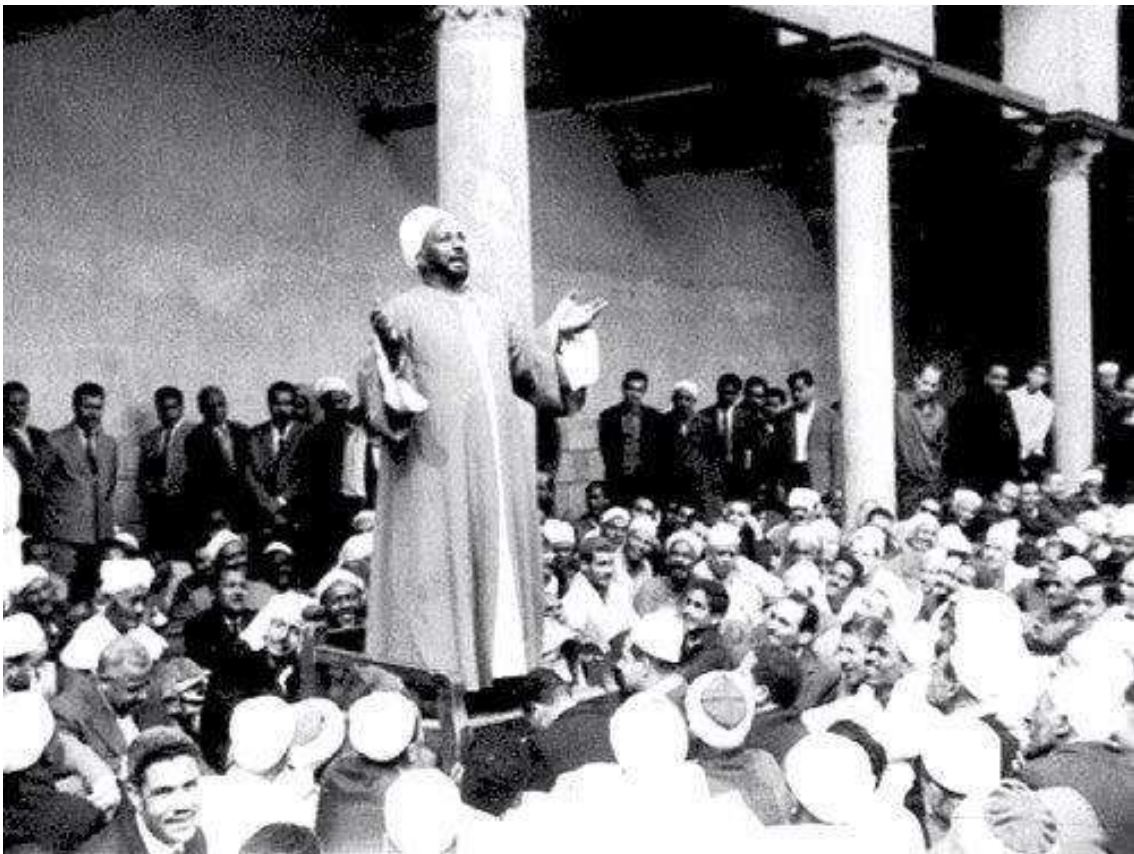


# The Secrets of Fasting

A Discourse on the Words of Allāh (The Exalted):

“O you who believe! Fasting has been prescribed for you as it has been prescribed for those before you, so that you may become God-fearing”



Authored by the Virtuous Teacher and Sayyid

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## In the name of Allāh, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

### Abridged Foreword

Praise be to Allāh, the Lord of the worlds: He introduced laws for His slaves in the religion which purify their lower-selves (nufūs), and cleanse their hearts and grant them felicity in their lives in this world and the hereafter, and may the blessings of Allāh, Blessed and Exalted is He, be upon our Master Muḥammad, the Messenger of Allāh, and upon his family and companions and those who support him, in every glance and breath, as many times as all that is contained in the knowledge of Allāh.”

To proceed:

Verily fasting is obligatory for all, and a complete worship, by it is known the sweetness of faith, and one is raised to the station of Iḥsān (excellence), for it is a worship of the heart, soul and feeling, mind and perception, awareness (murāqaba) and witnessing (mushāhada). So the aim behind the obligation of fasting is: that the fasting person experiences the life of the righteous and purified ones (al-athār), the chosen ones (al-aṣfiyā) and those drawn close (to Allāh) (al-muqarrabīn), in that (the fasting person) cannot engage in obscenity, iniquity and quarrelling, and sinning physically or spiritually, externally or internally, as this is from treachery of faith, or that which is reaped by limbs and hearts.

So fasting is from the most important of acts of worship and the greatest of acts pleasing to Allāh. The Messenger said regarding it—may the purest of prayers and peace be upon him—in a ḥadīth qudsī, which he narrates from his Lord: **“Every action of the son of Ādam is for him except fasting, for indeed that is for Me, and I will reward him for it.”**

It is the whole pivot of the matter for those wayfaring to Allāh the Exalted, is in controlling the lower-self (nafs), making it content with that which is disliked, curbing its wilfulness for cravings, humbling it to The Creator, and annihilating its essence in His love and closeness to Him. Fasting is the straight way to actualising these lofty goals, for fasting to them is passing from mere restraint from desires of the stomach and private parts, to restraint of all the limbs from any forbidden act (al-muḥarramāt), then they ascend by it to a greater rank. Imām al-Ghazālī says about it: “Fasting of the heart is from lowly things, and from worldly competition, and complete abstinence from all that is other than Allāh the Exalted.”



