extend tolerance to others?

The answer is simply because *Allāh*, Exalted be He, commands us to show tolerance.

﴿وَلْيَعْفُوا وَلْيَصْفَحُوا أَلَا يُحِبُّونَ أَنْ يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ﴾ [النور: ٢٢]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {*...and let them pardon and overlook. Would you not like that Allāh should forgive you? And Allāh is Forgiving and Merciful.*} [*An-Nūr*, 24:22]

﴿وَإِنْ تَعَفَّوْا وَتَصْفَحُوا وَتَغْفِرُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ﴾ [التغابن: ١٤]

He also says (what means): {*But if you pardon and overlook and forgive - then indeed, Allāh is Forgiving and Merciful.*} [*At-Taghābun*, 64:14]

﴿فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاصْفَحْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ﴾ [المائدة: ١٣]

He also says (what means): {*But pardon them and overlook [their misdeeds]. Indeed, Allāh loves the doers of good.*} [*Al-Mā'idah*, 5:13]

Extending tolerance to others is a divine command; it is required of a Muslim to adopt a tolerant attitude towards others because **firstly**, *Allāh*, Exalted be He, enjoins us to graciously overlook the mistakes of others.

Secondly, we should exercise tolerance, following the example of the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him.

O you who wish to follow the example of the Prophet, peace and blessings

of *Allāh* be upon him! Follow him in all his manners, and tolerance was one of his manners. *‘Ā’ishah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with her, was asked about the character of the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, and she replied: “He was not harsh or rough. He was never raucous in the marketplace, nor did he repay evil in kind. Rather he would pardon and forgive.”⁽¹²⁾ [*At-Tirmidhī*] This is the example of our Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, for whoever wishes to follow him.

Thirdly, we should cultivate tolerance within ourselves because human nature entails that if one is tolerant, it shall urge others to show tolerance in return. Tolerance begets tolerance. In fact, this is the very essence of our *Ḥadīth*; when one is tolerant towards others, he shall receive tolerance in this worldly life and the Hereafter.

Dear fellow Muslims, let us ponder over this great *Ḥadīth* cited by *Ibn Khuzaymah*, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, in his book *At-Tawhīd*. In a long *Ḥadīth*, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, described the conditions of the people of Paradise and Hellfire. The *Ḥadīth* reads, “**Allāh, Exalted be He, says, ‘Find anyone in Hellfire who has ever performed a good deed? (His mercy encompasses all His creation, even the disbelievers in Hellfire!) The Angels shall find a man and ask him, ‘Have you ever performed any good deed in your life?’ The man will reply, ‘No, I have not except that I was tolerant towards people when selling and buying.’ Allāh, Exalted be He, will say, ‘Let My slave receive tolerance as he showed tolerance to others,’ and the man will be saved from Hellfire.**”⁽¹³⁾

This man shall be saved from Hellfire on account of extending tolerance to others, being easy-going with people, and overlooking their mistakes.

Fourthly, we should show tolerance, aspiring to obtain the abundant rewards such a good deed yields.

(12) *Aḥmad* and *At-Tirmidhī*.

(13) *Aḥmad* and *Ibn Khuzaymah* in his book *At-Tawhīd*.

﴿فَمَنْ عَفَا وَأَصْلَحَ فَأَجْرُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ﴾ [الشورى: ٤٠]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {And the retribution for an evil act is an evil one like it,} but whoever pardons and makes reconciliation - his reward is [due] from Allāh. Indeed, He does not like wrongdoers.} [Ash-Shūra, 42:40]

We should not aspire to receive any reward or compensation from others, or even expect them to return the favor and be tolerant towards us. They may be wicked and refuse to show tolerance in return. Rather, we should aspire to nothing but the rewards of *Allāh*.

﴿فَمَنْ عَفَا وَأَصْلَحَ فَأَجْرُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ﴾ [الشورى: ٤٠]

Allāh, Exalted be He, Says (what means): {...whoever pardons and makes reconciliation - his reward is [due] from Allāh. Indeed, He does not like wrongdoers.} [Ash-Shūra, 42:40]

Fifthly, we should extend tolerance because the tolerant are closer to attaining righteousness.

﴿وَأَنْ تَعْفُوا أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ وَلَا تَنْسُوا الْفَضْلَ بَيْنَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ﴾ [البقرة: 237]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {And to forego it is nearer to righteousness. And do not forget graciousness between you. Indeed Allāh, of whatever you do, is Seeing.} [Al-Baqarah, 2:237]

Sixthly, we should be tolerant because it is the way to earn the mercy of our Lord. *Jābir*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**May the mercy of Allāh be on him who is lenient in his buying, selling, and in demanding back his money.**” [Al-Bukhārī]

Seventhly, we should have tolerance towards others because it is only the

noble people who can adopt it. A tolerant and lenient person is not weak; rather, extending tolerance is a sign of great strength. It takes a powerful and great person to give up his own rights and graciously choose to overlook people's mistakes rather than finding their faults. It is a noble quality that is only possessed by the noble.

An Arab poet said in this regard (what means): "The bonds between me and my nephews are so unique; I would surely protect and defend them even if they do not do the same for me; I would gladly uphold their reputation even if they undermine mine! I never hold a grudge against them; it is unbecoming of a noble person to do so."⁽¹⁴⁾

This poet describes his unique bond with his family, underlining that he would never return their offence in kind; rather, he tolerant and graciously endures their transgression against him and highlights that only great people can do so.

It has been narrated that a man stood before Imam *Ash-Sha'bī*, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, and insulted him to his face. *Ash-Sha'bī*, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, peacefully said: "If you are truthful, I implore *Allāh* to forgive me, and if you are a liar, I implore *Allāh* to forgive you."⁽¹⁵⁾ It is a very powerful statement. He did not return the insult in kind. Rather, he relished composure and dignity in pardoning and overlooking people's slips.

This is why *Ash-Shāfi'ī*, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, said (what means): "If anyone asks me when I am challenged by an opponent, why I remain silent, my reply is, "My answer would incur grievous evils. Verily, silence is, indeed, the best answer to a fool or ignorant. It helps one protect his own honor. Do not you see that a lion is feared because he is quiet, while a dog is driven away despite his excessive barking? It does not befit the lion to answer the dogs."⁽¹⁶⁾

(14) These lines were attributed to *Muḥammad ibn Maqīs Al-Azdī* in *Rawdat Al-'Uqalā'* and attributed to *Diwān Al-Hamāsah Bi-Sharh Al-Marzūqī* (a book on Arabic poetry), and to *Al-Muqni' Al-Kindī* in *Tārīkh Baghdād* 20/120.

(15) *Ibn Abu Ad-Dunyā*, and *Ad-Dīnawarī* in his book *Al-Mujālasah*.

(16) *Diwān Ash-Shāfi'ī*.

Eighthly, we should exercise tolerance toward others because it is one of the most virtuous and excellent deeds. *Jābir*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, reported that a man asked the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him: ‘Which deeds are best?’ He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, replied: “**Adhering to patience and tolerance.**” [*Ibn Abū Shaybah* and *Al-Bayhaqī*]

Patience goes hand in hand with tolerance. No person can be tolerant without embracing patience.

Ninthly, we should be tolerant because it is the way to savor inner peace and genuine comfort. Intolerant people feel distressed; they lead a life overwhelmed by worries and sadness. On the contrary, those who choose the path of tolerance relish easiness, genuine comfort and lead a peaceful life. *Anas ibn Mālik*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, said: “I served the Messenger of Allāh, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, for nine years, he never said any harsh word to me, and he never asked me about a thing as to why I had done it or why I had not done it.” [*Muslim*]

An intolerant person misses out on genuine easiness, relaxation and peace in life. He always puts blame on others. He reproaches his wife for delaying lunch; he blames his friend for being five minutes late to their meeting, he blames his coworker for not inviting him to his daughter’s wedding party. He is always searching for people’s faults. Thus, he is always enslaved in the chains of unease and tension by trying to find faults in others and playing the victim in life.

The explicit magnificent words of Caliph, ‘*Umar ibn Al-Khaṭṭāb*, Commander of the Believers, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, set a crucial rule in dealing with others. He said: “When you hear a word that offends you, disregard it until it passes you.”

Thus, one should avoid finding faults in others and stop monitoring others as if they are always at fault, simply because we are human beings. We are

imperfect and prone to make mistakes by nature. Therefore, you should hold on tolerance if you want people to be tolerant towards you.

A poet explained the meaning of tolerance, saying (what means): “Tolerance and harboring no malice kept me away from enmity; greeting my enemies and showing cheerfulness to people whom I hate, drive their evil away and protect my heart.”

Another poet referred to the issue of blaming others habitually, saying (what means): “If you are always prone to blame, then forget to have a friend.” People are imperfect and prone to making mistakes, so you have to learn to forgive in order to receive forgiveness.

Tenthly: We should be tolerant in order to earn tremendous rewards from *Allāh*. In a *Ḥadīth* narrated on the authority of *Sahl ibn Mu‘ādh*, on the authority of his father, may *Allāh* be pleased with them, that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “*If anyone suppresses anger when he is in a position to vent it, Allāh, Exalted be He, will call him on the Day of Resurrection over the heads of all creatures, and ask him to choose any of the bright and large eyed maidens he wishes.*” [*Aḥmad, Abū Dawūd and Ibn Majāh*]

Allāh rewards the person who restrains his anger. If a person is able to respond to others’ insults by fighting or uttering obscenities and harsh words, but he restricts this ability for the sake of *Allāh*, then *Allāh* will reward him.

A man once insulted ‘*Umar ibn Dharr*, and said bad words about him. ‘*Umar* said: “O brother, do not go to extremes in insulting us and leave a room for reconciliation. Indeed, we obey Allah concerning the one who disobeys Him concerning us.”⁽¹⁷⁾

Thus, try to keep repeating these eloquent words: “**Be tolerant and you will receive tolerance.**”

(17) *Abū Nu‘aym and Al-Bayhaqī.*

Ḥadīth no. 5

The Prophet, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said: “Restrain your tongue.”

In this *Khuṭbah*, we will discuss a *Ḥadīth* that was cited in *Al-Mu’jam Al-Kabīr* of *Aṭ-Ṭabarānī*, where someone asked the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him: “How can salvation be attained?” He replied, “**Restrain your tongue, stay at home, and weep over your sins.**” [*Aṭ-Ṭabarānī*]

Here, we will contemplate the first part of the *Ḥadīth*, “**Restrain your tongue.**” Dear fellow Muslim who aspires to attain salvation! You should keenly restrain your tongue. Salvation (deliverance) in this worldly life and the Hereafter can be attained by restraining the tongue. In the *Ḥadīth*, the questioner did not actually define which salvation he meant, the salvation in this worldly life or in the Hereafter? But he asked generally: “How can salvation be attained?” The Prophet’s answer was: “**Restrain your tongue.**” In this *Ḥadīth*, the Prophet, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, underlines the fact that tongue is a double-edged sword. It is your way to relish happiness and peace, or to live in misery and distress. It is your path to Paradise or to Hell. This is why the tongue is considered the most dangerous body organ; it defines one’s destination on the Day of Resurrection, as every word uttered is recorded.

﴿كَلَّا سَنَكْتُبُ مَا يَقُولُ وَنَمُدُّ لَهُ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ مَدًّا ﴿٧٩﴾ وَنَرْتُهُمْ مَا يَقُولُ وَيَأْتِنَا فَرْدًا ﴿٨٠﴾﴾ [مریم: 79-80]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {**No! We will record what he says and extend [i.e., increase] for him from the punishment extensively.**} [*Maryam*, (19:79-80)]

Allāh is All-Aware of everything. He hears our private conversations and secrets.

﴿أَمْ يَحْسِبُونَ أَنَا لَا نَسْمَعُ سِرَّهُمْ وَنَجْوَاهُمْ بَلْ وَرُسُلَنَا لَدَيْهِمْ يَكْتُبُونَ﴾ [الزخرف: 80]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): **{Or do they think that We hear not their secrets and their private conversations? Yes, [We do], and Our messengers [i.e., Angels] are with them recording.}** [*Az-Zukhruf*, 43:80]

Those people who are hypocritical and two-faced, who are nice and respectful to someone when they are with them, but then behind their back they paint a different picture, should be aware that every single word is recorded.

﴿مَا يَلْفِظُ مِنْ قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عِنْدٌ﴾ [ق: 18]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): **{He [i.e., man] does not utter any word except that with him is an observer prepared [to record].}** [*Qāf*, 50:18]

At the end of a long *Ḥadīth* that was narrated on the authority of *Mu‘ādh*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, held his tongue and said: “**Restrain this.**” I asked: ‘O Prophet of Allah! Will we be taken to account for what we say?’ He replied: “**May your mother grieve your loss O Mu‘ādh! People are tossed into Hellfire upon their faces, or upon their noses, only because of what their tongues have cultivated**” [*Aḥmad*, *At-Tirmidhī* and *Ibn Mājah*]

Dear fellow Muslims who aspire to attain salvation! Restrain your tongues! It is the best guaranteed way to enter Paradise. In a *Ḥadīth* that was cited in *Ṣaḥih Al-Bukhārī*, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**Whoever can guarantee (the chastity of) what is between his two jaw-bones and what is between his two legs (i.e. his tongue and his private parts), I shall guarantee him Paradise.**” [*Al-Bukhārī*]

It was narrated that once ‘*Umar ibn Al-Khaṭṭāb*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, saw *Abū Bakr Aṣ-Ṣiddīq*, the leader and caliph of Muslims, may *Allāh*

be pleased with him, stretching out his tongue. He asked him: “O caliph of the Messenger of *Allāh*! What are you doing?” He replied: “This (my tongue) has caused ruin to me. The Messenger of *Allāh* said: “**There is no part of the body but that it complains to Allāh of the tongue for its sharpness.**”⁽¹⁸⁾ [*Al-Bayhaqī*]

A sharp tongue is defined as one that utters harsh and obscene words. It is accustomed to speak evil of others. It is a blameworthy attribute. A man is dispraised if he is described by possessing a sharp tongue. People having sharp tongues are known of speaking to others in a harsh, critical, or insulting manner.

It was cited in *Kitāb Al-Adab* by *Ibn Abī Shaybah* that *Ibn Mas‘ūd*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, said: “There is nothing on earth more in need of being imprisoned than the tongue!” [*Ibn Abī Shaybah, Abu Dāwūd* and *Aṭ-Tabarānī*]

These words illustrate the incisive meaning conveyed through the counsel of the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, “**Restrain your tongue.**”

An Arab poet explained the insightful meaning of this aphoristic statement. He said (what means): “Restrain your tongue and beware of its words, for it leads you to either safety or trouble. Thinking before you speak is the key, so try not to be talkative and restrain your tongue.”

Some people enjoy talking more than others, they are talkative. They find it easy to strike up a conversation. They talk about anything at any time, with no definite purpose. *Yūnus ibn ‘Ubayd*, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, said: “If two qualities of a person are good, the rest of his affairs will also be good: his prayer and his tongue [i.e. He restrains his tongue]”⁽¹⁹⁾

It was cited in *Al-Muwaṭṭā‘ of Imām Mālik* that Prophet *‘Īsa* (Jesus), peace be upon him, encountered a pig on the road. He said to it: “Pass by in

(18) *Al-Bayhaqī*

(19) *Abū Nu‘aym*.

peace.” Somebody asked, “You’re saying this to a pig?” ‘*Īsā* said, “I fear lest I accustom my tongue to evil speech.”⁽²⁰⁾ He was seeking to accustom his tongue say only good.

The only means to salvation is to restrain one’s tongue, because when one gives free rein to his tongue, he will be far from the truth, and consequently he will be far from the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, on the Day of Judgment. In a *Ḥadīth* reported on the authority of *Jābir*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Indeed the most beloved among you to me, and the nearest to sit with me on the Day of Judgment is the best of you in character. And indeed the most disliked among you to me, and the one sitting furthest from me on the Day of Judgment are the Tharthārūn (garrulous), and the Mutashaddiqūn (pompous) and the Mutafayhiqūn.”** They said: **“O Messenger of Allah! We know about the Tharthārūn, and the Mutashaddiqūn, but who are the Mutafayhiqūn?»** He said: **“The arrogant.”** [*At-Tirmidhī*]

Moreover, the tongue leads of the body, if it remains sound, the rest of the body will remain sound, and vice versa.

Abū Sa‘īd Al-Khudrī, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“When the son of Ādam wakes up in the morning, all of his body parts plead to it and say: ‘Fear Allāh regarding us (i.e., we will be rewarded or punished as a result of what you do). If you remain steadfast so do we, and if you go astray so do we.’”** [*Aḥmad* and *At-Tirmidhī*]

In another *Ḥadīth* narrated by *Anas ibn Mālik*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“The faith of a person will not become steadfast until his heart is steadfast, and his heart will not become steadfast until his tongue is**

(20) *Mālik*.

steadfast.” [*Aḥmad*]

Whoever aspires to achieve salvation shall restrain his tongue. The tongue is the essence of true faith and the path towards salvation. This is one of the eternal advices delivered through the aphoristic speech of the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him.

Sufyān ibn ‘Abdullah Ath-Thaqafi, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that he asked the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, “O Messenger of Allah! What do you fear most about me?” He took hold of his own tongue and said: “**This.**” [*Aḥmad, At-Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah*]

People who are led by their tongues are led astray. The tongue may do away with all a person’s good deeds including prayer, fasting, pilgrimage and charity. Thus, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, advised us to use it wisely.

Abū Hurayrah, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, was asked, “O Messenger of *Allāh*, a woman spends the night praying, spends the day fasting, does many good deeds and gives charity (he spoke of how much she prayed and fasted and gave charity), yet she annoys her neighbors with her (sharp) tongue.” The Messenger of *Allāh*, peace and blessings be upon him, said, “**There is no good in her. She is one of the inhabitants of Hell.**”

The *Ḥadīth* states that the woman used to offer voluntary night prayers and fast during the day, outside the obligatory fasts of *Ramaḍān*, i.e. she used to fast six days in *Shawwāl*, the *Day of ‘Arafah*, and maybe the three days in the middle of lunar months. Hence, she observed voluntary fast, voluntary prayers, and was evidently righteous. However, she had a weakness in controlling her tongue, which she used in abusing her neighbors.

That is why the Messenger of *Allāh*, peace and blessings be upon him, said, “**There is no good in her. She is one of the inhabitants of Hell.**” Sadly, her

fast, voluntary night prayers, good deeds and charity were of no avail to her.

The companions then said, “O Messenger of *Allāh*! Another woman offers the obligatory prayers and gives dry yoghurt in charity (he spoke of how little she fasted, prayed and gave charity), yet she does not annoy anyone.” The Prophet said, “*She will be in Paradise.*” [*Aḥmad and Al-Bukhārī in Al-Adab Al-Mufrad*]

Therefore, one should not be deceived by his prayer, fasting, righteousness and religiosity as to allow himself to speak about others. In fact, some of us may believe that their righteousness can be a justification for them to criticize others. Of course, this is a gross mistake. What is even more disastrous is that some people criticize others, arguing that they are doing it for the sake of obeying *Allāh*, and supporting *Da‘wah* and reformation. In reality, they doing it in order to satisfy their own pride and boost their ego.

The severity and magnitude of this issue is magnificently elaborated in a quote by *Ibn al-Qayyim*, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, which I would like to conclude my *Khuṭbah* with. He said: “It is a wonder that a person has the ability to overcome his desires and resist the temptation of sins. He refrains from consuming unlawful wealth, doing injustice, adultering and fornicating, casting unlawful gazes etc., yet he is unable to restrain his tongue! A man may be known of his righteousness and asceticism, yet he may speak a word that angers *Allāh*, and not know how far its effect reaches. A man may diligently refrain from sinful acts, yet he could be a slanderer. He might speak ill of people behind their backs.”⁽²¹⁾

Therefore, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, was asked: “How can salvation be attained?” He replied: “**Restrain your tongue.**”

Dear fellow Muslims, to be asked: “Why did you not speak?” in a gathering, is better for you than to be asked: “Why did you speak?”

(21) *Ibn al-Qayyim, Ad-Dā‘ wad-Dawā‘*.

Ḥadith no.6

The Prophet, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said: “Whoever is deprived of gentleness is, in fact, deprived of all good.”

Dear fellow Muslims, one of the most praiseworthy qualities that Allāh, Exalted be He, loves is gentleness. It is a highly regarded virtue in Islam. Whenever there is gentleness in something, it adorns and beautifies it. Whoever adheres to gentleness shall attain goodness and receive rewards in the worldly life and the Hereafter. Gentleness is a sign of faith and a key to hearts.

﴿فَمَا رَحِمَهُ مِنَ اللَّهِ لَئِن لَّمْ يَكُنْ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانْفَضُّوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ﴾ [آل عمران: 159]

Allāh, Exalted be He, Says (what means): {So by mercy from God, [O Muhammad], you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you. So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult them in the matter. And when you have decided, then rely upon God. Indeed, God loves those who rely [upon Him].} [Āl-‘Imrān, 3:159]

In this *Khuṭbah*, we shall carry on with our series on “aphoristic speech” of the Prophet, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, and contemplate the following *Ḥadīth*: “**Whoever is deprived of gentleness is, in fact, deprived of all good.**” [*Abū Dāwūd and Muslim*]

In this *Ḥadīth*, the Prophet, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, underlines the consequences of harshness and being unkind towards others.

Whoever opts for harshness and cruelty rather than kindness and gentleness, shall be deprived of all good in the worldly life and the Hereafter.

In a *Ḥadīth* narrated on the authority of *‘Ā’ishah*, Mother of Believers, may *Allāh* be pleased with her, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, sheds light on one of the great merits of gentleness. He said: **“Whenever gentleness is found in something it beautifies it; whenever gentleness is removed from something, that thing becomes defective.”** [*Muslim: Ṣaḥīḥ*]

In another *Ḥadīth*, also narrated by *‘Ā’ishah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with her, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“O ‘Ā’ishah be gentle, as for if Allāh, Exalted be He, intends good for a household, He shows them the door to gentleness.”** [*Aḥmad*]

Thus, households wherein much kindness and compassion is found shall receive mercy and goodness from *Allāh*. On the contrary, those who show harshness and cruelty shall be deprived of His mercy.

It is narrated by *Jābir*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“When Allāh loves a household, he causes them to adhere to gentleness.”** [*Ibn Abī Ad-Dunyā*]

Gentleness is a great sign that denotes the love of *Allāh*, Exalted be He, towards His slaves. Whenever it is found in a house or a gathering of people, *Allāh*’s love is present. On the contrary, societies that lack kindness and gentleness are not loved by *Allāh*, Exalted be He.

O slaves of Allah! There are numerous uncountable situations in our lives where showing kindness and gentleness is required. Here, we will ponder over four examples of kindness that we keenly need to follow:

First, kindness is required with those who disagree with us. We should show gentleness even if we face abuse and cruelty. Disagreement occurs daily between people. You may disagree with your relatives as well as

strangers; loved ones as well as foes; and Muslims as well as non-Muslims. However, only wise people can strive to show gentleness towards those with whom they disagree. They believe that whenever gentleness is found in something, it beautifies it. This is evidenced by the following *Ḥadīth* narrated on the authority of ‘Ā’ishah, Mother of Believers, may *Allāh* be pleased with her, who said: “The Jews used to greet the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, by saying, “*As-Sāmu ‘alayka*” (i.e., death be upon you), so I understood what they said, and I said to them, “*As-sāmu ‘alaykum wal-la’nah* (i.e. may death and curse be upon you), O brethren of apes and pigs!” The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said, **“Take it easy, O ‘Āishah! Indeed, Allāh likes gentleness in all affairs.”** I said, “O *Allāh*’s Prophet! Did you not hear what they said?” He replied, **“Did you not hear me answering them by saying: ‘wa ‘alaykum’ (i.e., the same be upon you)?”** [*Al-Bukhārī and Muslim*]

Why do we neglect such a quality!

Dear fellow Muslims, I urge myself firstly, and then you, to strive to adopt kindness and gentleness even in disagreement. An important message I address to all people in different fields of life; to *Khuṭbā’* (preachers), to people in the media, to writers and all others: try to accustom yourselves to avoid using insults and offences against your opponents and abusers. Be lenient and forgiving, especially when you have the upper hand and the power to retaliate. Harsh words and disputes lead to hatred and antagonism. We need to urge each other to adopt harmony and unity rather than cruelty and hostility.

Kindness is a key to implant love and compassion in hearts. It is needed when disputing with others, with your wife, your son, your friends and any adversary. It is the magic cure of hearts embroiled in disputes, so be gentle with your opponents to relish the merits of gentleness.

Second, kindness is required in leadership. It is an oft-overlooked attribute

in successful leadership. Leaders, in a ministry, army, or even in the home, should adopt kindness as a strategy in dealing with people under their command. Cruelty and violence are not welcomed in Islam, as they are far from the approach of the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him.

﴿وَأَخْفِضْ جَنَاحَكَ لِمَنِ اتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾ [الشعراء: 215]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {**And lower your wing [i.e., show kindness] to those who follow you of the believers**} [*Ash-Shu‘arā’*, 26:215]

This verse sheds light on the unique perspective of adopting gentleness in leadership. It is a direct command from *Allāh* to every leader to adopt gentleness.

Jābir, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated: “The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, used to lag behind while travelling and encourage the weak. He would make some of them sit behind him and make *du‘ā’* (supplication) for them.” [*Abū Dāwūd*]

The *Hadīth* illustrates the approach of the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, in treating his people gently as a leader. He took a great interest in the welfare of his people. He used to show his kindness and gentleness, especially to the weak and the poor. He extended kindness to all beings, both animate and inanimate.

Moreover, he urged rulers of the *Ummah* (Muslim community) to adopt gentleness in treating the public. This was explicit in his *du‘ā’* (supplication) for them: “**O *Allāh*! Treat harshly those who rule over my Ummah with harshness, and treat gently those who rule over my Ummah with gentleness.**” [*Muslim*]

He emphasized on the issue of leading by kindness and gentleness. It is a required quality in all fields of leadership. A man as a leader in his household, the *Khaṭīb* (preacher) as a leader when delivering *Khuṭbah* (sermon) on his pulpit, governors, rulers and every leader shall adopt kindness and gentleness, otherwise they shall receive harshness and anger from *Allāh* as per the supplication of the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him.

Third: Gentleness towards oneself. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“You owe a duty to your body.”** [*Abū Dāwūd*] In this concise precious statement, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, emphasizes the importance of gentleness towards oneself.

Here, I would like to direct a message to the youth and say: learn how to treat your own self gently. Indeed, obedience to *Allāh*, Exalted be He, is the best example of gentleness towards oneself. It maintains the purity and vitality of the soul and body. On the contrary, disobedience to *Allāh* and committing sins are examples of being harsh and violent towards oneself. Thus, one is actually harming and torturing himself once he turns to drugs and alcohol, or when he drives his car carelessly. Such acts impede one’s duty to adopt gentleness towards himself.

Our Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Whoever throws himself from a mountain to kill himself, he will be continually throwing himself (from a height) in Hellfire, dwelling therein eternally.”** This *Hadīth* serves as an alert to those careless youth who adopt harshness towards themselves. Their fool and immature acts indicate their ignorance of their duty to preserve their bodies and their lives. They climb mountains in their cars and drive carelessly, putting themselves at risk of fatality. They could kill themselves or others when they run the red light or exceed the speed limit. They become addicted to drugs, which are the reason behind the death of millions of youth all over the world daily. Thus, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, warned us against such acts saying: **“And whoever kills himself with poison, then his poison will be in his hand, to continually drink in Hellfire, dwelling therein eternally. And whoever kills himself with [a sharp] iron [object], that iron [object] of his will be in his hand, to continually stab himself in his abdomen with in Hellfire, dwelling therein eternally.”**⁽²²⁾

(22) *Al-Bukhārī* and *Muslim*, on the authority of *Abū Hurayrah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him.

﴿وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُمْ رَحِيمًا ﴿٢٩﴾ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ عَدُوًّا وَظُلْمًا
فَسَوْفَ نُصَلِّيهِ نَارًا وَكَانَ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرًا ﴿٣٠﴾﴾ [النساء: ٢٩-٣٠]

Allāh, Exalted be He, also says (what means): “**And do not kill yourselves [for one another]. Indeed, God is to you ever Merciful. And whoever does that in aggression and injustice - then We will drive him into a Fire. And that, for God, is [always] easy.**” [*An-Nisā’*, 4: 29-30]

Fourth: Gentleness towards the weak. Gentleness is required towards all weak people you deal with in your daily life: your servant at your home, the employees in your company, even your wife, who may be a weak person, and your children. They all need to be treated gently.

While discussing this issue, we should raise awareness on the severity of adopting violence and harshness as an attitude in our communities. Our communities are full of numerous examples of violence and cruelty. Domestic violence is an explicit example of such harshness and cruelty. Some fathers have no mercy in their hearts towards their children. There are distressing stories of fathers who beat their children until they die. I remember reading a story in a newspaper about a husband and wife who physically abused his daughter until she died. Indeed, many domestic violence centers report numerous cases of children who have experienced physical or verbal abuse at the hands of their parents. Such kind of parents lack empathy and gentleness towards children.

Another example that indicates the lack of gentleness in our communities is represented in abusing weak people in the streets by groups of youth. Those youth try to prove their manliness by abusing a weak worker, taking photos of the incident and sharing it on the social media. In fact, their shameful act has nothing to do with manliness. In fact, it is proof of the lack of manliness and gentleness.

There are also many examples of husbands who mistreat their wives. This

is obvious when a wife complains of her husband's cruelty saying: "My husband abuses me physically. He knows that I am weak and I have no one to protect me; no father or son. I have no one in this country except *Allāh*."

Indeed, these cruel acts contradict the Islamic approach and the Prophetic teachings which urge us to be kind and gentle towards each other. *Abū Mas'ūd Al Anṣārī*, may Allāh be pleased with him, narrated: "While I was beating my servant, I heard someone behind me saying: 'Beware O Abū Mas'ūd!' In my rage, I did not immediately recognize the voice. When I turned around, I found that it was the Messenger of *Allāh*, and the whip dropped from my hands. He, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said: "**O Abū Mas'ūd! Bear in mind that *Allāh* has more dominance and power over you than you do over him.**" [Muslim]

Thus, you should always remember that *Allāh* alone has the extreme and infinite power. If you possess power and dominance now, one day you will lose it and become weak. Then you will be dominated by others who have more power than you.

To conclude, one should realize the fact that nothing on this earth is infinite or everlasting. Everyone who is deluded by his power, his authority and influence, his position, wisdom, eloquence and wealth, should realize that all of it will perish. Nothing will remain except *Allāh*, the Most Powerful, Who will give the weak person his full right in the worldly life before the Hereafter. The history of the previous nations bears clear testimony to what happens to those deluded by their powers. They too had no mercy in their hearts and lacked gentleness towards the weak.

Thus, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, spoke the truth when he said: "**Whoever is deprived of gentleness is, in fact, deprived of all good.**"

Ḥadīth no. 7

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “Learn enough about your lineages so that you can maintain ties of kinship.”

In this *Khuṭbah*, we shall discuss the *Ḥadīth* cited by *At-Tirmidhī*. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “*Learn enough about your lineages so that you can maintain ties of kinship.*”⁽²³⁾

There is no doubt that upholding ties of kinship holds a special position in Islam. It is a religious duty and also an instinctive human, societal need. *Allāh*, Exalted be He, encouraged such a good deed and praised those who complied by His command in this regard.

﴿وَالَّذِينَ يَصِلُونَ مَا أَمَرَ اللَّهُ بِهِ أَنْ يُوصَلَ وَيَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ وَيَخَافُونَ سُوءَ الْحِسَابِ﴾
[الرعد: 21]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{And those who join that which *Allāh* has ordered to be joined and fear their Lord and are afraid of the evil of [their] account.}* [*Ar-Ra’d*, 13:21]

Allāh, Exalted be He, also warned us against the gravity of severing ties of kinship.

﴿وَالَّذِينَ يَنْقُضُونَ عَهْدَ اللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مِيثَاقِهِ وَيَقْطَعُونَ مَا أَمَرَ اللَّهُ بِهِ أَنْ يُوصَلَ وَيُفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ أُولَئِكَ لَهُمُ اللَّعْنَةُ وَلَهُمْ سُوءُ الدَّارِ﴾ [الرعد: 25]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{But those who break the covenant of *Allāh* after contracting it and sever that which *Allāh* has ordered to be joined and spread corruption on earth - for them is the curse, and they will have the worst home.}* [*Ar-Ra’d*, 13:25]

(23) *At-Tirmidhī* and *Aḥmad*.

Moreover, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**Allāh, Exalted be He, created the creation, and when He finished it, the Raḥim (womb) got up and said: ‘This is the stand of one who is seeking refuge with You from all those who sever me (i.e. sever the ties of kinship)!’ Allāh, Exalted be He, said: “Would you be pleased that I (Myself) will keep good relations with the one who keeps good relation with you, and I will sever relations [between Myself and] the one who severs relations with you.” It said: ‘Yes, ‘O my Lord!’ Allāh said (to it), ‘That is for you.’”** Recite, if you wish, the following verse:

﴿ فَهَلْ عَسَيْتُمْ إِنْ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ أَنْ تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَتَقَطَّعُوا أَرْحَامَكُمْ ﴾ (٢٢) ﴿ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ فَأَصَمَّهُمْ وَأَعَمَّى أَبْصَرَهُمْ ﴾ (٢٣) ﴿ أَفَلَا يَتَذَكَّرُونَ الْفُرْعَانَ أَمْرًا عَلَى قُلُوبٍ أَقْفَالُهَا ﴾ (٢٤) ﴿ [محمد: ٢٢-٢٤]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {So would you perhaps, if you turned away, cause corruption on earth and sever your [ties off] relationship?} Those [who do so] are the ones that Allāh has cursed, so He deafened them and blinded their vision. Then do they not reflect upon the Quran, or are there locks upon [their] hearts?} [Muḥammad, 47:22-24] [Muslim]*

Moreover, *Abū Ayyūb Al-Anṣārī*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that a man came to the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, and said: “Direct me to such a deed that will admit me to Paradise.” Upon this, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**Worship Allāh and never associate partners with Him in worship, establish the prayer, pay Zakāh, and uphold ties of kinship.**” [*Al-Bukhārī*]

Undoubtedly, upholding ties of kinship holds a special status in Islam, and the one maintaining them is highly praised by *Allāh*, Exalted be He. Conversely, severing ties of kinship is a grave sin and a serious misdeed.

Sadly, we witness diverse examples on severing ties of kinship in our contemporary Muslim communities. On the other hand, there are also praiseworthy examples on upholding ties of kinship among Muslim families.

It should be noted, though, that upholding the ties of kinship is more than merely hanging family photos and family trees on the walls. Rather, it means keenly maintaining good relations with our family members, and this entails knowing our relatives to begin with. We should learn our lineages in order to uphold ties of kinship rather than finding false pride in them. This is why the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Learn enough about your lineages so that you can maintain ties of kinship.”**

Whoever severs ties of kinship is committing a grave sin. This sinful act incurs serious consequences in this worldly life and the Hereafter, some of which are the following:

First: it incurs the curse of *Allāh* (which means depravation from His mercy), Exalted be He, as well as deafness and blindness (from listening to or perceiving the truth).

﴿ فَهَلْ عَسَيْتُمْ إِنْ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ أَنْ تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَتَقَطَّعُوا أَرْحَامَكُمْ ﴾ (٢٢) أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ فَأَصَمَّهُمْ وَأَعَمَّى أَبْصَرَهُمْ ﴿٢٣﴾ أَفَلَا يَتَذَكَّرُونَ الْفُرْعَانَ أَمْرًا عَلَى قُلُوبٍ أَقْفَالُهَا ﴿٢٤﴾ [محمد: ٢٢-٢٤]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {*So would you perhaps, if you turned away, cause corruption on earth and sever your [ties off] relationship? * Those [who do so] are the ones that Allāh has cursed, so He deafened them and blinded their vision. * Then do they not reflect upon the Quran, or are there locks upon [their] hearts?*} [Muhammad, 47:22-24]

How grave are the consequences of cutting off relations with close relatives and even parents! Sadly, some people forsake their own parents, siblings or

cousins! Undoubtedly, such people incur the curse of *Allāh*, Exalted be He (and they are accordingly denied His mercy).

Second: having one's good deeds rejected.

Indeed, this is a very serious matter. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“The actions of the Children of Adam are presented to Allāh, Exalted be He, on Thursday evening, the night before Friday. He does not accept the actions of someone who has severed ties of kinship.”**⁽²⁴⁾

This *Ḥadīth* applies to cutting off relations with both one's close and distant relatives. A Muslim is required to uphold ties of kinship with all his relatives even if just by means of a mere exchange of greetings.

It is true that maintaining very close relations with some relatives may incur problems and result in discord; however, a Muslim is still required to uphold ties of kinship with his relatives in the least socially acceptable manner possible, even by the mere exchange of greetings, in order to avoid having his good deeds rejected.

Third: the one who fails to uphold ties of kinship incurs the relevant punishments in both the worldly life and the Hereafter. We do not know the nature of the worldly punishment; it could be any one or a combination of poverty, distress, hardship or having one's affairs made difficult. What we know is that committing such a sinful act incurs a punishment of some sort in the worldly life.

Abū Bakrah, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“There is no sin more likely and deserving of *Allāh* hastening the punishment meted out upon its perpetrator in the worldly life – along with what is in store for**

(24) *Aḥmad*, and *Al-Arnā'ūt*: *Ḥasan*.

him in the Hereafter – than oppression and severing ties of kinship.”⁽²⁵⁾

This should serve as a warning for us, urging us to hasten in rectifying our situation in this regard, or else incur the promised worldly punishment.

Fourth: among the punishments incurred by severing ties of kinship is deprivation of Paradise. It is one of the gravest punishments caused by such a sinful act. *Jubayr ibn Muṭ‘im*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**The one who severs the ties of kinship shall not enter Paradise.**” [*Al-Bukhārī* and *Muslim*]

There is no doubt that any wise person pondering over such *Ḥadīths* should hasten to repent from his sinful acts and grave sins. It is only sensible of a wise sinner to hasten to repentance before it is too late.

However, I would like to focus on the praiseworthy examples in this regard. There are righteous Muslims who earnestly uphold their ties of kinship, and show dutifulness towards their relatives as enjoined. These obedient Muslims outnumber those who sever the ties of kinship, and they should know the great rewards they earn through performing this good deed and find pride in their acts.

Examples of the fruits that upholding ties of kinship yield are the following:

First: *Allāh*, Exalted be He, blesses the doer’s household.

Upholding ties of kinship is rewarded with having one’s lifespan increased and his provision and household being blessed. *‘Ā’ishah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with her, narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**Maintaining good ties with kinship and adopting good manners bring blessings to the household and increase lifespan.**” [*Al-Bayhaqī*]

(25) *Al-Bukhārī* in *Al-Adab Al-Mufrad*, *Aḥmad*, *Abū Dāwūd*, *At-Tirmidhī*, and *Ibn Mājah*.

This is a great reward. Some people may mistakenly assume that blessing one's household in this *Ḥadīth* denotes actual expansion in the material sense, i.e. having multiple or wider houses. However, it, rather, means savoring inner delight and genuine joy inside one's house.

Second: the one who upholds ties of kinship is rewarded with inner strength, divine grace and mercy. *ʿĀ'ishah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with her, narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Ar-Raḥim (the womb) is named after Ar-Raḥmān (*Allāh*, Exalted be He), so whoever maintains it, *Allāh* maintains connection with him, and whoever severs it, *Allāh* cuts him off.”** [*Al-Bayhaqī*]

Whoever upholds ties of kinship, *Allāh* maintains the bond with him.

Third: maintaining ties of kinship is the good deed that is rewarded the quickest. Let us ponder over the following great *Ḥadīth* that calls for contemplation and reflection. In fact, we need to live by the lessons deduced from such a great *Ḥadīth* and translate them into actions. *Abū Bakrah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Of all righteous deeds, maintaining the ties of kinship is rewarded the quickest, so much so that the members of a family may be evil doers, but *Allāh* causes their wealth to grow and their number to increase because of maintaining ties of kinship. And no members of a household upholding ties of kinship as due would ever fall into poverty.”** [*Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Hibbān*]

A great rule may be deduced from this *Ḥadīth*: when family members uphold ties of kinship as enjoined, it is inconceivable that any of them should ever fall into poverty. This is why the members of close-knit families are not stricken with poverty; they support one another at times of need.

Fourth: having one's sins forgiven. Verily, we need this great fruit the most. *Ibn ʿUmar*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that a man

came to the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, and said: “O Messenger of *Allāh*! I have committed a tremendous sin. Is there any repentance for me?” He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**Is your mother still alive?**” The man said, “No.” The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**Are any of your maternal aunts alive?**” The man replied affirmatively. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**Show dutifulness to her.**” [*At-Tirmidhī*]

The way to have your sins forgiven is for you to show dutifulness to your maternal and paternal aunts, to your elder brother who has taken care of you until you grew up and graduated, and to all your relatives in order to earn such a great reward of forgiveness.

Ḥadīth no. 8

The Prophet, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said: “And I like good omen.”

Dear fellow Muslims! We are in dire need of learning this Ḥadīth to address those who are miserable, in despair, and have lost hope of the Mercy of *Allāh*, Exalted be He.

We need to communicate this Ḥadīth to those people who are suffering from anxiety and grief, and those overburdened by the worldly life’s concerns and hardship.

We all need to learn this Ḥadīth by heart to avail ourselves of the glad tidings of relief and ease it carries.

We all need to contemplate the following verse and renew our faith in it.