Since fasting—whether obligatory or voluntary—for the general Muslim is a healing remedy for the souls and bodies, then verily it is for the elite of them a way to closeness and a proof of love, for indeed the people of the path (ahl al-ṭarīq) gain the most benefit from the goodness of fasting, and the most knowledgeable of them; of its secrets and lights, for it is the shortest of ways to combatting the lower-self and freeing it from its cages, and its redemption from the chains of its desires, and the strongest helper in rejecting the whispers of the devil (al-Khannās), for indeed the accursed one runs in the son of Ādam like the running of blood in the veins, and fasting narrows his travelling, and weakens his tricks, “surely the devil’s plot is weak.”<sup>1</sup>

For this reason our master and Shaykh, the Knower of Allāh the Exalted, Imam al-Ja‘farī wanted to alert the wayfarers in the path of Allāh the Exalted, to the importance of fasting and its effect in training the ego (nafs), ridding it of its faults and elevating it to the highest ranks, for it grows in the ego of the disciple (murīd), the virtue of patience from the objects of desire of the ego, and raises in his heart the fear of Allāh the Exalted, and awareness of Him and taking himself to account, and the result of all of that: taqwā (fear) of Allāh the Exalted, and it is the best provision for the Day of Return, and fasting is half of patience which itself is half of faith (īmān), and by it the fasting person becomes worthy of being favoured with entering Paradise from the well-known door called: al-Rayyān. Due to the many benefits found in fasting and what it contains of secrets and precious pearls, Imam al-Ja‘farī (may Allāh be pleased with him) wrote this book. In it he explained this obligatory act of subtleties and gnosis, and derived from it wisdoms, secrets and lights. He extracted from the flowers of its gardens, fragrances and perfumes.

Imam al-Ja‘farī has established the principles of this book upon derived rulings and extracted principles from the verse obligating fasting, and it is the word of the Real – Blessed and Exalted is He – **“O you who believe! Fasting has been prescribed for you, as it has been prescribed for those before you, so that you may become God-fearing.”**<sup>2</sup> Our master, Imam al-Ja‘farī – may Allāh be pleased with him and please him and benefit us by his knowledge, ameen – did not intend with this treatise, exhaustive treatment of speech on fasting from all its sides sufficiently, or thorough examination of its rulings and details, as all of that has been undertaken by his amply provided lessons, which were filled with rulings of fasting and its jurisprudence completely, in detail and also simply; but he intended by this treatise to call the attention of the wayfarers in the path of Allāh the Exalted, to the significance of fasting, and guide

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<sup>1</sup> Sūra al-Nisā’, verse (76).

<sup>2</sup> Sura al-Baqara – verse (183).



them to benefit from what is in this complete act of worship and tremendous good deed, from secrets, lights and virtues beyond constraint.

**Publisher's Note:**

I have published this book during the life of the Shaykh (may Allāh be pleased with him), so that those who love him and those desirous of gaining from the emanation of lordly knowledge, hastened in possessing it. I published the first publication as a general propagation to benefit and in service to the needs of the sons of the path (abnā' al-ṭarīq), the wayfarers on the path of realisation to benefitting from that which is in it, from emanations of knowledge of its author and its sweet breezes. We put forward this new print hoping in Allāh the Exalted, to spread its benefit, and to continue its assistance, and Allāh is the giver of success and the One who guides to the straight path.

**The slave of his rich Lord  
Sayyid 'Abd al-Ghanī Ṣāliḥ al-Ja'farī  
Shaykh of the Ja'fariyya Ṭarīqa**



## In the name of Allāh, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

### Introduction

May Allāh bless our master Muḥammad, the guardian, by the light of His majesty and His true speech, and upon his family and grant them peace. There is no God but Allāh, Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh in every glance and breath, as many times as all that is contained in the knowledge of Allāh. Allāh the Exalted said, and He is the truest of speakers: **“O you who believe! Fasting has been prescribed for you, as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may become God-fearing”**.<sup>3</sup>

The slave and one who is destitute upon the mercy of his Lord says: I will speak about this holy verse based on what Allāh has opened for me on this.

This holy verse comprises of seven subjects:

**(The first): The calling out of Allāh the Exalted to all His slaves with extra concern for them and His honouring them.**

**(The second): Attributing them with faith, which is the greatest gift necessitating the obedience of the above command.**

**(The third): Attributing them with slavehood, which is contained in faith, because the believer is the one who believes in his heart that Allāh the Exalted is his God and his Creator and that he is a slave of Allāh and that there is no ability or power except by Allāh, the Exalted and Supreme.**

**(The fourth): Mention of obligation.**

**(The fifth): Mention of fasting.**

**(The sixth): Mention of the connection of fasting with those before us.**

**(The seventh): The mention of taqwā (piety)**

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<sup>3</sup> Sūra al-Baqara, verse (183).



## The First: From the Seven Subjects of the Noble Verse Allāh The Exalted calling out to his slaves

The call consists of seven parts:

(The first): Knowledge of the speaker of the state with regards to the one being spoken to.

(The second): Seeking a response from the one being addressed.

(The third): Seeking his attention.

(The fourth): Seeking his obedience.

(The fifth): Seeking good manners from the one being spoken to because of his knowledge of the speaker.

(The sixth): Seeking the one being addressed to have knowledge of the speaker.

(The seventh): Purification of his interior and exterior.

### The First: Knowledge of the speaker of the state of the one being spoken to

It is an interpretation that the person being spoken to believes that Allāh is all-knowing about him, as He created him from non-existence and is fully aware of that which is best for him, as He assembled him from different parts, and made for him internal intestines and an outward appearance, and He made the exterior develop its strength from the interior; so because of that, if He orders him with a command or prohibits him from something, then he should know that it is for a wisdom, understood by a sound intellect, even if this is not made apparent by the law, **“Does He Who created not know while He is The Subtle and Knowing”**<sup>4</sup>. **“Do you think that We have created you in vain?”**<sup>5</sup>, so after He clarified for you that He knows all of His creation and what they do and that which is suitable for them and that He never creates a thing in vain, rather all His creation is for a wisdom, and all His actions are for a wisdom, and all His commandments and prohibitions are for a wisdom; and Allāh the Exalted has commanded us with fasting and clarified for us the wisdom behind it

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<sup>4</sup> Sūra al-Mulk, verse (14).

<sup>5</sup> Sūra al-Mu'minūn, verse (115).



with His words: “so that perhaps you may become God-fearing”<sup>6</sup>, and also all the scholars and doctors and other than them have realised the wisdom behind fasting.

## In Fasting there are Benefits for the Soul and Body

The scholars of jurisprudence (al-fiqh) have understood that fasting calls to compassion for the poor and the destitute, and this compassion calls to the fulfilment of a sacred duty and a pillar from the pillars of Islām and that is zakāt. Allāh the Exalted says: “and give the zakāt”<sup>7</sup>. (And fasting calls) to repelling the lower self from desires and corrupt deeds that are manifest or hidden. The Exalted said: “Say, “My Lord has prohibited only the shameful acts, whether open or secret, and (every) sinful act, and unjust aggression.”<sup>8</sup> (And fasting calls) to supporting one another in exertion in good works, The Exalted said: “Help each other in righteousness and piety”<sup>9</sup>. (And fasting calls) to being active in doing good deeds and to hasten to it and being serious in attaining it, for indeed Allāh the Exalted has blamed the hypocrites due to their laziness by His words (may He be exalted): “And when they stand for prayer, they stand up lazily”<sup>10</sup> and (fasting calls to) other than that which pertains to the science of jurisprudence.

The scholars of taṣawwuf have discerned that fasting is the greatest means in purifying the soul, establishing its elevation and liberating it from the world of outward forms to the world of spirits, and by this it remembers its original state (pre-embodiment) in terms of respect, might, knowledge, sustenance and tranquillity,

**“Allāh gives an example: There was a town, secure and content with its sustenance coming in plenty from every place. Then, it turned ungrateful to the bounties of Allāh; so, Allāh made it to taste hunger and terror (that covered it) like a garment, as recompense of what its people used to do.”<sup>11</sup>**

I heard from my shaykh and teacher, al-Shaykh Muḥammad Bakhīṭ al-Muṭṭī, upon him be the mercy and pleasure (of Allāh), that he said about the interpretation (tafsīr) of this verse: “it is said that it<sup>12</sup> is the soul”.

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<sup>6</sup> Sūra al-Baqara - verse (183)

<sup>7</sup> Sūra al-Baqara - verse (110)

<sup>8</sup> Sūra al-A'rāf - verse (33)

<sup>9</sup> Sūra al-Mā'ida - verse (2)

<sup>10</sup> Sūra al-Nisā' - verse (142)

<sup>11</sup> Sūra al-Naḥl - verse (112).

<sup>12</sup> I.e. the town (*qarya*) mentioned in the verse.



They (the Ṣūfīs: scholars of taṣawwuf) mentioned that the Abdāl (substitutes) practise Sufism with four things: hunger, silence, wakefulness and seclusion. Silence is produced by hunger and so is wakefulness, and the remaining seclusion is its fruit, because it originates from the lights of dhikr (remembrance) causing intimacy (uns) with Allāh and estrangement from other than Him, as Ibn al-Fāriḍ (may Allāh be pleased with him) said:

“... and I sought intimacy in loneliness, as from intimacy was my loneliness.”

So hunger was the root cause for these three and it is caused by fasting.

They also mentioned that the medicine for the heart, when it becomes spiritually hardened, are five things:

(The first): Emptying of the stomach.

(The second): Reading the Qur’ān.

(The third): Getting up before fajr in humility and weeping.

(The fourth): Praying taḥajjud (the night vigil prayer).

(The fifth): Accompanying people of goodness and piety.

The four that are after emptying the stomach cannot be accomplished except with it, so it is also a root for them and an empty stomach occurs by fasting. So, the rank of the Abdāl and clearing hardness of the heart are both achieved by an empty stomach and this occurs by fasting as has been taught, so how magnificent are the benefits of fasting! And how abundant are its blessings upon mankind, so in this **“let those who wish to compete, compete.”**<sup>13</sup>

Doctors have said that it is essential to allow the stomach to rest for a length of time and they have determined the minimum duration to be one month from every year and the one who increases this to more than a month, then that is a surety in increased benefit. As for the one who does not fast, there will come a time where he is forced to abandon eating and drinking until the stomach takes its right.

### **In Fasting there is Facilitation for the Umma (nation)**

The wise sacred law came with that which agrees with human nature and is compatible with its universal states, so Allāh has obligated mankind to fast one month from every year. If it were not for that, then the system of the Islamic law would not be perfected, which came with all that is befitting for the worldly and other-worldly

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<sup>13</sup> Sūra al-Muṭaffifīn, verse (26).:





life and how it complies with every age (of time) and with people of all regions in accordance with their purpose. The one who has an encompassing knowledge of Islamic jurisprudence (aḥāṭ bil-fiqh al-islāmī) and what it contains of varying opinions of the Imāms, understands that this is expansion and mercy for the umma.

Allāh obligated fasting upon the human being and not on angels and animals due to the human being's need for it; for the matter of the noble angels is known, which is that they do not eat or drink and they have no bowels, and as for dumb animals, Allāh created (in them) strong bowels so that even a weak bird can swallow a hard stone and digest it, so they are not in need of resting their bowels due to its capability. So, the fasting person resembles the noble angels and the one who does not fast in Ramaḍān is closer to the state of a dumb animal, because he is imitating it “and the one imitated does not strengthen the strength of the one imitating him” (wa al-mushabbah lā yaqwā qawā al-mushabbih bihi).

O one who abandons the fast of Ramaḍān! I see you leaving its fast not simply from ignorance, but due to your ignorance of your ignorance! As your defiant lower self believes that in not fasting there is benefit and the matter is the opposite of that. How can it believe harm is beneficial and your religion has clarified it for you and taught it to people of religions other than yours, so they have testified that your religion has wisdom? If it was not for stubbornness, they would have certainly become Muslim, because the scholar critiques with the light of his knowledge, just as a traveller in the night is guided by the light of his lamp. Foreign doctors have found that the religion of Islām has come with all which befits the body and what it consists of and what is proper for its nourishment. So now they are in accordance with Islām and have acknowledged its truth and wisdom in this respect. If they would only examine what remains of what they have acknowledged, with their scrutiny, then they would find what follows to be the same as what is claimed by Islām. So, they are now saying what Islām has said in this respect, though they have not become Muslim in subjugation to the light of their knowledge and in submission to reality, because non-subjugation to the light of knowledge is blindness and denying reality is insanity. I do not know why they do not become Muslim and become callers to this religion that has come supporting their knowledge, agreeing with them, and solidifying their opinions, as it is the greatest soldier for them!