﴿فَإِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا ﴿٥﴾ إِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا ﴿٦﴾﴾ [الشرح: 5-6]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): **{For indeed, with hardship [will be] ease. * Indeed, with hardship [will be] ease.}** [*Ash-Sharḥ*, 94:5-6]

We need to frequently say with full conviction:

﴿...سَيَجْعَلُ اللَّهُ بَعْدَ عُسْرٍ يُسْرًا﴾ [الطلاق: 7]

Allāh, Exalted be He, also says (what means): **{Allāh will bring about, after hardship, ease.}** [*At-Talāq*, 65:7]

An Arab poet said (what means): “One may grow impatient at a calamity, while *Allāh*, Exalted be He, will soon grant him a way out of it. The more the hardship intensifies; the sooner relief will come, often at the least expected time.”

In a world marked by prevailing pessimism and discontent, we need to

speak of hope and good omens. At such times of darkness, we need the light of hope and good omen, and we need to hold on to optimism.

Dear fellow Muslims, we shall carry on with our series “Aphoristic Speech of Prophet *Muḥammad*”. In this *Khuṭbah*, we shall discuss the *Ḥadīth* reading: “**And I like a good omen**” (meaning good, positive, and optimistic words).⁽²⁶⁾

This *Ḥadīth* urges Muslims to promote positivity and optimism intertwined with having good expectations of *Allāh*, Exalted be He, and due reliance on Him.

It is a call for fostering the spirit of positivity and optimism within Muslim communities simply because emotions are contagious. This is why it is advisable that one should wisely choose his company and environment, given their momentous effect on our attitudes and perspectives on the world. Human behavior is significantly influenced by the environment in which a person lives. People thrive on hope, positivity and, optimism and wither in a negative and pessimistic environment.

As we ponder over the biography of our Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, we learn about the countless adversities that befell him, and the grievous harms inflicted on him. We also learn how he, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, remarkably adopted an optimistic view on the world and had always good expectations about his Lord. *Abū Bakr*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, related their story during the journey of migration to *Madīnah* when he and the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, took refuge in a cave, as they were chased by the disbelievers. *Abū Bakr*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, exclaimed, “Were one of them to look down at his feet, he would see us!” Thereupon, he, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, reassuringly said: “**Fear not, O Abū Bakr! What adversity can befall two persons who have Allāh as**

(26) *Al-Bukhārī*, on the authority of *Anas*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him.

their third Companion?”⁽²⁷⁾

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, comforted *Abū Bakr*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, and reminded him that they were in the company of *Allāh*, Exalted be He, and under His protection. Even at such a difficult situation, he, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, adopted a positive attitude and reassured *Abū Bakr*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, that the disbelievers would not harm them despite the fact that everything else suggested otherwise. He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, chose to hold on to hope even when there was absolutely no light in the horizon!

Dear fellow Muslims who are overwhelmed with distress! Do not grieve! Contemplate over this great verse:

﴿إِلَّا نَضْرُوهُ فَقَدْ نَصَرَهُ اللَّهُ إِذْ أَخْرَجَهُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ثَانِيَ اثْنَيْنِ إِذْ هُمَا فِي الْغَارِ إِذْ يَقُولُ لِصَاحِبِهِ لَا تَحْزَنْ إِنَّا نَرَى اللَّهَ مَعَنَا فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ سَكِينَتَهُ عَلَيْهِ وَأَيَّدَهُ بِجُنُودٍ لَمْ تَرَوْهَا وَجَعَلَ كَلِمَةَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا السُّفْلَىٰ وَكَلِمَةُ اللَّهِ هِيَ الْعُلْيَا وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ﴾ [التوبة: 40]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{If you do not aid the Prophet - Allāh has already aided him when those who disbelieved had driven him out [of Makkah] as one of two, when they were in the cave and he said to his companion, “Do not grieve; indeed Allāh is with us.” And Allāh sent down his tranquility upon him and supported him with angels you did not see and made the word of those who disbelieved the lowest, while the word of Allāh - that is the highest. And Allāh is Exalted in Might and Wise.}* [At-Tawbah, 9:40]

(27) *Al-Bukhārī* and *Muslim*, on the authority of *Abū Bakr*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him.

Developing a positive and optimistic outlook on life to the extent that it becomes second nature, has six requirements that can be summarized in the following points:

First: to have certainty that what is decreed by *Allāh* will inevitably happen, and that neither grief, nor depression, nor discontent could remove or repel it.

﴿ مَا أَصَابَ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ نَبْرَأَهَا إِنَّ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ ﴾ [الحديد: 22]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{No disaster strikes upon the earth or among yourselves except that it is in a register before We bring it into being - indeed that, for Allāh, is easy.}* [*Al-Hadīd*, 57:22]

What should we do then?

﴿ لِكَيْلَا تَأْسَوْا عَلَىٰ مَا فَاتَكُمْ وَلَا تَفْرَحُوا بِمَا آتَاكُمْ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ ﴾ [الحديد: 23]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{In order that you not despair over what has eluded you and not exult [in pride] over what He has given you. And Allāh does not like everyone self-deluded and boastful.}* [*Al-Hadīd*, 57:23]

Moreover, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, taught us that whatever is decreed will surely occur. He taught this fact to *Ibn ‘Abbās*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, as per the famous *Hadīth* which we should all know by heart. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “...And know that if all the people were to gather together to do something to benefit you- you would only benefit as much as *Allāh* had already prescribed for you. And if they were to gather to do something to harm you- you would only be harmed as

much as *Allāh* had already prescribed for you. The pens have been lifted and the scrolls have dried”⁽²⁸⁾

A firm conviction in that belief begets optimism and positivity.

Second, believing with certainty that this worldly life is fleeting and short-lived; while the Hereafter is our abode of everlasting life; and that enduring the distress and burdens of life is the due price we have to bear through our journey to our final destination.

﴿الْمَرْءُ أَحْسِبَ النَّاسَ أَنْ يُتْرَكُوا أَنْ يَقُولُوا ءَامَنَّا بِهِمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ﴾ ﴿٢﴾ وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ فَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ الْكٰذِبِينَ ﴿٣﴾ [العنكبوت: 1-3]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {*Alif, Lam, Meem. * Do the people think that they will be left to say, “We believe” and they will not be tried? * But We have certainly tried those before them, and Allāh will surely make evident those who are truthful, and He will surely make evident the liars.*} [Al-Ankabūt, 29:1-3]

The worldly life is fundamentally a transient abode of trial for humanity.

An Arab poet said (what means): “Although the worldly life is decreed to be a fleeting abode of trial and hardship, man wishes it to be free of any suffering. He who expects life to go easily against its nature, is like one who expects water to come forth from a blazing fire.”

Third, having a firm conviction that a Muslim is required to express servitude to *Allāh*, Exalted be He, at all times and in all situations. At times of adversities and hardships, it is required of Muslims to show true servitude to *Allāh*, Exalted be He, by patiently enduring them and expressing gratitude at good times. Both gratitude at good fortune and endurance of adversities with patience are manifestations of the enjoined servitude to

(28) *Aḥmad* and *At-Tirmidhī*, on the authority of *Ibn ‘Abbās*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him.

Allāh, Exalted be He. Therefore, a Muslim should rejoice at the blessings of *Allāh* conferred upon him in this worldly life, and be grateful to Him and whenever adversities befall him, he is required to endure them patiently.

﴿ وَأَصْبِرْ وَمَا صَبْرُكَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ وَلَا تَحْزَنْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا تَكُ فِي ضَيْقٍ مِّمَّا يَمْكُرُونَ ﴾
 ﴿١٢٧﴾ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ مُحْسِنُونَ ﴿١٢٨﴾ [النحل: 127-128]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{And be patient, [O Muḥammad], and your patience is not but through Allāh. And do not grieve over them and do not be in distress over what they conspire. * Indeed, Allāh is with those who fear Him and those who are doers of good.}* [An-Nahl, 16:127-128]

﴿ وَلَقَدْ نَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ يَضِيقُ صَدْرُكَ بِمَا يَقُولُونَ ﴾ ﴿١٧﴾ فَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ وَكُن مِّنَ السَّاجِدِينَ ﴿١٨﴾ [الحجر: 97-98]

Allāh, Exalted be He, also says (what means): *{And We already know that your breast is constrained by what they say. * So exalt [Allāh] with praise of your Lord and be of those who prostrate [to Him].}* [Al-Hijr, 15:79-98]

Showing gratitude for the bestowals of *Allāh*, Exalted be He, and endurance of hardships are manifestations of servitude to *Allāh*, Exalted be He.

Ṣuhayb, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“How wonderful is the case of a believer; there is good for him in everything. And this applies only to a believer. If prosperity comes to him, he expresses gratitude to *Allāh* and that is good for him; and if adversity befalls him, he endures it patiently and that is also good for him.”** [Muslim]

A believer is required to show servitude to *Allāh*, Exalted be He, in good and bad times alike.

Fourth, distancing oneself from those who are always miserable and

pessimistic. It is advisable that we should keenly stay away from negative people because they project negativity onto our lives. Keeping the company of such toxic people and being constantly exposed to their pessimistic outlooks on life cloud our lives with negative energy.

Negative people can only infest you with discouragement and pessimism.

Sadly, we are bombarded with pessimistic speech and negative outlooks on life. Pessimism and negativity are in the air, reflected on people's talks in social gatherings, TV shows, and even newspapers.

﴿الَّذِينَ قَالَ لَهُمُ النَّاسُ إِنَّ النَّاسَ قَدِ جَمَعُوا لَكُمْ فَآخَظْتَهُمْ فَزَادَهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ ﴿١٧٣﴾ فَانْقَلَبُوا بِنِعْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَفَضْلٍ لَّمْ يَمَسَّهْمُ سُوءٌ وَاتَّبَعُوا رِضْوَانُ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿١٧٤﴾﴾ [آل عمران: 173-174]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{Those to whom hypocrites said, “Indeed, the people have gathered against you, so fear them.” But it [merely] increased them in faith, and they said, “Sufficient for us is Allāh, and [He is] the best Disposer of affairs.”* So they returned with favor from Allāh and bounty, no harm having touched them. And they pursued the pleasure of Allāh, and Allāh is the possessor of great bounty.}* [*Āl ‘Imrān*, 3:173-174]

Let us ponder over this verse. Notice the intimidating language used by those negative people. Both the disbelievers and hypocrites were endeavoring to induce fear of the future within Muslims' hearts, by claiming that the Muslim state would come to an end, Islam would collapse and the Muslims would be losers.

Thankfully, Muslims ignored their negative thoughts, defended their religion as enjoined, and triumphed over their enemies. This teaches us to distance ourselves from such poisonous people.

﴿ قَدْ يَعْلَمُ اللَّهُ الْمَعْوِقِينَ مِنْكُمْ وَالْقَائِلِينَ لِإِخْوَانِهِمْ هَلُمَّ إِلَيْنَا وَلَا يَأْتُونَ الْبَأْسَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴾ [الأحزاب: ١٨]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{Already Allah knows the hinderers among you and those [hypocrites] who say to their brothers, “Come to us,” and do not go to battle, except for a few.}* [*Al-Aḥzāb*, 33:18]

These negative people live on hindering others from fulfilling their praiseworthy quests. Their minds are cluttered with negativity and they wickedly usher others onto the same dim path. They cowardly refrain from defending their religion and serving their nation at times of need and choose to give in to fear and cowardliness. This is why the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“When you hear a man saying, ‘People are doomed’, then he is the most doomed among them”, or (according to another narration) “...he is the reason for their doom.”**⁽²⁹⁾

Sadly, some people are overwhelmed by negativity and pessimism; they are unable to see the positive aspect of things and only see the bad, devoting themselves to promoting fear of a dim future awaiting the coming generations and the evil schemes of the West.

Rather, a Muslim is required to follow the advice of the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, and opt for optimism and positivity. He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Persue that which benefits you and seek help from *Allāh*. Do not give up. And if anything afflicts you do not say, ‘If I had done such-and-such things, such-and-such would have happened’, but say, ‘*Allāh* decrees and what He wills He does’, for (the utterance) ‘If I had’ provides an opening for the devil’s work.”**⁽³⁰⁾

The fifth requirement is expecting good things in order to receive them.

This principle is deduced from the *Ḥadīth Qudsiyy* reading: **“I am as my**

(29) *Muslim*, on the authority of *Abū Hurayrah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him.

(30) *Muslim*, on the authority of *Abū Hurayrah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him.

slave expects Me to be.”⁽³¹⁾

When a person has good expectation of *Allāh*, Exalted be He, his good expectations shall be fulfilled. However, he is still required to strive and exert effort to realize whatever he aspires to attain. This is not a call for laziness and laxness; it is required of a Muslim to work hard and utilize all the available means in order to attain whatever he is seeking while having good expectations about *Allāh*, Exalted be He, relying on Him and believing with certainty that He shall grant him what he is aspiring to attain. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, used to like it when he set out upon an affair if he heard such names being called as: “O Rāshid (a name meaning ‘rightly guided’) and O Najīh (successful one).”⁽³²⁾

He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, liked hearing these positive words that he could take good omen from.

This is why when the grandfather of *Sa‘īd ibn Al-Musayyib*, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, went to meet the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, (after embracing Islam) and he, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, asked him, “**What is your name?**” He said, “Ḥazn (i.e. rough or harsh).” Thereupon, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said, “Rather you are Sahl (i.e. easy).” He replied, “I will not change a name that my father gave me.” Ibn Al-Musayyib, his grandson, said that it was perhaps his grandfather’s insistence on keeping his name Ḥazn that, “Hardship and grief of one sort or another kept visiting the family.”⁽³³⁾

The sixth requirement of optimism to overcome worldly affliction was

(31) *Al-Bukhārī* and *Muslim*, on the authority of *Abū Hurayrah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him.

(32) *At-Tirmidhī*, on the authority of *Anas*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him.

(33) *Al-Bukhārī*, on the authority of *Al-Musayyib ibn Ḥazn*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him.

underlined by our Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, who knew of the true nature of this worldly life and whose knowledge was imparted to him by our Lord.

Ibn Mas'ūd, may Allāh be pleased with him, reported that he Messenger of *Allāh*, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said, **“If any Muslim is afflicted with distress and he makes this supplication, then his supplication will be answered: ‘O Allāh, I am your servant, the son of your servant, the son of your maidservant. My forelock is in your Hand, your judgment concerning me will surely come to pass, and your decision concerning me is just. I call upon you by every name that you have given to Yourself, or you have taught to any of your creation, or which you have revealed in your Book, or which you have chosen to keep with you among the knowledge of the unseen, [I call upon you] to make the Quran the delight of my heart, the light of my chest, and to remove my sadness and dispel my anxiety.’”** The Prophet added, **“If he says this, *Allāh* will remove his sadness and worry and replace it with happiness.”**⁽³⁴⁾

The *Ḥadīth* underlines that when the distressed person recites this supplication, his distress shall not merely be relieved; rather, it shall be replaced with happiness. We should memorize this amazing supplication and recite it whenever we feel overwhelmed by pessimism, discontent, boredom, and distress, to be relieved and replaced with joy.

An Arab poet said (what means): “O you grief-stricken person, rejoice at the imminent relief from *Allāh*, Exalted be He. Despair brings about ruin. Do not give in to despair and helplessness; verily, *Allāh*, Exalted be He, is sufficient for you. Whenever calamities befall you, place your trust in *Allāh*, the ultimate source of relief.”

(34) *Aḥmad*, on the authority of *Ibn Mas'ūd*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him.

Ḥadīth no. 9

The Messenger of Allāh, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said: “A body nourished with unlawful means shall never be admitted to Paradise.”

In this *Khuṭbah*, we shall carry on with our series “Aphoristic Speech of Prophet Muḥammad”. We shall shed light on a *Ḥadīth* narrated on the authority of *Ka’b ibn ‘Ujrah*, may Allāh be pleased with him, and cited in *Musnad Aḥmad*, reading, “**A body nourished with unlawful means shall never enter Paradise.**”

As usual, it is an aphoristic *Ḥadīth* abounding in great meanings. It means that whoever consumes what is unlawful shall never be admitted to Paradise. Whoever has the audacity to nourish his own body or those of his dependents with unlawful means, shall never be admitted to Paradise.

In the Quran, Allāh, Exalted be He, lays a significant emphasis on the importance of earning a living by legitimate and lawful means.

﴿يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كَلُوا مِن طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ وَأَشْكُرُوا لِلَّهِ إِن كُنتُمْ

إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿١٧٢﴾ [البقرة: 172]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): **{O you who have believed, eat from the good things which We have provided for you and be grateful to Allāh if it is [indeed] Him that you worship.}** [*Al-Baqarah*, 2:172]

﴿يَأْتِيهَا النَّاسُ كُلُوا مِمَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ حَلَالًا طَيِّبًا وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّهُ

لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٦٨﴾ [البقرة: 168]

Allāh, Exalted be He, also says (what means): **{O mankind, eat from whatever is on earth [that is] lawful and good and do not follow the footsteps of Satan. Indeed, he is to you a clear enemy.}** [*Al-Baqarah*, 2:168]

Moreover, *Allāh*, Exalted be He, warns us against the gravity of opting for unlawful means to earn a living.

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ أَمْوَالَ الْيَتَامَىٰ ظُلْمًا إِنَّمَا يَأْكُلُونَ فِي بُطُونِهِمْ نَارًا
وَسَيَصْلَوْنَ سَعِيرًا﴾ [النساء: 10]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{Indeed, those who devour the property of orphans unjustly are only consuming into their bellies fire. And they will be burned in a Blaze.}* [*An-Nisā'*, 4:10]

﴿وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبِطْلِ وَتُدُلُوا بِهَا إِلَىٰ الْحُكَّامِ لِتَأْكُلُوا فَرِيقًا مِّنْ
أَمْوَالِ النَّاسِ بِالْإِثْمِ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ﴾ [البقرة: 188]

Allāh, Exalted be He, also says (what means): *{And do not consume one another's wealth unjustly or send it [in bribery] to the rulers in order that [they might aid] you [to] consume a portion of the wealth of the people in sin, while you know [it is unlawful].}* [*Al-Baqarah*, 2:188]

'*Adiyy Al-Kindī*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**Whosoever from you is appointed by us to a position of authority and he conceals from us even a needle or something smaller than that, it would be misappropriation (of public funds) and he will be taken to account for it on the Day of Judgment.**” [Muslim]

This means that when a Muslim is entrusted with a public office and being in charge of others and he unlawfully consumes public money, such a misappropriation of public funds will be considered a sin of theft amounting to the gravity of stealing the spoils of war before its distribution (which is among the reasons for the punishment of the grave), and he would be held to account for it on the Day of Judgment.

Moreover, *Abu Umāmah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**Allāh decrees Hellfire and debars Paradise for the one who usurps the rights of a believer by taking a false oath.**” One man asked: “O Messenger of *Allāh*! Even if it should be for an insignificant thing?” He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said, “Even if it be a stick of the *Arāk* tree (i.e., the tree from which *Miswāk* sticks are taken).” [Muslim]

If a Muslim is given authority over others and he unlawfully appropriates even an insignificant twig of the *Arāk* tree from public funds, or usurps the rights of Muslims, *Allāh*, Exalted be He, shall admit him to Hellfire and deny him Paradise.

This is why the righteous predecessors were very mindful of the consumption of the unlawful, and avoided whatever might have been doubtful. In fact, they would avoid many things that were lawful, for fear of consuming something that was unlawful. *‘Umar*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, said: “We used to give up nine-tenths what is lawful, for fear of falling into what was unlawful.”⁽³⁵⁾

On the contrary, we find some people who justify committing prohibited acts and sins, and others may even embolden others to commit them. They may devilishly encourage you to do this by saying, “There is no harm done; you can even spend some of it (the unlawfully usurped wealth) in charity to redeem yourself and expiate your sin.” Indeed, this is misguided thinking! *Allāh*, Exalted be He, is Pure (*Ṭayyib*); He does not accept but that which is pure.

Ibn Al-Mubārak, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, said: “To return just a dirham acquired by doubtful means is more beloved to me than giving in charity 100,000 dirhams after 100,000 dirhams (until he reached 600,000 dirhams).”⁽³⁶⁾

(35) *‘Abd Ar-Rāzzāq* in his book *Al-Muṣannaf* and *Al-Balādhurī* in his book *Ansāb Al-Ashrāf*.

(36) *Ibn Abī Ad-Dunyā* in his book *Al-Wara’* and *Ṣifat Aṣ-Ṣafwah* by *Ibn Al-Jawzī*.

This is a message for whoever misguidedly assumes that he may obtain wealth unlawfully and then purify it by spending a portion in charity, or performing Hajj, or even helping ten or twenty people perform Hajj! Let us ponder over the following statement uttered by *Sufyān Ath-Thawrī*, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, cited by *Ibn Ḥajar*, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him: “Whoever spends unlawful gains in charity (and for performing acts of obedience) can be likened to a person trying to purify ritually impure clothing with urine!”⁽³⁷⁾

Sadly, some people usurp people’s rights and steal to perform Hajj, then ask those whom they had wronged to forgive them because they will be performing Hajj! A person may refuse to give people their due rights and persistently withhold them, under the pretext of wanting to perform Hajj. He might even accuse those claiming their own rights of preventing him from performing Hajj and threaten to supplicate to *Allāh* against them! Ironically, such a man is unmindful of the precious statement of the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, narrated by *Ibn ‘Abbās*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him: “O Sa’d! Consume lawful things and your supplications will be answered.”⁽³⁸⁾ In this situation, the person wants to perform Hajj with ill-gotten money and accordingly his supplications will be rejected to begin with.

In fact, people fall into the abyss of consuming ill-gotten money for many reasons:

First, lack of bashfulness with *Allāh*, Exalted be He, which leads to falling into the abyss of sin. *Ibn Mas‘ūd*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, once told his Companions, may *Allāh* be pleased with them: “*Show due reverence and bashfulness to Allāh.*” They (the Companions, may *Allāh* be pleased with them) exclaimed, “We show to (*Allāh*, Exalted be He) due reverence and

(37) *Az-Zawājir* by *Ibn Ḥajar Al-Haytamī*

(38) *Aṭ-Tabarānī*, on the authority of *Ibn ‘Abbās*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him.

bashfulness, O Messenger of *Allāh!*” He, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said: **“It is not that (which you think). Rather, a person who shows *Allāh* due reverence and bashfulness should preserve his head (i.e., by not using it to commit any act of disobedience) as well as what it includes (i.e., the eyes, ears and mouth), preserve his belly (i.e., from eating unlawful food) and what it includes, and should constantly remember death and perishing. Whoever pursues (the reward of) the Hereafter should abandon the pleasures of this worldly life. Whoever does this has shown due reverence and bashfulness to *Allāh*.”**⁽³⁹⁾

A person may fail to carry out his job as required, and when his superior rebukes him for it or holds him accountable for his mistakes, he would blame his superior for trying to get him fired unjustly and deprive him and his dependents of his earnings! This person is not performing his job as required, and accordingly his earnings are unlawful. In fact, such a sinful act is the result of lacking due reverence and bashfulness towards *Allāh*, Exalted be He.

Second, people consume what is unlawful because they eagerly seek quick gains, and our present-day environment encourages such an attitude. We are surrounded with advertisements urging us to make wealth quickly and double our income in a blink of an eye! Moreover, some financial institutions, like banks, promote the so-called get-rich-quick programs, tempting their clients to achieve quick wins in no time and effortlessly. Blinded by the mirage of easy gains, these people fall into the abyss of sin and consume the unlawful.

Jābir, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated this great *Ḥadīth*, which reads: **“A body that is nourished with unlawful means shall never be admitted to Paradise.”**⁽⁴⁰⁾

(39) *Aḥmad* and *At-Tirmidhī*.

(40) *Al-Ḥākim* in his book *Al-Mustadrak*.

This *Ḥadīth* serves as a warning to those who seek quick wins that could potentially lead to obtaining unlawful wealth, just as it warns those who consume interest, play the lottery, cunningly deceive people and usurp their wealth, or deceive the naïve common people and steal their money through fictional ‘paper’ projects in order to obtain quick wins, overlooking this *Ḥadīth*.

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“O people, no soul will die until it has received all its provision. So, do not consider your provision to be slow in coming, and fear Allāh! Seek your provision gracefully, take that which is permissible and leave that which is forbidden.”**⁽⁴¹⁾

A Muslim should not fear the delay or loss of provisions; rather, he should adhere to moderation in seeking provisions, consume only what is lawful, and keenly give up the unlawful.

Third, people consume the unlawful out of indifference and carelessness! It is a serious problem when people carelessly consume the unlawful without even bothering to investigate the matter!

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “Certainly, a time will come when people will not bother to know from where they earned the money, by lawful means or unlawful means.”⁽⁴²⁾

Let us contemplate the statement of *Sahl*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, who said: “He who eats what is unlawful, willingly or unwillingly, knowingly or unknowingly, his organs become disobedient to him!”

When a person consumes the unlawful, as insignificantly small portion it may be, his body parts are inherently incline to the prohibitions of *Allāh*. On the contrary, “He who consumes what is lawful, his organs become obedient and he is guided to good doing.”⁽⁴³⁾

(41) *Al-Ḥākim* and *Ibn Mājah*.

(42) *Al-Bukhārī*, on the authority of *Abū Hurayrah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him.

(43) See *Ihyā’ ‘Ulūm Ad-Dīn*.

Ḥadīth no. 10

The Messenger of *Allāh*, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “He who is not trustworthy has no faith.”

Allāh, Exalted be He, enjoins honoring trusts.

﴿ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ نِعِمَّا يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا ﴾ [النساء: 58]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{Indeed, Allāh commands you to render trusts to whom they are due and when you judge between people to judge with justice. Excellent is that which Allāh instructs you. Indeed, Allāh is ever Hearing and Seeing.}* [*An-Nisā*’, 4:58]

He, Exalted be He, praises the believers and highlights their attributes, one of which is honoring trusts.

﴿ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَمَانَاتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رَاعُونَ ﴾ [المؤمنون: 8]

Allāh, Exalted be He, also says (what means): *{And they who are to their trusts and their promises attentive.}* [*Al-Mu’minūn*, 23:8]

He also warns us against betrayal of trust and underlines its gravity.

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَخُونُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ وَتَخُونُوا أَمَانَاتِكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴾ [الأنفال: 27]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{O you who have believed, do not betray Allāh and the Messenger or betray your trusts while you know [the consequence].}* [*Al-Anfāl*, 8:27]

The *Ḥadīth* we are going to discuss in this *Khuṭbah* was narrated on the authority of *Anas*, may Allāh be pleased with him. It reads, “The Messenger of Allāh, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said: “*He who is not trustworthy has no faith.*” [*Aḥmad*]

Trustworthiness and fulfilling of trusts are indicative of strong faith, while the betrayal of trust signifies weakness of faith.

The Prophet, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said: “**A (true) Muslim is he from whose hand and tongue the Muslims are safe, and a (true) believer is he in whom the people place their trust concerning their lives and properties.**”⁽⁴⁴⁾

Fulfilling trust is the main indicator of genuine faith. This is why ‘*Umar*, may Allāh be pleased with him, said: “Do not judge a man’s religiosity based on his prayer or fasting; rather examine the truthfulness of his speech when he talks, his fulfillment of trusts when he is entrusted, and his prudence when he is given a position of responsibility.”⁽⁴⁵⁾ A person’s religiosity is best tested when he is given a chance to commit sins, yet refrains; when he is given the authority to dispose of people’s affairs, yet he chooses to honor the trust.

As we ponder over these texts, we come to realize that the concept of *Amānah* (translated as trust) is not confined to wealth. A Muslim is required to honor and fulfill trust in the broadest sense of the word. There are multiple forms of trust. A ruler is entrusted with disposing of the affairs of his subjects as enjoined, and this is the trust he is required to honor and fulfill. Similarly, an officer is entrusted with carrying out his job and he is required to honor and fulfill that trust. An employee is entrusted with performing his work as required. The same goes for the writer and every

(44) *Aḥmad*, *At-Tirmidhī* and *An-Nasā’ī*, on the authority of *Abū Hurayrah*, may Allāh be pleased with him.

(45) *Abū Dāwūd*, *Ibn Abī Ad-Dunyā* and *Al-Bayhaqī*.

Muslim. Each one of us is entrusted with taking care of his household, and is required to honor and fulfill this trust.

Abū Dharr, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, once asked the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, to put him in charge and give him a public office. He, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, said to Messenger of *Allāh*, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, “Why do you not appoint me to an (official) position?” He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, patted me on the shoulder with his hand and said: “*O Abū Dharr! You are a weak man and it is a trust, and it will be a cause of disgrace and remorse on the Day of Resurrection except for the one who takes it up with a full sense of responsibility, and fulfills what is entrusted to him.*”⁽⁴⁶⁾

Abū Dharr, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, was a great honorable Companion who was highly praised by the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him; however, he was not a very strong person (in terms of leadership) and thus would find it difficult to discharge the duties required of the post.

Dear Muslim! You should not boastfully rejoice at being in charge of or holding a public office. Indeed, it is a heavy responsibility and a serious trust. You should not also grieve when you are relieved of such a responsibility; rather, you should feel relieved of such a heavy burden.

Fulfilling trusts is one of the characteristics that please the Lord. Every Muslim should adhere to it as far as dealings and interactions with others are concerned. No one should justify betrayal on the pretext of others’ betrayal. A Muslim should not return betrayal with its like.

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**Fulfill the trust of the one who entrusted you, and do not betray the one who betrayed you.**”⁽⁴⁷⁾

(46) *Muslim*, on the authority of *Abū Dharr*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him.

(47) *Abū Dāwūd*, and *At-Tirmidhī*, on the authority of *Abū Hurayrah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him.

It is the unbecoming of a Muslim to betray even those who betray him. Rather, he should always honor and fulfill the trusts.

Sadly, trust (*Amānah*) is the first bonds of Islam to be undone.

The bonds of Islam will be undone one by one; the first of them to be undone shall be trustworthiness. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“The first thing you will lose of your religion is *Amānah* (trust).”**⁽⁴⁸⁾

When trustworthiness is lost within any community, it causes its downfall and destruction. Sadly, the loss of trustworthiness is evident nowadays, the prime effect of which is the weakness of faith. When betrayal prevails in a community, it is a clear sign of the weakness of people’s faith. This is underlined in our *Ḥadīth* “*He who is not trustworthy has no faith, and he who does not keep his word has no religion.*”

A second effect of the loss of trustworthiness is the prevalence of hypocrisy, which is the most dangerous effect. A community where betrayal is widespread is consequently full of hypocrites.

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Whoever possesses these four characteristics, is a sheer hypocrite; and anyone who possesses any one of them, possesses a characteristic of hypocrisy until he gives it up. (These are) When he is entrusted with something, he betrays that trust; when he talks, he tells a lie; when he makes a covenant, he acts treacherously, and when he quarrels, he utters foul language.”**⁽⁴⁹⁾ Hypocrisy is the ugly outcome of neglecting the enjoined fulfillment of trusts.

(48) *At-Tabarānī*, on the authority of *Shaddād ibn Aws*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, ‘*Abd Ar-Razzāq*, *Ibn Abī Shaybah*, and *Al-Ḥākim*, on the authority of *Ibn Mas‘ūd* as *Mawqūf*.

(49) *Al-Bukhārī* and *Muslim*, on the authority of ‘*Abdullāh ibn ‘Amr ibn Al-‘Āṣ*, may *Allāh* be pleased with them.

A third consequential outcome is actually an inevitable result of the two previous ones, namely the weakness of faith and prevalence of hypocrisy. It is misperception and erroneous understanding. Facts become twisted and distorted; the reasonable and conceivable become unreasonable and inconceivable.

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“There will come to the people years of treachery, when the liar will be regarded as honest and the honest man will be regarded as a liar; the traitor will be regarded as faithful and the faithful man will be regarded as a traitor; and the *Ruwaybiḍah* will speak.”** It was said: ‘Who are the *Ruwaybiḍah*?’ He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **‘Insignificant people who shall speak on behalf of the general masses.’**”⁽⁵⁰⁾

In another *Ḥadīth*, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“When honesty is lost, then wait for the Hour.”** He was asked, “How will honesty be lost, O Messenger of *Allāh*?” He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said, **“When authority is given to those who do not deserve it, then wait for the Hour.”**⁽⁵¹⁾ This is a manifestation of such misperception.

This corroborates the meaning of our *Ḥadīth* reading, **“He who is not trustworthy has no faith.” On the other hand, we come to realize that whenever faith flourishes in a community, trustworthiness comes in as a consequence.”**

It has been narrated that once, the spoils of war were brought to the Commander of the Believers, ‘Umar, may *Allāh* be pleased with him. Among them was the crown of *Khosrau* and his two bracelets, adorned with gold and precious jewels. ‘Umar, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, exclaimed, in the presence of the companions: “By *Allāh*! The one who

(50) *Aḥmad* and *Ibn Mājah*, on the authority of *Abū Hurayrah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him.

(51) *Al-Bukhārī*, on the authority of *Abū Hurayrah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him.

delivered this to us is indeed trustworthy!” That is, he delivered it to me although he could have concealed it, stealing it to keep it for himself. A man said to him, ‘Let me tell you something. You are the trustee of *Allāh (Amīn)* on earth, and they discharge the trust to you just like you discharge it to *Allāh*. So, if you strayed from the straight path, they would stray as well.’

This is, in fact, a constant rule: if a ruler or leader is trustworthy, his subjects will follow his example and be trustworthy.

Ḥadīth no. 11

The Messenger of Allāh, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said: “He who does not show mercy, no mercy shall be shown to him.”

It means that he who is not merciful to others will not be treated mercifully. As usual, it is a concise Ḥadīth that carries a multitude of insightful meanings. It underlines that whoever wishes to be shown mercy from Allāh should show mercy towards others. The more mercy one shows to others, the greater the mercy he receives from his Lord. This Ḥadīth was cited in *Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī*.⁽⁵²⁾ We all know that Allāh, Exalted be He, has graciously decreed upon Himself to confer His mercy upon all His creation.

﴿قُلْ لِمَنْ مَّا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۖ قُلْ لِلَّهِ ۚ كُنَّ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِ الرَّحْمَةَ ۚ لِيَجْمَعَنَّكُمْ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ ۗ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ فَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ﴾ [الأنعام: 12]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {Say, “To whom belongs whatever is in the heavens and earth?” Say, “To Allāh.” He has decreed upon Himself mercy. He will surely assemble you for the Day of Resurrection, about which there is no doubt. Those who will lose themselves [that Day] do not believe.} [Al-An‘ām, 6:12]

﴿وَإِذَا جَاءَكَ الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِآيَاتِنَا فَقُلْ سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ ۖ كَتَبَ رَبُّكُمْ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِ الرَّحْمَةَ ۖ أَنَّهُ مَن عَمِلَ مِنكُمْ سُوءًا بِجَهْلَةٍ ثُمَّ تَابَ مِن بَعْدِهِ وَأَصْلَحَ فَأَنَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ﴾ [الأنعام: 54]

Allāh, Exalted be He, also says (what means): {And when those come to you who believe in Our verses, say, “Peace be upon you. Your Lord has

(52) *Al-Bukhārī and Muslim*, on the authority of *Abū Hurayrah*, may Allāh be pleased with him.

decreed upon Himself mercy: that any of you who does wrong out of ignorance and then repents after that and corrects himself - indeed, He is Forgiving and Merciful.”} [Al-An‘ām, 6:54]

Moreover, Allāh, Exalted be He, attributed mercy to Himself in the Quran.

﴿وَرَبُّكَ الْغَنِيُّ ذُو الرَّحْمَةِ ۚ إِنْ يَشَاءُ يُدْهِبْكُمْ وَيَسْتَخْلِفْ مِنْ بَعْدِكُمْ مَا يَشَاءُ كَمَا أَنْشَأَكُمْ مِنْ ذُرِّيَّةِ قَوْمٍ آخَرِينَ﴾ ﴿١٣٣﴾
[الأنعام: 133]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {*And your Lord is the Free of need, the possessor of mercy. If He wills, he can do away with you and give succession after you to whomever He wills, just as He produced you from the descendants of another people.*} [Al-An‘ām, 6:133]

﴿فَإِنْ كَذَّبُوكَ فَقُلْ رَبُّكُمْ ذُو رَحْمَةٍ وَسِعَتْ وَلَا يُرْدُّ بِأَسْفُهُ عَنِ الْقَوْمِ الْمُجْرِمِينَ﴾ ﴿١٤٧﴾ [الأنعام: ١٤٧]

Allāh, Exalted be He, also says (what means): {*So if they deny you, [O Muhammad], say, “Your Lord is the possessor of vast mercy; but His punishment cannot be repelled from the people who are criminals.”*} [Al-An‘ām, 6:147]

Allāh, Exalted be He, underlines that He is the ultimate source of mercy for the Creation; He bestows mercy upon all people and creatures in the universe.

﴿مَا يَفْتَحُ اللَّهُ لِلنَّاسِ مِنْ رَحْمَةٍ فَلَا مُمْسِكَ لَهَا وَمَا يُمْسِكُ فَلَا مُرْسِلَ لَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ ۗ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ﴾ ﴿٢﴾ [فاطر: 2]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {*Whatever Allāh grants to people of mercy - none can withhold it; and whatever He withholds - none can release it thereafter. And He is the Exalted in Might, the Wise.*} [Fāṭir, 53:2]

Moreover, *Allāh*, Exalted be He, revealed to the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, that His mercy precedes and surpasses His wrath. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“When *Allāh* created the creations, He wrote with Him on His Throne: ‘My Mercy excels My Wrath.’”**⁽⁵³⁾

Another version of the *Ḥadīth* reads, **“My Mercy has preceded My Wrath.”**⁽⁵⁴⁾

One of the great manifestations of the all-inclusive nature of the divine mercy is delineated in the following *Ḥadīth*, which underlines that *Allāh* sent down only one part of His mercy in this worldly life, and this is the part with which the creatures show mercy to each other. He preserved the rest for Himself to show to his creatures.

Allāh, Exalted be He, divided mercy into one hundred parts, out of which He sent down only one for all the *Jinn*, mankind, animals and insects to use, through which they show mercy to and have compassion for one another; and through it, animals care for their little ones.

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Allāh, Exalted be He, has one hundred (degrees of) mercy, of which He has shared one between all of creation, by virtue of which you show mercy and compassion towards one another and the wild animals show compassion towards their young.”**⁽⁵⁵⁾

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, then gave us the glad tidings: **“And He has kept back ninety-nine parts of His mercy by virtue of which He will show mercy to His slaves on the Day of Resurrection.”**

(53) *Al-Bukhārī* and Muslim on the authority of *Abū Hurayrah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him.

(54) *Al-Bukhārī* and Muslim on the authority of *Abū Hurayrah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him.

(55) *Al-Bukhārī* and Muslim, on the authority of *Abū Hurayrah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him.

We implore *Allāh*, Exalted be He, to confer His mercy upon us in this worldly life and the Hereafter.

It should be noted that there are numerous means to earn the mercy of *Allāh*, Exalted be He, and the wise person is he who avails himself of such means to draw the all-inclusive mercy of his Lord. The following lines shall shed light on six of such means as a reminder for myself and the dear readers in our pursuit of the mercy of *Allāh*, Exalted be He.

First, one of the means to earn the mercy of *Allāh*, Exalted be He, is perfecting one's faith and *Taqwā* (mindfulness and fear of *Allāh*, Exalted be He). The stronger your faith and *Taqwā* are, the more likely you shall earn the mercy of your Lord.

﴿ وَمِنَ الْأَعْرَابِ مَن يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَيَتَّخِذُ مَا يُنْفِقُ قُرْبَاتٍ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَصَلَوَاتِ الرَّسُولِ ۗ أَلَا إِنَّهَا قُرْبَةٌ لَهُمْ ۗ سَيَدْخِلُهمُ اللَّهُ فِي رَحْمَتِهِ ۖ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴾ [التوبة: 99]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{But among the Bedouins are some who believe in Allāh and the Last Day and consider what they spend as means of nearness to Allāh and of [obtaining] invocations of the Messenger. Unquestionably, it is a means of nearness for them. Allāh will admit them to His mercy. Indeed, Allāh is Forgiving and Merciful.}* [At-Tawbah, 9:99]

﴿ فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فَيَدْخِلُهُمُ رَبُّهمُ فِي رَحْمَتِهِ ۗ ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْمُبِينُ ﴾ [الجاثية: 30]

Allāh, Exalted be He, also says (what means): *{So as for those who believed and did righteous deeds, their Lord will admit them into His mercy. That is what is the clear attainment.}* [Al-Jāthiyah, 45:30]

﴿يَأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَءَامِنُوا بِرِسُولِهِ ۚ يُؤْتِكُمْ كَفْلًا مِّن رَّحْمَتِهِ ۚ وَيَجْعَل لَّكُمْ نُورًا تَمْشُونَ بِهِ ۚ وَيَغْفِر لَكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ﴾ [الحديد: 28]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {O you who have believed, fear Allāh and believe in His Messenger; He will [then] give you a double portion of His mercy and make for you a light by which you will walk and forgive you; and Allāh is Forgiving and Merciful.} [Al-Ḥadīd, 45:28]

Another means to earn the mercy of *Allāh, Exalted be He*, is obeying the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, following his example, and adhering to his Sunnah. This entails earning the mercy of your Lord. A Muslim is enjoined to abide by the Sunnah the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, in order to earn the mercy of *Allāh, Exalted be He*. Dear Muslims! Know well that your obedience to the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, and compliance with his commands help you earn the divine mercy.

﴿وَاطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ﴾ [آل عمران: 132]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {And obey Allāh and the Messenger that you may obtain mercy.} [Āl ‘Imrān, 3:132]

﴿وَأَقِمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَءَاتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَاطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ﴾ [النور: 56]

Allāh, Exalted be He, also says (what means): {And establish prayer and give Zakāh and obey the Messenger - that you may receive mercy.} [An-Nūr, 24:56]

Another means to earn the mercy of *Allāh, Exalted be He*, is what was clearly stated in the *Ḥadīth* being discussed in the *Khuṭbah*. That is, showing mercy towards others. A Muslim is enjoined to extend mercy towards his household, wife, children, servants, neighbors, and even strangers. A Muslim should be merciful towards others while selling and buying, lending or repaying his debts. He is required to show mercy towards his

co-workers and colleagues at work. He should be an overflowing spring of mercy that never runs dry.

The more merciful you are towards others, the more mercy you receive. Mercy begets mercy. Showing mercy is a great means to earn divine mercy; extending mercy to others should be the motto of a Muslim.

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “***Allāh* shows mercy to His slaves who show mercy to others.**”⁽⁵⁶⁾

He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, also said: “**The merciful are shown mercy by *Ar-Raḥmān* (The Most Merciful). Be merciful on the earth, and you will be shown mercy from He Who is above the heavens.**”⁽⁵⁷⁾

In fact, this is the very essence of the message of Islam; Muslims are enjoined to show mercy to all creatures, including the animals that *Allāh* has subjugated for us. The more mercy you extend to others, the greater mercy you receive from your Lord in return.

It has been narrated on the authority of *Mu‘āwiyah ibn Qurrah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, that a man said, ‘O Messenger of *Allāh*, indeed, I show mercy to the sheep even when I am slaughtering it.’ He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said twice, “*If you show mercy to the sheep, Allāh will show mercy to you.*”⁽⁵⁸⁾

Look at how the heart of that man was full of mercy and compassion!

A Muslim is enjoined to show mercy to the animal in all its cases, even when he is slaughtering it. It is required of a Muslim to provide due care for the animal before its slaughter, and should also show mercy to it during its

(56) *Al-Bukhārī* and *Muslim*, on the authority of *Usāmah ibn Zayd*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him.

(57) *Aḥmad*, *Abū Dāwūd* and *At-Tirmidhī*, on the authority of ‘*Abdullāh ibn ‘Amr ibn Al-‘Ās*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him.

(58) *Aḥmad*.

slaughter, How great such a religion is that preaches mercy!

On hearing the disbelievers of the West promoting false accusations against Islam and claiming that it is a religion of terrorism and violence, we know with certainty that these are unfounded lies, since Islam preaches mercy as we have learned.

Anas ibn Mālik, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, reported that a poor woman came to *‘Ā’ishah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with her, who gave her three dates. The woman, may *Allāh* be pleased with her, gave each of her two children a date and kept one date for herself. The children ate the two dates and then looked at their mother. She took her date, split it into two halves, and gave each child a half. When the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, returned home and *‘Ā’ishah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with her, told him about it. He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said, “**Are you surprised at that? Allāh will show her mercy because of her mercy towards her children.**”⁽⁵⁹⁾

Dear Muslims! Bear in mind that showing mercy towards your own children is a great means for earning the mercy of your Lord. This is why when a Bedouin came to the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, and saw him kissing his children, he remarked, “You (people) kiss your little children! I have ten children and I have never kissed them!” Thereupon, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said, “**It is out of my control that Allāh has taken mercy out of your heart.**”⁽⁶⁰⁾

The fourth means to earn the mercy of *Allāh* is showing mercy to all the creatures.

As for **the fifth** means, it is devoting oneself to listening to, reciting, and learning the Quran at mosques.

(59) *Al-Bukhārī*

(60) *Muslim*, on the authority of *Abū Hurayrah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, and *Al-Bukhārī*, on the authority of *‘Ā’ishah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with her.

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**No people gather together in one of the Houses of *Allāh*, reciting the Book of *Allāh* and studying it among themselves, except that serenity (inner peace of mind) descends upon them, mercy envelops them, the angels surround them, and *Allāh* mentions them amongst those who are with Him.**”⁽⁶¹⁾

We implore *Allāh*, Exalted be He, to bless us and our parents with His mercy and grace.

The sixth means to earn the mercy of *Allāh*, Exalted be He, is patiently enduring calamities and aspiring to attain the rewards of *Allāh*, Exalted be He. Adversities befall us all, whether serious or otherwise. The wise, patiently endure calamities to earn the mercy of *Allāh*, Exalted be He, recalling the meaning of the following verse.

﴿الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمْ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ ﴿١٥٦﴾ أُولَٰئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٥٧﴾﴾ [البقرة: 156-157]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{Who, when disaster strikes them, say, “Indeed we belong to Allāh, and indeed to Him we will return.”* Those are the ones upon whom are blessings from their Lord and mercy. And it is those who are the [rightly] guided.}* [Al-Baqarah, 2:156-157]

In conclusion, it is advisable that we keenly show mercy towards other people and all the creatures of *Allāh*, and bear in mind that the more mercy we show to others, the greater mercy we receive from *Allāh* in return. Those who aspire to earning the mercy of *Allāh*, Exalted be He, should show mercy towards others.

(61) Muslim, on the authority of *Abū Hurayrah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him.

Ḥadīth no. 12

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “Be frequent in saying: *Lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh* (There is no power nor might except by with *Allāh*), for verily, it is one of the treasures of Paradise.”

Dhikr (remembrance of *Allāh*) is a virtuous act of worship that has a great, special status in Islam and in the hearts of Believers. It is one of the best good deeds, and one of the best ways to get closer to to *Allāh*. Therefore, the texts of the Qur’ān and Sunnah enjoin Muslims to recite *Dhikr* frequently.

﴿يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ ءَامَنُوْا اذْكُرُوْا اللّٰهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيْرًا ﴿٤١﴾ وَسِيْحُوْهُ بُكْرَةً وَّاٰصِيْلًا ﴿٤٢﴾﴾

[الأحزاب: 41-42]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {*O you who have believed, remember God with much remembrance. And exalt Him morning and afternoon*} [*Al-Ahzāb*, 33:41-42]

﴿وَالَّذِيْنَ كَرِهْتَ اللّٰهُ كَثِيْرًا وَّالَّذِيْنَ رَاتِ اَعَدَّ اللّٰهُ لَهُمْ مَّغْفِرَةً وَّاَجْرًا عَظِيْمًا ﴿٣٥﴾﴾ [الأحزاب: 35]

He also says in another verse of the same *Sūrah* (what means): {*And the men who remember God often and the women who do so- for them God has prepared forgiveness*} [*Al-Ahzāb*, 33:35]

In a *Ḥadīth* that was cited in *Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī* and narrated by *Abū Mūsā*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “The similitude of one who remembers his Lord and one who does not, is like that of the living and the dead.”

In this *Khuṭbah*, we shall ponder over one of the greatest formulae of *Dhikr* that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, instructed us

to say frequently. This invaluable *Dhikr* is one of our series on “aphoristic speech” of the Prophet, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him. It was cited in the following *Ḥadīth*:

“Be frequent in saying: *Lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh* (There is no power nor might except with *Allāh*), for verily, it is one of the treasures of Paradise.”⁽⁶²⁾ [*Aḥmad*]

The literal translation that captures the grandeur and deeper significance of this magnificent phrase, “*Lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh*” is: There is no power nor might to change any condition except by means of the aid, help and guidance of *Allāh*.

Ibn Abbās, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, elaborated on the meaning of this *Dhikr*, saying: “(*Lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh*) means that we cannot move to obey *Allāh* except by His aid, nor can we move to give up His disobedience except by His aid.”⁽⁶³⁾

As for *Ibn Mas‘ūd*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, he said: “None can move to avert any evil except with *Allāh*’s help, and none can move to achieve any good except with *Allāh*’s help.”

Thus, when a Muslim says: “*Lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh*,” he will, in fact, be seeking to attain strength and help from *Allāh*, Exalted be He.

However, there is a misconception regarding the occasion of reciting this *Dhikr*. Many people wrongly think that it is to be recited upon receiving news of a death, experiencing a tragedy or being afflicted by some calamity. Actually, in such occasions, it is prescribed to say: “*Innā lillāhi wa innā ilayhi rāji‘ūn* (We belong to *Allāh* and to Him we shall return)”. Thus *Lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh* should not be said when a Muslim experiences a tragedy or receives news of a death; rather, one should say it

(62) *Aḥmad*, on the authority of *Abū Hurayrah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him.

(63) *As-Suyūṭī*, *Ad-Durr Al-Manthūr*.

when he seeks to attain strength and help from *Allāh*.

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, instructed us to frequently say: “*Lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh*” due to the numerous virtues and merits that it involves, some of which are the following:

First virtue: Forgiveness and pardon of sins. This virtue was emphasized in a *Ḥadīth* narrated by ‘*Abdullāh ibn ‘Amr*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, where the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**There is not anyone upon the earth who says: ‘*Lā ilāha illallāh, wa Allāhu akbar, wa subḥānallāh, wa alḥamdu lillāh, wa lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh* (None has the right to be worshipped but *Allāh*, *Allāh* is the Greatest, Limitless is *Allāh* in His Glory, all praise is due to Him alone, and there is no power nor might except with *Allāh*)’, except that his sins shall be pardoned, even if they were equal to the extent of the foam of the ocean.**”⁽⁶⁴⁾

Dear fellow Muslims! Should we not seek attaining such a great virtue? Through His infinite mercy and grace, *Allāh* endowed us with that virtue in order for our sins to be expiated.

Second virtue: It is one of the treasures of Paradise. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, underlined this precious virtue in his words to *Abū Mūsā Al-Ash‘arī*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, as he said: “**O Abdullah ibn Qays! (the name of Abū Mūsā Al-Ash‘arī, may Allāh be pleased with him) Say ‘*Lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh*’, for it is one of the treasures of Paradise.**” [*Al-Bukhārī* and *Muslim*]

Whoever says *Lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh* shall earn the rewards from *Allāh* in the Hereafter. This *Dhikr* is a precious good deed that serves as a stored treasure in Paradise. It is the treasure that is inherited by those who frequently say *Lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh*.

(64) *Aḥmad* and *At-Tirmidhī*.

Third virtue: It is one of Paradise’s seedlings. In our worldly life, some people are interested in sowing and planting. They are keen to sow the best categories of seedlings in their lands. It is the same for *Jannah* (Paradise), but the seedlings of *Jannah* are to say *Lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh*. One of the most remarkable things about *Jannah* is that a believer shall inherit whatever he or she planted in the worldly life.

Sālim ibn ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, narrated from *Abū Ayyūb*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, passed by Prophet *Ibrahīm* (Abraham), peace be upon him, on the night of *al-Isrā’ wal-Mi’rāj* (the Night Journey and the Ascension of the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him), Prophet *Ibrahīm* (Abraham), peace be upon him, asked *Jibrīl* (Gabriel): “Who is with you *Jibrīl*?” he replied: “*Muḥammad*, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him”, Prophet *Ibrahīm* (Abraham), peace be upon him, said: “O *Muḥammad*! Instruct your nation to say frequently: *Lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh*.” [*Ibn Hibbān: Ṣaḥīḥ*]

It was the precious advice that Prophet *Ibrahīm*, peace be upon him, offered to our beloved Prophet *Muḥammad*, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, on the Night of *Al-Isrā’*. Thus, the Prophet *Muḥammad*, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, commands us to say this *Dhikr* frequently. One of the great virtues of *Lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh* is obviously revealed in the answer of the Prophet *Ibrahīm* (Abraham), peace be upon him, to the question of Prophet *Muḥammad*, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, when he asked: “O *Ibrahīm*! Tell me more about *Lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh*?” he replied: “Paradise’s soil is rich and pure, its water is sweet, and it is a vast, empty flatland. One of its seedlings is: *Lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh*”⁽⁶⁵⁾ It means that the seedlings of *Jannah* tend to grow fast because of its rich, fertile soil and sweet water. One of the

(65) *Aḥmad* and *Ibn Hibbān*.

seedlings that can be planted is these words.

Other virtues of *Lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh*:

It is one of the gates to Paradise. *Qays ibn Sa’d ibn ‘Ubādah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that his father took him to the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, to serve him. He said: “The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, passed by me, and said: “Shall I not tell you about one of the gates of Paradise?” I said: ‘Of course!’ He said: “Say: *Lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh*.”⁽⁶⁶⁾

Indeed, the numerous virtues of this invaluable statement: “*Lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh*” lead us to realize the great status of reciting this *Dhikr* in Islam, as it is strongly related to our daily life; in the day and night.

Here, there is an elaboration on some specific occasions where this statement should be recited.

Allāh, Exalted be He, directed us to say “*Lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh*” when we see a creation or something pretty and we like, whether that thing or creation is belong to us or to others.

﴿وَلَوْلَا إِذْ دَخَلْتَ جَنَّتَكَ قُلْتَ مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ تَرَنَ أَنَا أَقَلَّ مِنْكَ مَا لَا وَوْلَدًا﴾ [الكهف: 39]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {*And why did you, when you entered your garden, not say, ‘What God willed [has occurred]; there is no power except in God’? Although you see me less than you in wealth and children*} [*Al-Kahf*, 18:39]

Upon pondering over this verse, a Muslim shall realize that there is a divine instruction to say “*Lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh*” whenever he something he likes, for *Allāh* is the only one who granted that good and all bounties to

(66) *Aḥmad* and *At-Tirmidhī*.

us. One should praise *Allāh*, Exalted be He, and admit that whatever he has is from *Allāh* not of his own merit. Whatever we have is due to *Allāh* granting it to us; without *Allāh*'s grace we would have nothing. One should also beware that pride and haughtiness may lead to all these bounties perishing.

It is also prescribed to recite this *Dhikr* when waking up suddenly at night. It is reported on the authority of 'Ubādah ibn Aṣ-Ṣāmit, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **"Whoever wakes suddenly at night and says 'Lā ilāha il-lallāh Waḥdahū lā Sharīka lah, Lahul-mulku, waLahul-ḥamdu wahuwa 'alā kulli shay'in qadr. Al-hamdu lil-lāhi wa subhānallāh wa lā-ilāha il-lallāh wa-l-lahu akbar wa lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh'** (None has the right to be worshipped but *Allāh*. He is the alone and has no partners. To Him belongs the Kingdom and to Him all praises are due. He is over all things Competent. All the praises are for *Allāh*. All the glories are for *Allāh*. And none has the right to be worshipped but *Allāh*, And *Allāh* is the Greatest. And there is neither power nor might Except with *Allāh*). And then he says: 'Allāhumma ighfir lī (O *Allāh*! Forgive me)', or invokes (*Allāh*), he will be responded to, and if he performs ablution (and prays), his prayer will be accepted." [Al-Bukhārī]

It is also prescribed to say 'lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh' at the end of every obligatory *Ṣalah* (prayer) and after eating meals. It is cited in *Sunan ibn Mājah* that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **"Whoever eats food and says: 'Al-ḥamdu lillāhil-ladhī at'amanī hādha wa razaqanī min ḡayri ḥawlin minnī wa lā quwwah (Praise is due to Allāh Who has fed me this and provided it for me without any power or might on my part)', - his previous sins will be forgiven."**⁽⁶⁷⁾ Indeed, a Muslim should praise *Allāh*, Exalted be He, for the unlimited blessings and bounties that He granted to him with a deep belief that he has nothing of himself.

(67) Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd and At-Tirmidhī

Another occasion of reciting this *Dhikr* is during fights and battles. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, used to entrust his all affairs to *Allāh* whenever he went on any battle, he used to say: **“O *Allāh*, by You I fight, and by You I attack, And there is no power nor might Except with *Allāh*.”**⁽⁶⁸⁾

In another narration that is cited in *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“O *Allāh*, You are my aider and supporter; with You[r help] I move, with You I attack, and with You I fight.”**⁽⁶⁹⁾

Upon leaving the house, it is also prescribed to say this *Dhikr*. It is an expression of one’s humble submission to the power and glory of his Lord Almighty. Man, no matter how strong, powerful and great, is powerless, weak and meek in front of *Allāh*. When one adheres to reciting this *Dhikr*, *Allāh*, Exalted be He, will endow him with bounties and blessings where he finds himself highly motivated to remember reciting this *Dhikr* frequently upon leaving his house.

In a hadith narrated by *Anas ibn Mālik*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Whoever says – that is: when he leaves his house – ‘*Bismillāh, tawakkaltu ‘alallāh, lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh (In the Name of Allāh, I put my trust in Allāh, there no power nor might except with Allāh)*’, it will be said to him: ‘You have been sufficed and protected,’ and the devil will be kept far from him.”**⁽⁷⁰⁾

It is a great statement announcing the reality of all realities: Everything happens only with the help of *Allāh* alone.

O Slaves of *Allāh*! Islam has elevated the status of such *Dhikr*. The texts of the Quran and Sunnah enjoin us to recite it frequently for its great virtues. Thus, a Muslim should adhere to say it in pursuit of the abundant rewards from *Allāh* and seeking His forgiveness.

(68) *Aḥmad*.

(69) *Abu Abū Dāwūd, Aḥmad and At-Tirmidhī*.

(70) *Abū Dāwūd and At-Tirmidhī*.

Ḥadīth no. 13

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “There are two blessings that many people fail to make the most of: good health and free time.”

Time is the real capital of man. It is life itself. Time is a blessing from *Allāh* that He has granted to his slaves.

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ خِلْفَةً لِّمَنۢ أَرَادَ أَن يَذَّكَّرَ أَوْ أَرَادَ شُكُورًا﴾ [الفرقان: 62]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {*And it is He who has made the night and the day in succession for whoever desires to remember or desires gratitude.*} [*Al-Furqān*, 25:62]

Islam is a religion that acknowledges the importance of time and appreciates its seriousness. Further importance of time lies in the Quran, where *Allāh*, Exalted be He, swears by time in many verses, some of which are the following:

﴿وَاللَّيْلَ إِذَا يَغْشَىٰ ۝ وَالنَّهَارَ إِذَا تَجَلَّىٰ﴾ [الليل: 1-2]

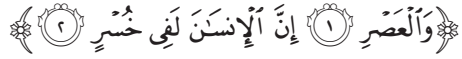
Allāh, Exalted be He, also says (what means): {*By the night when it covers. And [by] the day when it appears*} [*Al-Layl*, 92: 1-2]

﴿وَاللَّيْلَ إِذَا ذَبَرَ ۝ وَالصُّبْحَ إِذَا أَسْفَرَ ۝﴾ [المدثر: 33-34]

Another verse reads (what means): {*And [by] the night when it departs. And [by] the morning when it brightens*} [*Al-Muddathir*, 74:33-34]

﴿وَالضُّحَىٰ ۝ وَاللَّيْلَ إِذَا سَجَىٰ﴾ [الضحى: 1-2]

Also, *Allāh*, Exalted be He, says (what means): {*By the morning brightness. And [by] the night when it covers with Darkness*} [*Adh-Dhuhā*, 93:1-2]



Allāh, Exalted be He, also says (what means): **{By time, Indeed, mankind is in loss}** [*Al-‘Asr*, 103:1-2]

In this *Khuṭbah*, we shall carry on with our series on “aphoristic speech” of the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, and contemplate the following *Ḥadīth* that was cited in *Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī* and narrated by *Ibn ‘Abbās*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“There are two blessings that many people fail to make the most of: good health and free time.”**

From among the great blessings which many people are heedless and ungrateful about, are the blessings of free time and good health. Those two great blessings should be effectively utilized. If not, so much will be lost. We should make use of them in worshiping *Allāh* and doing beneficial things, especially those that will take us closer to *Allāh* and enable us to earn His mercy and forgiveness. In this regard, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, enjoined us to: **“Take (benefit of) five before (the occurrence of) five: Your youth before old age; your health before sickness; your wealth before poverty; your free time before pre-occupation, and your life before death.”**⁽⁷¹⁾

Indeed, if we do not use our time effectively for something good, then we will definitely use it for something which may distance us from *Allāh*. Thus, *Abū Bakr*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, advised *‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, saying: “Indeed, *Allāh* has a right during the day (meaning Muslims have duties towards *Allāh* at daytime) that He would not accept at night. And He also has a right during the night (meaning Muslims have duties towards *Allāh* at night) that He would not accept at daytime.”

(71) *Al-Hākīm* in *Al-Mustadrak*.

Upon pondering over these invaluable words, one comes to realize that there are many duties towards *Allāh* in the daytime that a Muslim is required to fulfill, and the same goes for night duties. One should hasten to carry out his duties on time, and avoid accumulating or postpone them.

Muslims are required to discipline themselves by underscoring the importance of time. Indeed, whoever wastes his time: living aimlessly, doing nothing valuable, is neither preoccupied by the matter of his religion nor the matter of his worldly life, then he spends his life in total vain. *‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, said: “I dislike that a man lives aimlessly; is neither preoccupied by the matter of his religion nor the matter of his worldly life.” Thus, wasting time by deriving no benefit from it in doing good deeds that draw us closer to Paradise and save us from the Hellfire, is a serious issue that Islam warned us against.

We are expected to have serious concern for time for many reasons, some of which are the following:

Firstly: Time is limited and life is short.

Our ages average between sixty and seventy. Only few of us will exceed that, as the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“The ages of my nation are between sixty and seventy, and the least among them who surpasses them.”**⁽⁷²⁾ In fact, we spend most of those sixty or seventy years of our lives preoccupied with worldly matters rather than doing good deeds that draw us closer to *Allāh*. Some of our years are spent eating and drinking, in hanging out and working; thus the rest of our days are limited and few. This idea of the shortness of life on earth is clarified in Quran when *Allāh*, Exalted be He, will ask His slaves on the Day of Judgment about the period of time and the number of years they spent on earth.

(72) *At-Tirmidhī* and *Ibn Mājah*.

﴿ قَلَّ كَمْ لَبِثْتُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ عَدَدَ سِنِينَ ﴿١١٢﴾ قَالُوا لَبِثْنَا يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ فَسْئَلِ
 الْعَادِينَ ﴿١١٣﴾ قُلْ إِنْ لَبِثْتُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا لَوْ أَنَّكُمْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١١٤﴾ أَفَحَسِبْتُمْ أَنَّمَا
 خَلَقْنَاكُمْ عَبَثًا وَأَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿١١٥﴾ فَتَعَلَى اللَّهُ الْمَلِكُ الْحَقُّ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا
 هُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْكَرِيمِ ﴿١١٦﴾ ﴾

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{[God] will say, "How long did you remain on earth in number of years?"}*. They will say, *"We remained a day or part of a day; ask those who enumerate."* He will say, *"You stayed not but a little- if only you had known. Then did you think that We created you uselessly and that to Us you would not be returned?"}* [*Al-Mu'minūn*, 23:112-116]

﴿ وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ يُقْسِمُ الْمُجْرِمُونَ مَا لَبِثُوا غَيْرَ سَاعَةٍ كَذَلِكَ كَانُوا يُؤْفَكُونَ ﴾

[الرؤم: 55]

Allāh, Exalted be He, also says (what means): *{And the Day the Hour appears the criminals will swear they had remained but an hour. Thus they were deluded.}* [*Ar-Rūm*, 30:55]

Time is life. *Al-Hasan Al-Baṣrī*, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, elaborated on this concept of time saying: "O son of Adam, indeed you are nothing but a makeup of a few days... whenever a day perishes a part of you perishes too." Thus, the wise one is one who is conscious of his time and utilizes it in the best possible manner, refusing to postpone today's duties till tomorrow.

Secondly: Lost time cannot be recovered, once it goes, it never comes back.

Whatever goes by thereof does not return and cannot be compensated. Every day, hour, or moment that passes cannot be regained. This meaning was expressed by *Al-Hasan Al-Baṣrī*, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, when he said: "No day starts without it calling out to man and saying: 'O son of Adam! I am a new creation, and in the future I will bear witness to what you do within me, so take advantage of me. Beware, once I pass, I will never return.'" In this regard, a rhetorician also said: "Three things when gone, they never

return: time, beauty and youth.”

Therefore, a wise person is the one who is not undutiful to his day. Yes, there are people who are undutiful to their day. A sage man once said: “The one who lets his day pass without having fulfilled a right, performed a duty, set firm his glory, gained praise, founded a good thing, learnt knowledge, then he is undutiful to his day, and unjust to himself.” [*Al-Māwardī*]

Thirdly: little time weighs heavily on the balance according to *Allāh*

Allāh has scales with which He attaches value to things. One of those things that is valuable and has a great status according to *Allāh*, is time. One single minute may weigh heavily on the balance of good deeds. It may elevate one’s status and erase his sins and misdeeds. Indeed, every minute of a person’s life carries the potential to elevate his own status. However, one wonders how many minutes one wastes in his current short life! How many days, months and years!

O Slaves of *Allāh*! We should contemplate the texts of the Holy Quran in order to be aware of the value of every moment in our lives. For instance, *Allāh* accepts the repentance of His slaves immediately. It does not take so much time to repent to *Allāh*; it takes just a moment. Once one repents sincerely, *Allāh* accepts his repentance. Then, the balance of deeds changes in just a moment as *Allāh* replaces one’s sins with rewards.

﴿وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَدْعُونَ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ وَلَا يَقْتُلُونَ النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَلَا يَزْنُونَ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ يَلْقَ أَثَامًا ﴿٦٨﴾ يُضْعَفُ لَهُ الْعَذَابُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَيَخْلُدُ فِيهِ مُهَانًا ﴿٦٩﴾ إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا فَأُولَئِكَ يُبَدِّلُ اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ حَسَنَاتٍ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ﴿٧٠﴾﴾ [الفرقان: 68-70]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {*And those who do not invoke with God another deity or kill the soul which God has forbidden [to be killed], except by right, and do not commit unlawful sexual intercourse.*

And whoever should do that will meet a penalty. Multiplied for him is the punishment on the Day of Resurrection, and he will abide therein humiliated -. Except for those who repent, believe and do righteous work. For them God will replace their evil deeds with good. And ever is God Forgiving and Merciful. } [Al-Furqān 25: 68-70]

The following *Ḥadīth* that is cited in *Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī* elaborates on the meaning of the previous verses. *Al-Barā'*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that a man whose face was covered with an iron mask (i.e. clad in armor) came to the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, and said: “O *Allāh*’s Messenger! Shall I fight or convert to Islam first?” The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**You must convert to Islam first, and then fight.**” So he converted to Islam, and was martyred. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**He did a little work, but earnt a great reward.**”

A Muslim should strive to make the most of each minute. A few minutes may weigh heavily on the balance of good deeds. This is clarified in a *Ḥadīth* that was cited in the *Musnad* of *Imām Aḥmad*, that when the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**Whoever recites Sūrah Al-Ikhlās until its end 10 times, Allāh will build for him a palace in Paradise.**” *Umar*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, asked, “If so, shall we multiply our palaces O Messenger of *Allāh*?” He replied, “**Allāh will give you much more and better in return for what you have done.**”⁽⁷³⁾ That means whoever reads it twenty times, *Allāh* will build for him two palaces.

Reciting *Dhikr* after every obligatory prayer is a small act that brings great rewards in very little time. This is indicated in a *Ḥadīth* that is cited in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* and narrated by *Abū Hurayrah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**Whoever says: ‘Subḥānallāh (Glory be to Allāh)’**

(73) *Aḥmad*.

thirty-three times, ‘*Allāhu akbar (Allāh is the Greatest)*’ thirty-three times, ‘*Al-hamdu lillāh (Praise be to Allāh)*’ thirty-three times, and seals the hundred with: ‘*Lā ilāha illallāh, waḥdahu lā sharīka lah, laḥul mulku wa laḥul hamdu, wa huwa ‘ala kulli shay’in qadīr* (None has the right to be worshipped but Allāh. He is the Only One and has no partners. For Him is the Kingdom and all the praises are due for Him. He is over all things Competent)’ after every prayer, his sins will be forgiven even if they are as abundant as the foam of the sea.”

Fourthly: Its quick passage

Time passes quickly. Especially nowadays, years go by as if they are months; a month goes by as if it is a week; a week goes by as if it is a single day, and a day goes by as if it is a flare of fire. Thus, the wise one is one who strives to benefit from each moment in his life.

﴿وَيَوْمَ يَحْشُرُهُمْ كَأَن لَّمْ يَلْبَثُوا إِلَّا سَاعَةً مِّنَ النَّهَارِ يَتَعَارَفُونَ بَيْنَهُمْ قَدْ خَسِرَ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِلِقَاءِ اللَّهِ وَمَا كَانُوا مُهْتَدِينَ﴾ ﴿٤٥﴾ [يونس: 45]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {And on the Day when He will gather them, [it will be] as if they had not remained [in the world] but for an hour of the day, [and] they will know each other. Those will have lost who denied the meeting with God and were not guided.} [Yūnus, 10:45]

﴿كَأَنَّهُمْ يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَ مَا يُوعَدُونَ لَمْ يَلْبَثُوا إِلَّا سَاعَةً مِّن نَّهَارٍ بَلَّغٌ فَمَهْلِكُ إِلَّآ الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقُونَ﴾ ﴿٣٥﴾ [الأحقاف: 35]

Allāh, Exalted be He, aslo says (what means): {It will be - on the Day they see that which they are promised – as though they had not remained [in the world] except an hour of a day.} [Al-Aḥqāf, 46:35]

﴿كَانَ يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَهَا لَمْ يَلْبَسُوا إِلَّا عَشِيَّةً أَوْ صُحْحًا﴾ [النّازعات: 46]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): **{It will be, on the Day they see it, as though they had not remained [in the world] except for an afternoon or a morning thereof.}** [*An-Nāzi'āt*, 79:46]

Both the Quran and the Sunnah enjoin Muslims to be conscious of time. We are reminded that life in this world is nothing but temporary. Thus, the winner is the one who makes use of his time wisely to increase his faith, and thus attain success, especially eternal success in the Hereafter, while the loser is the one who wastes his time or spends it in vain.

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said the truth when he said:

“There are two blessings that many people fail to make the most of: good health and free time.”

Ḥadīth no. 14

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “The first step of this nation on the path to righteousness is certitude (*Yaqīn*).”

Dear Muslims, certitude is the essential provision of the righteous and the ultimate motive for giving and sacrifice. It is one of the great secrets of the human soul and sources of spiritual illumination, urging the pious to give more and perform good deeds. It eradicates satanic whisperings, doubts, and uncertainty. Therefore, it is the very essence of perfect faith. *Ibn Mas‘ūd*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, said: “Certitude is perfect faith.”⁽⁷⁴⁾ *As-Sa‘dī*, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, said: “Certitude denotes (the faith founded on) perfect and firm knowledge that leaves no room for doubts, and accordingly results in doing good.”⁽⁷⁵⁾ The highest level of knowledge is an unwavering certitude.

Aḥmad ibn ‘Āṣim Al-Anṭākī, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, defined certitude as follows: “The smallest share of certitude eradicates the traces of doubts from the heart, and the smallest share of doubt eradicates certitude from the heart!”⁽⁷⁶⁾

Moreover, *Al-Ḥasan*, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, said: “By means of certitude, Paradise can be attained, Hellfire can be escaped, religious obligations can be observed, and upholding the truth can be endured.”⁽⁷⁷⁾

Embracing certitude is an act of worship performed by the heart. In fact, it is one of the greatest and most rewardable acts of worship required of a Muslim. It yields abundant rewards and abounds in great merits and virtues.

Dear fellow Muslims, we shall carry on with our series “Aphoristic Speech of Prophet *Muḥammad*”. In this *Khuṭbah*, we shall discuss this great *Ḥadīth* about certitude.

(74) *Al-Bukhārī*, *Aṭ-Ṭabrānī* and *Al-Bayhaqī*

(75) *Tafsīr As-Sa‘dī*.

(76) *Al-Bayhaqī* in *Az-Zuhd Al-Kabīr*.

(77) *Ibn Al-Mubārak*, *Aḥmad* and *Ibn Abī Ad-Dunyā*.

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**The first step of this nation on the path to righteousness is certitude (*Yaqīn*)...**”⁽⁷⁸⁾

There is no doubt that certitude must be translated into action; settling for harboring certitude without acting upon it (in terms of abiding by the divine commands, observing religious obligations, and avoiding prohibitions) renders it worthless and yields no good.

﴿الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَهُمْ بِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ﴾ [النمل: ٣]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{Who establish prayer and give Zakāh, and of the Hereafter they are certain [in faith].}* [An-Naml, 27:3]

Only when a Muslim acts upon the certitude harbored within his heart, can he earn Paradise.

One of the righteous predecessors named *Ḥaywah*, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, used to spend all his annual allowances in charity. One year, he received 60 Dinars and spent them all in charity before even reaching his house. Every time he did so, he would go home to find the exact amount he spent in charity below his pillow and even more! This was because he used to offer the charity with a heart reassured with genuine *Yaqīn*.

﴿قُلْ إِنَّ رَبِّي يَبْسُطُ الرِّزْقَ لِمَن يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ وَيَقْدِرُ لَهُ، وَمَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَهُوَ يُخْلِفُهُ، وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الرَّزُقِينَ﴾ [سبأ: 39]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{Say, “Indeed, my Lord extends provision for whom He wills of His servants and restricts [it] for him. But whatever thing you spend [in His cause] - He will compensate it; and He is the best of providers.”}* [Saba’, 34:39]

Ḥaywah’s cousin heard of it and decided to follow his example. He spent all his yearly allowance in charity and then went home and looked for

(78) *Aḥmad, Ibn Abī Ad-Dunyā, Aṭ-Ṭabrānī and Al-Bayhaqī.*

the money below his pillow, but found nothing. He went to *Haywah* and exclaimed, “I do not understand! I did exactly like you, but I did not find the same results!” *Haywah* explained: “I acted out of firm certitude in *Allāh*, Exalted be He, whereas you were testing your Lord! It is not the same.”⁽⁷⁹⁾

Ash-Shāfiʿī, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, composed the following poem (what means): “When it comes to my provision, I rely exclusively upon *Allāh*, Exalted be He, my Creator. And I know with certainty that He will undoubtedly provide for me. Whatever is decreed for me, will never pass me by, even if it were to be in the depths of the sea. *Allāh*, Exalted be He, will bring it forth by His Grace, even if I were to remain silent over it. So, what can a soul feel sorrow over, when the Most Merciful has set the provisions of the creation?”

The essence of certitude is to have perfect and firm knowledge in *Allāh*, Exalted be He, and the divine revelation that reached us (the Quran and Sunnah).

Like any other act of worship, certitude yields abundant rewards and has great merits and virtues.

The following lines shall shed light on the fruits and merits of certitude.

First: whoever attains the refined status of certitude is rewarded with the strength of faith. Verily, certitude is indicative of the strong faith harbored within one’s heart. Let us ponder on the following great *Ḥadīth* cited by *Al-Albānī*, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him. It was also cited by many *Ḥadīth* scholars. Although its authenticity is questioned by *Ḥadīth* scholars, *Al-Albānī*, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, investigated it later in his life and classified it as *Ḥasan* (sound)⁽⁸⁰⁾. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, once asked the Companions: “**Whose faith amongst the various creations astounds you?**” They [the Companions] replied, “The Angels” He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, exclaimed:

(79) *Siyar A’lām An-Nubalā’*.

(80) See *As-Silsilah Aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah*, and *Al-‘Allāmah Al-Albānī* by Muḥammad Ḥasan *Ash-Shaykh*.

“The Angels? Why would not they believe when they are with their Lord!” They [then] said, “The Prophets.” He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said, “The Prophets receive divine revelation; how would not they believe?” They [then] said, “[Us] the Companions.” He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said, “How could you not believe, when I am with you? No! The most astounding of faith is that of those who shall come after you, who will find Books which have revelation written in them [the Quran], and they will believe in it, and obey and follow it. They are the ones whose faith is truly astounding.”⁽⁸¹⁾

Those people whose faith is truly astonishing are the ones who believe in the divine Book communicated to them without having seen or met the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him. They receive the teachings and legislations delineated in the Quran and Sunnah and abide by them.

When they are enjoined to give up dealing in interest, they comply with the divine command.

﴿وَأَحَلَّ اللَّهُ الْبَيْعَ وَحَرَّمَ الرِّبَا﴾ [البقرة: ٢٧٥]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {*But Allāh has permitted trade and has forbidden interest.*} [Al-Baqarah, 2:275]

When they are commanded to give up adultery and fornication, they obey.

﴿وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا الزِّنَى﴾ [الإسراء: ٣٢]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {*And do not approach unlawful sexual intercourse.*} [Al-Isrā', 17:32]

When they are asked to give up backbiting, they abide by the command.

﴿وَلَا يَغْتَب بَّعْضُكُم بَعْضًا﴾ [الحجرات: 12]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {*And do not spy or backbite each other.*} [Al-Hujurat, 49:12]

When they are enjoined to establish the prayer, they comply.

(81) Al-Bazzār, Al-Lālakā'ī, and Al-Bayhaqī.

﴿وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ﴾ [البقرة: ٤٣]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {**And establish prayer.**} [*Al-Baqarah*, 2:43]

Although they have never met the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, or heard such commands from him directly, they willfully abide by the commands that have reached them through divine revelation (Quran and Sunnah). They choose to believe in them with certainty and act upon them.

Second: embracing certitude is one of the greatest and most rewardable good deeds.

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, was once asked: “Which deed is best?” He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Faith that is devoid of all traces of doubt, *Jihād* in which there is no *Ghulūl* (stealing the spoils of war), and accepted Hajj.”**⁽⁸²⁾

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, taught us that the greatest and most rewardable good deeds are harboring firm faith that is devoid of doubts, participating in *Jihād* while refraining from stealing the spoils of war, and performing an accepted Hajj (while abstaining from sexual intercourse and sins).

It is required of a Muslim to display an unwavering conviction of the truth of Islam. Is not acceptable that a Muslim should ever say, even in jest, “We cannot know with certainty that we (Muslims) are following the true religion of *Allāh* and the ones adhering to the Truth!” Sadly, some people lack certitude and conviction in their religion.

Third: those who attain certitude in faith as enjoined relish genuine supremacy, leadership and empowerment on Earth.

They learned through the Quran that certitude is the path to genuine supremacy, leadership and empowerment on earth.

(82) *Aḥmad* and *An-Nasā’ī*.

﴿وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْهُمْ أَيْمَةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا لَمَّا صَبَرُوا وَكَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يُوقِنُونَ﴾ [السجدة: ٢٤]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{And We made from among them leaders guiding by Our command when they were patient and [when] they were certain of Our signs.}* [As-Sadjah, 32:24]

The fourth fruit that certitude yields is having one's supplications answered. When a Muslim implores his Lord with a heart abounding in certitude in Him and His generosity, his supplications will more likely be answered. One should supplicate *Allāh*, Exalted be He, with certainty that He will answer his supplications and fulfill his wishes.

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “Supplicate to *Allāh* while being certain of being answered, and know that *Allāh* does not respond to a supplication from a heart of someone who is heedless and unmindful.”⁽⁸³⁾

The fifth fruit of certitude is patience and aspiration for the rewards of *Allāh*, Exalted be He. A heart that is filled with certitude is more able to endure hardships and aspire to the rewards of *Allāh*, Exalted be He, having firm conviction in the abundant rewards the endurance of calamities yields.

﴿مَا أَصَابَ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يُؤْمِنْ بِاللَّهِ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ قَلْبَهُ، وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ﴾ [التغابن: ١١]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{No disaster strikes except by permission of Allāh. And whoever believes in Allāh - He will guide his heart. And Allāh is Knowing of all things.}* [At-Taghābun, 64:11]

Verily, when certitude settles within the heart and it takes root therein, it begets immense happiness.

The sixth fruit is that certitude guides a person to giving the correct answers to the questions in his grave. We implore *Allāh*, Exalted be He, to widen our graves. As a dead person - Muslim or non-Muslim - is buried, he is required

(83) *At-Tirmidhī*.

to answer three questions. Only the believers whose hearts are reassured with certitude can answer these questions correctly. However, those whose hearts are filled with doubt shall not be guided to answer them correctly.

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Indeed I have been inspired to know that you will be put to trial in your graves, and this trial will be similar/close to (the sub narrator is not sure which expression was used) the trial of *Ad-Dajjāl*. You will be asked, ‘What do you know about this man (Prophet Muḥammad)?’ The faithful believer (whose heart is reassured with certitude) will reply, ‘He is *Muḥammad*, the Messenger of Allāh, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, who had come to us with clear proofs and guidance, and so we accepted his teachings and followed him.’ The angels will then say to him, ‘Sleep in peace, as we have known that you believed in him with certainty.’ On the other hand, a hypocrite or doubtful person will reply, ‘I do not know, but I heard the people saying something, and so I said it’.** ^{”(84)}

The hearts of those hypocrites were devoid of certitude. They lacked firm conviction in the Messenger of *Allāh*, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, whilst only those who attained certitude will be able to answer the questions correctly.

The seventh fruit: The people of certitude are the people of Paradise. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Go and give glad tidings of Paradise to anyone who testifies that there is no deity worthy of worship save *Allāh*, being whole-heartedly certain of it.** ^{”(85)}

Certitude is one of the seven perquisites of the testimony of faith. It is required of a Muslim to have firm conviction and certitude in the testimony of faith, believing with certainty that there is no deity worthy of worship save *Allāh*. A believer who harbors such a firm conviction and certitude in his heart earns the glad tidings of Paradise. There is no doubt that certitude is one of the greatest and most rewardable acts of worship performed by the heart.

We implore *Allāh*, Exalted be He, to grant us this certitude.

(84) *Al-Bukhārī and Muslim.*

(85) *Muslim.*

Ḥadīth no. 15

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “Undoubtedly, sustenance pursues the servant (to which it is predestined) in the same way as death pursues him (i.e. both shall inevitably reach him).”