O the ones who deny the superiority of Islām, come and let us judge with doctors, geographers, physicists, engineers and mathematicians, for they all acknowledge that: that is in the Qur'ān and Sunna and what they have is only a drop from its overflowing ocean; as I will clarify for you by the will of Him The Exalted.



Medicine of the Qur’ān and Sunna is abundant and from it are His, the Exalted, words: **“and eat and drink, but be not excessive.”**<sup>14</sup>, and his words (may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him): **“And eat up to half the capacity of your stomachs”**, and other than that which has come in prohibition of filling the stomach, taking in food upon food and eating hot food.

And the words of Allāh **“Do not even come close to fornication (al-zinā)”**<sup>15</sup>, for all the doctors today prohibit fornication and have established that most of the destructive diseases for a person, such as syphilis, gonorrhoea, eye diseases, weakening of the body’s strength and injuring spouses and offspring with infection, originates from fornication, so how far-reaching is the Qur’ān in its expression saying **“Do not even come close to fornication”**<sup>16</sup>, and it did not say, “and do not fornicate”, because the prohibition of drawing near to something is more far-reaching than just prohibiting it and this is not except for the knowledge of Allāh the Exalted, of the harm of fornication, which the doctors have not realised, except for some of them. His words (may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him): **“A fornicator is not a believer at the time of fornicating”**<sup>17</sup>, because his action nullifies the light of faith, because with the light of faith the harm of fornication is known; which he sees in front of him, then he hears doctors after that prohibiting it and they show him its harms in health books and inform him of its diseases. Then his stopping fornication after that is evidence that upon the light of his faith is a covering and upon the power of his intellect a headband (‘iqāl). Islām came with perfection, so anyone of its people that come with deficiency then he is not from them (ahl al-Islām), meaning: he is not acting by their (ahl al-Islām) actions of perfection which our Prophet (may peace and blessings be upon him) came with.

His, The Exalted, words: **“O you who believe! Wine, gambling, altars and divining arrows (drawing lots on decisions) are filth, made up by Satan. Therefore, refrain from it, so that you may be successful.”**<sup>18</sup> O believer, reflect with me on His (may he be exalted) words: **“Therefore, refrain from it, so that you may be successful,”** for the sake of Allāh! What do you think about your Creator, is He a deceiver to you or a wise and sincere advisor? Is He incapable against you or powerful over you? Does He go against His promise or fulfil it? If you believe He is a wise and sincere advisor, then He has prohibited drinking alcohol and gambling, so why don’t you stop? And if you believe that Allāh is fully capable over you then why do you not fear His vengeance?

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<sup>14</sup> Sūra al-A’rāf, verse (31).

<sup>15</sup> Sūra al-Isrā’ - verse (32).

<sup>16</sup> Sūra al-Isrā’ - verse (32).

<sup>17</sup> Narrated by Ibn Mājah.

<sup>18</sup> Sūra Mā’ida - verse (90).





For mathematicians there is evidence for them in the word of the Sublime: **“so that you may learn the number of the years, and the calculation (of time).”**<sup>25</sup> **“And He taught Ādam all the names.”**<sup>26</sup>

For astronomers there is evidence for them in the words of the Sublime: **“I swear by the sky, the one having stellar formations,”**<sup>27</sup> **“And the sun is quickly proceeding towards its destination.”**<sup>28</sup> You know that all the sciences of the Qur’ān and the possessors of this knowledge acknowledge that, and they have seen its information is in conformity to reality, so there is no denial after conformity, except out of obstinacy and evasion.

### **The second: Seeking a response from the one being addressed:**

As it is not feasible that the listening of the speech be an accepting and careful listening with reluctance, the Exalted said: **“And when the Qur’ān is recited, then listen to it and remain silent, that mercy may be shown to you.”**<sup>29</sup> Allāh the Sublime has inspired us with some of the secrets of this verse in al-Azhar al-Sharīf after maghrib of the last Friday of Rajab, I ask Him (may He be Exalted) that it be correct and accepted, and it is:

If you hear the Qur’ān from other than you or your recitation of it to yourselves, then listen to it with your ears without listening to any other thing along with it, and reflect upon its meanings in your hearts, without thinking of anything else which comes from thoughts of the heart, hoping that Allāh will inspire you with the urge to act upon that which you have heard, so you are aided to it and therefore shown mercy, and this mercy is something extra upon the reward of reciting the Qur’ān; listening to it and manners in sitting and reflecting upon its verses. When the believer hears the speech of Allāh the Exalted:

**“O you who believe! Fasting has been prescribed for you,”**<sup>30</sup> and he is someone who possesses an attentive ear and a dignified heart, so that his heart feels the light of the Qur’ān, then the light of the Qur’ān will connect with the light of faith, so that they both radiate. Then the believer will see by the light of his faith that, for him to contradict this Qur’ānic light, is a big shortcoming and an indication of lack of faith or a deficiency in it and for that he will wish to burn in the boiling fire like the people

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<sup>25</sup> Sūra Yūnus - verse (5).

<sup>26</sup> Sūra al-Baqara - verse (31).

<sup>27</sup> Sūra al-Burūj - verse (1).

<sup>28</sup> Sūra Yā-Sīn - verse (38).

<sup>29</sup> Sūra al-A’rāf - verse (204).

<sup>30</sup> Sūra al-Baqara - verse (183).



of al-Ukhdūd (mentioned in Sūra al-Burūj), rather than missing one day of fasting without an excuse.