There is no doubt that the pursuit of sustenance is one of the most important matters that concern people and preoccupy their minds. It consumes people’s thought, energy, effort, and time. The pursuit of sustenance, in many of its different forms, not only preoccupies people; rather, it concerns all the creatures.

This pursuit may even drive some to go beyond limits and commit sinful acts in order to secure their livelihood and sustenance. During such a quest, some may be lured into theft, murder, or committing other sinful acts. Moreover, some may be preoccupied with this pursuit from fulfilling the very purpose for which man was created (i.e. worship *Allāh*, Exalted be He, populate the earth, and shoulder his duties as a vicegerent on it). This is why *Allāh*, Exalted be He, says (what means):

﴿وَفِي السَّمَاءِ رِزْقُكُمْ وَمَا تُوعَدُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾ فَوَرَبِّ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِنَّهُ لَحَقُّ مِثْلَ مَا أَنْتُمْ نَاطِقُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾﴾ [الذاريات: 22-23]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{And in the heaven is your provision and whatever you are promised. *Then by the Lord of the heaven and earth, indeed, it is truth - just as [sure as] it is that you are speaking.}* [*Adh-Dhāriyāt*, 51:22-23]

Allāh, Exalted be He, provides us with various forms of sustenance.

﴿وَأِنْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا عِنْدَنَا خَزَائِنُهُ وَمَا نُنزِلُهُ إِلَّا بِإِقْدَارٍ مَعْلُومٍ﴾ [الحجر: 21]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{And there is not a thing but that with Us are its depositories, and We do not send it down except according to a known measure.}* [Al-Hijr, 15:21]

Allāh, Exalted be He, requires us to devote ourselves to worship and promises to grant us sustenance.

﴿وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ ﴿٥٦﴾ مَا أُرِيدُ مِنْهُمْ مِنْ رِزْقٍ وَمَا أُرِيدُ أَنْ يُطْعَمُوا ﴿٥٧﴾ إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الرَّزَّاقُ ذُو الْقُوَّةِ الْمَتِينُ ﴿٥٨﴾﴾ [الذاريات: 56-58]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{And I did not create the Jinn and mankind except to worship Me. *I do not want from them any provision, nor do I want them to feed Me. * Indeed, it is Allāh who is the [continual] Provider, the firm possessor of strength.}* [Adh-Dhāriyāt 51:56-58]

In fact, Allāh, Exalted be He, provides sustenance to all creation.

﴿وَكَايْنٍ مِّنْ دَابَّةٍ لَّا تَحْمِلُ رِزْقَهَا اللَّهُ يَرْزُقُهَا وَإِيَّاكُمْ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ﴾ [العنكبوت: 60]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{And how many a creature carries not its [own] provision. Allāh provides for it and for you. And He is the Hearing, the Knowing.}* [Al-'Ankabūt 29:60]

He confers sustenance to whomever He wills, whenever He wills.

﴿قُلْ إِنْ رَبِّي يَبْسُطُ الرِّزْقَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَقْدِرُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾﴾ [سبأ: 36]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{Say, "Indeed, my Lord extends provision for whom He wills and restricts [it], but most of the people do not know."}* [Saba' 34:36]

This is why the *Ḥadīth* being discussed in this *Khuṭbah* in our series

“Aphoristic Speech of Prophet *Muḥammad*, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him” underlined that sustenance pursues man in the same way as death does.

It has been narrated on the authority of *Abū Ad-Dardā’*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Undoubtedly, sustenance pursues the servant of *Allāh* (to which it is predestined) in the same way as death pursues him (i.e. both shall inevitably reach him).”**⁽⁸⁶⁾

The *Ḥadīth* highlights that sustenance, which we keenly pursue, actually pursues us, and will inevitably reach us. This means that no person shall depart the worldly life before receiving the sustenance decreed for him in full. It will certainly reach him as inevitably as death shall befall him.

As stated above, the pursuit of sustenance is one of the very important concerns that preoccupy people’s minds.

Allāh, Exalted be He, has issued many keys to unlock sustenance, some of which are the following:

First: obedience to *Allāh*, Exalted be He. There is no doubt that obedience to *Allāh*, Exalted be He, brings along sustenance. *Ibn Al-Qayyim*, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, wrote: “*‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, (who was nicknamed *Ḥabr Al-Ummah* (the most knowledgeable scholar of the Muslim nation) and *Tarjumān Al-Qurān* (the one endowed with immense knowledge on Quranic interpretation)), said: “Verily, righteous deeds brighten the face, enlighten the heart, increase sustenance, strengthen the body, and foster love for their doer in the hearts of the creation. On the contrary, evil deeds blacken the face, darken the heart, weaken the body, decrease sustenance, and sow hatred for their doer in the hearts of the creation.” [*Madārij As-Sālikīn*]

(86) *Al-Bazzār, Ibn Ḥibbān* in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* and *Al-Bayhaqī*

Performing righteous deeds and acts of obedience to *Allāh* begets abundant sustenance.

﴿وَأْمُرْ أَهْلَكَ بِالصَّلَاةِ وَاصْطَبِرْ عَلَيْهَا لَا نَسْأَلُكَ رِزْقًا نَحْنُ نَرْزُقُكَ وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلتَّقْوَى﴾

[طه: 132]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{And enjoin prayer upon your family [and people] and be steadfast therein. We ask you not for provision; We provide for you, and the [best] outcome is for [those off] righteousness.}* [Ta-ha, 20:132]

One of the most important acts of obedience that help in the pursuit of sustenance is establishing the prayer; this means performing the obligatory and voluntary prayers on time as required.

Whoever seeks sustenance should diligently perform acts of obedience to *Allāh* as enjoined.

Second: giving in charity. The more you give in charity, the greater the recompence you shall receive.

﴿وَمَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَهُوَ يُخْلِفُهُ، وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ﴾ [سبا: ٣٩]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{But whatever thing you spend [in His cause] - He will compensate it; and He is the best of providers.}* [Saba', 34:39]

As a Muslim gives in charity and helps those in need, *Allāh*, Exalted be He, generously compensates him, regardless of how insignificant the amount spent in charity may seem. *Allāh*, Exalted be He, said in a *Ḥadīth Qudsī*, “O son of Adam! Spend, and I shall spend on you.” [Al-Bukhārī]

Moreover, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “There is never a day wherein the slaves (of *Allāh*) get up at morning, but that two angels descend and one of them says: ‘O *Allāh*! Compensate

the person who gives (in charity)'; while the other one says, 'O Allāh! Destroy the one who withholds (charity).'" [Al-Bukhārī and Muslim]

Third: due reliance on Allāh, Exalted be He.

﴿ وَمَنْ يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ مَخْرَجًا ﴿٢﴾ وَيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ وَمَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بَلِغٌ أَمْرِهِ قَدْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدْرًا ﴿٣﴾ ﴾

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {*And whoever fears Allāh - He will make for him a way out. * And will provide for him from where he does not expect. And whoever relies upon Allāh - then He is sufficient for him. Indeed, Allāh will accomplish His purpose. Allāh has already set for everything a [decreed] extent.*} [At-Ṭalāq 65:2-3]

It means that Allāh, Exalted be He, shall relieve his distress and agony as compensation.

The Commander of the Believers, 'Umar ibn Al-Khaṭṭāb, may Allāh be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said: "If you were to rely on Allāh as He should be relied on, He would provide for you as He provides for the birds. They set out early in the morning hungry, and return in the evening full." [Aḥmad, At-Tirmidhī, and Ibn Mājah]

Ash-Shāfi'ī, may Allāh have mercy upon him, said (what means): "When it comes to sustenance, I rely upon Allāh, my Creator, knowing with certainty that He will undoubtedly provide for me. Whatever is in my due will not pass me by, even if it were to be in the depths of the sea. Allāh, Exalted be He, will bring it forth by His Grace, even if I were to remain silent about it (i.e. do not request it). So, what can a soul feel sorrow over, when the Most Merciful has decreed the sustenance of all creation?"

Fourth: seeking forgiveness of Allāh, Exalted be He.

It is worth highlighting that when a Muslim seeks the forgiveness of his Lord, he should do so while having a firm conviction that *Allāh*, Exalted be He, would compensate him by providing him with sustenance as promised.

﴿وَيَقَوْمٌ أَسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّكُمْ ثُمَّ تُوبُوا إِلَيْهِ يُرْسِلِ السَّمَاءَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِدْرَارًا وَيَزِدْكُمْ قُوَّةً إِلَىٰ قُوَّتِكُمْ وَلَا تَتَوَلَّوْا جُنُومًا﴾ [هود: 52]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{And O my people, ask forgiveness of your Lord and then repent to Him. He will send [rain from] the sky upon you in showers and increase you in strength [added] to your strength. And do not turn away, [being] criminals.}* [Hūd 11:52]

When a man came to *Al-Ḥasan Al-Baṣrī*, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, and complained to him about drought, saying, “The sky has held back the rain from us!” He, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, replied: “Seek forgiveness of *Allāh*, Exalted be He.” Another person came to him and complained of poverty. He, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, advised: “Seek forgiveness of *Allāh*, Exalted be He.” Then, another person came to him and complained, “My wife cannot bear children.” He replied: “Seek forgiveness of *Allāh*, Exalted be He.” People exclaimed, “How come every time a person came to you complaining about something different, you instruct him to seek the forgiveness of *Allāh*, Exalted be He?” *Al-Ḥasan Al-Baṣri*, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, explained: “Have you not read the statement of *Allāh*?”

﴿فَقُلْتُ اسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّكُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ غَفَّارًا ﴿١٠﴾ يُرْسِلِ السَّمَاءَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِدْرَارًا ﴿١١﴾ وَيُمِدْكُمْ بِأَمْوَالٍ وَبَنِينَ وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ جَنَّاتٍ وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ أَنْهَارًا﴾ [نوح: 10-12]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{And I said, ‘Ask forgiveness of your Lord. Indeed, He is ever a Perpetual Forgiver.* He will send [rain from] the sky upon you in [continuing] showers* And give you increase in wealth and children and provide for you gardens and provide for you*

rivers. } [Nūh, 71:10-12]⁽⁸⁷⁾

Fifth: Providing for the weak, poor, and those in need. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “*You do not gain any victory nor livelihood except through (the blessings and invocations of) the poor amongst you.*” [Al-Bukhārī]

The *Ḥadīth* means that tending to the needs of the weak and those in need is a gateway to gaining victory and livelihood.

It has been narrated that there were two brothers during the lifetime of the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, one of whom regularly used to come to the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, in order to seek knowledge, while the other used to work and earn a living to provide for both of them. Once, the latter complained to the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, about the former (for not earning his living). He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, replied: “*Perhaps you are being blessed with sustenance because of him.*” [At-Tirmidhī]

O blessed slave of *Allāh*! Bear in mind that when you pay for the education of the seekers of knowledge who are in need, you will be compensated with abundant sustenance in return. It is worth noting though, that this is not a call for unemployment and laziness. The seeker of knowledge, who devotes himself to seeking knowledge and it preoccupies him from earning a livelihood, is actually serving the broader Muslim community. His commendable efforts benefit all Muslims in the present and future.

Sixth, supplication. Since *Allāh*, Exalted be He, is the One providing us with sustenance, it is only logical that we tirelessly implore Him to bless us with abundant provision, following the example of Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him.

It has been narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon

(87) See *Tafsīr Al-Qurṭubī*.

him, used to invoke *Allāh*, Exalted be He, saying: **“O Allāh, I seek refuge with You from poverty, deprivation and abasement, and I seek refuge with You lest I cause or suffer wrong.”**⁽⁸⁸⁾

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, frequently sought refuge with *Allāh*, Exalted be He, from poverty. It has been narrated that a man came to the Caliph ‘*Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, complaining about his financial troubles and debts. ‘*Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, said: “Shall I not teach you the words that Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, taught me (to help you in this regard)? [Say:] ‘O *Allāh*! Save me from what is unlawful, and sustain me with what is lawful; and through Your Grace, make me in no need of others.’ Even if your debts are as huge as high mountains, *Allāh* will relive you of them.”⁽⁸⁹⁾

O you who are burdened with debts! Let us recite this great supplication with hearts reassured with firm conviction that *Allāh*, Exalted be He, shall relieve our burdens and pay off our debts as huge as they may be!

As we have learned, sustenance pursues man just as death pursues him, and shall inevitably reach him. We should believe with certainty that every person shall receive whatever sustenance has been decreed for him in this worldly life. Nonetheless, we are required to work hard and exert efforts to obtain it. These six ‘keys’ are mere examples of the many means through which we can render our commendable pursuit of sustenance fruitful.

(88) *Aḥmad*, *Abū Dāwūd*, *An-Nasā’ī*, and *Ibn Mājah*.

(89) *Aḥmad* and *At-Tirmidhī*.

Ḥadīth no. 16

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “*Allāh* does not accept any deed except that which is sincerely dedicated to Him, and with which His pleasure is sought.”

A Muslim is required to devote his deeds exclusively and sincerely to *Allāh*, Exalted be He. There are many religious texts in the Quran and Sunnah to this effect. In fact, this is one of the fundamental beliefs of Islam.

﴿إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ فَاعْبُدِ اللَّهَ مُخْلِصًا لَهُ الدِّينَ ﴿٢﴾ أَلَا لِلَّهِ الدِّينُ الْخَالِصُ ﴿٣﴾﴾ [الزمر: 2-3]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {*Indeed, We have sent down to you the Book, [O Muḥammad], in truth. So worship Allāh, [being] sincere to Him in religion. * Unquestionably, for Allāh is the pure religion (i.e. sincere devotion and worship).*} [Az-Zumar, 39:2-3]

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said in a *Ḥadīth Qudsī*: “*Allāh* says: ‘I am the One Who is most independent and in no need of a partner. If anyone does a deed in which he associates anyone else with Me, I shall abandon him to what he associates with Me’” [Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim]

Ikhlāṣ (the sincere devotion of worship and intention exclusively to *Allāh*, Exalted be He) is extremely meritorious and helps in perfecting one’s acts of worship, purifying them from any traces of ostentation, thereby making them worthy of being accepted by *Allāh*. One of the righteous predecessors said: “How many are those small actions which are made great by the intentions behind them! And how many are those great actions that become

trivial due to the intentions behind them!”⁽⁹⁰⁾

Devotion of deeds and intentions exclusively and sincerely to *Allāh*, Exalted be He, entails exercising self-restraint and self-discipline. A Muslim is required to discipline himself and refrain from the gratification of the soul in its desire to achieve anything from other than *Allāh*, aspiring for nothing but the rewards of *Allāh*, Exalted be He. *Sufyān Ath-Thawrī*, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, said: “I have never attempted to discipline something more difficult than my own self (i.e. sometimes it obeys, and other times it rebels).”⁽⁹¹⁾

In this *Khuṭbah*, we shall carry on with our series “Aphoristic Speech of Prophet *Muḥammad*” and address the above cited *Ḥadīth*.

It is a great *Ḥadīth* that can help us save our precious time and efforts, and guide us to the way to devote ourselves to a single, focused direction.

It has been reported by *Abū ‘Umāmah Al-Bāhilitī*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “*Allāh* does not accept any deed except that which is sincerely dedicated to Him, and through which His pleasure is sought.” [*An-Nasā’ī*]

Pondering over this *Ḥadīth*, a Muslim comes to realize that he should be wise enough not to devote any of his deeds or intentions to other than *Allāh*, Exalted be He, because they will simply be rejected. *Allāh*, Exalted be He, accepts only the good deeds that are exclusively and sincerely dedicated to Him. Therefore, a wise Muslim should not waste his precious time and effort in carrying out good deeds if he does not devote them exclusively and sincerely to *Allāh*, Exalted be He.

The following lines shall shed light on the story behind our *Ḥadīth*. *Abū Umāmah Al-Bāhilitī*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that a man

(90) *Iḥyā’ ‘Ulūm Ad-Dīn*.

(91) *Abū Nu‘aym in Ḥilyat Al-Awliyā’*.

came to the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, and said: ‘What do you think of a man who fights, seeking rewards and fame - what will he receive?’ The Messenger of *Allāh*, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **‘He will not receive anything.’** The man repeated it thrice, and the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said to him each time: **‘He will not receive anything.’** Then, he, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **‘Allāh does not accept any deed except that which is sincerely dedicated to Him and through which His pleasure is sought.’**”

Verily, *Ikhhlāṣ* is a lofty station and one of the great acts of worship. Whoever aspires to attaining such a station should contemplate the means delineated below to accomplish this objective and carry out that great act of worship.

First: you should keenly seek the help of *Allāh*, Exalted be He, and devotedly implore Him to bless you with *Ikhhlāṣ*. The heart is the abode of *Ikhhlāṣ*. Changeability is an intrinsic characteristic of the heart: the states of the heart naturally fluctuate between good and evil.

﴿ وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمْ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَاخِرِينَ ﴾ [غافر: 60]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{And your Lord says, “Call upon Me; I will respond to you.” Indeed, those who disdain My worship will enter Hell [rendered] contemptible.}* [Ghāfir, 40:60]

Moreover, it has been narrated on the authority of *Anas*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, used to say: *“O Changer of the hearts! Make my heart firm upon Your religion.”* [At-Tirmidhī and Aḥmad]

It should be highlighted though, that this does not necessarily mean that a person would abandon the prayer or fasting in their totality or worship other

than *Allāh*, Exalted be He. However, the changeable nature of the heart could mean that a person may devote his good deeds (charity, for instance,) to other than *Allāh*, Exalted be He, aspiring to people's admiration and praise rather than dedicating his deeds exclusively and sincerely to *Allāh*, Exalted be He.

Abū Mūsa Al-Ash'arī, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, once delivered a speech and said: **“O people! Beware of Shirk (associating partners with Allāh, Exalted be He, in worship), for it is subtler [in creeping into the heart] than the footsteps of an ant.”**

The Companions exclaimed, “O Messenger of *Allāh*! How can we beware of it when it is more subtle than the footsteps of an ant?” Thereupon, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, explained, guiding them to the greatest means to attain the noble objective of *Ikhhlās*, namely, seeking the help of *Allāh*, Exalted be He. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, instructed: **“Say, ‘O Allāh! We seek refuge with You from knowingly associating anything with You, and we seek Your forgiveness for that which we do unknowingly.’”** [*Aḥmad* and *Ibn Abī Shaybah*]

Thus, we come to know that the first means to attain such a refined status is to seek the help of *Allāh*, Exalted be He.

Second: keenly performing the obligatory acts of worship as enjoined, because as Satan detects our keenness on devoting our intentions and actions exclusively to *Allāh*, Exalted be He, and avoiding *Shirk*, he strives to drive us to give up the religious obligations and righteous deeds under the pretext of fearing to fall into the abyss of ostentation. Accordingly, a Muslim should devotedly perform the obligatory acts of worship.

❁ لَا خَيْرَ فِي كَثِيرٍ مِّن نَّجْوَاهُمْ إِلَّا مَنَ أَمَرَ بِصَدَقَةٍ أَوْ مَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ إِصْلَاحٍ

بَيْنَ النَّاسِ^ع وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ فَسَوْفَ نُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿﴾
[النساء: 114]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {No good is there in much of their private conversation, except for those who enjoin charity or that which is right or conciliation between people. And whoever does that seeking means to the approval of Allāh - then We are going to give him a great reward.} [An-Nisā', 4:114]

﴿ وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ حُنَفَاءَ وَيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَذَلِكَ دِينُ الْقِيَمَةِ ﴾ [البينة: 5]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {And they were not commanded except to worship Allāh, [being] sincere to Him in religion, inclining to truth, and to establish prayer and to give Zakāh. And that is the correct religion.} [Al-Bayyinah, 95:5]

Third: striving to purify the heart from whatever displeases *Allāh*, Exalted be He, and exercising self-discipline and self-restraint (to avoid ostentation and adhere to *Ikhlaṣ*). This requires hard work and daily practice. The Muslim should resolutely monitor his heart, bearing in mind that the heart is what really counts. It is the spot that *Allāh*, Exalted be He, examines. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, instructed: “**Verily, Allāh, Exalted be He, does not look at your outward appearance nor your wealth; rather, He looks at your heart and your deeds.**” [Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim]

Allāh, Exalted be He, does not judge us according to our outward appearances, clothes, wealth, vehicles, or possessions. Rather, He judges our hearts. Therefore, a wise Muslim should leave no stone unturned in his endeavors to purify his heart from any traces of whatever displeases his Lord, given its changeable nature. It fluctuates constantly and this calls for

meticulous care, continuous self-restraint and self-discipline. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “*The heart of the son of Adam changes more quickly than a pan of rapidly boiling water.*” [*Aḥmad*] Given that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, likened the heart’s changeable nature to a pot of rapidly boiling water in the *Ḥadīth* above, it should urge the Muslim to devote himself to purifying his heart from the traces of *Shirk* or ostentation.

Fourth: Self-restraint and self-discipline.

This means is vital, and I believe it comes second only to seeking the help of *Allāh*, Exalted be He. A Muslim should devotedly train himself to avoid ostentation, refrain from exhausting himself in the pursuit of worldly benefits and gains, and devote his actions and intentions exclusively and sincerely to *Allāh*, Exalted be He. When a Muslim performs righteous deeds, aspiring to win people’s admiration and praise rather than the rewards of *Allāh*, Exalted be He, his efforts and time spent shall be in vain. ‘*Amr ibn ‘Abasah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, said: “On the Day of Judgment, *Allāh*, Exalted be He, shall examine the (deeds performed in the) worldly life; whatever was devoted exclusively and sincerely to Him shall be accepted, and whatever was dedicated to other than Him shall be cast into Hellfire.” [*Ibn Abī ‘Āṣim* and *Al-Bayhaqī*]

This means that a *Khaṭīb* (preacher), *Imām* (leading Muslims in prayer), or *Mu’adh-dhin* (one raising the call to prayer) should not aspire to people’s admiration or any worldly gains. When a Muslim enjoins good and forbids evil or spends in charity, he should not seek thereby to attain worldly gains, or else his righteous deed shall be rejected by *Allāh*, Exalted be He.

﴿مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا وَزِينَتَهَا نُوفِيَ إِلَيْهِمْ أَعْمَلَهُمْ فِيهَا وَهُرِّفَ فِيهَا لَا يُخْسُونَ﴾

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{Whoever desires the life of this world and its adornments - We fully repay them for their deeds therein, and they therein will not be deprived.}* [Hūd, 11:15]

﴿أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَيْسَ لَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ إِلَّا النَّارُ وَحَبِطَ مَا صَنَعُوا فِيهَا وَبِطُلَّ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ﴾ ﴿١٦﴾ [هود: ١٦]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{Those are the ones for whom there is not in the Hereafter but the Hellfire. And lost is what they did therein, and worthless is what they used to do.}* [Hūd, 11:16]

﴿مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْعَاجِلَةَ عَجَلْنَا لَهُ فِيهَا مَا نَشَاءُ لِمَنْ نُرِيدُ ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَا لَهُ جَهَنَّمَ يَصَلُّهَا مَذْمُومًا مَدْحُورًا﴾ ﴿١٨﴾ وَمَنْ أَرَادَ الْآخِرَةَ وَسَعَىٰ لَهَا سَعْيَهَا وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُولَئِكَ كَانَ سَعْيُهُمْ مَشْكُورًا﴾ ﴿١٩﴾ [الإسراء: 18-19]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{Whoever should desire the immediate - We hasten for him from it what We will to whom We intend. Then We have made for him Hellfire, which he will [enter to] burn, censured and banished.* But whoever desires the Hereafter and exerts the effort due to it while he is a believer - it is those whose effort is ever appreciated [by Allāh].}* [Al-Isrā', 17:18-19]

﴿إِنَّمَا نَطْعِمُكُمْ لِرُؤْحَةِ اللَّهِ لَا نُرِيدُ مِنْكُمْ جَزَاءً وَلَا شُكْرًا﴾ ﴿٩﴾ [الإنسان: 9]

Allāh, Exalted be He, also says (what means): *{[Saying], “We feed you only for the countenance of Allāh. We wish not from you reward or gratitude”}*. [Al-Insān, 76:9]

The doer of any good deed may aspire to winning people’s admiration and praise, and this would sadly cause him to be deprived of the rewards they beget! Therefore, a person should not aspire to any material or moral gains when performing righteous deeds, otherwise he shall lose the

relevant rewards.

Shaykhul-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, commented on the previously cited verse no. (79:9), saying: “When the charity giver asks the poor person for supplication or praise in return, this verse also applies to him!” [*Majmū‘ Al-Fatāwā*] This is because the verse specifically highlights that the charitable person must not aspire to anything from the recipient in return. Instead, he should devote his deed exclusively and sincerely to *Allāh*, Exalted be He.

‘Ā’ishah, may *Allāh* be pleased with her, best translated this verse into action. She used to send gifts (charity) to her neighbors and instruct the messenger to deliver the gift, and after he had delivered it, to stand by their door to listen to their praise (asking *Allāh* to reward *‘Ā’ishah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with her, generously for her act of kindness). This was so that she could supplicate to *Allāh* for them in return, to earn equal rewards for the supplications, and preserve the rewards of the charity.” [*An-Nasā’ī* and *Ibn As-Sunnī*]

Al-Ghazālī, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, cited a great story in this regard, and it goes as follows: “A man used to attend the congregational prayers at the mosque regularly for thirty years, always standing in the first row behind the *Imām*. One day, he was late and when he arrived at the mosque, he stood in the second row. He felt shy (minding people’s opinion of him as he stood in the second row for the first time in many years). At that point, he had an epiphany and realized that he had been praying in the first row for thirty years merely to gain people’s admiration rather and not for the sake of *Allāh* as he had thought! Saddened by such a discovery, he made up for all the prayers he had performed in the first row during those thirty years.” [*Ihyā’ ‘Ulūm Ad-Dīn*]

Our great Muslim scholars have instructed: “Deliverance can never be attained except through *Ikhhlās*.”

Fifth: the fifth means to attain the refined status of *Ikhlāṣ* is keenly concealing one’s good deeds. It is becoming of a true believer to conceal his righteous deeds as keenly as he hides his sins.

﴿فَلَا تُزَكُّوْا اَنْفُسَكُمْ هُوَ اَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ اَتَقَى﴾ [النجم: 32]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): **{So, do not claim yourselves to be pure; He is most knowing of who fears Him.}** [*An-Najm*, 53:32]

A Muslim who is duly mindful of his Lord should hide his good deeds and pay no attention to people’s opinions, nor give in to the urge to be seen (i.e. win people’s admiration). What really matters is that *Allāh*, Exalted be He, knows our good deeds, charity, and acts of obedience. We do not need people to know of our righteousness, nor even of our keenness in concealing our good deeds.

﴿هُوَ اَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ اَتَقَى﴾ [النجم: 32]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): **{He is most knowing of who fears Him.}** [*An-Najm*, 53:32]

A wise man was once asked, “Who has attained the status of *Ikhlāṣ*?” He replied, “He who has truly attained the status of *Ikhlāṣ* is the one who keenly conceals his good deeds as eagerly as he conceals his sins.”⁽⁹²⁾

The following *Ḥadīth* best highlights the gravity of ostentation. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“On the Day of Judgment, when *Allāh*, Exalted be He, recompenses people according to their deeds, He shall say to some (who have fallen into the abyss of ostentation), ‘Go to those to whom you had devoted your good deeds in the worldly life and see if you can receive any rewards from them!’”** [*Aḥmad*]

One of the most grievous consequences of ostentation is that its perpetrator

(92) *Tanbīh Al-Ghāfilīn* and *Iḥyā’ ‘Ulūm Ad-Dīn*.

shall not receive any rewards from *Allāh*, Exalted be He, for his good deeds on the Day of Judgment. Rather, *Allāh*, Exalted be He, will order them to go and claim their rewards from those to whom they had dedicated their righteous deeds in the worldly life.

These were examples of the means that can help us attain the refined status of *Ikhhlāṣ*. Availing oneself of such means yields great results in this worldly life and the Hereafter, while disregarding them drives the person away from the path to *Ikhhlāṣ*.

Ḥadīth no.17

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “Whoever adheres to [praiseworthy] silence shall attain salvation.”

There is no doubt that silence is the absent virtue of our time. It is a precious and noble quality in an era full of meaningless noise. Silence involves genuine adornment, prestige, and protection against grave evil. As *Ash-Shāfi* ^ʿ, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, said (what means): “Verily, silence is the best answer to a fool or ignorant. It helps one protect his honor.”

Praiseworthy silence (when speech is unneeded) is indicative of true wisdom. It has been narrated that *Luqmān*, the Wise, said: “In silence lies sheer wisdom; strangely, few people adhere to it.” [*Aḥmad*]

In fact, silence is the path towards safety and salvation, as the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, taught us: “**Whoever adheres to [praiseworthy] silence shall attain salvation.**” [*Aḥmad* and *At-Tirmidhī*]

We shall carry on with our series “Aphoristic Speech of Prophet *Muḥammad*”, contemplating over this concise statement of Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him.

As always, this concise statement abounds in great lessons and meanings. Firstly, it means that refraining from idle talk and adhering to praiseworthy silence when speech is not required, is the path to salvation.

An Arab poet said (what means): “I have learned that eloquence adorns a person; however, silence proves to be the best indicator of true greatness. Words could seal one’s doom; many people wished they had remained silent in certain situations.” [*Ar-Risālah Al-Qushayriyyah*]

Praiseworthy silence brings about great benefits and ushers the Muslim into

the path to safety. Abstaining from sinful speech or actions is praiseworthy and it leads to salvation.

It is true that speaking may be rewardable through reciting *Dhikr*, enjoining good and forbidding evil. Likewise, refraining from evil and wickedness is the way to salvation. How could not it be so, when the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Whoever adheres to [praiseworthy] silence shall attain salvation.”**

It is an invaluable statement, uttered at a time when people knew the true value of speech best and weighed their words accordingly. We today are in dire need of adhering to the virtue of silence. Praiseworthy silence is one of the most meritorious qualities. It has been narrated that *Anas*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, said that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, met *Abū Dharr* and said to him: **‘O *Abū Dharr*! Shall I not inform you of two characteristics which are lightest on your back and heaviest on the scales (easy to perform and yield great rewards)?’** *Abū Dharr*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, answered: ‘Of course O Messenger of *Allāh*!’ He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **‘Good manners and frequent silence; I swear by He in whose Hand is my soul! None has adopted better characteristics than these two.’** [*Al-Bayhaqī*] The version cited by *Ibn Abī ‘Āṣim* in his book *Az-Zuhd* reads, **“I swear by He in whose Hand is my soul! There is no better adornment than these two characteristics.”**

Praiseworthy silence is an outstanding character trait. It is easy and keeps the person away from the grave evils of indulging in sinful speech or actions. On the contrary, unwarranted speech regarding what concerns the speaker and that which does not concern the speaker, overburdens him.

Moreover, praiseworthy silence has been associated with *Imān* (faith). *Abū Hurayrah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“He who truly believes in *Allāh***

and the Last Day, let him either speak good or remain silent.” [*Al-Bukhārī* and *Muslim*]

The keener a person is on adhering to praiseworthy silence, the greater his faith becomes. It should be noted that silence in this context refers to refraining from all evil and immoral talks or actions, and sins in general. Some scholars even encouraged refraining from indulgence in the lawful as well.

A Muslim should abstain from talking about what does not concern him or brings harm upon himself or others.

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“He who truly believes in *Allāh* and the Last Day, let him either speak good or remain silent.”**

Silence in such situations spares a person and others undue blame and harm. *Anas*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, used to say: **“May *Allāh* show mercy to that servant who gives benefit when he speaks, or who is protected through maintaining silence.”** [*Ibn Abī Ad-Dunyā*, *Aṭ-Ṭabarānī* and *Al-Bayhaqī*]

The *Ḥadīth* encourages that one should wisely weigh his words when he speaks. One of the righteous predecessors said: “I could easily count the words I had uttered all week long!” indicating how few they were.

May *Allāh* show mercy to that servant who benefits himself or others when he speaks, or shields himself from undue evil through adhering to praiseworthy silence.

‘*Umar*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, said: “He who laughs too much loses dignity; he who jokes too much is taken lightly; he who does something a great deal becomes known for it; he who speaks a great deal makes mistakes; he who makes many mistakes loses his sense of dignity. Whoever loses his sense of dignity loses his fear of *Allāh*, and whoever loses his fear of *Allāh* is spiritually dead and more deserving of Hellfire.”

Note how the initiation of treading the path to Hellfire has been mentioned as speaking a great deal!

Ibn Rajab, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, wrote: “Some visitors entered upon a Companion on his deathbed, as he was struggling with his terminal illness. Nevertheless, he was cheerful and his face was shining. When they asked him about the secret behind his mood, he explained, “I have no deeds on which I am more confident except for two: I would not speak about what did not concern me, and I kept my heart clean of any ill towards Muslims.” [Jāmi‘ Al-‘Ulūm wal-Ḥikam]

How great these two blessings are!

This Companion explained that the reason behind his cheerfulness at such difficult time was the fact that he found comfort in having two noble qualities, namely, refraining from talking about that which did not concern him, and not bearing any grudges against his fellow Muslims.

Al-Ḥasan, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, said: “O son, when you sit with others, be more diligent to listen than to speak, and learn to listen carefully just as you learn to speak aptly.”⁽⁹³⁾

Do not people learn the art of public speaking and dialogue? Similarly, the art of silence should be learnt as well. The one who fails to master the art of listening can never master the art of speaking.

This gives rise to an important question regarding the means to acquire such a noble quality. The following lines shall shed light on the means to accomplish this objective.

First: pondering over the biographies of the early Muslim generations to learn from them the art of praiseworthy silence.

Simāk, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, reported: “I said to *Jābir ibn*

(93) *Al-Kharā‘iṭī* in *Makārim Al-Akhalāq*.

Samurah, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, “Did you sit with the Messenger of *Allāh*, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him?” *Jābir* said, “Yes; he, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, would observe silence for long periods of time and laugh little.” [*Aḥmad*]

O slaves of *Allāh* who wish to follow in the footsteps of the Messenger of *Allāh*, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him! Bear in mind that he used to observe silence for long periods of time.

As for his close friend *Abū Bakr*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, it has been narrated that ‘*Umar*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, once entered upon the Caliph *Abū Bakr*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, and found him holding on to his tongue. ‘*Umar*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, exclaimed: “What are you doing?” He, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, explained: “It has caused me great trouble! I have heard the Messenger of *Allāh*, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, saying: **“There is not a part of the body except that it complains of the tongue - of its sharpness.”**” [*Al-Bayhaqī*]

This meaning is further supported by the following *Ḥadīth*. *Abū Sa‘īd Al-Khudrī*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that the Messenger of *Allāh*, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“When the son of Adam awakens in the morning, all of his body parts plead with the tongue and they say: ‘Fear *Allāh* concerning us; we are only a part of you (i.e. we follow you). If you remain straight then we shall remain straight, and if you go astray, we shall also go astray.’”** [*At-Tirmidhī* and *Aḥmad*]

The *Ḥadīth* means that all the body parts submissively solicit the tongue every morning to fear *Allāh* regarding them for their destiny is bound to it. This means that were the tongue to adhere to the straight path, the body parts would do the same, and were it to go astray, they would go astray as well. Verily, a Muslim should keenly guard his tongue and celebrate the virtue of praiseworthy silence.

So, let the one who seeks salvation and aspires to acquire such a noble quality, contemplate the biographies of the early Muslim generations.

Second: another means to help one acquire this praiseworthy quality is pondering over the gravity of blameworthy talk and the grave evil that could be incurred due to carelessness in guarding one's tongue.

﴿لَا خَيْرَ فِي كَثِيرٍ مِّن نَّجْوَاهُمْ إِلَّا مَنْ أَمَرَ بِصَدَقَةٍ أَوْ مَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ إِصْلَاحٍ﴾
 بَيِّنَاتُ النَّاسِ ١١٤ ﴿﴾ [النساء: 114]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): **{No good is there in much of their private conversation, except for those who enjoin charity or that which is right or conciliation between people.}** [*An-Nisā'*, 4:114]

Some people talk non-stop, commenting on everything happening around them, expressing criticism or disapproval, nagging, or engaging in backbiting and sinful talks. Thanks to the abundant communication channels available to people nowadays, they can easily talk to others live and their speech is instantly transmitted worldwide, which may incur grave consequences.

As we have learned, the early Muslim generations used to speak only when they believed that talking was needed and would yield benefit. They never spoke merely to satisfy themselves.

It behooves a Muslim to be mindful of whatever he utters and consider the consequences ahead. This is why the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Verily, the majority of the sins committed by the son of Adam originate from the tongue alone.”** [*Aṭ-Ṭabarānī* and *Al-Bayhaqī*]

Let us also contemplate the following *Ḥadīth*. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, once visited a sick Companion of his. Upon entering upon him, he, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, remarked, **“Rejoice O Ka‘b!”** (*Ka‘b*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, was an honorable Companion who attended many battles with the Prophet,

peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him). Ka‘b’s mother, as if she was bidding him the last farewell, compassionately said: “O Ka‘b! Rejoice at the glad tidings of Paradise.” Thereupon, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“O mother of Ka‘b! You can never be certain; perhaps he spoke of that which did not concern him, or he was miserly with something that he could do without.”** [*Ibn Abī Ad-Dunya* and *Aṭ-Ṭabrānī*]

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, drew her attention to the fact that he may have spoken of something that might not have concerned him, and that could be an obstacle between him and Paradise!

If this is the scenario a noble companion could have found himself facing, what would be the case with those of us who speak non-stop, heedless of what concerns them and what does not concern them?

It is therefore appropriate that a Muslim cultivates this noble quality and observes the virtue of praiseworthy silence. He should keenly strive to promote this culture within the Muslim community, in an era characterized by unwarranted speech.

Ḥadīth no. 18

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “Verily, this religion is strong, so proceed within it gently.”

Dear fellow Muslims! The linguistic meaning of the word ‘*ghuluww*’ is: the tendency to exceed the limits of propriety in deeds and speech. In Islam, it means to go beyond the limits of moderation and balance.

Ghuluww (exaggeration/extremism) is indeed an ancient disease whose evil consequences many previous nations suffered from. Those who exaggerate in religion are those who follow their own desires. Thus, *Allāh*, Exalted be He, warned against exaggeration in the religion and against those who adopt it.

﴿يَتَأْهَلُ الْكِتَابَ لَا تَعْلُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ وَلَا تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْحَقَّ﴾ [النساء: 171]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{O People of the Scripture, do not commit excess in your religion or say about Allāh except the truth}* [*An-Nisā*, 4:171]

﴿قُلْ يَتَأْهَلُ الْكِتَابَ لَا تَعْلُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا أَهْوَاءَ قَوْمٍ قَدْ ضَلُّوا مِنْ قَبْلُ وَأَضَلُّوا كَثِيرًا وَضَلُّوا عَنْ سَوَاءِ السَّبِيلِ﴾ [المائدة: 77]

Allāh, Exalted be He, also says (what means): *{Say, “O People of the Scripture, do not exceed limits in your religion beyond the truth and do not follow the inclinations of a people who had gone astray before and misled many and have strayed from the soundness of the way”}*. [*Al-Mā'idah*, 5:77].

In this *khuṭbah*, we shall carry on with our series on “aphoristic speech”

of the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, and discuss the issue of exaggeration/extremism in religion. Thus, we shall contemplate a *Ḥadīth* that was cited in *Musnad Aḥmad* on the authority of *Anas*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “*Verily, this religion is strong, so proceed within it gently.*”

Islam is a great religion, it accommodates everyone. Thus, one should strive to adhere to it and proceed in it gently. The meaning of ‘gentleness’ in this *Ḥadīth* refers to following the example of the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, that is: in moderation, without going to any extremes.

Upon pondering over the Quran and Sunnah texts in this regard, we come to realize that exaggeration in religion is forbidden. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, enjoined his nation to avoid such a quality. This was clarified in his advice to *Ibn ‘Abbās*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, during the pilgrimage, when he intended to pelt the devil. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: ‘*O Ibn ‘Abbās! Collect some pebbles for me,*’ So he picked up seven small pebbles, which the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, placed in his hands and showed them to the Companions, saying: “**Throw something like these,**” (i.e., pick up pebbles of the same size and number), then he said: “**O people! Beware of exaggeration in religious matters, for those who came before you were destroyed because of exaggeration in religious matters.**”⁽⁹⁴⁾ Meaning that whoever exceeds the limits even in choosing the size or number of pebbles used in stoning the devil in pilgrimage, indeed, exaggerates in religion and brings destruction to himself and to his nation.

Another *Ḥadīth* on the authority of *Ibn Mas‘ūd*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, emphasizes the punishment and the consequences of exaggeration in religion. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said:

(94) *Aḥmad, An-Nasā’i Nasā’ī* and *Ibn Majah*

“Ruined are the *Mutanaḥḥi‘ūn*.”⁽⁹⁵⁾ He repeated this thrice.

Imam *An-Nawawī*, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, explained the meaning of *Mutanaḥḥi‘ūn*, saying: “It refers to those who exaggerate and go beyond limits in their words and deeds.”⁽⁹⁶⁾ Those who exaggerate in religion tend to go beyond the prescribed limits set by *Allāh*, Exalted be He. Moreover, they exceed the limits of Sunnah by either negligence or excessiveness in religion.

According to a *Ḥadīth* on the authority of *Sahl ibn Hunayf*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Do not impose hardship upon yourselves, as people before you were doomed because they imposed hardship upon themselves.**”⁽⁹⁷⁾

After contemplating upon the three previous *Ḥadīths* that warn against exaggeration in religion, one comes to realize that the common factor between them is that they all indicate that those who exceed the limits in religion lead themselves to destruction. Thus, whoever treads the path towards exaggeration and hardship in religion, should beware of his awful end.

O Slaves of *Allāh*, especially the youth of the *Ummah*! Indeed, my speech is particularly directed to the youth, as they are the most affected by this phenomenon. In this *khuṭbah*, we shall elaborate on some manifestations and examples of extremism in religion.

First manifestation:

Exceeding the religious limits in worship and obligating oneself or others to perform acts of worship that are not part of the religion, with the purpose of getting closer to *Allāh* and earning His pleasure. Thus, once you have an inner desire to obligate yourself to perform an act of worship that is not

(95) *Muslim*

(96) *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*

(97) *Aṭ-Ṭabarānī (Al Mu‘jam Al-Kabīr)*

prescribed by the religion, know that you are on your way to exceed the prescribed limits in religion. There are many examples of such actions:

First example:

In a *Ḥadīth* that was cited in *Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī*, Ibn ‘Abbās, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that while the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, was delivering *khuṭbah* (sermon), he noticed a man standing in the sun. When he asked about him, he was told that his name was *Abī Isrā’īl*, and he had taken a vow to stand and to not sit, not to speak, nor to shade himself from the sun, and to fast; aspiring to get closer to *Allāh*. (However, he sought to do that by performing acts of worship that are not prescribed in religion) The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said, **“Go and tell him to speak, seek shade, and sit, but let him complete his fast.”**

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, denoted that the fourth act (fasting) is the only one prescribed by the religion, among other acts which the man vowed to perform, thus the other three acts are considered as deviation and an extremism in religion.

Another example:

Anas, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, passed by an old man who was being supported between his two sons - he was unable to walk and was so exhausted to the extent that he could not step forward so his sons supported him - the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, asked: **“What is the matter with him?”** They said: ‘He vowed to walk (instead of riding on a conveyance).’ He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“*Allāh* has no need for him to torture himself. Tell him to ride”** ⁽⁹⁸⁾

(98) *Al-Bukhārī and Muslim.*

Third example:

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, entered his mosque and saw a rope hanging in between its two pillars. He asked: “**What is this rope for?**” They said: “It belongs to *Zaynab*, the Mother of Believers and the wife of the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, she prays here and when she begins to feel tired during her voluntary prayer she holds it (to keep standing for the prayer)”. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**Undo it (remove the rope). You should pray as long as you feel active, and when you get tired, sit down.**”⁽⁹⁹⁾

Fourth example:

In a *Hadīth* on the authority of *Jābir*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, he said: “We were traveling when one of us was wounded by a stone hitting his head. He then had a wet dream which required him to perform *ghusl* (a ritual bath). He asked his fellow travelers: “Do you think I have a concession to perform *tayammum* (dry ablution)?” They said: “We do not think you are allowed this concession when water is available.” Upon that, he took a bath and died immediately. When we came to the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, the incident was reported to him. He said: “**They killed him, may Allāh kill them! Why did not they ask when they did not know? Indeed, the only cure for ignorance is to ask.**”⁽¹⁰⁰⁾

This *Hadīth* sheds light on another manifestation of exaggeration in religion. To be strict in guiding people by issuing strict *Fatwā* is considered an exaggeration in religion. They exceeded the limits in issuing *fatwā* which led the man to lose his life. Accordingly, Muslims who tend to exceed limits in their acts of worship are indeed exaggerators in religion.

Second and third manifestations:

(99) *Al-Bukhārī* and *Muslim*, on the authority of *Anas*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him.

(100) *Abū Dawūd*.

Both excessive praise and excessive criticism are considered exaggeration in religion. To exceed the limits in praising others by elevating them above their true status is an exaggeration in religion. An example of this is what the Quran has stated about the Christians and Jews.

﴿ وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ عُزَيْرٌ ابْنُ اللَّهِ وَقَالَتِ النَّصْرَى الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ اللَّهِ ﴾

[التوبة: 30]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {*The Jews say, “Ezra is the son of God”; and the Christians say, “The Messiah is the son of God.”*} [*At-Tawbah*, 9:30]

They exceeded the limits in their religion by their excessive praise and glorification of their prophets and elevating them above that status in which *Allāh* has placed them as His slaves.

﴿ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَا تَغْلُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ وَلَا تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْحَقَّ ۗ إِنَّمَا الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَكَلِمَتُهُ أَلْقَاهَا إِلَى مَرْيَمَ وَرُوحٌ مِّنْهُ فَآمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ ۗ وَلَا تَقُولُوا ثَلَاثَةً ۗ ﴾ [النساء: ١٧١]

Allāh, Exalted be He, also says (what means): {*O People of the Scripture, do not commit excess in your religion or say about God except the truth. The Messiah, Jesus, the son of Mary, was but a messenger of God and His word which He directed to Mary and a soul [created at a command] from Him. So believe in God and His messengers. And do not say, “Three”*} [*An-Nis’* 4:171]

Thus, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, warned the Companions against this type of exaggeration and against following one’s own vain desires by going beyond the proper limits of love and devotion to other creatures. He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “Do not extol me as the Christians extolled the son of Maryam. Indeed, I

am no more than a slave (of Allāh), and so (instead), say: Allāh’s Slave and His Messenger.” (۱۰۱)

On the other hand, exceeding limits in vilification or criticism of others is a serious issue related to extremism in religion. Extremists in religion often tend to accuse those who disagree with them of disbelief (*kufir*), disobedience (*fisq*) and heresy (*zandaqah*) even if the accused is a scholar; for they have no respect to any opponent. They cruelly and arrogantly insult Muslim scholars and seekers of Islamic knowledge because they disagree with their ideology. They seek to attack righteous scholars in forums and gatherings and criticize them severely in their books.

In a *Ḥadīth* on the authority of *Abū Dharr*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“If a man accuses another man of disobedience and disbelief, that accusation will come back on him if the accused is not [guilty].”** [*Al-Bukhārī*]

This *Ḥadīth* sheds light on a serious mistake that grows amongst Muslim youth as they fall a prey to a deviant sect that tends to make *takfir* (declaring a person or a group to be disbelievers). Accordingly, they accuse the surrounding community including their parents, their families and their fellow Muslims of disbelief. Their deviant ideology comes out of their rejection to the diversity of opinions which is a result of their exaggeration in religion.

Fourth manifestation:

Extremists in religion treat their fellow Muslims arrogantly and despise them, as they have a strict belief that they are the only rightly guided sect. In this regard, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“It is evil enough that a man looks down upon his Muslim**

(101) *Al-Bukhārī*.

brother. ⁽¹⁰²⁾ Indeed, this is a blameworthy quality in Islam that has led to serious consequences in the Muslim community. Extremists look upon other Muslims as disbelievers. Accordingly, they refuse to socialize and gather with them or even to pray together in the same mosque. Rather, they take refuge in small mosques, abandoned houses and desolate places. They avoid gathering with others of different ideologies as they believe themselves to be superior to them. Yet how great is our Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him! He guided us to the right path, yet is there any wise man to contemplate?! He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him- said: **“The believer who interacts and socializes with people and endures their harm with patience, is better than the one who does not socialize with nor endures their harm with patience.”** ⁽¹⁰³⁾

Indeed, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, spoke the truth when he said: **“Verily, this religion is strong, so proceed within it gently.”**

Fifth manifestation: Declaring the shedding of Muslim blood lawful.

Some people boldly declare the killing of Muslims lawful. This should not be surprising since they accuse them of disbelief, look down on them, and believe themselves to be superior to them. Sadly, they do not stop at the *Takfir* (declaring a person or a group to be disbelievers) and declaring the blood of Muslims lawful; rather, they misguidedly believe such an act to be a means to get closer to *Allāh*, Exalted be He!

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, informed us that there will be a time when widespread killing would prevail and Muslims will cold-bloodedly kill one another. The Companions exclaimed, “O Messenger of *Allāh*! Do you mean that they shall kill the disbelievers?” The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, replied: **“No!**

(102) *Muslim*, on the authority of *Abu Abū Hurayrah*. may *Allāh* be pleased with him.

(103) *Aḥmad*, *At-Tirmidhī* and *Ibn Mājah*, on the authority of *Ibn ‘Umar*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him.

Rather, you (Muslims) will kill one another!” The Companions further exclaimed, “O Messenger of *Allāh*! Will we be in our right minds that day?” The Messenger of *Allāh*, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“No, most people will be deprived of sound reason at that time, and insignificant people lacking reason will remain.”** [*Aḥmad*]

Indeed, such Muslims will have no sound reason. This profile best fits those misguided people who bomb mosques or markets full of Muslims, believing it to be a means to get closer to *Allāh*, Exalted be He! What sane Muslim would do such a heinous act? When a brainwashed Muslim is emboldened to kill his own parents, believing it to be a means to get closer to *Allāh*, Exalted be He, he is simply afflicted by the plague of shedding the blood of innocent people while misguidedly believing such an act to be lawful and even a means to get closer to *Allāh*, Exalted be He! In fact, such people find joy in shedding the blood of innocent people!

Wherever such sick people are found in the world, destruction prevails. No civilization, development, nor improvement could ever be accomplished in such a toxic environment. This had been the case since ancient history: a community where immoderation triumphs seals its doom.

﴿ وَمَنْ يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَاؤُهُ جَهَنَّمُ خَالِدًا فِيهَا وَعَصِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَلَعَنَهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُ عَذَابًا عَظِيمًا ﴾ [النساء: 93]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): **{But whoever kills a believer intentionally - his recompense is Hell, wherein he will abide eternally, and Allāh has become angry with him and has cursed him and has prepared for him a great punishment.}** [*An-Nisā*, 4:93]

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, warned us against such a grievous tribulation that may befall any of us. We should beware that our young children are more vulnerable to such a peril. When they are

asked to kill their innocent fellow Muslims and refuse, the extremists move to plan B and threaten to kill them if they do not comply.

This is why the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“On the Day of Judgment, the murdered will come holding his murderer’s forelock and head in his hand, blood flowing from his jugular vein, saying: ‘O Lord! This one killed me!’ (He keeps saying this) Until he comes close to the Throne.”**⁽¹⁰⁴⁾

A Muslim is required to hold on to the religion of *Allāh*, Exalted be He, and keenly follow the example of Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him; however, he is enjoined to delve into it moderately and gently. Verily, whenever there is gentleness in something, it adorns and beautifies it, and whenever it is removed from something, it is marred.

(104) *At-Tirmidhī* and *An-Nasāʾī* on the authority of *Ibn ‘Abbās*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him.

Ḥadīth no. 19

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “Remember frequently the destroyer of worldly pleasures (i.e. death).”

Death is the greatest affliction. It is the most horrific and dreadful event that every soul shall face. It is the destroyer of worldly pleasures. It disunites and separates people, causing grief.

Death is not the ultimate end, rather, it is a passage or a bridge between two worlds through which one moves from a home (the worldly life) to another home (Hereafter), whether to Paradise or to Hellfire.

An Arab poet said (what means): “And if we were to die and be left as we were, death would be the repose of every living human. However, when we die, we shall be resurrected and be taken to account for everything.”

﴿ زَعَمَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنْ لَنْ يُبْعَثُوا قُلْ لَنْ يَبْعَثَ قَلْبِي وَرَبِّي لَيُبْعَثُنَّ ثُمَّ لِيُنَبِّئَنَّ بِمَا عَمِلْتُمْ وَذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ ﴾

[التغابن: 7]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {*Those who disbelieve have claimed that they will never be resurrected. Say, “Yes, by my Lord, you will surely be resurrected; then you will surely be informed of what you did. And that, for God, is easy*} [At-Taghābun, 64:7]

In this *khuṭbah*, we shall carry on with our series on “Aphoristic Speech” of the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, and contemplate His concise words on death. He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Remember frequently the destroyer of worldly pleasures (i.e. death).”**⁽¹⁰⁵⁾

(105) *Aḥmad*, *At-Tirmidhī*, *An-Nasāʾī* and *Ibn Majah*, on the authority of *Abū Hurayrah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him.

This statement of the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, is short but inclusive of a great reminder. He enjoins the *Ummah* to be frequent in remembering the destroyer of worldly pleasures. He wants to inform us that remembering death should be part of our daily life. It should be mentioned by the tongues, and kept at the forefront of minds and hearts. Indeed, the moment of death is always in the mind of the real believer. It is an evidence of his true superiority.

This is emphasized in a *Hadīth* that was cited in *Sunan Ibn Mājah* on the authority of *Ibn ‘Umar*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, who narrated that a man from the *Anṣār* came to the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, and asked him: “O Messenger of *Allāh*, who is the best among the believers?” The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“They are those with the best manners.”** Then, that man asked: “Who is the most sagacious and the most prudent among believers?” He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“They are those who remember death most often and are well-prepared for what is after it. Verily, those are the wisest believers.”**

Every day and night we hear the news of the death of a fellow Muslim, so we go to offer a funeral prayer for him/her. Sometimes we go to offer a funeral prayer for one person, but we find that there are a number of deceased there that we need to offer prayers for. Indeed, death is enough as an admonition.

Every time you see a funeral bier being carried, it should be a great reminder for every Muslim. It should soften our hearts and remind you - O slave of *Allāh*! - and remind me of the Hereafter, and the state we are going to be in when we will be put into a ditch under the ground.

Mentioning death, leads us to remember five important facts that we should keep in mind:

First fact:

Death is inevitable; every soul shall taste it, without exception.

﴿كُلُّ شَيْءٍ هَالِكٌ إِلَّا وَجْهَهُ لَهُ الْحُكْمُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ﴾ [القصاص: 88]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): **{Everything will be destroyed except His Face. His is the judgment, and to Him you will be returned}** [Al-Qaṣaṣ, 28:88]

﴿كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ وَيَبْقَى وَجْهَ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ﴾ [الرحمن: 26-27]

Allāh, Exalted be He, also says (what means): **{Everyone upon it [i.e., the earth] will perish. And there will remain the Face of your Lord, Owner of Majesty and Honor}** [Ar-Raḥmān, 55:26-27]

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, used to say: **“O Allāh, I seek refuge with Your Might; none has the right to be worshipped but You. You are the One who will never die, whereas the human beings and Jinn do die”**⁽¹⁰⁶⁾

There is a verse that we should always repeat and keep at the forefront of our minds.

﴿إِنَّكَ مَيِّتٌ وَإِنَّهُمْ مَيِّتُونَ﴾ [الزمر: 30]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): **{Indeed, you are to die, and indeed, they are to die.}** [Az-Zumar, 39:30]

This verse indicates an important fact about death: death is one of the things in which all men are alike. If anyone deserved to be eternal on the earth, it would have been Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, the most honored and the most beloved to *Allāh*, Exalted be He. But death comes to all. There are no exceptions.

(106) *Al-Bukhārī* and *Muslim*, on the authority of *Ibn ‘Abbās*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him.

This fact was also emphasized by *Jibrīl*, peace be upon him, when he came to the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, and reminded him of death saying: “O Muhammad, live as you wish, for you shall eventually die. Love whoever you like, for you shall eventually depart. Do what you please, for you shall face its consequences.”⁽¹⁰⁷⁾

Thus, one should be aware of the fact that death is inevitable. Having to leave your beloved people behind is also inevitable, and so is the fact that every slave of *Allāh* will be paid his full recompense.

﴿كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ وَإِنَّمَا تُوَفَّوْنَ أُجُورَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فَمَنْ زُحِرَ عَنِ النَّارِ وَأُدْخِلَ الْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا لَمَتَعٌ الْعَرُورِ﴾ [آل عمران: ١٨٥]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {Every soul will taste death, and you will only be given your [full] compensation on the Day of Resurrection. So he who is drawn away from the Fire and admitted to Paradise has attained [his desire]. And what is the life of this world except the enjoyment of delusion.} [*Āl-‘Imrān*, 3:185]

﴿كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ وَنَبَلُوكُم بِالشَّرِّ وَالْخَيْرِ فِتْنَةً وَإِلَيْنَا تُرْجَعُونَ﴾ [الأنبياء: ٣٥]

Allāh, Exalted be He, also says (what means): {Every soul will taste death. And We test you with evil and with good as trial; and to Us you will be returned.} [*Al-Anbiyā’*, 21:35]

The second fact:

Death has a specific time that can neither be advanced nor delayed, no matter how hard we may try. It is set according to a determined decree.

(107) *At-Tayālīsī* and *Al-Bayhaqī*, on the authority of *Jabir*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him.

﴿وَمَا كَانَ لِنَفْسٍ أَنْ تَمُوتَ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ كَتَبْنَا مُوَجَلًّا ۗ﴾ [آل عمران: ١٤٥]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {**And it is not [possible] for one to die except by permission of God at a decree determined.**} [*Āl-‘Imrān*, 3:145]

﴿وَلَنْ يُؤَخِّرَ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِذَا جَاءَ أَجَلُهَا ۗ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرٌ مِمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ﴾ [المنافقون: ١١]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {**But never will God delay a soul when its time has come.**} [*Al-Munāfiqūn*, 63:11]

This verse states an important fact about death. That is, once the appointed time comes, all endeavors to ward it off are fruitless.

Umm Habībah, may *Allāh* be pleased with her, the wife of the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, was supplicating to *Allāh* saying: “O *Allāh*, let me enjoy the company of my husband, the Messenger of *Allāh*, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, my father *Abū Sufyān* and my brother *Mu‘āwiyah*. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, was listening to her supplication, then he said to her: “**You implore Allāh concerning fixed life terms, counted days, and determined provisions. Allāh would not advance something before its due time, nor delay something beyond its due time. Yet if you were to ask Allāh to provide you refuge from the torment of the Hellfire, or from the torment of the grave, it would have been better for you.**”⁽¹⁰⁸⁾

The third fact:

Death is inescapable. It is impossible to escape from death even if one owns all aspects of power, strength, wealth, intelligence and knowledge. When its due time arrives, it will come and nothing can stop it. There are numerous verses in the Quran to this effect, some of which are the following:

(108) *Muslim*, on the authority of *Ibn Mas‘ūd*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him.

﴿قُلْ إِنَّ الْمَوْتَ الَّذِي تَفِرُّونَ مِنْهُ فَإِنَّهُ مُلَاقِيكُمْ ثُمَّ تُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ عِلْمِ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ﴾ [الجمعة: ٨]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {Say, “Indeed, the death from which you flee - indeed, it will meet you. Then you will be returned to the Knower of the unseen and the witnessed, and He will inform you about what you used to do.} [Al-Jumu‘ah, 62:8]

﴿قُلْ لَنْ يَنْفَعَكُمْ الْفِرَارُ إِنْ فَرَرْتُمْ مِنَ الْمَوْتِ أَوِ الْقَتْلِ وَإِذَا لَا تَمْنَعُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا﴾ [الأحزاب: ١٦]

Allāh, Exalted be He, also says (what means): {Say, [O Muhammad], “Never will fleeing benefit you if you should flee from death or killing; and then [if you did], you would not be given enjoyment [of life] except for a little.”} [Al-Ahzāb, 33:16]

No matter how much we may try to avoid it, we will surely have to face it.

﴿وَجَاءَتْ سَكْرَةُ الْمَوْتِ بِالْحَقِّ ذَلِكَ مَا كُنْتُمْ مِنْهُ تَجِيدُ﴾ [ق: ١٩]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {And the intoxication of death will bring the truth; that is what you were trying to avoid.} [Qāf, 50:11]

The fourth fact:

No one knows the time and place of death except *Allāh*.

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ السَّاعَةِ وَيُنزِلُ الْغَيْثَ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْأَرْحَامِ وَمَا تَدْرِي نَفْسٌ مَآذَا تَكْسِبُ غَدًا وَمَا تَدْرِي نَفْسٌ بِأَيِّ أَرْضٍ تَمُوتُ إِنَّ﴾ [لقمان: ٣٤]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {Indeed, God [alone] has knowledge of the Hour and sends down the rain and knows what is in the wombs. And no soul perceives what it will earn tomorrow, and

no soul perceives in what land it will die. Indeed, God is Knowing and Acquainted.} [Luqmān, 31:34]

Death is a hidden issue of which *Allāh* alone has exact knowledge. None can reveal its time but He. In this verse, the Quran draws our attention to *Allāh*'s absolute, all-encompassing Knowledge *vis-à-vis* the restricted knowledge of humankind. Thus, if you are informed by anyone that you are expected to die tomorrow or after a month or after a year, you should reply that *Allāh* alone has the exact knowledge of when and where we will die. This is the fact that the Quran informs us about. This is the truth of the matter: it is only *Allāh* Who has full knowledge of the time and place of death.

The fifth fact:

Death carries relief for the believer. A good person is the one whom you feel grief and pain to lose, but if one is a true believer, then death to him is a relief from the afflictions of this life.

In a *Ḥadīth* reported on the authority of *Abū Qatādah ibn Rib'ī*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, a funeral procession passed by the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, and he said: **“Relieved or relieving.”** The people asked, “O *Allāh*'s Messenger! What is relieved and relieving?” He said, **“A believer is relieved (by death) from the afflictions and hardships of the worldly life and he attains the Mercy of *Allāh*, while (the death of) a wicked person relieves the people, the land, the trees, (and) the animals from him.”** [*Al Bukhārī*]

Some people dislike mentioning death or listening to any *khutbah* or sermon about it. However, the texts of the Quran and Sunnah frequently address the topic of death. I wonder why do not we like to remember death despite the fact that it is sufficient as a reminder to awake us from our heedlessness?!

Indeed, the purpose of remembering death and its facts in this *khutbah* is to remind us of the Hereafter and to wake us from our heedlessness. O mankind! Why are you so arrogant, although you will soon be consumed by worms?! Why do you leave prayer and neglect performing it, although you will eventually be thrown into a ditch under the ground?! Why are you disobedient to your parents, while you know that death comes suddenly?! O You who consumes others' wealth unjustly, misappropriate public funds and steal the money of the weak and the needy! Beware that your wealth will not delay your death! O You who commits wrongdoings and adultery, do not you know that death is so close?! And O you who is addicted to drugs and intoxicants, do not you know that death comes suddenly without warning?!

When you go to attend the burial of a dead person or when you offer a funeral prayer for someone, can you imagine that one day the same scene will happen to you! One day our appointed term will come and others will offer the funeral prayer for me and you! One day our families will receive condolences on our death!

The main purpose of my words in this *khutbah* is not to give information about death. Rather, it is to remind myself and you of the death's reality, for indeed, reminders benefit the believers.

Ḥadīth no. 20

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “The grave is the first stage of the Hereafter.”

In this *Khuṭbah*, we shall carry on with our series “Aphoristic Speech of Prophet *Muḥammad*, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him”. We shall address the following *Ḥadīth* narrated on the authority of *‘Uthmān*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“The grave is the first stage of the Hereafter. Whoever is saved from it[s difficulties], the stages that come after it are easier; however, if he is not saved from it, then whatever comes after it is harder.”** [*Aḥmad* and *At-Tirmidhī*]

As usual, it is a great *Ḥadīth* abounding in insightful meanings, and it is closely related to the previous one.

It underlines the fact that whoever is spared the punishment of the grave shall be delivered from the horrors in the following stages. On the contrary, being subjected to the punishment of the grave indicates that the following stages would be harder and more dreadful.

There is no doubt that the grave is the silent preacher that urges us to remember death. This is why the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, commanded us to visit the graveyards as they remind us of the Hereafter.⁽¹⁰⁹⁾

Moreover, the grave is the intermediate stage between the transitory abode (the worldly life) and the permanent abode (the Hereafter), as *Allāh*, Exalted be He, informs us.

(109) *Aḥmad* and *At-Tirmidhī*.

﴿حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَ أَحَدَهُمُ الْمَوْتُ قَالَ رَبِّ ارْجِعُونِ ﴿٩٩﴾ لَعَلِّي أَعْمَلُ صَالِحًا فِيمَا تَرَكْتُ كَلَّا إِنَّهَا كَلِمَةٌ هُوَ قَائِلُهَا وَمِنْ وَرَائِهِمْ بَرْزَخٌ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾﴾ [المؤمنون: ٩٩-١٠٠]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{[For such is the state of the disbelievers], until, when death comes to one of them, he says, “My Lord, send me back.* That I might do righteousness in that which I left behind.” No! It is only a word he is saying; and behind them is a barzakh (barrier) until the Day they are resurrected.}* [*Al-Mu'minūn*, 23:99-100]

Mujāhid and *Adh-Dhahḥāk*, may *Allāh* have mercy upon them, said: “*Al-Barzakh* is a barrier between this world and the Hereafter.”⁽¹¹⁰⁾

The grave is the first stage of the journey undertaken by a person after departing the worldly life. It can be likened to a container where our worldly deeds are preserved. There, a person shall reap the fruits of his actions in the worldly life.

An Arab poet said: “O you who have been deceived by the worldly life, and lured by the long worldly aspirations! Beware of death, as it arrives suddenly, and bear in mind that the grave is the container of your deeds.”

Inside the grave we shall face the consequences of our actions in the worldly life. It shall be either a garden of Paradise or a pit of Hellfire. We implore *Allāh*, Exalted be He, to make our graves gardens of Paradise.

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, clarified the difference between the graves of the righteous believer and those of the sinful disbelievers or hypocrites. He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, related to us events that cannot be known to any human being except through divine revelation.

(110) *Tafsīr Aṭ-Ṭabarī* and *Tafsīr Al-Qurṭubī*.

﴿وَمَا يَنْطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ ۚ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَىٰ﴾ [النجم: ٤-٣]

Allāh, Exalted be He, said (what means): **{Nor does he speak from [his own] inclination. * It is not but a (divine) revelation revealed.}** [*An-Najm*, 53:3-4]

As we stand by a grave, we cannot see or hear anything inside it, yet we have been informed of the delights and horrors experienced by their inhabitants depending on their worldly deeds, knowledge of which belongs exclusively to *Allāh*, Exalted be He.

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said about the righteous believer’s grave: **“As the dead person is buried in the grave and asked the [three questions] by the angels, he (the believer) shall answer them (correctly). Then, a caller from the heaven, which can only be heard by the inhabitant of the grave, will call out, ‘My servant has spoken the truth! Give him furnishings from Paradise, clothe him from (the clothes of) Paradise, and open for him a door to Paradise.’ The pleasant and refreshing breeze of Paradise and its fragrance will then come to the believer, and his grave will be made spacious, and spread out as far as his eye can see. There will then come to him a man with a handsome face, beautiful clothes, and a beautiful fragrance. This man will say, ‘Rejoice at that which will please you! [Rejoice at the pleasure of *Allāh* and gardens in which is eternal bliss.] This is the day that you were promised.’ So the person will ask the man, ‘Who are you? Your face is the face that brings good.’ The man will reply, ‘I am your good deeds.’”** The believer shall supplicate: **‘O Lord! Bring on the Day of Judgment!’”**

As for the disbelievers and hypocrites, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Then, a caller will then call out from the heaven, saying, ‘He lied! Give him furnishing and clothing from Hellfire, and open a door for him to Hellfire.’ Its heat and scorching wind will then**

come to him, and his grave will close in on him, tightening around him until his ribs are pressed together. There will then come to him a man with an ugly face and a horrible stench. This man will say to the person, ‘Receive tidings of that which will sadden you; this is your day which you were promised.’ So the person will say to this man, ‘Who are you? Your face is the face that brings evil!’ The man will reply, ‘I am your evil deeds.’ Then, the man will supplicate, “O Lord! Let not the Last Hour come!”⁽¹¹¹⁾

The *Hadīth* informs us that the believer shall implore *Allāh*, Exalted be He, to establish the Last Hour upon knowing that he has been saved from the punishment of the grave and that the following stages would be easier accordingly. On the contrary, the disbeliever shall fail in this stage and realize that the following stages would be harder and more horrific.

There is no doubt that the scene of the grave shall be the most terrifying scene ever. It has been narrated on the authority of ‘*Uthmān*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**I have never seen any scene except that the grave is more terrifying than it.**”⁽¹¹²⁾

However, it should be noted that the point is not to stir the fear of the grave in general in Muslims’ hearts, because some graves shall actually be gardens of Paradise (as highlighted above). Rather, we should remember that the grave shall ultimately be our destination and it shall be either a garden from Paradise or a pit from Hellfire. Therefore, a wise and sane Muslim should strive to carry out good deeds in this worldly life in order to be well prepared for such a stage.

O slaves of *Allāh*! I would like to remind you, and myself of some mistakes that we commit by means of which we incur the punishment of the grave.

(111) *Aḥmad* and *Abū Dāwūd*, on the authority of *Al-Barā’*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him.

(112) *Al-Bukhārī*.

There are many sins, the committing of which incurs the punishment of the grave; the following are a few examples.

First: tale bearing and gossip are among the reasons for incurring the punishment of the grave. *Ibn ‘Abbās*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, once passed by two graves and said: **“They are being punished, but they are not being punished for a serious sin. One of them was heedless about preventing urine [from soiling his body or clothes], and the other used to walk about spreading malicious gossip.”** [*Al-Bukhārī*]

The one who spreads gossip and engages in tale-bearing, sowing seeds of discord between a person and his/her family or friends, should bear in mind that he is committing a grave sin, even if he misguidedly perceives it as insignificant. It incurs the punishment of the grave.

Second: theft, usurpation of people’s wealth, and misappropriation of public funds, even to a limited degree, are among the reasons of incurring the punishment of the grave. *Abū Hurayrah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “We went out with the Messenger of *Allāh*, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, on the Day of Khaybar.” (He, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, related some events that took place on that day.) He added, “A slave boy was presented to the Messenger of *Allāh*, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, whose name was *Mid‘am*. The Messenger of *Allāh*, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, commissioned him to unsaddle his camel. As *Mid‘am* was unsaddling the camel of the Messenger of *Allāh*, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, a stray arrow struck and killed him. People said, ‘How fortunate is he! He shall be admitted to Paradise!’ (He died while serving the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, and participating in an important battle with him) The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, remarked: **‘No! By He in Whose**

Hand my soul is! The cloak which he took from the spoils of war on the Day of Khaybar before they were distributed will blaze with fire on him.” [Al-Bukhārī]

This slave boy usurped a cloak from the spoils of war before the distribution, and accordingly this led to his own destruction.

A wise and sane Muslim should, therefore, return people’s rights that he has usurped, as insignificant as they may seem, right now before he ends up in the grave subjected to the blazing fire inside the grave, like that slave boy.

Third: taking loans with the intention of not paying them off. It has been narrated that Sa’d ibn Al-Aṭwal, may Allāh be pleased with him, narrated that his brother passed away, leaving behind three hundred dirhams and dependents. He, may Allāh be pleased with him, said: “I wanted to spend (his money) on his dependents, but the Prophet, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said: **‘Your brother is being detained by his debt, so pay it off for him.**’”⁽¹¹³⁾

As a principle, debts should be settled before the distribution of the estate.

﴿مَنْ بَعْدَ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصِي بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ﴾ [النساء: ١٢]

Allāh, Exalted be He, said (what means): {... **after any bequest he [may have] made or debt...**} [An-Nisā’, 4:11]

A person who takes loans from people with the intention of not paying them off, misguidedly believing this to be shrewdness on his part; it shall cause him to be detained in his grave.

Dear slaves of Allāh! It behooves a wise person to avail himself of these *Khuṭbahs*, pay greater attention to them, and allow the lessons deduced from them to sink in and help him better his situation accordingly in order to find his way to Paradise.

(113) Aḥmad and Ibn Mājah.

Safety from the punishment of the grave can be attained through the performance of good deeds. *Abū Hurayrah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“The dead person hears the sound of your sandals when you depart and leave him. If he is a believer, the prayer will stand by his head...”**

O slaves of *Allāh*! Bear this *Ḥadīth* in mind because whenever you stand by a grave or help bury a dead person, you should remember it. This is the recipe for salvation. It should be noted that the *Ḥadīth* means that salvation lies in establishing the prayer. What is meant here is to perform the obligatory prayers on time as required, and not merely attend the Friday prayer and abandon the prayers throughout the week, or perform some of the obligatory prayers occasionally.

The *Ḥadīth* goes on: **“If he is a believer, the prayer will stand by his head (to ward off the punishment), Zakah to his right and the fast by his left; the righteous deeds, such as charity, upholding ties of kinship and performing acts of kindness to people will stand by his feet. He will be approached (by punishment) from his head, and the prayer will declare, ‘There is no access from my side.’ He will then be approached from his right side (i.e. punishment), and Zakah will declare, ‘There is no access from my side.’ He will then be approached from his left, and the fast will declare, ‘There is no access from my side.’ He will be approached from his feet, and the acts of kindness will declare, ‘There is no access from our side.’ And thus he shall be saved.”**⁽¹¹⁴⁾

It is therefore only logical for a believer to guard these lines of defense: prayer, fasting Zakah, acts of kindness, to shield himself against the punishment of the grave. *Mālik ibn Dinār*, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, said (what means): “I have come to the graves and exclaimed, ‘Where are the great ones? And where are those who were considered lowly?’

(114) *‘Abd Ar-Razzāq, Ibn Abī Shaybah, Ibn Ḥibbān, and Al-Ḥākim.*

Where is the one conceited about his authority, and where is the powerful one, who wielded his prowess?’ A voice answered me, though I would see no face, ‘They vied each other for destruction, and there is no sign; they all died, and (with them) the news (about them) died. The earthly insects and worms come and go, and destroy the beauty of those faces, O you who asks about the people bygone! Is there no lesson for you in what you see?’”

Verily, this is the key lesson that should be deduced. A Muslim should contemplate these valuable lessons and learn from the previous generations.

Ḥadīth no. 21

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “A servant of *Allāh* shall not truly believe until he believes in predestination, the good and bad thereof.”

In this *Khuṭbah*, we shall carry on with our series “Aphoristic Speech of Prophet *Muḥammad*”. The *Ḥadīth* at hand is concise and rich in meaning.

Jābir ibn ‘Abdullāh, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“A servant of *Allāh* shall not truly believe until he believes in Al-Qadar (Predestination), the good and bad thereof, and knows with certainty that whatever befalls him would have never escaped him, and that whatever escaped him would have never befallen him.”** [*At-Tirmidhī*]

The *Ḥadīth* addresses one of the fundamental beliefs and pillars of faith, without which one’s faith can never be perfect, namely, belief in predestination.

Allāh, Exalted be He, delineated the great importance of belief in predestination. Many verses in the Quran underline such a fundamental prerequisite of faith.

﴿ سُنَّةَ اللَّهِ فِي الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلُ وَلَنْ يَجْدَ لِسُنَّةِ اللَّهِ تَبْدِيلًا ﴾ [62]

[الأحزاب: 62]

For example, *Allāh*, Exalted be He, says (what means): **{[This is] the established way of *Allāh* with those who passed on before; and you will not find in the way of *Allāh* any change.}** [*Al-Aḥzāb*, 33:62]

﴿إِنَّا كُلُّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْتُهُ بِقَدَرٍ﴾ [القمر: ٤٩]

Allāh, Exalted be He, also says (what means): **{Indeed, all things We created with predestination.}** [*Al-Qamar*, 54:49]

Moreover, ‘*Alī ibn Abī Tālib*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“A servant of Allāh shall not truly believe until he believes in four: that there is no deity worthy of worship but Allāh, Exalted be He, that I am the Messenger of Allāh whom He sent with the Truth; believes in death; resurrection after death, and predestination.”**⁽¹¹⁵⁾

A Muslim cannot perfect his faith without harboring the essential belief in predestination; otherwise, his faith is imperfect.

Ibn ‘Umar, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, said: “By *Allāh*, were any one of them (who does not believe in predestination) to possess gold equal to the mountain of *Uḥud* and spend it in charity (for the sake of *Allāh*), *Allāh* would not accept it unless he believes with certainty in predestination.” He, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, then related the lengthy *Ḥadīth* about the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, when *Jibrīl* (Gabriel) asked him, “Inform me about *Imān* (faith).” He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, replied: **“That you affirm your faith in Allāh, in His angels, in His Books, in His Messengers, in the Last Day, and believe with certainty in predestination.”** [*Muslim*]

Moreover, it has been narrated on the authority of *Abū Ad-Dardā’*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“A person who is not dutiful to his parents, a drunkard nor one who disbelieves in predestination shall ever enter Paradise.”** [*Aḥmad*]

(115) *Aḥmad*, *At-Tirmidhī*, and *Ibn Mājah*.

These *Hadīths* and verses cited above show the evidence of the importance of assigning care to this great pillar of faith (belief in predestination).

It is worth highlighting that there are four key pillars of belief in predestination:

- 1) belief in *Allāh's* all-inclusive knowledge that encompasses everything,
- 2) to believe that *Allāh* has recorded everything that will happen until the Hour in *Al-Lawh Al-Mahfūz* (The Preserved Tablet), 3) to believe in the all-embracing divine will, and 4) to believe that *Allāh* created all things.

These four pillars will be elaborated upon hereunder:

First, to believe in the all-inclusive divine knowledge that encompasses everything that exists and happens in this universe. This belief is underlined in many Quran and Sunnah texts. There are numerous verses and *Hadīths* evidencing that *Allāh*, Exalted be He, knows everything; He knows what happened, what will happen, what did not happen and, even were it to happen, He knows how it would happen.

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ وَيَوْمَ يَقُولُ كُن فَيَكُونُ قَوْلَهُ الْحَقُّ وَلَهُ الْمَلَكُ يَوْمَ يُنْفَخُ فِي الصُّورِ عَلَيْكَ الْغَيْبِ﴾ [الأنعام: ٧٣]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{And it is He who created the heavens and earth in truth. And the day He says, “Be,” and it is, His word is the truth. And His is the dominion [on] the Day the Horn is blown. [He is] Knower of the unseen and the witnessed; and He is the Wise, the Acquainted.}* [Al-An‘ām, 6:73]

﴿اللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَحْمِلُ كُلُّ أُنْثَىٰ وَمَا تَغِيضُ الْأَرْحَامُ وَمَا تَزْدَادُ وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ عِنْدَهُ بِمِقْدَارٍ﴾ [الرعد: ٨]

Allāh, Exalted be He, also says (what means): *{Allāh knows what every female carries and what the wombs lose [prematurely] or exceed. And*

everything with Him is by due measure.} [Ar-Ra'd, 13:8]

This means that *Allāh*, Exalted be He, knows whatever a female carries in her womb, whether that female be a human being, animal, Jinn, bird, insect, or sea creature! *Allāh*'s all-inclusive knowledge encompasses everything.

Hence, one of the fundamental aspects of belief in predestination is to believe that *Allāh*, Exalted be He, knows all that comes to pass.

There are many *Hadīths* reported to that effect, (which shall be cited later), highlighting the all-inclusive knowledge of *Allāh* that encompasses everything. In fact, this belief brings an immense sense of peace of mind and tranquility to a Muslim's heart, knowing that everything happening to and around him is encompassed by the knowledge of *Allāh*, Exalted be He.

Second, to believe that *Allāh*, Exalted be He, has recorded everything that happened or shall happen until the Day of Judgment in *Al-Lawḥ Al-Mahfūz*. Everything that happened, is happening, or shall happen unto the Day of Judgment, is prerecorded in *Al-Lawḥ Al-Mahfūz* as stated in many Quranic verses and *Hadīths*.

﴿ وَمَا تَكُونُ فِي شَأْنٍ وَمَا تَتْلُوا مِنْهُ مِنْ قُرْءَانٍ وَلَا تَعْمَلُونَ مِنْ عَمَلٍ إِلَّا كُنَّا عَلَيْكُمْ شُهُودًا إِذْ تُفِيضُونَ فِيهِ وَمَا يَعْزُبُ عَنْ رَبِّكَ مِنْ مِثْقَالِ ذَرَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ وَلَا أَصْغَرَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ وَلَا أَكْبَرَ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ ﴾ [يونس: ٦١]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {*And, [O Muhammad], you are not [engaged] in any matter or recite any of the Quran and you [people] do not do any deed except that We are witness over you when you are involved in it. And not absent from your Lord is any [part] of an atom's weight within the earth or within the heaven or [anything] smaller than that or greater but that it is in a clear register.*} [Yunus, 10:61]

Nothing escapes the all-inclusive knowledge of *Allāh*, Exalted be He; even

tree leaves that fall have been prerecorded in *Al-Lawḥ Al-Mahfūz*.

The fetuses, newborns, the living, and the deceased are all prerecorded in *Al-Lawḥ Al-Mahfūz*; those walking free on earth and those buried underground and are being held accountable for their deeds, everything has been prerecorded in *Al-Lawḥ Al-Mahfūz* in advance.

﴿مَا أَصَابَ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ نَبْرَأَهَا إِنَّ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ﴾ [الحديد: 22]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {*No disaster strikes upon the earth or among yourselves except that it is in a register before We bring it into being - indeed that, for Allāh, is easy.*} [*Al-Hadīd*, 57:22]

This is why ‘*Abdullāh ibn ‘Amr ibn Al-‘Āṣ*, may *Allāh* be pleased with them, narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**Allāh prerecorded the measurement of all matters pertaining to creation, fifty thousand years before He created the heavens and earth.**” [*Muslim*]

Belief in the prerecording of all events and things begets tranquility and peace of mind, knowing that everything that has happened, is happening, or shall happen is prerecorded and predestined. Accordingly, this leaves no room for discontent, grumbling, or grief over anything.

It has been narrated that ‘*Ubādah ibn Aṣ-Ṣāmit*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, said to his son: “Son! You will not savor the taste of genuine faith until you know that what has come to you could never have missed you, and that what has missed you could not never have come to you. I heard the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, say: **The first thing *Allāh* created was the pen. He said to it: ‘Write.’ It asked: ‘What should I write, my Lord?’ He said: ‘Write what was decreed about everything till the Last Hour comes.’**” [*Ubādah*] added, “O my son! I

heard the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, say: **‘He who dies while believing in something other than this does not belong to me.’**”⁽¹¹⁶⁾

Third, belief in the all-embracing will of *Allāh*, namely, to believe that nothing could ever happen without His permission and will. Everything happens according to the all-embracing divine will. Whatever *Allāh* wants will definitely occur, and whatever is against His will never occurs regardless of the worldly material means a person may utilize or fail to avail himself of.