If a prepared believer hears this verse, since assistance (al-imdād) is based upon the level of preparedness, he will obtain sweetness that meets the sweetness of his faith, so by these two he will forget food and drink. We have witnessed many of the Muslims experience pleasure in fasting and if one of them were not to fast due to an excuse, he does not experience the pleasure of food and drink and this has even been witnessed in menstruating women. If they do not obtain sweetness or enjoyment, even with the existence of an excuse, then what do you think about those without it! As everyone who hears the verse with an attentive ear and a present heart is suited to realise that it has a spirit (rūḥ) that connects with the spirit of his faith (bi-rūḥi īmānihi) and the spirit of his life. The spirit of life overcomes the self that commands to evil, the spirit of faith overcomes the devil and the spirit of the Qur’ān overcomes passion (al-hawā). At that point, the believer will fast the ‘fasting of the righteous’, and be in a shelter, an impenetrable protection and a fortified armour, such that his fast will reach an olive tree: he will pick its ripe fruit and take from the lights of its guidance-which guides to excellence, purification of the self and compassion for the poor, and forgiveness, mercy and contentment,

**“Indeed, there is a lesson in all this for him who has a heart and gives ear (to the truth) attentively.”<sup>31</sup>**

### **The third: Seeking his attention**

It is an expression on severing satanic thoughts which interrupt the hearing of the heart and its sight, from comprehending the secrets of the meanings by which obedience occurs and by which the human comprehends the wisdoms of things. At that point he will realise the wisdoms of fasting and will hasten to it and gain from it based on his level of readiness and according to his happiness.

### **The fourth: Seeking his obedience**

Obedience to the command is an expression of acting on what he heard, so that he arrives to the state where the Qur’ān will become a proof for him and not against him. Everyone who heard the verse of fasting for example and acted by it, then that is a proof for him tomorrow with Allāh, and if he does not act by it, it is a proof against him, so obedience is the result of suggestion of revelation and the sending of

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<sup>31</sup> Sūra Qāf - verse (37).



messengers. The Exalted said: “And say, “Do (what you do); Allāh will see your deed, as will the Messenger and the believers.”<sup>32</sup>

### **The fifth: Seeking good manners from the one being spoken to because of his knowledge of the speaker**

The speaker in this verse is Allāh the Exalted, so good manners with Him is to strive, so that He does not see you where He has prohibited you and He does not miss you where He has ordered you to be. He has ordered you with fasting, so beware of Him seeing you not fasting or cursing or perpetrating what He has forbidden for you, and beware and totally on guard from backbiting, talebearing (namīma), distraction and gambling and gatherings of evil, or that you abandon the prayer or consume usury. For the one who leaves the prayer has no reward for his fast, and the consumer of usury has his fast rejected. Or that you drink alcohol like whiskey, al-‘irqī, al-dukārā, al-marīsa (these are all types of alcoholic drinks), booze and everything that intoxicates the mind or makes it drunk. Or that you be miserly in the month of generosity, foolish in the month of forbearance, vengeful in the month of pardoning. Or that you turn away from Allāh and be responsive to other than Him, or that you request from other than Him what should not be sought except from Him. All of that is from bad manners and it is from the worst of partitions from al-Ḥaqq (the Real, glorified and exalted is He), so the one who does not adhere to good manners is driven away to the animal stable.

### **The sixth: Seeking the one being addressed to have knowledge of the speaker.**

The speaker is Allāh the Exalted. It is incumbent upon every Muslim to know that Allāh is one in His essence, one in His attributes, characterised by all perfection, free from all deficiencies, does what He pleases, creator of everything and independent of everything. He ordered creation with acts of obedience for their benefit and prohibited them from evil deeds out of fear of this harming them. He commanded the creation with obedience: promising reward for it, and prohibited obedience and threatened punishment for it. Then glory be to the One who decreed and ordained, and commanded good and prohibited evil, so the one who obeys has carried out the command of his Lord, “Allāh enjoins to do justice and to adopt good behavior,”<sup>33</sup> and the one who disobeys has carried out the command of his lower-self, “Surely, man’s inner self often incites to evil.”<sup>34</sup> (And it is incumbent to know) that the Exalted has

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<sup>32</sup> Sūra al-Tawba - verse (105).

<sup>33</sup> Sūra al-Naḥl - verse (90).

<sup>34</sup> Sūra Yūsuf - verse (53).



revealed books and sent messengers, and that He will resurrect all creatures and recompense them for their actions on the day of judgement, and that the resurrection is true, just like waking up from sleep is true, and that the Book of Allāh has not omitted a small or big thing except that it contains it, **“So, whoever does any good act (even) to the weight of a particle will see it. And whoever does evil (even) to the weight of a particle will see it.”**<sup>35</sup>

## **The seventh: Purification of his interior and exterior**

As for purification of the exterior, then this is an expression of ghusl (bathing) and ablution with cleansing water, there is in it strengthening of the holy soul. So as long as the body is clean, then the soul will be strong and relaxed. The purification of the interior is to purify it from waswās (devilish temptations), harmful thinking with the mind and going along with the whispers of the devil. From the things that help to achieve this, is witnessing Allāh the Exalted with the eyes of the heart, until he sees that which those who look do not see, for the Exalted and Real (al-Ḥaqq) has from his names al-Zāhir (the Apparent) and al-Bāṭin (the Hidden). Thus, your exterior has manifested because of the Apparent, and your interior because of the Hidden, who bestowed His apparent and hidden gifts upon you: **“and has perfected His blessings on you, both outward and inward.”**<sup>36</sup>

My master Muḥammad ‘Alī al-Yamanī al-Idrīsī (may Allāh be pleased with him) said, and I have heard him recite this verse in the town of Dongola: “Allāh the Exalted is reminding His slaves of His blessings, both outward and inward.”

## **The Second: from the Seven Subjects of the Noble Verse Faith**

This is an expression on believing in the word of Prophet (Allāh grant him peace and blessings): **“That you believe in Allāh, His angels, His books, His messengers, the Last Day, and that you believe that destiny, its good and bad, its sweetness and bitterness, is from Allāh.”** Narrated by al-Bukhārī and Muslim. This ḥadīth is the tafsīr (interpretation) given for the verses mentioned on the matter of faith.

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<sup>35</sup> Sūra al-Zalzala - verses (7-8).

<sup>36</sup> Sūrah Luqmān - verse (20).



## Belief in Allāh

That you believe that Allāh is one god without partner, nothing occurs in His dominion, except for what He wills and He cannot be dominated by anyone, He does not err or forget, He is not heedless, so that we must remind Him. He is not distant, so that we must shout at Him, nor is He ignorant, so that we must teach Him, He is exalted above needing a helper or an advisor. All His actions are good and His word is true. He has clarified to His creation what they need, guided the believer to His light by His will, invalidated the proof of disbelievers by establishing His proof. The decree and ordainment are not objections against Him, rather His is the profound proof. The mind cannot comprehend Him and text cannot encompass Him, He is not perceived by sight, nor settled in any place, and the inhabitants of the heavens are like the dwellers of the earth in that regard. He has promised the believers with His vision in His Paradise and promised them, that He is their guardian and helper who takes them out of the darkness of sins to the light of pious deeds. Whoever is ignorant of the reality of His essence and knows His attributes is a muwahḥid (one who professes the unity of Allāh), and whoever believes he knows the reality of the essence, then he is a heretical disbeliever, for Allāh is of nothing and nothing is of Him: **“There is nothing like Him, and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing.”**<sup>37</sup>

## Belief in the Angels

This is that you believe Allāh has a creation called angels and Allāh created them from light, they do not eat or drink or marry, they are neither male or female, they do not disobey Allāh or precede Him in speech, and they are faster than lightning in fulfilling his command, slaves of Allāh, Who honoured them with worship and occupied them with obedience. They are soldiers of Allāh in His heavens and earth, fulfilling orders forever and always, not a single one of them is free of occupation, even for a moment. From them are the four leaders **Jibrīl, Mikāʾīl, Isrāfīl and ‘Azrāʾīl**, the first of them for revelation, the second for sustenance, the third for blowing the horn and the fourth for seizing the souls. The rest of the angels, every group from them, are carrying out some good work. From them are the carriers of the throne (al-‘arsh), scribes, guardians, travellers and examiners of the slaves (of Allāh) and Muslims. They take shape in handsome forms, they are not dominated by one image and no one can overpower them. Allāh created them and their characteristics; then Allāh will dispatch them and cause them to enter Paradise where they will greet the believers with salām from every gate. As for those of them who will be in the Fire like, Sayyidunā Mālik and those with him, then they are like those who are in Paradise and the fire

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<sup>37</sup> Sūra al-Shūrā - verse (11).





will not catch them, and they are not affected by the screaming of the sinners. I heard about the angels, who fought with the Messenger (may peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), from my Shaykh al-Muṭṭī, an opinion which I did not hear from anyone else and that is: “the angels who descended to give victory to the Prophet (Allāh grant him peace and blessings) still remain between the heavens and the Earth, fighting alongside every sincere believer who strive for the sake of Allāh, the Lord of the worlds,” that is the amazing wisdom of Allāh, so reflect o believer and do not be heedless.

## **Belief in the Book**

Al-Bājūrī (Allāh grant him mercy) said: “To be precise: There is no set number that restricts them (books of Allāh), so it is necessary to believe that Allāh the Exalted revealed books from heaven in general; though yes, it is necessary to know the four books in detail and they are: al-Zābūr (the Psalms), al-Tawrā, al-Injīl (the Gospel) and al-Furqān (the Qur’ān), so the first was given to Sayyidunā Dāwūd, the second to Sayyidunā Mūsā, the third to Sayyidunā Īsā and the fourth to Sayyiduna Muḥammad, blessings of Allāh and peace be upon them all.

## **Belief in the Prophets (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon them all)**

Al-Bājūrī (Allāh grant him mercy) said: “What is correct, is to hold back in restricting them (the prophets) in number, because it may lead to affirming prophethood for one who is not or invalidating it for one who is, so it is necessary to believe that Allāh has prophets in general, except for twenty-five who must be known in detail, the first of them is Sayyidunā Ādam, and the last of them is Sayyidunā Muḥammad (may Allāh grant them peace and blessings).

## **Belief in the Last Day**

It is to believe that the arrival of a day named the Last Day is inevitable, and it is called “the last”, because it is the last of days and it has been said: “because there is no guide (dalīl) after it”, and its beginning is at the second blowing of the horn, and it has been said: “at the congregation (al-ḥaṣhr)”, and it was said: “from death and it has no end”, and it was said: “it will end by the entering of the people of Paradise into Paradise and the people of the Fire into the Fire”, and what is meant by the second blowing is resurrection (al-ba‘th) and that is Allāh reviving the bodies in the graves, and that (i.e. the second blowing being called the resurrection) is because of the death of creatures with the first blowing which is the blow of death (al-ṣa‘aq), and between the two blows are forty years. The sky will rain severely like the mouths of waterskins with water and like the semen of men for forty days, until the water will be twelve forearms in



height. Then Allāh will order the bodies and they will germinate, like the germination of herbs, until it is completed and they become as they once were. Then Allāh the Exalted will say: “Live” to Jibrīl, Mīkā’īl and Isrāfīl- He will order Isrāfīl , so he will take the horn, which is a horn from light, shaped like a trumpet that one blows into, but it is massive like the breadth of the heaven and the earth as mentioned in the ḥadīth. Then Allāh will summon the souls and cast them into the horn and order Isrāfīl to blow, so the souls will exit like bees and proceed into the bodies like the moving of poison in someone stung. That is called al-nashr (the resurrection). As for al-ḥashr, then it is the mobilisation of people to the place of congregation. Then the scale will be erected: **“Then, as for him whose scales (of good deeds) are heavy, he will live a pleasant life. But he whose scales are light, his abode will be the Abyss.”**<sup>38</sup>