﴿قُلِ اللَّهُمَّ مَلِكُ الْمَلِكِ تُؤْتِي الْمُلْكَ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتَنْزِعُ الْمُلْكَ مِمَّنْ تَشَاءُ وَتُعِزُّ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتُذِلُّ مَنْ تَشَاءُ بِيَدِكَ الْخَيْرُ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ﴾ [آل عمران: ٢٦]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {Say, “O *Allāh*, Owner of Sovereignty, You give sovereignty to whom You will and You take sovereignty away from whom You will. You honor whom You will and You humble whom You will. In Your hand is [all] good. Indeed, You are over all things competent.”} [*Āl-‘Imrān*, 3:26]

﴿لِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۖ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ ۗ يَهَبُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ إِنثًا وَيَهَبُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ الذَّكَورَ ﴿٤٩﴾ أَوْ يُزَوِّجُهُمْ ذَكَرًا وَإِنثًا ۖ وَيَجْعَلُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ عَقِيمًا ۗ إِنَّهُ عَلِيمٌ قَدِيرٌ﴾ [الشورى: 49-50]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {To *Allāh* belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth; He creates what he wills. He gives to whom He wills female [children], and He gives to whom He wills males.* Or He makes them [both] males and females, and He renders whom He wills barren. Indeed, He is Knowing and Competent.} [*Ash-Shūrā*, 42:49-50]

(116) *Aḥmad*, *Abū Dāwūd*, and *At-Tirmidhī*.

﴿تَخُنْ خَلْقَنَّهُمْ وَشَدَدْنَا أَسْرَهُمْ ۖ وَإِذَا شِئْنَا بَدَلْنَا أَمْثَلَهُمْ تَبْدِيلًا﴾ (٢٨) ﴿إِنْ هَدِيَهُ تَذَكُّرٌ ۖ فَمَنْ شَاءَ اتَّخَذْ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ سَبِيلًا﴾ (٢٩) ﴿وَمَا تَشَاءُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا﴾ (٣٠) ﴿يُدْخِلُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ فِي رَحْمَتِهِ ۗ وَالظَّالِمِينَ أَعَدَّ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا﴾ (٣١)

[الانسان: ٢٨-٣١]

Allāh, Exalted be He, also says (what means): *{We have created them and strengthened their forms, and when We will, We can change their likenesses with [complete] alteration. * Indeed, this is a reminder, so he who wills may take to his Lord a way. * And you do not will except that Allāh wills. Indeed, Allāh is ever Knowing and Wise. * He admits whom He wills into His mercy; but the wrongdoers - He has prepared for them a painful punishment.}* [Al-Insān, 76:28-31]

Moreover, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “Verily, the hearts of all the sons of Adam are between two fingers of the Fingers of the Most Merciful as one heart, which He can turn in any direction He likes.” He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, also said: “O *Allāh*, the Turner of the hearts, turn our hearts to Your obedience.” [Muslim]

Fourth, believing that *Allāh*, Exalted be He, created all creation. All that exists in the universe, that can be seen, felt, or perceived, has been created by *Allāh*, Exalted be He.

﴿ذَٰلِكُمْ اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ خَلِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ ۗ لَآ إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ فَاَنَّىٰ تُؤْفَكُونَ﴾ [غافر: ٦٢]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{That is Allāh, your Lord, Creator of all things; there is no deity except Him, so how are you deluded?}* [Ghāfir, 40:62]

﴿ذَالِكُمْ اللهُ رَبُّكُمْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ خَلِقُ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ فَأَعْبُدُوهُ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَكِيلٌ﴾ [الأنعام: ١٠٢]

Allāh, Exalted be He, also says (what means): *{That is Allāh, your Lord; there is no deity except Him, the Creator of all things, so worship Him. And He is Disposer of all things.}* [*Al-An ‘ām*, 6:102]

It should be noted, though, that believing in predestination does not mean giving in to failure and defeat. It does not call for surrender to illness, depression, pessimism, distress, anxiety, and heartbreak! On the contrary, the required belief in predestination means fleeing from the decree of *Allāh* to the decree of *Allāh*. It means that we should place our trust in *Allāh*, Exalted be He, and graciously accept His decrees, their positive and negative consequences, and cordially embrace success and failure, triumph and defeat, illness and wellbeing, and distress and relief.

It has been narrated that the Commander of the Believers, ‘*Umar*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, once marched towards Syria to find out that a plague had broken out there. The commanders of his army, led by *Abū ‘Ubaydah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, requested him to stop and inquired: “The plague had broken out in Greater Syria; are you planning to enter it anyway or go back?” ‘*Umar*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, said, ‘Call for the early *Muhājirūn*, *Anṣār* and the wise for consultation!’ They were subsequently summoned. ‘*Umar*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, informed them that a plague had broken out in Greater Syria, and sought their opinions on this issue. Some of them opted for entering it, and some others felt that he should not. Accordingly, ‘*Umar*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, announced that he would not enter, and that they were to return to *Madīnah*. *Abū ‘Ubaydah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, stood up and said: ‘Are you fleeing from the decree of *Allāh*?’ ‘*Umar*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, responded, ‘If only someone other than you had said

that, *Abū 'Ubaydah!* Yes, we are fleeing from the decree of *Allāh* to the decree of *Allāh*.”⁽¹¹⁷⁾

This is how a Muslim should hold on to belief in predestination; he should graciously accept whatever *Allāh*, Exalted be He, decrees.

The enjoined belief in predestination does not mean to surrender to one's unfavorable circumstances and refusal to effect change for the better. On the contrary, the enjoined belief in predestination requires the Muslim to improve himself, increase his value, ally himself with the successful, seek remedy for his illnesses, and aspire to improve wellbeing. It entails that one should not grieve over loss, nor overly rejoice over that which has been given to him. Rather, it is becoming of a true believer to seek the help of his Lord relentlessly and graciously accept His decrees, bearing mind that both success and failure are decreed by *Allāh*.

Thus, we come to realize that believing in predestination is one of the indispensable pillars of faith.

(117) *Al-Bukhārī* and *Muslim*.

Ḥadīth no. 22

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Whoever believes in *Allāh* and the Last Day, let him treat his neighbor well.”**

In this *Khuṭbah*, we shall carry on with our series “Aphoristic Speech of Prophet *Muḥammad*”. In the following *Ḥadīth*, *Abū Shurayh Al-Khuzā’ī*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Whoever believes in *Allāh* and the Last Day, let him treat his neighbor well.”** [*Muslim*]

When we ponder over the Quran and Sunnah, we find that they abound in texts urging Muslims to show kindness to their neighbors. A Muslim is instructed to be kind towards his neighbors in terms of both statements and actions.

﴿وَأَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا ۚ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَبِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَالْجَارِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْجَارِ الْجُنُبِ وَالصَّاحِبِ بِالْجَنبِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَن كَانَ مُخْتَالًا فَخُورًا﴾ [النساء: ٣٦]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{Worship Allāh and associate nothing with Him, and to parents do good, and to relatives, orphans, the needy, the near neighbor, the neighbor farther away, the companion at your side, the traveler, and those whom your right hands possess. Indeed, Allāh does not like those who are self-deluding and boastful.}* [*An-Nisā’*, 4:36]

In this verse, *Allāh*, Exalted be He, enjoins us to worship Him alone without ascribing any partners to Him, and adds to that the command of showing dutifulness towards the parents and close relatives, as well as showing

kindness to neighbors. That they are mentioned in the same breath as monotheism reflects the significance assigned to such acts of worship.

Moreover, the Sunnah of the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, abounds in commands to treat neighbors with kindness. For instance, *‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Amr*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, had a sheep slaughtered for his family. When he returned home after going away for a while, he enquired: ‘Have you given some to our Jewish neighbor?’ He, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, repeatedly asked and then remarked, “I heard the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, saying: **‘Angel Jibrīl continued to advise me about [treating] the neighbors [well, with such frequency and persuasiveness], that I thought he would order me (as per the command of *Allāh*) to make them heirs.’**” [*Aḥmad* and *At-Tirmidhī*]

In addition, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, taught us that showing kindness to one’s neighbors yields abundant blessings in our lives, households, and provisions. *‘Ā’ishah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with her, reported that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Maintaining ties of kinship with relatives, having good character, and being kind to neighbors bring blessings to the household and increase one’s life span.”** [*Aḥmad*]

On the Day of Resurrection, the greatest adversaries shall be neighbors. *‘Uqbah ibn ‘Āmir*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“The first two people to dispute on the Day of Resurrection will be two neighbors.”** [*Aḥmad*]

Showing kindness to neighbors is one of the main reasons for entering Paradise. It has been reported on the authority of *Abū Hurayrah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, that he asked the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, “O Messenger of *Allāh*! Inform me of a good deed which, if I do, I will enter Paradise.” He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be

upon him, said: **“Show kindness towards others.”** *Abū Hurayrah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, further inquired: “How can I know that I am kind to others?” The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, replied: **“Ask your neighbors; as they can best answer this question for you.”** [*Al-Ḥākim* in *Al-Mustadrak*]

It is true that the best neighbor in the sight of *Allāh*, Exalted be He, is he who is the kindest to his neighbors. *‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Amr*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: *“The best of companions in the sight of Allāh is the one who is best to his companions, and the best of neighbors to Allāh is the one who is the best of them to his neighbor.”* [*At-Tirmidhī*]

Moreover, it has been reported that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“None amongst you (truly) believes until he loves for his brother - or he, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said: “for his neighbor” - that which he loves for himself.**”⁽¹¹⁸⁾

If you are blessed with a good neighbor who treats you kindly, know that you have been blessed with one quarter of happiness in the worldly life. *Sa‘d ibn Abī Waqqāṣ*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Four attainments are aspects of genuine happiness: a righteous wife, a spacious abode, a good neighbor and a comfortable mount; and four things are aspects of misery: a bad wife, a bad neighbor, a small abode and a bad mount.”** [*Ibn Ḥibbān*] If a person is blessed with a kind neighbor, he has been given a great share of happiness, and whoever is afflicted with a bad neighbor has been afflicted with a quarter of misery.

It should be noted that a neighbor enjoys a multitude of rights in Islam, some of which are the following:

(118) *Muslim* and *Al-Bukhārī*.

Firstly, a neighbor is entitled to kindness in its broadest sense: in terms of words and actions as well as having good expectations about him or her. A neighbor, according to custom, is the one whose house is next to yours. However, Muslim scholars underlined that a ‘neighbor’ is not only the one next door, but all those households up to forty houses in all directions.

There are many *Hadīths* that underline the enjoined kindness towards one’s neighbors, on top of which comes our *Hadīth* that reads: **“Whoever believes in *Allāh* and the Last Day, let him treat his neighbor well.”**

Moreover, *Abū Qirād As-Sulamī*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, called for some water to perform ablution. After he, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, performed ablution, the Companions rushed to take his leftover ablution, intending to seek blessings from it. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, exclaimed: **“Why did you do that?”** They explained: “We did it out of love for *Allāh* and His Messenger.” He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, added: **“If you wish to earn the love of *Allāh* and His Messenger, fulfill the trusts, be truthful, and show kindness to your neighbors.”** [*Aṭ-Ṭabarānī*]

A Muslim can earn the love of *Allāh*, Exalted be He, and His Messenger, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, by showing kindness to his neighbors.

Secondly, offering gifts to one’s neighbors, regardless of their value. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said to *Abū Dharr*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, **“O *Abū Dharr*! Whenever you prepare a broth, add a little extra water to it, and give some to your neighbors.”** [*Muslim*]

Moreover, *Ibn ‘Abbās*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“A man is not a true believer if he fills his stomach while his neighbor is hungry.”**⁽¹¹⁹⁾

(119) *Al-Bukhārī*, *Aṭ-Ṭabarānī*, and *Al-Bayhaqī*.

Anas, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**He who has eaten to his fill and knowingly leaves his neighbor hungry, has not believed in me.**”⁽¹²⁰⁾

A Muslim should gift his neighbors, especially those in need.

Thirdly, protecting and defending neighbors’ honor and wealth. One’s neighbor may pass away and it would be required of a Muslim to honor and protect his late neighbor’s family and wealth.

We are sad to hear of the increasing number of betrayals among neighbors nowadays. We hear of a wives cheating on their husbands with their neighbors; neighbors having the audacity to violate the honor of their neighbors, or assaulting them and usurping their property! Verily, these are examples of the most grievous betrayals.

It has been narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, stated that committing adultery ten times is a lesser sin than committing adultery with your neighbor’s wife. Likewise, it is less serious for a man to steal from ten houses than it is for him to steal from his neighbor’s house.⁽¹²¹⁾

In the pre-Islamic era, the Arabs assigned great attention and care to honoring the rights of neighbors, and their history testifies to it. Famous Arab poets spoke of such a great and praiseworthy quality. For example, an Arab poet from the *Banū ‘Abs* tribe, said (what means): “I keenly lower my gazes from my female neighbor if I happened to see her accidentally out of respect for my neighbor’s honor.” Another Arab poet said (what means): “My neighbor does not even need to install a curtain over his house’s door; I lower my gazes anyway.” Yet another Arab poet said (what means): “Once my female neighbor appears, I lower my gaze until she enters her home.”

Fourth, one should abstain from wronging and harming his neighbors.

(120) *Al-Bukhārī*, *Abū Ya ‘lā*, *Aṭ-Ṭabarānī*, and *Al-Bayhaqī*.

(121) *Musnad Aḥmad*.

Sadly, we see a great deal of police reports about the harms inflicted by people on their neighbors, as well as false and malicious complaints and cases filed against neighbors. There are endless examples in this regard. Unquestionably, this is unbecoming of a Muslim. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “*Whoever believes in Allāh and the Last Day, let him refrain from harming his neighbor.*”⁽¹²²⁾

In fact, Islam teaches us that when a person recites the Quran loudly, causing inconvenience to his neighbors, that is also a sin! The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, forbade raising one’s voice while reciting the Quran in the mosque, in order not to disturb those sitting around him.⁽¹²³⁾

I would like to draw the attention of the mosque’s officials and *Imāms* who use loudspeakers outside the mosques during the prayers, causing inconvenience to people in neighboring houses. They are in fact going against the teachings of the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him. They should bear in mind that only the worshippers inside the mosque need to hear their recitation of the Quran; therefore, they should confine themselves to using the internal speakers. They should keep in mind that they may even bear a sin for disturbing the neighbors. It is advisable that they refer to the scholars’ *Fatwas* in this regard.

Fifth: as surprising as it may sound, a Muslim should endure the harm of his unkind neighbor with patience. One of the neighbor’s rights is enduring his harms. *Abū Dharr*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**There are three whom *Allāh* loves and three whom *Allāh* hates. As for those whom *Allāh* loves ... one who has a bad neighbor who harms him and he chooses to endure his harm and aspire to the reward of *Allāh*, until *Allāh* ends the matter either during his lifetime or upon the death of**

(122) *Al-Bukhārī and Muslim.*

(123) *Aḥmad and Abū Dāwūd.*

either of them.” [*Aḥmad*]

Moreover, *Al-Ḥasan Al-Baṣrī*, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, said: “Being a good neighbor does not merely mean refraining from harming one’s neighbors; rather, it also means enduring their harm!”⁽¹²⁴⁾

It has been narrated that a man went to *Ibn Mas‘ūd*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, and said: “I have a bad neighbor who harms, insults, and annoys me.” *Ibn Mas‘ūd*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, said: “If he disobeys *Allāh* by neglecting your due rights over him, do not do the same (i.e. honor his rights over you).”⁽¹²⁵⁾

Fulfilling the rights of neighbors is a great and rewardable act of worship by means of which we can draw closer to *Allāh*, Exalted be He. I would like to remind myself and the dear readers to beware of harming our neighbors and driving them to move away because of our bad attitudes and actions.

It was reported that once a man bought some land and built a beautiful house on it with a great view. However, he had a bad neighbor. He was forced to forgo his aspirations and put it up for sale merely because of this neighbor’s harm. People criticized him for such a decision. In response, he composed a poem reading (which means): “People blame me for selling such a great house cheaply; they knew not of my bad neighbor who is annoying me. I told them to stop blaming me; verily, the true value of a house is determined by the kindness of its neighbors ...”

Having good neighbors is an extremely important thing. It has been narrated that the neighbor of *Sa‘īd ibn Al-‘Āṣ*, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, wanted to sell his home for 100,000 dirhams. He told the would-be purchaser, “This is the price of the house; what would you pay for having *Sa‘īd ibn Al-‘Āṣ* as your neighbor?” He, may *Allāh* have mercy

(124) See *Tanbīh Al-Ghāfilīn* by *As-Samarqandī*.

(125) *Iḥyā’ ‘Ulūm Ad-Dīn*.

upon him, explained: “He checks on you when you are absent, warmly welcomes you whenever he sees you, respects you in your absence, helps you whenever you are in need whether you ask for help or not, and relieves your adversities!” When *Sa‘īd*, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, heard of this, he paid the value of the house to his neighbor told him to stay there, saying: “I have bought the house, and chosen to keep you as my neighbor.”⁽¹²⁶⁾

(126) See *Rabī‘Al-Abrār* by *Az-Zamakhsharī* and *Wafayāt Al-A‘yān* by *Ibn Khallikān*.

Ḥadīth no. 23

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “The first thing to be lifted up (taken away) from this nation will be *Khushū’*.”

Allāh, Exalted be He, has attached great importance to establishing prayer, and has made *Khushū’* (expressing humbleness and submissiveness to *Allāh*, Exalted be He, and attentiveness of the heart) its essence.

It is required of the Muslim to perform the obligatory prayers while observing *Khushū’*. There is no good in a prayer that is devoid of *Khushū’*. No matter how many prayers one may perform, they yield no rewards if he neglects the enjoined *Khushū’*.

In this *Khuṭbah*, we shall carry on with our series “Aphoristic Speech of Prophet *Muḥammad*.”

Our *Ḥadīth* was narrated by *Abū Ad-Dardā’*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, and cited by *Aṭ-Ṭabrānī*, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, in his book *Musnad Ash-Shāmiyyīn*.

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “*The first thing to be lifted up (taken away) from this nation will be Khushū’, and soon you will not find anyone who has Khushū’.*”

As we contemplate the attributes of the believers listed in the Quran, we come to realize that the first attribute *Allāh* mentioned is observing *Khushū’*.

﴿قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ① الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ ② وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنِ اللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُونَ ③ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِلزَّكَاةِ فَاعِلُونَ ④ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِقُرُوبِهِمْ حَافِظُونَ ⑤ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ أَزْوَاجِهِمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مَلُومِينَ ⑥ فَمَنِ ابْتَغَىٰ وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْعَادُونَ ⑦ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَمْتِنَتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رَاعُونَ ⑧ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَىٰ صَلَوَاتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُونَ ⑨ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْوَارِثُونَ ⑩ الَّذِينَ يَرِثُونَ الْفِرْدَوْسَ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ⑪﴾ [المؤمنون: 1-11]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {*Certainly will the believers have succeeded: * They who are during their prayer humbly submissive ... And they who carefully maintain their prayers – * Those are the inheritors* Who will inherit Al-Firdaws. They will abide therein eternally.*} [Al-Mu'minūn, 23:1-11]

The verses highlight the attribute of establishing the prayer after that of observing *Khushū'*, which is mentioned as the foremost of these attributes.

This is why *Hudhayfah*, may Allāh be pleased with him, said: “The first thing of your religion that you will lose is *Khushū'*, and the last thing that you will lose of your religion is establishing the prayer. There is many a person praying who is devoid of any good, and soon you will enter the mosque and not find anyone who observes *Khushū'*.”⁽¹²⁷⁾

The report means that there shall come a time when one would enter a big mosque and will not find a single worshipper observing *Khushū'*! Sadly, Muslims would observe the prayers, but neglect the necessary *Khushū'*.

This is why there are many *Hadīths* encouraging the observance of *Khushū'*. For instance, 'Amr ibn 'Abasah As-Sulamī, may Allāh be pleased with him, reported (in a lengthy *Hadīth*) that the Prophet, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said in a lengthy *Hadīth*: “**Then, if he stands up for the**

(127) Ibn Al-Qayyim in *Madārij As-Sālikīn*, Ibn Abī Shaybah, *Al-Hākim*, and *Abū Nu'aym*.

prayer and praises *Allāh*, glorifies Him, proclaims His Greatness as He deserves, and devotes his heart wholly to Him, he concludes his prayer while being free of sin as the day he was born.” [*Muslim*]

This is the great reward that *Khushū‘* yields. Unfortunately, we have missed out on abundant rewards by neglecting the enjoined *Khushū‘*.

Moreover, ‘*Uthmān*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“When the time for a prescribed prayer is due and a Muslim performs ablution thoroughly, carries out the acts of prayer (bowing and prostration) properly with *Khushū‘*, this prayer will be an expiation for his past sins as long as he does not commit major sins, and this applies forever.”** [*Muslim*]

These great *Ḥadīths* urge us to show keenness on observing *Khushū‘* in prayer. On the other hand, other *Ḥadīths* warn us against the gravity of neglecting it. For example, it has been narrated that one day the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, saw a man offering prayer without performing its bowing and prostration as due. Thereupon the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, remarked: **“Behold, were this man to die in this state, he would die on a religion other than that of *Muḥammad*.”** Then, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, added: **“The likeness of one who does not bow properly and hurries in his prostration, is like a hungry man eating one or two dates; they do not satisfy his hunger in the slightest.”**⁽¹²⁸⁾

Ḥudhayfah, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, - whose narration we have cited above - saw a man praying, but his bowing and prostration were lacking (i.e. he was not bowing properly, and was rushing his prostration such that it looked as if he was pecking). *Ḥudhayfah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, said to him: ‘For how long have you been praying like this?’ The man replied: ‘Forty years.’ *Ḥudhayfah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him,

(128) *Abū Ya‘lā*, *Ibn Khuzaymah*, *Aṭ-Ṭabrānī*, and *Al-Bayhaqī*.

then said: ‘You have not really been praying for forty years, and if you die while still praying like this, you will have died following a path other than the path of *Muḥammad*.’⁽¹²⁹⁾

The reasonable question that arises is “How can we observe *Khushū*?” Since *Khushū* ‘ is the first thing to be lost, how can we observe it?

The following lines shall shed light on the means through which we can observe *Khushū* ‘ as we have been commanded.

First: a Muslim should keenly prepare for the prayer in advance. He should be constantly mindful of the prayer times, purify his heart from worldly pursuits, perform ablution properly, and walk to the prayer place calmly. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**When the call for prayer is made, do not come to [prayer] running. You should walk to it, not run to it.**”⁽¹³⁰⁾

Second: the person praying should keenly observe *Ṭuma’ nīnah* (tranquility in each position of the prayer). The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, used to perform the prayer with tranquility, completing the bowing and prostration properly until every limb returned to its relaxed form, and understanding what he recited.⁽¹³¹⁾ (*Ṭuma’ nīnah* is defined as a praying person’s limbs remaining motionless between two postures of the prayer. It also means that the praying person should ponder over the Quran being recited in the prayer.)

Third: remembering death while standing for prayer and reciting the opening *Takbīr*. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**Remember death in your prayer, because when a man remembers death in his prayer, he is more likely to perfect his prayer. Perform the**

(129) *An-Nasā’ī* and *Al-Bukhārī* with a similar wording.

(130) *Al-Bukhārī* and *Muslim*.

(131) *Al-Bukhārī*, *Aḥmad*, *Abū Dāwūd*, *At-Tirmidhī*, and *Ibn Mājah*.

prayer of a person who does not believe he will pray another prayer. ^{”(132)}

Remembering death during the prayer and thinking that it might be one’s last prayer would urge one to observe *Khushū’*. Verily, this is a crystal-clear instruction. We should recall death while performing the prayer and consider each prayer as our last, as this would urge us to observe *Khushū’* as the highlighted by the *Hadīth*.

Moreover, it has been narrated on the authority of *Abū Ayyūb*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, that a man said to the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, “O Messenger of *Allāh*! Teach me something and make it concise.” The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“When you stand for your prayer, then pray as if it were your last.** ^{”(133)}

Fourth: contemplating over the portion of the Quran being recited in the prayer, whether one is performing the prayer individually or in congregation. Pondering over the Quran being recited in the prayer helps the worshipper observe *Khushū’*.

﴿قُلْ ءَامِنُوا بِهِ ؕ أَوْ لَا تُؤْمِنُوا إِنَّا أَلَيْنَا أَلَمَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ ؕ إِذَا يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ يَخِرُّونَ لِلْأَذْقَانِ سَجْدًا ۖ (١٠٧) وَيَقُولُونَ سُبْحٰنَ رَبِّنَا إِن كَانَ وَعْدَ رَبِّنَا لَمَفْعُولًا ۖ (١٠٨) وَيَخِرُّونَ لِلْأَذْقَانِ يَبْكُونَ وَيَزِيدُهُمْ خُشُوعًا ۗ﴾ [الإسراء: ١٠٧-١٠٩]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {Say, “Believe in it or do not believe. Indeed, those who were given knowledge before it - when it is recited to them, they fall upon their faces in prostration.”* And they say, “Exalted is our Lord! Indeed, the promise of our Lord has been fulfilled.”* And they fall upon their faces weeping, and the Quran increases them in humble submission.} [Al-Isrā’, 17:107-109]

This is another effective method of achieving *Khushū’*.

(132) *Al-Bayhaqī* and *Ad-Daylamī*.

(133) *Aḥmad* and *Ibn Mājah*.

In addition, the person praying should recite different formulae of *Dhikr* and chapters of the Quran in prayer, so as to foster his attentiveness and concentration.

The worshipper may recite different versions of the reported *Dhikr* while bowing such as: “*Subḥāna Rabbī Al-‘Aẓīm* (which means: Glory be to *Allāh*, my Lord, the Greatest)”, “*Subḥāna Rabbī Al-‘Aẓīm wa Bi-Ḥamdih* (which means: Glory be to *Allāh*, my Lord, the Greatest, worthy of praise)”, “*Subbūh Quddūs, Rabb ul-Malā’ikati war Rūḥ* (which means: *Allāh* is the Most Exalted, Most Holy, Lord of Angels and Angel *Jibrīl* [Gabriel])”, or “*Allāhumma Laka Raka’atu wa Bika Āmantu wa Laka Aslamtu, Khasha’ Laka Sam’ī wa Baṣarī wa Mukkhī wa ‘Aẓmī wa ‘Aṣabī* (which means: O *Allāh*, to You I have prostrated myself. I surrender to You, I believe in You; to You I submit. My hearing, my sight, my brain, my bones and my essence are humbled to You). All these are reported *Dhikrs* to be recited while bowing in the prayer.

Another means to attain *Khushū’* is reminding ourselves of the great and abundant rewards yielded by *Khushū’* itself. If we to only do this much, we would certainly attain *Khushū’*, *Allāh* willing. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said about such abundant rewards: **“Verily, when a servant stands to pray, his sins are placed on top of his head and shoulders. Every time he bows or prostrates, they fall away from him.”**⁽¹³⁴⁾

As you stand in the prayer, remember that your sins are placed on top of your head and shoulders. Every time you bow or prostrate and prolong the bowing or prostration, your sins fall away. Bearing that in mind helps the praying person to observe *Khushū’*, and those with *Khushū’* are praised by *Allāh*.

(134) *Al-Marwazī, Ibn Ḥibbān, and Al-Bayhaqī.*

﴿قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١﴾ الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ ﴿٢﴾ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنِ اللَّغْوِ
 مُعْرِضُونَ ﴿٣﴾ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِلزَّكَاةِ فَاعِلُونَ ﴿٤﴾ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِفُرُوجِهِمْ حَافِظُونَ
 ﴿٥﴾ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ أَزْوَاجِهِمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مَلُومِينَ ﴿٦﴾ فَمَنْ ابْتَغَىٰ
 وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْعَادُونَ ﴿٧﴾ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَمَانَاتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رَاعُونَ ﴿٨﴾
 وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَىٰ صَلَاتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُونَ ﴿٩﴾ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْوَارِثُونَ ﴿١٠﴾ الَّذِينَ يَرِثُونَ
 الْفِرْدَوْسَ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿١١﴾﴾ [المؤمنون: 1-11]

*Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {Certainly will the believers have succeeded: * They who are during their prayer humbly submissive ... And they who carefully maintain their prayers – * Those are the inheritors * Who will inherit Al-Firdaws. They will abide therein eternally.} [Al-Mu'minūn, 23:1-11]*

Ḥadīth no. 24

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “Whoever performs ablution well in his home, and then walks to the mosque, he is a guest of *Allāh* and it is a duty upon a host to honor his guest.”

O slave of *Allāh*! Do you know that when you come to the mosque, you are a visitor of *Allāh* in His house?!

O slave of *Allāh*! Do you know that when you come to the mosque, you are under the hospitality of *Allāh* in His house?!

O slave of *Allāh*! Do you know that when you come to the mosque, *Allāh* is happy and welcomes you, just as the family of one who was away is delighted upon his return?!

O slave of *Allāh*! Do you know the numerous gifts and bestowals that *Allāh* prepares for you when you come to the mosque?!

In this *khuṭbah*, we shall carry on with our series on “Aphoristic Speech of Prophet *Muḥammad*”. We will shed light on a *Ḥadīth* narrated on the authority of *Salmān*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, reading, “**Whoever performs ablution well in his home, and then walks to the mosque, he is a guest of *Allāh*, and it is a duty upon the host to honor his guest.**” [*Aṭ-Ṭabarānī*]

The one being visited is *Allāh*, Exalted be He, and the visitor is you – O slave of *Allāh* - while the place of visit is the mosque, the most sacred and the dearest place to *Allāh*, Exalted be He.

‘*Amr ibn Maymūn*, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, said: “The Companions of the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, would repeat this

statement, ‘Mosques are *Allāh*’s houses on the earth, and it is incumbent upon *Allāh* to honor his visitors’.”⁽¹³⁵⁾

Verily, those who come to the mosques are the guests of *Allāh* for whom He prepares plenty of gifts. Now, let us learn about those gifts and bounties that *Allāh* grants to His guests. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“He who goes to the mosque in the morning or in the evening, *Allāh* prepares for him a place in Paradise whenever he goes to the mosque in the morning or in the evening.”**⁽¹³⁶⁾

Indeed, there are numerous gifts which are prepared for *Allāh*’s guests, some of which are the following:

First gift:

They will be given full light on the Day of Judgment. Indeed, the slave of *Allāh* will be in need of that light on the Day of Judgment. There will be extreme darkness on that day, especially on *Aṣ-Ṣirāṭ* (a bridge that will be set up over Hellfire) where every slave of *Allāh* will be in need of light in order to cross it safely. Those who observe the prayers, who walk to the mosque in the darkness in their worldly life, will be given full light on the Day of Resurrection. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, stressed in a *Ḥadīth* that was cited in *Sunan Ibn Mājah* and narrated on the authority of *Anas*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him: **“Convey glad tidings to those who walk to the mosque in the darkness, for they will be given full light on the Day of Judgment.”**

“Darkness” here refers to the darkness at the time of ‘*Ishā*’ (dusk) and *Fajr* (dawn). The ‘People of darkness’ are those who walk to the mosques in the darkness at dawn or dusk. Perhaps no one pays attention

(135) *Ibn Al Mubārak* and *Al Bayhaqī Bayhaqī*.

(136) *Al-Bukhārī* and *Muslim*, on the authority of *Abū Hurayrah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him.

to them and perhaps they are not known among humans, but they are very famous among the residents of heaven. *Allāh*, Exalted be He, will grant them full light.

Second gift: Erasing sins and misdeeds

Sins and misdeeds are wiped away in the houses of *Allāh*. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“He who purifies himself (performs ablution) in his house, and then walks to one of the Houses of *Allāh* (mosque) to perform an obligatory prayer, for every two steps he takes towards the mosque, one step will wipe away a sin and another step will raise his degree in Paradise”** ⁽¹³⁷⁾

Every step is a reward: one erases a sin and the other raises one’s status a degree in the Paradise. The Companions were totally aware of that gift, so they walked to the mosques in small steps. They aspired to be elevated in status and to have their sins wiped away.

In a *Ḥadīth* that was cited in *Sunan At-Tirmidhī* and narrated on the authority of *Ibn ‘Abbās*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him - a long *Ḥadīth* about a vision - the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said towards the end of it: **“The footsteps to the congregation (i.e. walking to the mosque), performing ablution thoroughly even if it is hard to, and waiting eagerly for the next prayer after a prayer is over. And whoever adheres to do that continuously shall live in goodness and die upon goodness, and his sins shall be erased like that on the day upon which his mother gave birth to him.”**

The third gift: Angels are subjugated to them

The one who is suffering from loneliness and keeps saying: ‘I feel lonely, I feel distressed and I feel like the whole world is against me’, I advise him to come to the mosque to relish the merits of visiting it. One is never alone

(137) *Muslim*, on the authority of *Abū Hurayrah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him.

as long as he frequents the mosque, as *Allāh* grants him the gift of making angels subjugated to him. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“When one of you enters the mosque, he is considered as performing prayer so long as it is the prayer which prevents him (from leaving the mosque); and the angels keep on supplicating to *Allāh* for him so long as he remains in his place of prayer. They (the angels) say: ‘O *Allāh*, forgive his sins; O *Allāh*, have mercy upon him; O *Allāh*, accept his repentance.’”**⁽¹³⁸⁾

This *Ḥadīth* highlights the virtue of walking to the mosque and staying in it waiting for the prayer. As long as one remains in the mosque waiting for *Iqāmah* (the second call to prayer), angels – the great creations of *Allāh* who never disobey Him- continue supplicating to *Allāh* for him, saying: “O *Allāh*, forgive him; O *Allāh*, have mercy upon him; O *Allāh*, accept his repentance,” until the *Iqāmah* is called. Thus, you will never feel lonely as long as you come regularly to the mosque. This is one of *Allāh*’s gifts given to His guests.

Fourth gift: How great is this gift!

In a *Ḥadīth* that was cited in *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* and narrated on the authority of *Abū Umāmah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“If anyone goes out from his house after having performed ablution to offer the prescribed prayer in congregation (in the mosque), his reward will be like that of a pilgrim who is in a state of *iḥrām* (ritual consecration). And whoever goes out to offer *Dhuḥā* (the fore-noon prayer), and takes the trouble for this purpose, will obtain the reward like that of a person who performs ‘*Umrah*’”**⁽¹³⁹⁾

(138) *Al-Bukhārī* and *Muslim*, on the authority of *Abu Abū Hurayrah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him.

(139) *Aḥmad* and *Abu Abū Dāwūd*.

Indeed, whenever a slave of *Allāh* hears this *Ḥadīth*, he should be overwhelmed with happiness and should keep remembering and praising *Allāh*. It indicates that the reward of every prescribed prayer, if performed in congregation, is the same as the reward of a prescribed Hajj (pilgrimage), and the reward of praying *Dhuḥā* in the mosque is like the reward of performing *‘Umrah*.

The four gifts mentioned previously are granted to those who visit the mosques for the purpose of praying and remembering *Allāh*. They are given a full light, their sins and their wrongdoings are erased, angels are subjugated to them and they receive a reward like that of a pilgrim who is in a state of *iḥrām*, and a person who performs *‘Umrah*. Indeed, these are great gifts prepared especially for the guests of *Allāh*.

Fifth gift:

The following gift may not be expected, yet it is granted from the most Generous, Exalted be He. One cannot imagine it but actually it is amongst the numerous gifts bestowed to those who come to the house of *Allāh*. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, informed us about this gift saying: **“Whoever performs ablution perfectly, and then goes to the mosque and finds that the people have finished the prayer (in congregation), *Allāh* will give him a reward like one who prayed in congregation and attended it in full; without their reward being decreased in the slightest.”**⁽¹⁴⁰⁾

How Generous is our Lord! If someone who is a regular observer of congregational prayers hastens to the mosque to perform the prayer, but finds the prayer has already finished, he will gain the same rewards as if he had performed it with them in congregation. Indeed, it is a great gift from The Generous, Exalted be He.

(140) *Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd* and *An-Nasāʿī*, on the authority of *Abū Hurayrah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him.

Thus, when the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“It is a duty upon the host to honor his guest”**, he refers to the generosity of *Allāh*, the Most Merciful, the Most Gracious, towards His guests who come to visit His House (*Ka‘bah*), or anyone of His houses (mosques).

Ḥadīth no. 25

The Prophet, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said: “The best charity is to reconcile between people.”

The religion of Islam preaches peacemaking and mending discord among adversaries. It is considered a highly encouraged good deed that begets abundant rewards. It is even regarded the best act of kindness and charity that helps one draw closer to *Allāh*, Exalted be He.

Reconciling between disputants is a meritorious act of worship that abounds in copious good.

﴿وَالصُّلْحُ خَيْرٌ﴾ [النساء: ١٢٨]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {... **and reconciliation is better.**}
[*An-Nisā'*, 4:128]

Reconciliation between people means eliminating the causes of discord, dispute, and dissention among disputants, and sowing instead the seeds of compassion, love, and accord within the hearts.

In fact, reconciling disputing people comes on top of other noble qualities. An Arab poet said (what means): “All merits and noble qualities emanate from two attitudes; honoring the commands of *Allāh*, Exalted be He, and reconciling disputing people.”

In this *Khuṭbah*, we shall carry on with our series “Aphoristic Speech of Prophet *Muḥammad*”. We shall discuss the *Ḥadīth* narrated on the authority of *Ibn ‘Umar*, may *Allāh* be pleased with them, reading: “**The best charity is to reconcile between people.**” [*Aṭ-Ṭabrānī*]

There is no doubt that the virtue of peacemaking and reconciling between

disputants is a noble moral value, with which only those whose hearts are free of malice, envy, conceit, and selfishness are endowed.

Allāh, Exalted be He, encourages such a virtue and great act of worship; there are numerous verses in the Quran to that effect.

﴿مَنْ يَشْفَعْ شَفَعَةً حَسَنَةً يَكُنْ لَهُ نَصِيبٌ مِنْهَا وَمَنْ يَشْفَعْ شَفَعَةً سَيِّئَةً يَكُنْ لَهُ كِفْلٌ مِنْهَا وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُقِيمًا﴾ [النساء: ٨٥]

For instance, *Allāh*, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{Whoever intercedes for a good cause will have a reward therefrom; and whoever intercedes for an evil cause will have a burden therefrom. And ever is Allāh, over all things, a Keeper.}* [*An-Nisā'*, 4:85]

Moreover, *Ibn 'Abbās*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, commented on this verse saying: “Intercession for a good cause in this verse denotes reconciliation between disputing people, and intercession for an evil cause refers to tale bearing.” [*Tafsīr Al-Baghawī*]

﴿لَا خَيْرَ فِي كَثِيرٍ مِنْ نَجْوَاهُمْ إِلَّا مَنْ أَمَرَ بِصَدَقَةٍ أَوْ مَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ إِصْلَاحٍ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ ۗ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ فَسَوْفَ نُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا﴾ [النساء: ١١٤]

Allāh, Exalted be He, also says (what means): *{No good is there in much of their private conversation, except for those who enjoin charity or that which is right or conciliation between people. And whoever does that seeking means to the approval of Allāh – then We are going to give him a great reward.}* [*An-Nisā'*, 4:114]

﴿وَإِنْ تَصْلِحُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا﴾ [النساء: ١٢٩]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{And if you amend [your affairs] and fear Allāh - then indeed, Allāh is ever Forgiving and Merciful.}* [*An-Nisā'*, 4:129]

It is indeed one of the greatest acts of worship that yields abundant rewards.

﴿وَالَّذِينَ يَمْسِكُونَ بِالْكِتَابِ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّا لَا نَضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُصْلِحِينَ﴾
[الأعراف: ١٧٠]

Allāh, Exalted be He, also says (what means): **{But those who hold fast to the Book and establish prayer - indeed, We will not allow to be lost the reward of the reformers.}** [*Al-A‘rāf*, 7:170]

Moreover, there are many *Hadīths* encouraging peacemaking and reconciling between people. For example, it has been narrated on the authority of *Abū Ad-Dardā’*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, that Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**Should I not tell you what is better in virtue than prayer, fasting, and charity?**” They (the companions) said: “Yes.” He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**Reconciling between people.**”⁽¹⁴¹⁾

Reconciling disputants is highly rewardable and supercedes the performance of voluntary fasting, prayer, and charity, in terms of the abundant rewards it begets.

Moreover, *Abū Hurayrah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with them, narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**The son of Adam cannot perform any good deed that is better than establishing prayer, reconciliation between disputing people, and having a good character.**” [*Shu‘ab Al-Īmān*]

Abū Umāmah, may *Allāh* be pleased with them, narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said to *Abū Ayyūb*, may *Allāh* be pleased with them: “**O Abū Ayyūb! Should I inform you of an act of charity which pleases *Allāh*, Exalted be He, and His Messenger?**” He, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, said: “Yes.” The Prophet, peace and

(141) *Aḥmad*, *Abū Dāwūd*, and *At-Tirmidhī*.

blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Reconcile between people when they are quarrelling with each other and bring them closer to one another when their relationships break down.”**⁽¹⁴²⁾

Undoubtedly, it is a great and rewardable act of worship that is much needed in any given community. Disputes and conflicts naturally arise among parents and children, husbands and wives, and families in general within any given community, and this gives rise to dissension. This great act of worship aims to eradicate grudges and discord from the hearts of the disputing people, and aims to make peace among them.