## Belief in Destiny

It is an expression that the believer believes: all that occurs in existence is by the will of the Exalted, be it good or bad, sweetness or bitterness. You must know the Exalted may will something and orders it, like faith of the believer, and He may will something but not order it, like the disbelief of a disbeliever, and He may order something but not will it, like for Abu Jahl to believe, and He may not will something and not order it, like the disbelief of a believer (mu’min). Therefore, if you are in difficulty, then seek ease from Allāh, and if you are in disobedience, then fear Allāh cautiously. As for the saying of the common people: “Allāh wanted me to disobey so for what reason is He punishing me for it?” This is satanic speech and there is no answer for it except silence, and it is better to say: “Allāh wanted me to obey and granted me success to do it, so how can I attribute it to myself and He is giving me reward for it, indeed this is a great bounty!” **“For the like of this, then, let the workers work.”**<sup>39</sup>

## The Third: From the Seven Subjects of the Noble Verse He (Allāh) Attributed them with Slavehood

Slavehood is the actualisation of a slave with spiritual perfections, and giving up attributes of the self, and submitting all matters to his Just Owner, acknowledging His ownership and being confident in His justice, like it has been said:

**And from the evidences that you see him submitting (musliman)  
All affairs to the Just Owner**

<sup>38</sup> Sūra al-Qāri’a - verses (6-9).

<sup>39</sup> Sūra al-Ṣāffāt - verse (61).





**“And Allāh is Free-of-All-Needs, the Ever-Praised,”**<sup>41</sup> i.e. He is not in need of all that, as He is the Creator and there is no creator for Him and He is the One Who Decrees and no one decrees over Him: **“And He feeds and is not fed”**<sup>42</sup>, the Absolutely Rich, the Ever-Praised whose actions are praised because they are not without wisdom. Glory be to the One who enriched the rich one, so he gave thanks, and caused the poor one to be poor, so he was patient, and if He were to enrich the poor one he would sin, and if He were to cause the rich one to be poor he would disbelieve (la-kafar). Glory be to the One who was generous in withholding and giving, and was praised in both of these by the intelligent: **“and your Lord is most generous”**<sup>43</sup>, the Praised One in withholding and giving, and no one other than Him is praised for withholding because His withholding is the essence of giving.

I said in “al-Wuṣṭā”:

**And all that he removed from His slave**

**From that which His slave loves is for his good fortune**

**So He is gracious in withholding and in giving**

**The Most generous God, possessing grace**

**“It could be that you dislike something, when it is good for you; and it could be that you like something when it is bad for you. Allāh knows, and you do not know.”**<sup>44</sup> i.e. the Guardian who decreed for you matters, as there is no one more knowing of what is good for you, suitable for your nature and purifies your egos apart from Him. If you are pleased with what He has manifested for you, then you are pleased with His decree and love what he has chosen for you in conformity to His eternal knowledge: **“And your Lord creates what He wills and chooses.”**<sup>45</sup> If you are in some country for example, then do not dislike to be there, because then you are disliking what Allāh wanted for you, and do not move from there by yourself, because if you intended to move from there and He did not want that, then your intention would be in vain and impossible—even if you were to gather all of mankind and jinn—for you to move from there. And if He wants you to travel from there and you did not want that, then you will travel despite your stubbornness and it is impossible for you to remain there. If someone were to say, “so-and-so is in this direction and in that position and Allāh did not want that for him” then he has disbelieved.

**And everything is decreed and ordained**

**And every fate (maqdūr) so there is no escape from it**

<sup>41</sup> Sūra Fāṭir - verse (15).

<sup>42</sup> Sūra al-An‘ām - verse (14).

<sup>43</sup> Sūra al-‘Alaq - verse (3).

<sup>44</sup> Sūra al-Baqara - verse (216).

<sup>45</sup> Sūra al-Qaṣaṣ - verse (68).



The manifestations of the godly names are two parts: without intermediary, like the creation of the heavens, the earth and angels, and by intermediary, like the birth of these three: animals, plants and inanimate beings, and that which came into being without intermediary is greater than that which came into being by an intermediary: **“Certainly, the creation of the heavens and the earth is greater than the creation of human beings.”**<sup>46</sup> This is in relation to your understanding, for in relation to the Exalted, then everything is easy for Him so there is no lesser or greater but all His actions are original, perfect and wise: **“the doing of Allāh who has perfected everything”**<sup>47</sup>, and in the Sublime’s creation, that the people are here by an intermediary, is an indication that in this life it is essential to take means, as it is an abode of effort and action.

In the words of the Exalted: **“And whoever opts for the Hereafter and makes efforts for it as due, while he is a believer,”**<sup>48</sup> are amazing things which will become clear, if Allāh the Exalted wills, in my book titled *“Ajā’ibu al-Qur’ān li-man Arāda al-Īmān”*, such as desiring without effort is not appreciated by Allāh, because the example of desiring is like the soul and effort is like the body, and the soul’s impressions appear on its body, so then if the body is missing then the apparent impressions will also be missing. Also from the amazing things from these words, are that the effort must be connected to effort for Him, because it is in relation to the goal that effort is made to it, like a road and arrival is dependent on travelling on the road. So whoever wants to visit the tomb of my master Aḥmad bin Idrīs (may Allāh be pleased with him) for example, which is in Ṣabiyā’, (formerly Yemen, now part of Saudi Arabia)—because from the etiquettes of people of the path (ahl al-ṭarīq) is visiting the graves of their mashāyikh (Shaykhs) and believing that openings come because of it—is it possible for him to arrive to it, except through Yemen? So the one who wants the abode of the hereafter, then let him perform good deeds for it which Allāh made as a path to it, and the abode of the hereafter is Paradise, so al-taqwā is a path to Paradise and a shield from the Fire, and sin is a path to Hell and a partition from Paradise.

From these (amazing things) are that in the word of the Exalted: **“while he is a believer,”**<sup>49</sup> is an indication to his word (may Allāh bless him and grant him peace): **“Supplicate to Allāh while being certain He will answer,”** narrated by al-Tirmidhī and al-Ḥākim. Then, the one striving in pious deeds must believe that Allāh the Exalted will reward him for his deeds, enter him into Paradise by His mercy and multiply his reward. And the accusation is from the slave upon himself for not ascertaining

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<sup>46</sup> Sūra Ghāfir - verse (57).