Upon reflection, we come to realize that this act of worship is required in many contexts and situations, some of which are the following:

Firstly, one of the contexts that most requires peacemaking is reconciling between the rulers and the subjects. This means that it is encouraged for a Muslim to show keenness on reconciling between the ruler and the ruled, and unite them at times of discord rather than being among the mischief-makers, who wickedly sow the seeds of discord between the two parties. You are well aware of the gravity of such mischief, and reality best testifies to it.

In addition, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, warned us against corrupting relations among people.

He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Spoiling relations between people is *Al-Ḥāliqah* (razor); it shaves faith, just like a razor removes hair.”** [*At-Tirmidhī*]

Pondering over the situation of the communities, in which there are deliberate attempts to spoil the ruler’s relation with the ruled, we come to realize that they are deprived of genuine faith and righteousness, the most invaluable and needed assets. Accordingly, grievous afflictions have

(142) *Aṭ-Ṭabrānī*, *Aṭ-Ṭayālīsī*, and *Al-Kharā’iṭī*.

befallen them as a punishment.

Therefore, it is odd to find some wicked writers and even preachers exploit situations to spoil the relationship between the ruler and the ruled, and pitting one against the other by circulating negative opinions within the community and focusing only on the bad. Verily, this is far from the required reconciliation and peacemaking. This act of worship means eliminating the causes of discord, dissension, and disunity among the adversaries. Those who kindle rancor between the ruler and the ruled, pitting them against each other, are actually causing grave harm, and such people were described by the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, as mischief-makers.

Secondly, another context that requires this virtue is bringing reconciliation to conflicts and disputes among people, be they brothers or friends. *Anas*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, said: “Whoever makes peace between two people, *Allāh* gives him the reward of freeing a slave upon every word he utters.” How great such a statement is! Every word such a person utters in his commendable attempts of bringing peace between the disputants earns him a reward of freeing a slave. It should be noted that it is inconceivable that *Anas*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, uttered such a statement of his own inclination (because promise of reward is from the matters of the unseen, which can only come from the Quran and Sunnah.) It must have been deduced from the teachings of the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him. The secret behind such a great reward is the gravity of the adversaries’ death before making peace with one another. Dear Muslim who has forsaken his own brothers, parents, children, or wife! Contemplate over this *Hadīth*!

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“It is not permissible (for a believer) to forsake his (Muslim) brother for more than three days. If three days have passed, he should meet him and greet him. If the other one responds to him they will both share the**

reward; but if he does not respond, he will bear his sin and the one who has taken the initiative to greet (the other) will be absolved of the sin of forsaking (one's brother in Faith). If they both die while forsaking each other, they will not be together in Paradise."⁽¹⁴³⁾

The one reconciling between the disputants is actually saving them from the gravity of dying in this sinful state to earn such a great reward.

Thirdly, another context where this virtue is required is reconciling between disputing spouses.

A Muslim should seek to reconcile between disputing spouses and strive to eliminate marital discord and disputes between the husband and wife. This good act is emphasized in many verses in the Quran.

﴿وَأِنْ خِفْتُمْ شِقَاقَ بَيْنِهِمَا فَابْعَثُوا حَكَمًا مِّنْ أَهْلِهِ وَحَكَمًا مِّنْ أَهْلِهَا إِنْ يُرِيدَا إِصْلَاحًا يُوَفِّقِ اللَّهُ بَيْنَهُمَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا خَبِيرًا﴾ [النساء: ٣٥]

For example, *Allāh*, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{And if you fear dissension between the two, send an arbitrator from his people and an arbitrator from her people. If they both desire reconciliation, Allāh will cause it between them. Indeed, Allāh is ever Knowing and Acquainted [with all things].}* [*An-Nisā'*, 4:35]

﴿وَإِنْ أُمْرَأَةٌ خَافَتْ مِنْ بَعْلِهَا نُشُورًا أَوْ إِعْرَاضًا فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا أَنْ يُصَلِّحَا بَيْنَهُمَا صَلِّحًا وَالصُّلْحُ خَيْرٌ﴾ [النساء: 128]

Allāh, Exalted be He, also says (what means): *{And if a woman fears from her husband contempt or evasion, there is no sin upon them if they make terms of settlement between them - and settlement is best. And present in [human] souls is stinginess. But if you do good and fear Allāh - then indeed Allāh is ever, with what you do, Acquainted.}* [*An-Nisā'*, 4:128]

(143) *At-Tabarānī* and *Al-Hākim*.

﴿وَأِنْ تُصْلِحُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَفُورًا رَحِيمًا﴾ [النساء: ١٢٩]

Moreover, *Allāh*, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{And if you amend [your affairs] and fear Allāh - then indeed, Allāh is ever Forgiving and Merciful.}* [*An-Nisā'*, 4:129]

Fourthly, another context that requires reconciliation is making peace between the disputing heirs.

Sometimes, in actual fact, the cause of dissension could be the deceased person's will or the appointed distributor, fueling disputes among the heirs even before the deceased person is buried. The heirs may dispute over their shares of the estate even before they place their deceased inside his or her grave!

﴿فَمَنْ خَافَ مِنْ مَوْصٍ جَنَفًا أَوْ إِثْمًا فَأَصْلَحَ بَيْنَهُمْ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ﴾ [البقرة: ١٨٢]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{But if one fears from the bequeather [some] error or sin and corrects that which is between them, there is no sin upon him. Indeed, Allāh is Forgiving and Merciful.}* [*Al-Baqarah*, 4:182]

Anas, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**Some people are the keys to good and the locks upon evil, and some people are the keys to evil and the locks upon good. Glad tidings to those in whose hands *Allāh* places they keys to good, and woe to those in whose hands *Allāh* places the keys to evil.**” [*Ibn Mājah*]

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, in this *Hadīth*, brought us the glad tidings of abundant good for whomever *Allāh*, Exalted be He, causes to open the doors to good and close the doors to evil.

I would like to urge my fellow Muslims, individuals as well as civil and government institutions to establish special entities to be entrusted with the great task of peacemaking and reconciling between disputants. It would be great to find such entities in every corner of the Muslim world to reduce the number of lawsuits in courts and conduce to reconciliation between disputants within Muslim communities. There is no doubt that whoever takes the initiative to establish such entities with the aim of reconciling between disputing Muslims, on both the individual or institutional levels, shall earn the promised reward, namely, abundant good and glad tidings stated in this *Ḥadīth*.

Ḥadīth no. 26

The Prophet, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said: “This world is sweet and lush.”

In this *khuṭbah*, we shall carry on with our series on “Aphoristic Speech of Prophet Muḥammad”. We shall contemplate upon a Ḥadīth that was cited in *Musnad Aḥmad* and was narrated on the authority of *Abū Sa‘īd Al-Khudrī*, may Allāh be pleased with him; which reads: **“This world is sweet and lush (alluring), and verily Allāh is appointing you as vicegerent, in it in order to see how you act.”**

The worldly life is nothing but a passage. It is not our permanent home. It is not an abode for genuine pleasures and bliss; rather, it is an abode for tests and trials. Thus, whoever is attracted to it and deluded by its external beauty and adornment, is in fact, ignorant of its reality.

The worldly life is simply a means of crossing to the Hereafter. If you want to truly recognize its reality, you shall contemplate over the texts of the Quran and Sunnah. There are numerous verses and Ḥadīths that shed light and elaborate on the reality of the worldly life, some of which are the following:

﴿وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا لَعِبٌ وَلَهُوَ وَلِلدَّارِ الْآخِرَةِ خَيْرٌ لِّلَّذِينَ يَتَّقُونَ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ﴾

[الأنعام: ٣٢]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {**And the worldly life is not but amusement and diversion; but the home of the Hereafter is best for those who fear Allāh, so will you not reason?**} [*Al-An‘ām*, 6:32]

﴿ إِنَّمَا مَثَلُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا كَمَاءٍ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ فَاخْتَلَطَ بِهِ نَبَاتُ الْأَرْضِ مِمَّا يَأْكُلُ النَّاسُ وَالْأَنْعَامُ حَتَّى إِذَا أَخَذَتِ الْأَرْضُ زُخْرُفَهَا وَازَّيَّنَتْ وَظَنَّ أَهْلُهَا أَنَّهُمْ قَادِرُونَ عَلَيْهَا أَتْنَاهَا أَمْرًا لَيْلًا أَوْ نَهَارًا فَجَعَلْنَاهَا حَصِيدًا كَأَن لَّمْ تَغْنَبْ بِالْأَمْسِ كَذَلِكَ نُفَصِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾ وَاللَّهُ يَدْعُوا إِلَى دَارِ السَّلَامِ وَيَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٢٥﴾ ﴾ [يونس: ٢٤-٢٥]

Allāh, Exalted be He, also says (what means): {The example of [this] worldly life is but like rain which We have sent down from the sky that the plants of the earth absorb - [those] from which men and livestock eat - until, when the earth has taken on its adornment and is beautified and its people suppose that they have capability over it, there comes to it Our command by night or by day, and We make it as a harvest, as if it had not flourished yesterday. Thus do We explain in detail the signs for a people who give thought. And Allāh invites to the Home of Peace [i.e., Paradise] and guides whom He wills to a straight path.} [Yūnus, 10:24-25]

Some people were mindful of its reality, so they abandoned it and avoided to be lured by its illusory adornment. Imam *Ash-Shāfi'ī*, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, referred to those people saying: ‘Verily, *Allāh* has intelligent and wise slaves. They abandoned the worldly life, and were cautious of its tribulations and temptations. They looked to it, and when they realized that it is not an abode for those who are truly alive, they perceived it as a stormy ocean [that would bring destruction] and they took their good deeds as ships therein [in order to survive].’

‘*Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar*, may *Allāh* be pleased with them both, narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, once took hold of his (*Ibn ‘Umar*’s) shoulders and said: “Live in this world as (if you are) a wayfarer or a stranger.” ‘*Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar*, may *Allāh* be pleased with them both, used to say: “If you live till the night, then do not wait for

the next day (i.e. do not have hopes that you will live to the next day), and if you wake up in the morning do not have hope that you will live till the night. Take (advantage) from your good health for times of your sickness, and take advantage of your life for your death (i.e. offer every possible obedience in your life before death comes to you for then no deeds can be performed.)”⁽¹⁴⁴⁾ This is the reality of the worldly life. The whole world, including its planets, stars, galaxies, rivers, trees, flowers and towns, can never be compared to the Hereafter.

Our beloved Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“By *Allāh*! This world compared to the Hereafter is like the amount of water one of you gets when he dips his finger into the sea: how much does he remove from it?”**⁽¹⁴⁵⁾

The worldly life is nothing but a transitory abode. All enmities, quarrels and abandonment that Muslim communities witness nowadays are largely due to infatuation with the worldly life and seeking its pleasures, which are nothing compared to what *Allāh* had prepared for His slaves in the Hereafter.

All the regret and tears wept over missing out on a pleasure in the worldly life are results of the ignorance of its reality. It was said: “The soul weeps over this world, and yet it knows that safety in it is to abandon what is in it. There is no house for an individual to live in after death, except for the one that he built before his death. And if he built it with goodness (good deeds), pleasing his abode will become; if it was built with evil, disappointed its builder will be.”

‘*Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, said: “This world is reaching closer and closer to its end, and we are getting closer and closer

(144) *Al-Bukhārī*

(145) *Aḥmad* and *Muslim* with a similar wording on the authority of *Al-Mustawrid ibn Shaddād*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him.

to the Hereafter, and each dwelling place has its seekers, so be among the seekers of the Hereafter and not among the seekers of this life. Today is the time for work, and tomorrow is the time for judgment.”

‘Umar ibn ‘Abdul ‘Azīz, may Allāh have mercy upon him, describes the reality of the worldly life, saying: “Verily, nothing in life is constant or everlasting. All things in it are perishable: the honored and noble people are liable to be humiliated, the rich are liable to become poor, the youth will become old, and every living organism is going to die. Do not be deceived by it as you realize that it is reaching closer and closer to its end. Those who are deluded by it, say: ‘Where are its inhabitants, who built its towns, dug its rivers and implanted its trees?’”

It was said: “Indeed, the worldly life is perishable. Nothing in it is constant. It is a house (fragile and weak) like that the one a spider spins. Verily, the least of its livelihood is sufficient for you to live happily.”

Whoever is attached to the worldly life and is overwhelmed by its love, shall suffer (from depression and distress). The love and preference of the worldly life to Hereafter is described as a blameworthy love.

﴿وَابْتَغِ فِيمَا آتَاكَ اللَّهُ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ وَلَا تَنْسَ نَصِيبَكَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَأَحْسِنْ
كَمَا أَحْسَنَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ وَلَا تَبْغِ الْفُسَادَ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُفْسِدِينَ﴾

[القصاص: ٧٧]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): **{But seek, through that which Allāh has given you, the home of the Hereafter; and [yet], do not forget your share of the world. And do good as Allāh has done good to you. And desire not corruption in the land. Indeed, Allāh does not like corrupters.}**

[Al-Qaṣaṣ, 28:77]

On the other hand, loving the worldly life is not blameworthy if it is not

preferred to the Hereafter. It is permissible to love your parents, your wife and your children. It is also permissible to wear clothes, to drink and eat, according to what is unlawful under the Islamic law, and without jeopardizing one's status in the Hereafter. Islam does not suppress human desires. Instead, it teaches us how to control and direct them rightfully and properly. For example, if one has sexual desires, then he should marry. The soul is innately inclined to love this worldly life and to desire its pleasures.

﴿ زَيْنَ لِلنَّاسِ حُبُّ الشَّهَوَاتِ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ وَالْبَنِينَ وَالْقَنَاطِيرِ الْمُقَنْطَرَةِ مِنَ الذَّهَبِ وَالْفِضَّةِ وَالْخَيْلِ الْمُسَوَّمَةِ وَالْأَنْعَامِ وَالْحَرْثِ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ مَتَاعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ۗ وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ حُسْنُ الْمَبَإِ ﴿١٤﴾ ۗ قُلْ أَوْفَيْتُكُمْ بِحَيْثُ مَنَاصِدِكُمْ ۗ لِلَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَأَزْوَاجٌ مُطَهَّرَةٌ وَرِضْوَانٌ ۗ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِالْعِبَادِ ﴿١٥﴾ ﴾ [آل عمران: ١٤-١٥]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {Beautiful for people is the love of that which they desire – of women and sons, heaped-up sums of gold and silver, fine branded horses, and cattle and tilled land. That is the enjoyment of worldly life, but Allāh has with Him the best return [i.e., Paradise] Say, “Shall I inform you of [something] better than that? For those who fear Allāh will be gardens in the presence of their Lord beneath which rivers flow, wherein they abide eternally, and purified spouses and approval from Allāh. And Allāh is Seeing [i.e. aware] of [His] servants.} [Āl-‘Imrān, 3:14-15]

People who are overwhelmed by love for the worldly life and prefer it to the Hereafter, are not bothered about righteous deeds. They do not refrain from evil and wrongdoings. They eat forbidden food, commit adultery, wear forbidden things, drink forbidden drinks and consume what is unlawful.

Blameworthy love for the worldly life leads to distress and depression. One

would lose both of his worldly life and the Hereafter if he allows himself to be overwhelmed his love for the worldly life.

﴿فَلَا تُعْجِبَكَ أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُهُمْ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُعَذِّبَهُمْ بِهَا فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَتَزْهَقَ أَنْفُسُهُمْ وَهُمْ كَافِرُونَ﴾ [التوبة: ٥٥]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {*So let not their wealth or their children impress you. Allāh only intends to punish them through them in worldly life and that their souls should depart [at death] while they are disbelievers.*} [*At-Tawbah*, 9:55]

He who loves this worldly life will suffer in his life and after his death. In his life, he suffers from his toil while seeking its perishable pleasures, and from grieving over what he missed in it. Moreover, he will be tortured after death in his grave and when he returns to his Lord in the Day of Judgment. He will be called to account and questioned about his actions.

Accordingly, there are three perils related loving the worldly life, which one should be well aware of.

First peril: Suffering from endless distress, poverty, and regret.

It was narrated on the authority of *Anas ibn Mālik*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**If a man’s sole concern is the Hereafter, *Allāh* will make his heart independent, take care of his affairs, and the worldly life will be forced to come to him. If a man’s sole concern is this worldly life, *Allāh* will put poverty between his eyes, unsettle his affairs, and will not get from this world except [the little] that was predetermined for him.**” [*At-Tirmidhī*]

This *Hadīth* indicates the extent of distress and the depressed life that the one who is overwhelmed by the love of the worldly life experiences. Thus,

the slave of *Allāh* should be mindful of the danger of making this worldly life his primary concern, and hankering for its pleasures. Indeed, this love leads to endless distress, poverty, and regret.

Second peril - it is very serious-: Selling religion for worldly gains

This blameworthy love causes one to lose his religion and faith. Moreover, it leads him to neglect the principles and values he used to adopt. Once he is attracted to the worldly life's superficial beauty and adornment, he easily sells his religion for worldly gains. In a *Hadīth* on the authority of *Abū Hurayrah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, warned us against this peril saying: **“Rush to do good deeds as there will be a time where trials and tribulations will occur. They will be like parts of the dark night, morning will come upon a man as a believer, who will be a disbeliever by the evening, and evening will come upon a believer, who will become disbeliever by the morning. One will sell his religion for worldly gains.”** [*Muslim*]

Love for the worldly life blinds one's eyes to see its reality. It causes him to lose his religion and the principles he used to call for. The worldly life is beautified for him and he is lured by its deceitful adornment. He does not hesitate to sell his religion for worldly perishable gains. He may also mislead people in the name of religion by using religious words and a religious attire. His deceptive attitude confuses people- especially those who are attracted to the religious matters and religious people- about Islamic beliefs.

Al-Fuḍayl ibn 'Iyād, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, said: “I prefer to earn my living by working as a drummer to earn it, as opposed to selling my religion by misleading people in the name of religion.”⁽¹⁴⁶⁾ This is because he was aware of the severity of that issue. Imām *Mālik*, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, was asked by his instructor *Rabi'at Ar-Ra'y*: “O

(146) *Al-Bayhaqī in Shu'ab Al-Īmān*

Mālik! Who are the lowly among the people?” *Mālik* replied: “Those who sell their religion for worldly gains.” *Rabi’at Ar-Ra’y* further asked him: “Who are the most lowly among them?” He said: “Those who set right other’s worldly affairs by spoiling their [own] religion.”

Thus, wise is the one who truly contemplates what the texts of the Quran and Sunnah state about the reality of this worldly life. By realizing its reality, one can enjoy the worldly life moderately and properly without being deluded by its tribulations or jeopardizing the Hereafter.

Third peril: Making the worldly life one’s ultimate objective and his main goal. One should beware of making this worldly life his main goal especially in the matters of religion and worship. Be cautious of doing acts of worship and righteous deeds seeking thereby worldly gain. Guard against pursuing worldly gains whenever you perform an act of worship such as praying, giving charity or Zakat, delivering a sermon (*khuṭbah*) and advising someone or even smiling to him. This worldly life does not deserve to be considered one’s main goal. It is nothing but a crossing to reach one’s true goal and real destination which is the Hereafter.

﴿مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْعَاجِلَةَ عَجَلْنَا لَهُ فِيهَا مَا نَشَاءُ لِمَنْ نُرِيدُ ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَا لَهُ جَهَنَّمَ يَصَلُّنَهَا مَذْمُومًا مَدْحُورًا ﴿١٨﴾ وَمَنْ أَرَادَ الْآخِرَةَ وَسَعَىٰ لَهَا سَعْيَهَا وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُولَٰئِكَ كَانَ سَعْيُهُمْ مَشْكُورًا ﴿١٩﴾﴾ [الإسراء: ١٨-١٩]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {*Whoever should desire the immediate (the worldly life)- We hasten for him from it what We will to whom We intend. Then We have made for him Hell, which he will [enter to] burn, censured and banished. But whoever desires the Hereafter (makes it his main goal) and exerts the effort due to it while he is a believer - it is those whose effort is ever appreciated [by Allāh].*} [Al-Isrā’, 17:(18-19)]

In conclusion, one has to be aware of the reality of this worldly life and be mindful of its dangers.

Ḥadīth no. 27

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “Indeed, lying leads to wickedness.”

In this *Khuṭbah* (in our series “Aphoristic Speech of Prophet *Muḥammad*, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him”), we shall discuss the following *Ḥadīth*: **“Indeed, Lying leads to wickedness, and wickedness leads to Hellfire. A man continues to lie until he is recorded as a liar before *Allāh*.”** [*Al-Bukhārī* and *Muslim*]

There is no doubt that lying is a morally repugnant vice and reprehensible quality. It is also among the attributes of the hypocrites and one of the symptoms of disbelief.

Lying is to present information contrary to the truth by means of a statement, action, gesture, facial expression, writing or otherwise.

Lying is the job of a liar, since a liar is someone whose main job is to distort facts, falsify the reality, and sell illusion.

A liar is intrinsically drawn to his like; birds of a feather flock together. On the contrary, truthful and honest people and those endowed with sound human disposition inherently dislike liars. This is why the Arabic proverb goes as follows: “The less truthful people are, the fewer friends they have.” Logically, liars are innately attracted to their counterparts and inclined to keep their company.

There is no doubt that liars are the plague that has befallen the Muslim nation, especially when they are entrusted with governing the affairs of Muslims. This is why an ancient Arabic maxim says: “Never seek to fulfil your needs from a liar; he will make fulfilling them seem imminent when

in fact they are to be delayed and vice versa.”

‘Umar ibn ‘Abdul ‘Azīz, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, used to write instructions to his governors and officials reading: “Beware of appointing persistent liars as aides! Verily, obeying a liar incurs utter destruction.”⁽¹⁴⁷⁾

It is worth highlighting that lying takes multiple forms in our present-day communities and interactions, some of which are the following:

First: lying about *Allāh*, Exalted be He, and the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him.

This simply means declaring unlawful what *Allāh*, Exalted be He, and the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, deemed lawful and declaring lawful what they deemed unlawful. Whoever does so is committing the sinful act of lying about *Allāh*, Exalted be He, and his Messenger, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him.

﴿وَلَا تَقُولُوا لِمَا تَصِفُ أَلْسِنَتِكُمُ الْكُذِبَ هَذَا حَلَلٌ وَهَذَا حَرَامٌ لِنُفْتَرُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكُذِبَ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكُذِبَ لَا يُفْلِحُونَ﴾ [النحل: ١١٦]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {*And do not say about what your tongues assert of untruth, “This is lawful and this is unlawful,” to invent falsehood about Allāh. Indeed, those who invent falsehood about Allāh will not succeed.*} [An-Nahl, 16:116]

Such liars wickedly twist and distort the understanding of the Sharia, changing what is deemed forbidden to lawful or vice-versa. They do this merely to win the approval of someone, or obtain worldly gains and fleeting pleasures. Those who mischievously declare lawful what is deemed unlawful as per the Sharia, while knowing with certainty that they are forbidden, are flagrantly lying about *Allāh*, Exalted be He.

(147) *Al-Kharā’iṭī* in *Masāwi’ Al-Akhlāq*.

﴿ وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ تَرَى الَّذِينَ كَذَبُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ وُجُوهُهُم مُّسْوَدَّةٌ أَلَيْسَ فِي جَهَنَّمَ مَثْوًى لِّلْمُتَكَبِّرِينَ ﴾ [الزمر: ٦٠]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says about such liars (what means): **{And on the Day of Resurrection you will see those who lied about Allāh [with] their faces blackened. Is there not in Hell a residence for the arrogant?}** [Az-Zumar, 39:60]

The same goes for those who egregiously lie about the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him. Sadly, Muslim communities are plagued with such liars in the present time. Some Muslims deliberately, or sometimes unintentionally, attribute lies to the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him. By adopting such an irresponsible and reckless attitude in this regard, we have turned the blessing of new technologies into a curse. Some people would indifferently hasten to post or broadcast whatever unverified information reaches them without investigating its authenticity in the slightest, and therefore end up promoting and circulating fabricated or rejected reports as authentic *Hadīths*, especially when the sender concludes his message with instructions like, “You are entrusted with the duty of resending this message to all your contacts.”

It has been narrated on the authority of *Al-Mughīrah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Ascribing lies to me is not like ascribing lies to any other person. Whoever attributes a lie to me deliberately let him take his place in Hellfire.”** [Al-Bukhārī and Muslim]

It is therefore advisable that a Muslim refrain from resending such reports whose authenticity is not verified, without investigating them first. By doing so, you will be on the safe side. But, to circulate such reports that are falsely attributed to the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, involves huge harm.

Some people, who promote religious innovations, deliberately circulate fabricated reports as authentic *Hadīths* under the pretext that their content may be conducive to rectifying the situation of Muslims! Some may even acknowledge the fact that such fabricated reports are false lies attributed to the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, and know that they are preaching sheer religious innovations that have no basis in the Sharia! They are well aware that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, never said or did what they are claiming, yet they circulate them anyway, hoping that they would help in rectifying the Muslim community and guiding the straying Muslims! How an inversion of reasoning is that! The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, clearly said: **“Ascribing lies to me is not like ascribing lies to any other person. Whoever tells a lie against me deliberately let him take his place in Hellfire.”**

Second: lying while conducting financial transactions.

Some people lie, and even take false oaths merely to sell their goods or get a higher price. There are many *Hadīths* reported in this regard. For instance, *Abū Hurayrah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Swearing a false oath produces a ready sale for a commodity (i.e. it may persuade the buyer to purchase the goods), but blots out the blessing of the earnings.”** another version reads, **“...destroys blessing.”**⁽¹⁴⁸⁾

Moreover, *Abū Umāmah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Whoever swears falsely in order to usurp a Muslim’s right, Allāh makes the Hellfire inevitable for him and Paradise forbidden to him.”** A man inquired, ‘Even if it were something insignificant, O Messenger of *Allāh*?’ He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, replied, **‘Even if it were a twig of an Arak tree!’**” [*Muslim*]

(148) *Aḥmad*, *Al-Bukhārī*, and *Muslim*.

This *Ḥadīth* applies to a person who for example is asked to take a false oath and claim that a certain man died having had one wife only, while he had actually two wives, in order to deny the other wife her rightful share in the estate. This *Ḥadīth* best reflects the gravity of such a sinful act; even if the unjustly usurped property is insignificant as much as a *Siwāk* (teeth cleaning twig made of Arak tree). Even if it were a mere *Siwāk*, as punishment, the perpetrator would be thrown into Hellfire and denied Paradise.

It has been further narrated on the authority of *Ḥakīm ibn Hizām*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Both parties in a business transaction (buyer and seller) have a right to annul it so long as they have not separated. If they tell the truth and make everything clear to each other (i.e., the seller and the buyer speak the truth, the seller with regard to what is purchased, and the buyer with regard to the money) their transaction will be blessed for them, but if they conceal and lie, the blessings of their transaction will be eliminated.”** [*Al-Bukhārī* and *Muslim*]

Moreover, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“There are three (types of) people to whom *Allāh* will neither speak on the Day of Resurrection, nor look at them nor purify them, and they will have a painful chastisement.”** The Messenger of *Allāh*, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, repeated it thrice. *Abū Dharr*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, remarked: “They are ruined! Who are they, O Messenger of *Allāh*?” Upon this, the Messenger of *Allāh*, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“One who lets down his lower garments hang below his ankles out of arrogance, one who boasts of his favors done to others; and one who sells his goods by taking a false oath.”** [*Muslim*]

In fact, there are many *Ḥadīths* reported to this effect, regarding such form of lying.

Third: lying to make people laugh!

Gatherings in the past comprised of a limited number of people. A person would lie to make the few people sitting with him laugh. However, lies now may reach an endless number of followers worldwide on the internet and social media. A person may post or tweet sheer lies, or tell lies in his acting performance merely to make people laugh.

The Messenger of *Allāh*, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Woe to the one who lies in his talks to make people laugh. Woe to him! Woe to him!”**⁽¹⁴⁹⁾

These stern warnings are addressed to those who have the audacity to lie in jest. A Muslim should speak the truth at all times; there are no religious impediments to laughing and making others laugh. However, this does not justify lying.

Some Muslim scholars underlined that the Arabic word “*Wayl*” used in the *Ḥadīth* (translated as “woe”) is actually the name of a valley in Hellfire known for its intense heat; were the mountains of the world to be brought to such a valley, they would melt. This is the punishment of a person who lies to make others laugh, whether in a social gathering or on websites and the like.

Fourth: relating whatever one hears or reads to others.

Some people indifferently relate whatever they see, read, or hear to others without the slightest verification or investigation to make sure that what they are relating is truthful, not to mention whether it is of any real benefit, even if it is true. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“It is enough a lie for a man to relate everything he hears.”** [*Muslim*]

(149) *Aḥmad*, *Abū Dāwūd*, and *At-Tirmidhī*.

A Muslim is legislatively required to refrain from narrating whatever he hears without verification. It is not acceptable that he simply remarks that he is merely relating what has reached him and assumes that he would not be held responsible for it, or that he would escape the sin of lying by doing so. Circulating such unverified information may violate people's honor, jeopardize national security, or undermine the Muslim community! Why would a Muslim be willing to get involved in such a blameworthy activity?

Unfortunately in recent times, hearts have become heavily charged with resentment and bitterness. There are wicked people who are keenly determined to fuel disturbance and chaos within the Muslim communities. They make up false stories and indifferently circulate them, urging others to follow their example and resend them to others and so on. It is advisable that the recipients of such messages should refrain from resending them to others, bearing in mind that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“It is enough a lie for a man to relate everything he hears.”**

Fifth: falsely attributing oneself to other than one's father.

Some people lie about their lineage and claim to be the descendants of other than their real fathers, or that they belong to a certain tribe or family. This is considered a lie and a sinful act as per the Sharia. A Muslim should not falsely attribute himself or others to other than their own family or tribe. This is considered a serious sinful act. Sadly, we have been afflicted recently with this evil attitude. This even takes place right before the eyes of the decision-makers, who gladly accept the chaos, and tampering with people's lineages! Accordingly, within two or three generations, we would have people with unknown lineages! Verily, this is a catastrophe and those decision-makers who remain silent before it, bear a sin turning a blind eye on such a serious problem. There are many *Hadīths* reported on the gravity of such a sinful act and the evil consequences it begets. For instance, the

Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Whoever claims to be the son of any other than his real father knowingly, will not smell the fragrance of Paradise, even though its fragrance can be detected from a distance of seventy years.”** [*Aḥmad*] This also applies to those officials who allow such a sinful act to pass within Muslim communities. Sadly, some people indifferently attribute children with unknown lineages to themselves, or falsely attribute themselves to a certain tribe or family. The *Ḥadīth* applies to them as well.

Moreover, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“He who falsely attributes himself to other than his own father knowingly, Paradise will be deemed forbidden to him.”** [*Al-Bukhārī* and Muslim] This applies to the case when one falsely attributes another person to other than his father or family leading to the mixing of lineages and undermining the Muslim community.

A third *Ḥadīth* reads: **“Whoever claims to belong to someone other than his father, or (a freed slave) who claims that his *Walā*⁽¹⁵⁰⁾ is for other than his real master, the curse of *Allāh*, the angels and all people will befall him.”** [*Aḥmad* and *Ibn Mājah*] Some Muslims employ devious methods and circumvent the laws to attribute themselves to their paternal or maternal uncles in order to enter the country legally. In fact, those people have incurred the curse of *Allāh*, the angels, and all people upon themselves and upon many generations to come.

In brief, we come to realize that there are various forms of lies, and it befits the wise Muslim to avoid all such forms keenly and implore *Allāh*, Exalted be He, to help him adhere to truthfulness as enjoined.

(150) An Islamic system of the manumission of slaves devised whereby a master and his freed slave always remained tied together in a kind of brotherhood; if a slave died without heirs, his previous master would inherit his wealth. Similarly, if a master died without heirs, his freed slave would inherit his wealth.

Ḥadīth no. 28

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “Supplication is (the essence of) worship.”

This is a tender call to all the distressed, grief-stricken, and heavy-hearted people in the world.

It is a gentle call to those struggling with sickness, adversity, or agony, and whoever stands in need of help and deliverance.

It is a call to those who are overwhelmed with troubles, and lack any source of relief or assistance.

﴿وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ ۖ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ ۗ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ﴾ [البقرة: 186]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{And when My servants ask you, [O Muhammad], concerning Me - indeed I am near. I respond to the invocation of the supplicant when he calls upon Me. So let them respond to Me [by obedience] and believe in Me that they may be [rightly] guided.}* [Al-Baqarah, 2:186]

﴿وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمْ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَن عِبَادَتِي سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَاخِرِينَ﴾ [غافر: 60]

Allāh, Exalted be He, also says (what means): *{And your Lord says, “Call upon Me; I will respond to you.” Indeed, those who disdain My worship will enter Hellfire [rendered] contemptible.}* [Ghāfir, 40:60]

Moreover, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, who never

spoke of his own inclination, said: **“Whoever is afflicted with destitution, and he beseeches people (seeking relief from it), his destitution shall not cease and will not be relieved. And whoever suffers from destitution and he beseeches *Allāh* for it (seeking relief from *Allāh* alone), *Allāh* will bless him with provision and relieve him, sooner or later.”**⁽¹⁵¹⁾

In this *Khuṭbah* (in our series “Aphoristic Speech of Prophet Muḥammad, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him”), we shall discuss the *Ḥadīth* narrated on the authority of *An-Nu‘mān ibn Bashīr*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, reading: *“Supplication is (the essence of) worship.”*⁽¹⁵²⁾

There is no doubt that supplication is a great rewardable act of worship whereby a Muslim seeks to draw closer to *Allāh*, Exalted be He. Whenever a Muslim implores his Lord and asks Him for whatever he needs or aspires to obtain, he should bear in mind that he is performing an act of worship.

Supplication serves as a useful means in many situations, some of which are the following:

First: it is a great means to ward off calamities and can even change divine decree. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Nothing can ward off the divine decree except supplication.”** [*At-Tirmidhī*]

Moreover, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Verily, supplication benefits against that which has already befallen you as well as that which has not yet befallen you, so hold fast, O worshippers of *Allāh*, onto supplication.”** [*At-Tirmidhī*]

In addition, supplication is held in a high status in the sight of *Allāh*, Exalted be He. *Allāh* loves to hear the submissive voice of His slave, imploring Him. He loves seeing our utter submission and need for Him. The

(151) *At-Tirmidhī*. A *Ḥadīth* of a similar wording was cited by *Aḥmad* and *Abū Dāwūd*.

(152) *Aḥmad*, *Abū Dāwūd*, *At-Tirmidhī*, and *Ibn Mājah*.

Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**There is nothing more noble in the sight of *Allāh*, Exalted be He, than supplication.**”⁽¹⁵³⁾

Allāh, Exalted be He, loves to hear our voices as we humbly implore Him and proclaim our need for Him.

Moreover, *Allāh*, Exalted be He, dislikes that His slave should refrain from invoking Him. When a person turns away from his Lord and abstains from supplication, mistakenly assuming that he does not need it, he incurs His wrath.

﴿ وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمْ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَاخِرِينَ ﴾ [غافر: 60]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {**And your Lord says, “Call upon Me; I will respond to you.” Indeed, those who disdain My worship will enter Hellfire [rendered] contemptible.**} [Ghāfir, 40:60]

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “*He who does not invoke Allāh, Exalted be He, incurs His wrath.*” [Aḥmad and At-Tirmidhī]

Allāh, Exalted be He, gets angry at whoever arrogantly refrains from imploring Him. On the contrary, people may get fed up with frequent requests of help, whereas *Allāh*, Exalted be He, loves to hear the voice of His slave imploring Him.

An Arab poet said (what means): “When you refrain from asking *Allāh*, Exalted be He, you incur His wrath, whereas, asking any human being for help may drive him angry!”

It is advisable that a Muslim should keenly supplicate *Allāh*, Exalted be He, and implore Him for anything he needs, no matter how insignificant we may perceive it.

(153) Aḥmad, At-Tirmidhī, and Ibn Mājah.

‘Ā’ishah, may *Allāh* be pleased with her, taught us to invoke *Allāh*, Exalted be He, for all our needs, no matter how trivial they may seem to us. She, may *Allāh* be pleased with her, said: “Let one of you ask his Lord for ease in everything that he needs, even a lace for his shoe if it breaks; nothing can be easy unless *Allāh*, Exalted be He, makes it easy.”⁽¹⁵⁴⁾ It befits a Muslim to turn to *Allāh*, Exalted be He, for help and invoke Him for all his needs, as simple as they may seem.

Indeed, supplication can serve as a very useful instrument to ward off evil and adversities, and a source of remedy for misfortune. It is the only means to change the divine decrees before they come to pass and the means to rectify unfavorable situations. *Ibn Al-Qayyim*, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, wrote: “Supplication is among the most beneficial cures, and it is an enemy to tribulations. It suppresses and cures them. It prevents tribulations from befalling the person and removes or alleviates them, if they befall him. It is the weapon of the believer.” [*Al-Jawāb Al-Kāfī*]

Verily, it is an easy act of worship to perform; as the person does not need any intermediary between himself and his Lord, nor ever need to offer any bribe. He can simply turn to *Allāh*, Exalted be He, in any given place or state, at the mosque, house, lab, or even while lying on his own bed.

A Muslim should bear in mind that once he starts invoking *Allāh*, Exalted be He, he is considered in a state of worship that earns him abundant rewards, whether the supplications are answered or not. This is why the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “*Supplication is (the essence of) worship.*”

It is required of a Muslim to devote his acts of worship sincerely and exclusively to *Allāh*, Exalted be He. (Accordingly, he must not turn to other than *Allāh*, Exalted be He, in supplication.)

(154) *Aḥmad* and *Al-Bayhaqī*.

﴿قُلْ أَمَرَ رَبِّي بِالْقِسْطِ وَأَقِيمُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ عِندَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَادْعُوهُ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ﴾ [الأعراف: ٢٩]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{Say, [O Muḥammad], “My Lord has ordered justice and that you maintain yourselves [in worship of Him] at every place [or time] of prostration, and invoke Him, sincere to Him in religion.”}* [Al-A‘rāf, 7:29]

﴿هُوَ الْحَيُّ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ فَادْعُوهُ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ﴾ [غافر: ٦٥]

Allāh, Exalted be He, also says (what means): *{He is the Ever-Living; there is no deity except Him, so call upon Him, [being] sincere to Him in religion. [All] praise is [due] to Allāh, Lord of the worlds.}* [Ghāfir, 40:65]

The supplicant should humbly raise his hands to his Lord, proclaiming his utter need for Him and reliance on His assistance. He should raise his hands as high as he can, and display his submission and weakness before *Allāh*, Exalted be He.

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Your Lord is Modest and Generous, and would never turn the hands of a slave empty when he raises them to Him (in supplication).”**⁽¹⁵⁵⁾

Allāh, Exalted be He, is too gracious and generous to turn down His slave as he turns to Him and calls upon Him.

It is advisable that a Muslim should raise his hands and supplicate his Lord whether in public or private. It has been narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, used to raise up both his hands in supplication that the whiteness of his armpits was seen.

The third etiquette of supplication is praising *Allāh*, Exalted be He.

(155) *Abū Dāwūd, At-Tirmidhī, and Ibn Mājah.*

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “*And nothing is more loved by Allah than praise.*”⁽¹⁵⁶⁾

Allāh, Exalted be He, loves to be praised and He has extensively praised Himself in the Quran. One of the due etiquettes of supplication is praising *Allāh*, Exalted be He, before invoking Him.

It has been narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, once heard a man supplicating to *Allāh* in *Ṣalāh* saying: ‘O *Allāh*, I ask You on account of my bearing witness that there is no deity worthy of worship but You, the One and Only God, Who begets not nor was begotten, and there is none equal or comparable to Him.’ He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, remarked: “**You have supplicated *Allāh* with His Greatest Name. When *Allāh* is asked by this name, He gives, and when He is supplicated by it, He answers.**”⁽¹⁵⁷⁾

The fourth etiquette is invoking *Allāh*, Exalted be He, while believing with certainty that He shall answer your supplications and fulfill your requests. One should never implore *Allāh*, Exalted be He, with a doubtful heart. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said in the *Qudsī Hadīth*: “***Allāh*, Exalted be He, said: ‘I am as My slave expects me to be.**”⁽¹⁵⁸⁾ Therefore, a Muslim is required to expect the best of *Allāh*, Exalted be He, and implore Him with a heart reassured with certitude. If one has good or bad expectations about *Allāh*, Exalted be He, He will fulfill his expectations accordingly.

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**Call upon *Allāh* while being certain of being answered, and know that *Allāh* does not respond to a supplication from the heart of one who is heedless and distracted.**” [*At-Tirmidhī*]

(156) *Al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and Ibn Mājah.*

(157) *Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, At-Tirmidhī, and Ibn Mājah.*

(158) *Al-Bukhārī and Muslim.*

The fifth etiquette of supplication is invoking peace and blessings of *Allāh*, Exalted be He, upon the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, after the supplication. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, taught us to conclude our supplications with invoking peace and blessings upon him, and informed us that this makes our supplications more likely to be answered.

‘*Alī*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, said: “Your supplications remain screened (i.e. unanswered) until you invoke peace and blessings upon the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, and his family.”⁽¹⁵⁹⁾

It is worth highlighting two important points regarding supplication.

First: Muslim parents should beware of supplicating *Allāh*, Exalted be He, against himself or his children. *Jābir*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**Do not invoke curses upon yourself, your children or your possessions, lest you should happen to do it at a moment when the supplications are accepted, and your supplication might be answered.**” [*Abū Dāwūd* and *Muslim*]

It is severely discouraged for a Muslim to supplicate against himself, his children, or property at times of anger lest his supplications should be answered and he would incur destruction upon himself, his children, or property. Rather, one should supplicate in their favor and for their betterment. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**Three supplications are answered without doubt: the supplication of the oppressed, the supplication of the traveler, and the supplication of the parent for his child.**”⁽¹⁶⁰⁾

Second: Muslims should beware of the supplications of those whom they wrong. A Muslim should keenly refrain from wronging others, exposing

(159) *At-Tabarānī* and *Al-Bayhaqī*.

(160) *Aḥmad*, *Abū Dāwūd*, *At-Tirmidhī* and *Ibn Mājah*.

himself to the peril of being the target of their supplications. This applies to whomever a Muslim may wrong, be it a Muslim or a disbeliever, whether Jew, Christian, Hindu or Buddhist. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Beware of the supplication of the oppressed, even if a disbeliever.”** [*Aḥmad*]

How would the case be then, when the wronged person is righteous or among the friends of *Allāh*, Exalted be He?

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Beware of the supplication of the oppressed, for there is no barrier between it and *Allāh*, Exalted be He.”** [*Al-Bukhārī* and *Muslim*]

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, also said: **“The supplication of the oppressed is carried upon the clouds, and the gates of heaven are opened for it, and the Lord says, ‘I will surely support you (against the wrongdoer) even if it is after a while.’”** [*Aṭ-Ṭabrānī* and *Aḥmad*]

Moreover, *Ibn ‘Umar*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Beware of the supplication of the oppressed; it ascends to the heaven as if it were a flare.”**⁽¹⁶¹⁾

As much as a Muslim is encouraged to supplicate *Allāh*, Exalted be He, for all his needs, the wronged person is encouraged to invoke his Lord against those who wrong him.

History has recorded the tales of many tyrants who were destroyed because of the supplications of those whom they had wronged. Similarly, there are many accounts about healthy oppressors who were afflicted with sickness or poverty as a result of the supplications of those whom they wronged. It is advisable that a Muslim keenly refrain from

(161) *Al-Mustadrak of Al-Ḥākim.*

wronging others and be mindful of the supplications of the oppressed against him.

An Arab poet said (what means): “Beware of falling into the abyss of injustice; do not wrong others if you hold authority. Verily, injustice begets remorse. You may heedlessly forget about it, but the wronged person remains mindful of it and supplicates his Lord against you and He shall inevitably punish you for such injustice sooner or later.”

Ḥadīth no. 29

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “There shall come upon people a time when the one who patiently holds onto his religion will be like the one holding onto a burning ember.”

In this *Khuṭbah*, we shall carry on with our series “Aphoristic Speech of Prophet *Muḥammad*”. We shall discuss the *Ḥadīth* narrated on the authority of *Anas*, may *Allāh* be pleased with them, reading: “*There shall come upon people a time in which the one who patiently holds onto his religion will be like the one holding onto a burning ember.*” [*Aṭ-Ṭabrānī*]

In this the *Ḥadīth*, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, informed us of the change of times in the future during which numerous tribulations will befall people’s religiosity. He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, described these days as “days of patience”.

He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “*Ahead of you there lie days of patience, during which being patient will be like grasping a burning coal. The one who does good deeds then will earn a reward equal to that of fifty men who perform the like of his good deeds.*” [*Ibn Ḥibbān*]

The distinct features of such a time as delineated by the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, are: the numerous temptations and trials (*Fitnah*) as well as compromise, relapse, and regress as far as religiosity is concerned.

Verily, overwhelming *Fitnah* befalling religiosity is considered the most grievous peril, as it drives Muslims away from their religion. It should be highlighted that *Fitnah* does not necessarily manifest itself merely in forms of wars, chaos, or murder. These are mere examples on the manifestations

of *Fitnah*; both deprivation and affluence (poverty and richness) can be tests for people. The same goes for well-being and sickness.

However, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, pointed out a specific kind of *Fitnah*, namely, *Harj* (widespread killing).

This is why the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“There will be trials (in the near future) during which a sitting person will be better than a standing one, and the standing one will be better than a walking one, and the walking one will be better than a running one.”** [*Al-Bukhārī* and *Muslim*]

This means that the less exposed you are to *Fitnah*, the safer and better off you would become.

Partaking in such grievous *Fitnah* differs in terms of gravity according to the role one plays. The one who actively participates in fueling the *Fitnah* is not equal to the one playing a smaller part in it (in terms of the sin the doer bears). Such harsh times shall witness serious fluctuations and compromise. Some role models will compromise many of their moral values and principles that they have long preached. Verily, this is an example of the most grievous *Fitnah* that would befall Muslims.

﴿ وَأَتَلَّ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ الَّذِي ءَاتَيْنَاهُ ءَايَاتِنَا فَانْسَلَخَ مِنْهَا فَاتَّبَعَهُ الشَّيْطَانُ فَكَانَ مِنَ الْغَاوِينَ ﴿١٧٦﴾ وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَرَفَعْنَاهُ بِهَا وَلَٰكِنَّهُ أَخْلَدَ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ فَمَثَلُهُ كَمَثَلِ الْكَلْبِ إِنْ تَحْمِلَ عَلَيْهِ يَلْهَثْ أَوْ تَرَكَهٗ يَلْهَثْ ذَٰلِكَ مِثْلُ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِءَايَاتِنَا ۖ فَاقْصُصِ الْقَصَصَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿١٧٦﴾ ﴾

[الأعراف: 175-176]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {*And recite to them, [O Muhammad], the news of him to whom we gave [knowledge of] Our signs, but he detached himself from them; so Satan pursued him, and he*

became of the deviators. And if We had willed, we could have elevated him thereby, but he adhered [instead] to the earth and followed his own desire. So his example is like that of the dog: if you chase him, he pants, or if you leave him, he [still] pants. That is the example of the people who denied Our signs. So relate the stories that perhaps they will give thought.}* [Al-A'raf, 7:175-176]

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**There shall come upon the people a time in which the one who patiently holds onto his religion will be like the one holding onto a burning ember.**”

This gives rise to an important question; what are the means that would help us adhere to the required patience at such harsh times when *Fitnah* shall overwhelm us?

The following lines shall answer it.

First: devotion to worship and drawing closer to *Allāh*, Exalted be He.

When you are overwhelmed by *Fitnah*, it is advisable that you should devote yourself to worship and drawing closer to *Allāh*, Exalted be He. You should devote your whole life exclusively to *Allāh*, Exalted be He.

﴿قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٦٢﴾ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَبِذَلِكَ أُمِرْتُ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿١٦٣﴾ قُلْ أَغَيْرَ اللَّهِ أَبْغَىٰ رَبًّا وَهُوَ رَبُّ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ ۗ وَلَا تَكْسِبُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ إِلَّا عَلَيْهَا ۗ وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ ۗ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُم مَّرْجِعُكُمْ فَيُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿١٦٤﴾﴾ [الأنعام: 162-164]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {Say, “**Indeed, my prayer, my rites of sacrifice, my living and my dying are for Allāh, Lord of the worlds.* No partner has He. And this I have been commanded, and I am the first [among you] of the Muslims.**”} Say, “**Is it other than Allāh I should desire as a lord while He is the Lord of all things? And every**

soul earns not [blame] except against itself, and no bearer of burdens will bear the burden of another. Then to your Lord is your return, and He will inform you concerning that over which you used to differ.”} [Al-An‘ām, 4:162-164]

A Muslim is required to devote himself sincerely and exclusively to *Allāh*, Exalted be He, in a manner that encompasses the totality of his life and existence. Verily, *Allāh*, Exalted be He, is the ultimate source of steadfastness, strength, and protection for man.

﴿وَلَوْلَا أَنْ تَبَنَّكَ لَقَدْ كِدْتَ تَرْكَنُ إِلَيْهِمْ شَيْئًا قَلِيلًا﴾ ﴿٧٦﴾ إِذَا لَأَذْنَنَكَ
 ضَعْفَ الْحَيَاةِ وَضَعْفَ الْمَمَاتِ ثُمَّ لَا تَجِدُكَ عَلَيْنَا نَصِيرًا ﴿٧٥﴾ [الإسراء: ٧٤-٧٥]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says, addressing the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, and all Muslims (what means): {*And if We had not strengthened you, you would have almost inclined to them a little.* Then [if you had], We would have made you taste double [punishment in] life and double [after] death. Then you would not find for yourself against Us a helper.*} [Al-Isrā’, 4:74-75]

Bear in mind that if you fail to devote yourself to *Allāh*, Exalted be He, as due at times of prosperity, it is harder to do so at times of adversity.

Dear Muslims, beware of failing to devote yourselves to *Allāh*, Exalted be He, at times of prosperity and ease, since it becomes rather harder to do so at times of adversity and hardship. You may be lost and led astray to other than the path of guidance, and be left to perish in the relentless crashing waves of *Fitnah*.

Second: a Muslim should devotedly embark on reciting, memorizing, contemplating, and acting upon the Quran. Verily, this is one of the greatest sources of assistance and empowerment for a Muslim to hold fast onto the enjoined patience at times of *Fitnah*.

﴿ وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ الْقُرْآنُ جُمْلَةً وَاحِدَةً كَذَلِكَ لِنُثَبِّتَ بِهِ فُؤَادَكَ
وَرَتَّلْنَاهُ تَرْتِيلًا ﴾ [الفرقان: ٣٢]

Allāh, Exalted be He, also says (what means): *{And those who disbelieve say, “Why was the Quran not revealed to him all at once?” Thus [it is] that We may strengthen thereby your heart. And We have spaced it distinctly.}* [*Al-Furqān*, 25:32]

Those Muslims who read the *Quran* in *Ramaḍān* only and abandon it during the rest of the year would face serious difficulty in holding onto the patience required at times of *Fitnah*. On the contrary, committedly familiarizing oneself with the *Quran* on a regular basis and allocating a daily session for reciting and pondering over the *Quran* are conducive to adhering to that necessary patience at times of *Fitnah*. It has been reported on the authority of *Abū Shurayh Al-Khuzā‘ī*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, that the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “Verily, this *Quran* can be likened to a rope, one end of which is in the Hand of *Allāh* and the other end in your hands. Hold fast to it, for you will never be led astray or ruined ever again.”⁽¹⁶²⁾

The *Quran* therefore serves as a safety net for Muslims, shielding them against misguidance.

Third, a Muslim should devote himself to worship to help him hold onto the enjoined patience at times of *Fitnah*.

Worship at times of *Fitnah* is held in remarkably special regard, and is handsomely rewardable. This is why the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, highly praised those who devote themselves to worship at times of *Fitnah*. He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “The reward of worship performed at a time of trials is equal (in

(162) *Ibn Abī Shaybah*, *Ibn Hibbān*, and *Aṭ-Ṭabrānī*.

reward) to an emigration to me.” [Muslim]

We have missed out on the abundant rewards yielded by the migration to the Prophet, because that time has passed; however, we can still earn equal rewards by devoting ourselves to worship at times of *Fitnah* and *Harj*.

﴿لَوْ أَنَّهُمْ فَعَلُوا مَا يُوعَظُونَ بِهِ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ وَأَشَدَّ تَبِيئًا﴾ [النساء: ٦٦]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): **{But if they had done what they were instructed, it would have been better for them and a firmer position [for them in faith].}** [*An-Nisā*’, 4:66]

The phrase ‘what they were instructed...’ in the verse refers to the enjoined acts of worship such as: prayer, *Zakāh*, recitation of the Quran, acts of kindness, and charity. The verse means that were Muslims to obey such divine commands and do what they were instructed, these acts of worship would have helped them to hold onto the enjoined steadfastness.

Fourth: a Muslim should call upon his Lord and seek His assistance.

We have previously underlined that *Allāh*, Exalted be He, is the ultimate source of protection, deliverance, and strength. If a Muslim fails to be mindful of his Lord at times of *Fitnah*, then when would he be mindful of Him? This is why the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**Know Allāh in times of ease and prosperity, and He will remember you in times of adversity.**” [*Aḥmad*] Moreover, he, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, used to implore his Lord saying: “**O Changer of the hearts, make my heart firm upon Your religion.**”⁽¹⁶³⁾

When the confederates of disbelievers assembled their joint forces of various tribes to besiege *Madīnah*, the Muslims decided to dig up a massive ditch around their city to ward off the assault. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, participated in the digging and

(163) *Aḥmad*, *At-Tirmidhī*, and *Ibn Mājah*.

chanted out loud for Muslims, saying: “*O Allāh! Were it not for You, we would not have been guided, nor would we have given in charity, nor prayed. Shower upon us calmness when we meet the enemy, and make our feet firm, for indeed if they want to put us in affliction, (i.e. want to fight against us) we would not (flee but withstand them).*”

[*Al-Bukhārī and Muslim*]

It is therefore highly encouraged that a Muslim firmly holds onto the bond with his Lord.

Abū Hurayrah, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, said: “There will be *Fitnah* (and at that time) no one will be saved except the one who supplicates *Allāh* as fervently as a drowning person would supplicate.”

[*Muṣanaf Ibn Abī Shaybah*]

﴿وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَىٰ أُمَمٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ فَأَخَذْنَاهُمْ بِالْبَأْسَاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَضُرَّعُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾ فَلَوْلَا إِذْ جَاءَهُمْ بَأْسُنَا تَضَرَّعُوا وَلَكِن قَسَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾ فَلَمَّا نَسُوا مَا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ أَبْوَابَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا فَرِحُوا بِمَا أُوتُوا أَخَذْنَاهُمْ بَغْتَةً فَإِذَا هُمْ مُبْلِسُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾ فَقَطَّعَ دَائِرَ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا ﴿٤٥﴾ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾ [الأنعام: ٤٢-٤٥]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {*And We have already sent [messengers] to nations before you, [O Muḥammad]; then We seized them with poverty and hardship that perhaps they might humble themselves [to Us].* Then why, when Our punishment came to them, did they not humble themselves? But their hearts became hardened, and Satan made attractive to them that which they were doing.* So when they forgot that by which they had been reminded, We opened to them the doors of every [good] thing until, when they rejoiced in that which they were given, We seized them suddenly, and they were [then] in despair.* So the people that committed wrong were eliminated. And praise to Allāh, Lord of the*

worlds.} [*An-An'ām*, 4:42-45]

When *Allāh*, Exalted be He, tested those people with trails, He wanted them to turn to Him and call upon Him for help. However, they failed and incurred the punishment of *Allāh*, Exalted be He, accordingly.

In brief, devoting oneself to *Allāh*, Exalted be He, memorizing, contemplating, and acting upon the Quran, supplication, and performing good deeds are among the best means that help a Muslim to adhere to the enjoined patience at times of *Fitnah*.

Fifth: keeping the company of righteous people endowed with knowledge of *Allāh*, Exalted be He, and patience, at times of *Fitnah*.

Keeping righteous and spiritually nurturing company is a great tool that helps a person hold onto the patience required at times of *Fitnah*. None should misguidedly think that he is able to do without the help of others in this regard. *Allāh*, Exalted be He, even enjoined the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, to hold onto righteous company and highlighted the importance of this source of assistance at harsh times. In principle, all Muslims should hold the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, as their source of strength and spiritual nurture and yet *Allāh*, Exalted be He, enjoined him to keep righteous company in order to cultivate this fundamental value within the hearts of all Muslims.

﴿وَأَصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ ۗ وَلَا تَعْدُ عَيْنَاكَ عَنْهُمْ تُرِيدَ زِينَةَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ۗ وَلَا تُطِعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُ عَن ذِكْرِنَا وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ وَكَانَ أَمْرُهُ فُرُطًا﴾ [الكهف: ٢٨]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): *{And keep yourself patient [by being] with those who call upon their Lord in the morning and the evening, seeking His countenance. And let not your eyes pass beyond*

them, desiring adornments of the worldly life, and do not obey one whose heart We have made heedless of Our remembrance and who follows his desire and whose affair is ever [in] neglect. } [Al-Kahf, 18:28]

These are the means delineated in the Quran and Sunnah to achieve the steadfastness required. All Muslims should implement such means at times of prosperity and times of adversity, and times of *Fitnah* a priori. Lastly, we implore *Allāh*, Exalted be He, to safeguard us from *Fitnah*.

Ḥadīth no. 30

The Prophet, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said: “Two will never be gathered in the heart of a slave of Allāh: faith and envy.”

Over more than seven months, we have been discussing “Aphoristic Speech” of the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him. In this *khuṭbah*, we shall conclude our series with the thirtieth *Ḥadīth* which was cited in (*Sunan Ibn Majah*) and narrated on the authority of *Abū Hurayrah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him. It reads: “*Two will never be gathered in the heart of a slave of Allāh: Faith and envy.*” This *Ḥadīth* indicates that whenever envy is present in the heart of a believer, it seriously affects his faith. Moreover, it could be the main reason that takes faith out of the heart.

There are many verses in the Quran which refer to this evil disease of the heart, some of which are the following:

﴿أَمْرٍ يُحْسَدُونَ النَّاسَ عَلَىٰ مَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ ۗ فَقَدْ آتَيْنَا آلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَءَاتَيْنَاهُمْ مُلْكًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٥٤﴾﴾ [النساء: 54]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): {*Or do they envy people for what God has given them of His bounty? But We had already given the family of Abraham the Scripture and wisdom and conferred upon them a great kingdom.*} [*An-Nisā*, 4:54]

﴿وَدَّ كَثِيرٌ مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ لَوْ يَرُدُّونَكُمْ مِن بَعْدِ إِيمَانِكُمْ كُفَّارًا حَسَدًا مِّنْ عِنْدِ أَنفُسِهِمْ مِّن بَعْدِ مَا بَيَّنَّ لَهُمُ الْحَقُّ ﴿١٠٩﴾﴾ [البقرة: 109]

Allāh, Exalted be He, also says (what means): {*Many of the People of the Scripture wish they could turn you back to disbelief after you have believed, out of envy from themselves [even] after the truth has become*

clear to them.} [*Al-Baqarah*, 2:109]

﴿وَمِن شَرِّ حَاسِدٍ إِذَا حَسَدَ﴾ [الفلق: ٥]

Allāh, Exalted be He, also says (what means): {*And [say: I seek refuge in Allāh] from the evil of an envier when he envies.*} [*Al-Falaq*, 113:5]

The texts of the Sunnah also elaborated on the seriousness of envy. Thus, by contemplating the texts of the Sunnah, one can notice the Prophet’s instructions and warnings against this disease. In a *Ḥadīth* on the authority of *Abū Hurayrah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Beware of suspicion, for it is the falsest form of speech. Do not spy on one another and do not eavesdrop. Do not envy one another; do not turn your backs on each other (in aversion) and do not hate each other; but O slaves of Allāh! Be brothers.”** [*Al-Bukhārī* and *Muslim*]

The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, described envy as a sickness; a serious disease. It is one of the the most dangerous diseases that can afflict the self. He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“You have been afflicted with the disease of the nations that came before you: envy and hatred. They are the ‘shavers’ (destroyers); I do not mean that they shave the hair, rather they shave (destroy) the faith.”**⁽¹⁶⁴⁾

Indeed envy; this serious disease, affects one’s own religion and faith at its onset. Thus, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, described it saying: **“It is the ‘shaver’; I do not mean that it shaves the hair, rather it shaves the faith.”** It has the potential to cause the person to indulge in disbelief. Thus, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Two will never be gathered in the heart of a salve of *Allāh*: faith and envy.”**

(164) *Aḥmad* and *At-Tirmidhī*, on the authority of *Az-Zubayr ibn Al-‘Awwām*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him.

Whenever communities abandon envy, they live happily and peacefully. This is the fact which the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, declared in a *Ḥadīth* that was cited by *Aṭ-Ṭabarānī* in his book *Al-Muʿjam Al-Kabīr*, and narrated on the authority of *Ḍamrah ibn Thaʿlabah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, it reads: **“People will remain in good as long as they do not harbor envy towards one another.”**

One of the definitions of the word *‘al-Ḥasad’* is mentioned by *Ar-Rāghib*, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him. He said: “Envy refers to the desire that a person feels for the destruction or removal of a blessing that another person has. Moreover, he himself may seek and strive to remove those blessings from the envied.”

In other words, the jealous one lives in a miserable state by his constant wish for others’ blessings to be removed or lost. In addition, he may exaggerate in his evil desire by striving and making every effort to remove those blessing from others. This is an explanation to what *Ar-Rāghib*, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, meant by: “He may seek and strive to remove those blessings from the envied.”

Indeed, envy is the first sin that was committed on the earth. This happened when the evil desire grew inside the heart of one of the sons of *Ādam*, peace be upon him. *Qābil* murdered his brother *Hābil* out of envy. The story of *Hābil* and *Qābil* indicates that the evil desire inside the heart of the jealous one may exceed its limits to the extent that it drives him to commit murder.

On the other hand, one should seek protection against the evil eye. We are living in communities where people mix with each other, and people like each other and also like what others own. An Arab saying goes, ‘Nobody is free from envy’. Thus, one should seek protection against the evil eye and against the envier when he envies. Here, there are four ways (precautionary measures) to ward off the evil eye:

1-Be discreet:

In a *Ḥadīth* on the authority of *Mu‘ādh ibn Jabal*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: “**Seek help in having your needs fulfilled by being discreet, for everyone who is blessed with something is envied.**”⁽¹⁶⁵⁾

Actually, despite a Muslim being encouraged to express the generous blessings that *Allāh* has given to him; as per *Allāh*’s statement (which means):

﴿وَأَمَّا بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ فَحَدِّثْ﴾ [الضحى: ١١]

{*But as for the favor of your Lord, report [it].*} [*Aḍ-Ḍuḥā*, 93:11] One is urged to hide some blessings and favors from the evil eye.

Dear fellow Muslims, I would like here to draw your attention to a serious mistake that many people make, namely, sharing their private matters with others. This act leads them to lose the privacy of their personal lives. Nowadays, many people are keen to share the details of their daily lives and even their conjugal relations with others. They may also share the photos of what they eat and drink, and the photos of their houses and banquets. These acts, in fact, provoke the feeling of envy inside the hearts of the needy poor people, or those who suffer from severe hunger. Indeed, these acts contradict the divine approach which enjoins you to: “**Seek help in having your needs fulfilled by being discreet, for everyone who is blessed with something is envied.**”

Thus, an Arabic saying goes: “If you want to protect yourself against the envier, be discreet in all your matters.”

2- Seeking *Allāh*’s protection by reciting *Dhikr* (Remembrance of *Allāh*)

Remembrance of *Allāh* is considered the greatest fortress and an impenetrable shield to protect yourself against all evils. The Prophet,

(165) *Aṭ-Ṭabarānī*, *Abū Nu‘aym* and *Al-Bayhaqī*.

peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, guided us to seek refuge in this fortress in order to attain protection against the evil eye. In a *Hadith* on the authority of ‘*Uthmān*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, He, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“If anyone says three times in the morning: ‘In the name of *Allāh*, by (the protection of) Whose name nothing can cause harm neither on Earth nor in the Heaven, and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing’, he will not suffer sudden affliction till the evening, and if anyone says this in the evening, he will not suffer sudden affliction till the morning.”**⁽¹⁶⁶⁾ This *Dhikr* which takes less than half a minute to be recited thrice, will protect you by the will of *Allāh*, Exalted be He.

‘*Abdullāh ibn Khubayb*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, narrated: “Once, we went on an extremely dark, rainy night, looking for the Messenger of *Allāh*, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, asking him to pray for us. When I found him, he said to me: ‘**Say**’, but I did not say anything. Then He said again: ‘**Say**’, but I did not say anything. He then said again: ‘**Say**’, so I said: ‘What should I say?’ He replied: “**Say: ‘Say, He is *Allāh*, the One**’ [i.e., recite *Sūrat Al-Ikhlās*] and *Al-Mu‘awwidhatayn* (*Sūrat Al-Falaq* and *Sūrat An-Nās*) **thrice in the morning (when you wake up) and in the evening (when you go to sleep); they will protect you against everything.**”⁽¹⁶⁷⁾ It is the guidance of the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, who does not speak of his own inclination.

So, you should hide the blessings and favors bestowed upon you from the jealous one and his evil eye, in addition to remembering *Allāh* which is the greatest fortress of the Muslim.

3-Avoid being preoccupied by the envier or the evil eye

Some people have burdened their minds with their concerns over the evil

(166) *Al-Bukhārī, Ahmad, Abū Dāwūd, At-Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah.*

(167) *Ahmad, Abū Dāwūd, At-Tirmidhī and An-Nasā’ī.*

eye. Accordingly, their illusion of being envied prevents them from moving forward or enjoying the favors and blessings bestowed upon them. Thus, getting overwhelmed with this illusion is more dangerous than envy itself. So, be patient and do not preoccupy yourself with the jealous one, as it was said: “Be patient with the jealous one if he plots against you; truly, your patience will kill him. For the fire only consumes itself if it doesn’t find something else to consume.” Nothing grieves or inflicts pain or doom on the envier or evil one than seeing that his evil act or scheme has not affected the target.

Therefore, one should not pay any attention to the envier or preoccupy himself with his malignancy. Indeed, the envier suffers from a miserable life full of sorrow, grief and regret. *Al-Aṣma ʿī*, may *Allāh* have mercy upon him, said: “I have heard a Bedouin saying: ‘I have not seen an oppressor whose condition is so much like an actual oppressed person, than the jealous one. He suffers from constant sorrow, a preoccupied mind and endless distress.’

4-Show kindness and be good to the envier

One should try to be good to those who envy him or give him the evil eye. Showing kindness and good to your envier can reduce evils and malignancy in his heart and turn him from an enemy to a friend. This is what the Lord, Exalted be He, enjoined us to do.

﴿ ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ فَإِذَا الَّذِي بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ عَدَاوَةٌ كَأَنَّهُ وَلِيٌّ حَمِيمٌ ﴾ (٣٤) وَمَا يُلْقَنَهَا إِلَّا الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا وَمَا يُلْقَنَهَا إِلَّا لَآذٍ حَظِيٍّ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٣٥﴾ [فصلت: ٣٤-٣٥]

Allāh, Exalted be He, says (what means): ***{Repel [evil] by that [deed] which is better; and thereupon, the one whom between you and him is enmity [will become] as though he was a devoted friend. But none is granted it except those who are patient, and none is granted it except one having a***

great portion [of good].} [*Fussilat*, 41:34-35]

May *Allāh*, Exalted be He, protect us from the evil of the envier when he envied.

These are the precautionary measures that one should take in order to protect himself against the evil eye. As for the one who finds that he harbors envy in his soul towards someone else, then it is upon him to cure it. Indeed, nobody is free from envy, but we will not be accounted for this evil desire inside our hearts. Rather, we will be accounted for interpreting this desire into an evil action by envying others. Thus, to protect your heart against being afflicted by this disease, I would like to give you two pieces of advice:

Firstly:

Always look at those below you, not above. Keep your soul away from looking at the bounties and blessings bestowed upon others. Do not occupy yourself with what people have; rather, with what you have. The Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, guided us to do that saying: **“Look at those who are below you (inferior to you), and do not look at those who are above you (superior to you), for that is more likely to deter you from belittling the blessings that Allāh has bestowed upon you.”**⁽¹⁶⁸⁾

Indeed, looking at the blessings bestowed upon others and desiring what they have may cause endless sorrow. Thus, be grateful and content with the numerous blessings that *Allāh*, Exalted be He, has bestowed upon. This is your path towards inner peace and happiness.

Secondly:

Whenever you see something that you like belonging to someone else, say ‘*Tabāarak Allāh*’ (May *Allāh* bless it for you). In a *Ḥadīth* that is cited in

(168) *Muslim*, on the authority of *Abū Hurayrah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him.

Sunan Ibn Majah and narrated on the authority of *Abū Umāmah*, may *Allāh* be pleased with him, the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, said: **“Why would anyone of you kill his brother? If you see something of your brother’s that you like, then pray for blessings for him.”** The jealous one may cause severe harm to the envied, to the extent that he may kill him with his hand or his eyes or his tongue. Thus, one should say: *‘Tabāarak Allāh’*, whenever he sees something that he likes. Say it to your fellow Muslim; say it loudly or keep it within yourself, but do not ignore to say it. Indeed, reciting this *Du‘ā* wards off the evil desires within yourself.

Thus, by contemplating this *Ḥadith*: **“Two will never be gathered in the heart of a slave of Allāh: faith and envy,”** one can completely realize the severity of envy.

Topic Index

• **Preface**

1-Whoever lags behind in doing good deeds, his nobility of lineage will not make him go forward.

The remarkable eloquence of the Prophet, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, is one of the most distinctive aspects of the greatness bestowed upon him.

Lesson 1: In their spiritual journey towards *Allāh*, Exalted be He, people seek various means to reach their desired destination.

Lesson 2: *Allāh*, Exalted be He, created humankind in variation and distinction.

Lesson 3: In Islam, there is no room for nepotism, preferential treatment, or caste.

Lesson 4: Genuine praise is that which is received from *Allāh* and His Messenger, and he who is worthy of praise is the one declared as such by *Allāh* and His Messenger, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him.

Lesson 5: Adherence to Islam is the only path to supremacy.

2-The wealth of a man shall never be diminished by giving in charity.

Giving in charity increases one's wealth.

Charity is a main reason for having one's sins removed.

3-Islam is (founded on) the exchange of sincere advice.

One of the due rights of a Muslim over his fellow Muslims is to offer him sincere advice.

Offering one's fellow Muslims sincere advice is a great righteous deed.

All the Messengers and Prophets of *Allāh* shouldered the task of offering advice to their people.

Objectives realized by offering advice.

4-Be tolerant and you will be shown tolerance [in return]

Tolerance is the most refined of praiseworthy qualities.

Why are we urged to extend tolerance to others?

5-Restrain your tongue.

The tongue is the most dangerous body organ.

Restraining the tongue is the way to salvation.

Why is restraining the tongue the only way to salvation?

6-Whoever is deprived of gentleness is in fact, deprived of all good.

Whenever there is gentleness in something, it adorns and beautifies it.

There are numerous uncountable situations in our lives where showing kindness and gentleness is required:

First: kindness is required with those who disagree with us.

Second: kindness is required in leadership.

Third: Gentleness towards oneself.

Fourth: Gentleness towards the weak.

7-Learn enough about your lineages so that you can maintain ties of kinship.

Maintaining ties of kinship is an essential need under sharia.

Serious consequences of severing ties of kinship:

First: Incurring the curse of *Allāh* (which means deprivation from His

mercy), Exalted be He, as well as deafness and blindness.

Second: Having one's good deeds rejected.

Third: Failure to uphold ties of kinship incurs the relevant punishments in both the worldly life and the Hereafter.

Fruits that upholding ties of kinship yield:

First: *Allāh*, Exalted be He, blesses the doer's deeds.

Second: Whoever upholds ties of kinship, *Allāh* maintains the bond with him.

Third: Maintaining ties of kinship is the good deed that is rewarded the quickest.

Fourth: Having one's sins forgiven.

8-And I like good omen.

We are in dire need to optimism.

Requirements of optimism.

First: Having certainty that what is decreed by *Allāh* will inevitably happen.

Second: Believing with certainty that this worldly life is fleeting and short-lived; not an abode of everlasting life.

Third: Having a firm conviction that a Muslim is required to express servitude to *Allāh*, Exalted be He, at all times and in all situations.

Fourth: Distancing oneself from those who are always miserable and pessimistic.

Fifth requirement is expecting good things in order to receive them.

9-A body nourished with unlawful means shall never be admitted to Paradise.

Allāh, Exalted be He, lays a significant emphasis on the importance of earning a living by legitimate and lawful means.

The righteous predecessors were mindful of the consumption of the unlawful, and avoided whatever might have been doubtful.

Consuming ill-gotten money has many reasons:

First: Lack of bashfulness with *Allāh*, Exalted be He.

Second: Seeking quick gains.

10- He who is not trustworthy has no faith.

Faith and trustworthiness are strongly interrelated.

Consequences of the loss of honesty:

First: Weakness of faith.

Second: Prevalence of hypocrisy.

Third: Misperception and erroneous understanding.

11-He who does not show mercy, no mercy shall be shown to him.

Mercy is in the Hands of Allah, Exalted Be He.

Means of earning Allah's mercy:

First: Perfecting one's faith and *Taqwa*.

Second: Obeying the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him.

Third: Showing mercy to the creation.

Fourth: Receiving mercy from Allah is proportionate to showing mercy to others.

Fifth: Devoting oneself to the Quran.

Sixth: Being patient toward affliction.

12-Be frequent in saying: *Lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh* (There is

no power nor might except by with *Allāh*)

Dhikr (remembrance of *Allāh*) is a virtuous act of worship that has a great, special status in Islam.

Meaning of *Lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh* (There is no power nor might except by with *Allāh*)

Virtues of saying *Lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh*:

First: Forgiveness and pardon of sins.

Second: One of the treasures of Paradise.

Third: One of Paradise's seedlings.

Fourth: One of the gates to Paradise.

“*Lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh*” is strongly related to our daily life; in the day and night.

13-There are two blessings that many people fail to make the most of: good health and free time.

Time is the real capital of man.

Reasons why we should give importance to time and care for it:

First: Time is limited.

Second: Lost time cannot be recovered.

Third: Little time weighs heavily on the balance according to *Allāh*.

Fourth: It passes quickly.

14-The first step of this nation on the path to righteousness is certitude (*Yaqīn*)

Certitude is the essential provision of the righteous.

Fruits of certitude:

First: Strength of faith.

Second: Certitude is a proof of doing the best deeds.

Third: Those who attain certitude in faith relish genuine supremacy, leadership and empowerment on Earth.

Fourth: Certitude is a reason for answering one's supplications.

Fifth: Patience and aspiration for the rewards of *Allāh*, Exalted be He.

Sixth: Certitude guides a person to giving the correct answers to the questions in his grave.

Seventh: The people of certitude are the people of Paradise.

15-Undoubtedly, sustenance pursues the servant (to which it is predestined) in the same way as death pursues him (i.e. both shall inevitably reach him).

Pursuit of sustenance is one of the most important matters that concern people and preoccupy their minds.

Keys to unlock sustenance:

First key: Obedience to *Allāh*, Exalted be He.

Second key: Giving in charity.

Third key: Due reliance on *Allāh*, Exalted be He.

Fourth key: Seeking forgiveness of *Allāh*, Exalted be He.

Fifth key: Providing for the weak, poor, and those in need.

Sixth key: Supplication.

16- *Allāh* does not accept any deed except that which is sincerely dedicated to Him, and with which His pleasure is sought.

Devoting one's deeds sincerely to Allah alone is a fundamental of the Muslim's belief.

Means of attaining *Ikhlaṣ*:

First means: Seeking the help of *Allāh*, Exalted be He.

Second means: Performing the obligatory acts of worship.

Third step: Striving to purify the heart from whatever displeases *Allāh*, Exalted be He.

Fourth step: Self-restraint and self-discipline.

Fifth step: Concealing one's good deeds.

17- Whoever adheres to [praiseworthy] silence shall attain salvation.

Silence is the absent virtue in an era full of meaningless noise.

Silence is the best adornment for mankind.

Silence and faith are interrelated.

How to acquire the noble moral of remaining silent:

First means: Reading the biographies of the early Muslim generations.

Second means: Pondering over the gravity of blameworthy talk.

18- Verily, this religion is strong, so proceed within it gently.

Ghuluww (exaggeration/extremism) is indeed an ancient disease whose evil consequences many previous nations suffered from.

Manifestations and examples of extremism in religion:

First manifestation: Obligating oneself or others to perform acts of worship that are not part of the religion.

Second and third manifestations: Excessive praise and excessive criticism.

Fourth manifestation: Treating others arrogantly and despising them.

Fifth manifestation: Declaring the shedding of Muslim blood lawful.

19-Remember frequently the destroyer of worldly pleasures (i.e. death).

Facts that we should keep in mind:

First fact: Death is inevitable; every soul shall taste it, without exception.

Second fact: Death has a specific time that can neither be advanced nor delayed.

Third fact: Death is inescapable.

Fourth fact: No one knows the time and place of death except *Allāh*.

Fifth fact: Death may be a source of relief for the believer.

20- The grave is the first stage of the Hereafter.

The grave is the greatest preacher.

The difference between a good believer and an evil disbeliever inside the grave.

Examples of deeds that cause the punishment of the grave:

First example: Tale bearing and gossip.

Second example: Theft.

Third example: Taking loans with the intention of not paying them off.

Safety from the punishment of the grave can be attained through the performance of good deeds.

21-A servant of Allāh shall not truly believe until he believes in predestination, the good and bad thereof.

The great importance of belief in predestination.

There are four key pillars of belief in predestination:

First: To believe in the all-inclusive divine knowledge that encompasses everything that exists and happens in this universe.

Second: To believe that *Allāh*, Exalted be He, has recorded everything that happened or shall happen until the Day of Judgment in *Al-Lawḥ Al-Mahfūz*.

Third: Believing in the all-embracing will of *Allāh*, namely, to believe that nothing could ever happen without His permission and will.

Fourth: Believing that *Allāh*, Exalted be He, created all creation.

22- Whoever believes in Allāh and the Last Day, let him treat his neighbor well.

Muslims are urged to treat their neighbors kindly.

A neighbor enjoys a multitude of rights in Islam:

First right: A neighbor is entitled to kindness in its broadest sense.

Second right: Offering gifts to one's neighbors frequently.

Third right: Protecting the neighbors' honor and wealth.

Fourth right: Abstaining from wronging and harming the neighbors.

Fifth right: Enduring the harm of the unkind neighbor with patience.

23- The first thing to be lifted up (taken away) from this nation will be *Khushū'*.

Muslims are encouraged to observe *Khushū'* in prayers.

How can I observe *Khushū'* in my prayers?

First means: Preparing for the prayer in advance.

Second means: Observing *Tuma'nīnah* (tranquility in each position of the prayer).

Third means: Remembering death upon standing for prayer even before

reciting the opening *Takbīr*.

Fourth means: Contemplating the portion of the Quran being recited in the prayer.

Fifth means: Reciting different formulae of *Dhikr* and chapters of the Quran in prayer.

Sixth means: Reminding ourselves of the great and abundant rewards yielded by *Khushū‘*.

24-Whoever performs ablution well in his home, and then walks to the mosque, he is a guest of Allāh.

Gifts which are prepared for those who come to the mosque:

First gift: They will be given full light on the Day of Judgment.

Second gift: Erasing sins and misdeeds.

Third gift: Angels are subjugated to them.

Fourth gift: Receiving a reward equal to that of performing Hajj and ‘Umrah.

Fifth gift: When one arrives late at the mosque and misses the congregational prayer, he will gain the reward of performing the prayer in congregation.

25- The best charity is to reconcile between people.

Reconciling between disputants is a meritorious act of worship.

Reconciliation is required in many contexts and situations:

Reconciling between the rulers and the subjects.

Bringing reconciliation to conflicts and disputes among people.

Reconciling between disputing spouses.

Making peace between the disputing heirs.

26- This world is sweet and lush.

Underlining the reality of the worldly life.

There are three perils related loving the worldly life.

First peril: Suffering from endless distress, poverty, and regret.

Second peril: Selling religion for worldly gains.

Third peril: Making the worldly life one's ultimate objective and his main goal.

27- Indeed, lying leads to wickedness.

Lying is a morally repugnant vice and reprehensible quality.

Forms of lying:

First: Lying about *Allāh*, Exalted be He, and the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him.

Second: Lying while conducting financial transactions.

Third: Lying to make people laugh!

Fourth: Relating whatever one hears or reads to others.

Fifth: Falsely attributing oneself to other than one's father.

28- Supplication is (the essence of) worship.

Why do we supplicate *Allāh*?

Recommendations on making supplication:

First: Supplicate *Allāh* in all conditions.

Second: Raise your hands in submission when you supplicate *Allāh*.

Third: Praise *Allāh* before you supplicate Him.

Fourth: Supplicate *Allāh*, Exalted be He, while believing with certainty that He shall answer your supplications.

Fifth: Invoking peace and blessings of *Allāh*, Exalted be He, upon the Prophet, peace and blessings of *Allāh* be upon him, after the supplication.

Two important points regarding supplication:

First: Muslim parents should beware of supplicating *Allāh*, Exalted be He, against his children.

Second: Muslims should beware of the supplications of those whom they wrong.

29- There shall come upon people a time when the one who patiently holds onto his religion will be like the one holding onto a burning ember.

Change of times and the numerous tribulations.

Means that would help us adhere to the required patience at times of tribulations:

1-Devotion to worship and drawing closer to *Allāh*, Exalted be He.

2-A Muslim should devotedly embark on reciting, memorizing, contemplating, and acting upon the Quran.

3-A Muslim should devote himself to worship to help him hold onto the enjoined patience at times of *Fitnah*.

4-A Muslim should call upon his Lord and seek His assistance.

5-Keeping the company of righteous people endowed with knowledge of *Allāh*, Exalted be He, and patience.

30-Two will never be gathered in the heart of a slave of Allāh: faith and envy.

Envy is a serious moral disease.

Four means of protection against envy:

First means: Hide some blessings and favors from the evil eye of the envier.

Second means: Seeking *Allāh*'s protection by reciting *Dhikr* (Remembrance

of *Allāh*).

Third means: Avoiding being preoccupied by the envier or the evil eye.

Fourth means: Showing kindness and be good to the envier.

Pieces of advice on how to ward off evil thoughts from one's heart:

First advice: Do not look at the bounties and blessings bestowed upon others.

Second advice: Whenever you see something that you like belonging to someone else, say '*Tabāarak Allāh*' (May *Allāh* bless it for you).

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