<sup>47</sup> Sūra al-Naml - verse (88).

<sup>48</sup> Sūra al-Isrā’ - verse (19).

<sup>49</sup> Sūra al-Isrā’ - verse (19).



perfection from it, and blaming it with shortcomings out of fear of its oppression: **“Nay, but verily man is rebellious because he deems himself to be free of need”**<sup>50</sup>, because if the possessor of the lower-self praises it and shows confidence in it, then it will oppress other than it, see its precedence because of its good deeds, and be independent of guidance from other than it, although from the etiquettes of the People (al-Qawm) is that they listen to the advice of every individual, even a blind person. If they find light in his speech that agrees with their state, then they act upon it and if not, then they excuse themselves, like I said in my tā poem (Tā’iyyātī):

**Mould yourself with honourable character and be for the one  
 Who admonishes you hearing, acting on advice  
 Be patient, be shy and do not mix with those who follow passionate desires  
 For they will blow you with desires in the direction of error**

This amount is enough in that which concerns slavehood.

## **The Fourth: From the Seven Subjects for the Noble Verse Obligation**

[The obligation is] in the word of the Exalted: **“Prescribed for you,”**<sup>51</sup> meaning that Allāh the Exalted is saying: I have obligated and necessitated fasting upon you, so the fasting of Ramaḍān is obligatory and necessary upon every male and female Muslim. The one who fasts in it is rewarded and the one who does not without excuse is punished. Obligation and necessity (al-farḍ wa al-wājib) both have the same meaning to (Imāms) Mālik and al-Shāfi‘ī, except on the subject of Ḥajj where obligation (al-farḍ) cannot be rectified with a sacrifice and necessity (al-wājib) can be rectified by it. And it is one of the five obligatory rulings and they are:

**Firstly:** al-Wājib (necessary): it is what one is rewarded for doing and punished for leaving, such as the fast of Ramaḍān.

**Secondly:** al-Ḥarām (forbidden): it is what one is punished for doing and rewarded for leaving, like not fasting in Ramaḍān.

**Thirdly:** al-Mandūb (recommended): it is what one is rewarded for doing and not punished for leaving, like leaving the ṣaḥūr (pre-dawn meal).

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<sup>50</sup> Sūra al-‘Alaq - verses (6-7).

<sup>51</sup> Sūra al-Baqara - verse (183).



**Fourthly:** al-Makrūḥ (disliked): it is what one is rewarded for leaving and not punished for doing, like the fasting person tasting salt.

**Fifthly:** al-Mubāḥ (permissible): it is what one is not rewarded for doing and not punished for leaving, like eating and drinking.

There are five others, called “situational rulings” (al-aḥkām al-waḍ‘iyya) and they are: al-sharṭ (condition or precondition), al-māni‘ (prevention or prohibition), al-sabab (reason), al-ṣiḥḥa (validity) and al-fasād (invalidity).

## **The Fifth: From the Seven Subjects of the Noble Verse Fasting (al-Ṣawm)**

Allāh the Exalted commands us with fasting in this verse—and it means **linguistically**: Abstinance and abandonment, the Exalted said in a story about Maryam (may Allāh be pleased with her): “Say, “I have vowed a fast (of silence) for the All-Merciful,”<sup>52</sup> i.e. silence and abstention from speaking. The poet said:

**The fasting horse and the non-fasting horse  
Is vociferous and the other chews the bridle**

Shar‘an (in Islamic law): (Fasting is) Abstinance from the desires of the stomach and private parts, for a whole day from the start of fajr to the setting of the sun, i.e. he leaves that which goes into the stomach or the throat from the mouth or other than it such as the eye or ear, and he leaves sexual intercourse or other than it of means that break the fast, such as touching that leads to ejaculation of sperm or pre-sexual fluid. (The fast must be done) with intention before fajr or at the time of fajr, outside the time of menstruation, post-natal bleeding or days of ‘Īd. It is best for him to intend to draw closer to Allāh the Exalted with his fast, if he were not to intend al-taqarrub (wishing to draw closer) the fast will still be valid. I say: But he must believe that this fast is obligatory and Allāh the Exalted has imposed it, so if he does not believe this then his fast is invalid.

Ramaḍān was obligated on a Monday, the second of Sha‘bān in the third year after the hijra, and it is obligatory by the Book and Sunna and by consensus (ijmā‘). Whoever denies its obligation has disbelieved and the one who abandons its fast without an excuse is a fāsiq (open sinner). It is the best month in relation to the remaining months of the year, and it is called Ramaḍān because it scorches sins, i.e. it burns them.

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<sup>52</sup> Sūra Maryam - verse (26).



Thereupon I am presenting general advice to every Muslim man and woman that it is essential to read the chapter of fasting. Every person should read it to a scholar of his madhhab (school of jurisprudence) until the fasting is complete and perfect in line with and in conformity to the Book and Sunna. Because every madhhab from the four madhhabs is upon the Book and Sunna, and I will compile, if Allāh wills, the jurisprudence of the four madhhabs on fasting in a future book, I ask Allāh to facilitate it, ameen. Allāh has granted me openings in the meanings of the letters from the word ṣawm (fasting), with these words:

### From the Secrets of the Letters of Ṣawm

**Letter Ṣād:** Points to patience (al-ṣabr), the Exalted said: **“Certainly those who observe patience will be given their reward in full without measure.”**<sup>53</sup> It is said they are those who observe the fast. I say: those who fast were attributed with patience externally because they were patient in parting from food and drink and other than that from which the fasting person is prohibited. The reward is full without measure due to the difficulty of fasting. There is in a ḥadīth of the Messenger (peace and blessings be upon him): **“Fasting is half of patience (al-ṣabr),”** (narrated by Ibn Mājah). Patience (ṣabr) is the greatest characteristic which the human requires because it is the reason for felicity, source of spiritual ascension and the epitome of bravery, because by it the heroes are distinguished and known. Patience is steadfastness of the human and keeping his humanity, and his responding to the caller to Allāh as opposed to responding to the caller to whims, lower-self and Satan. He hears with his heart: **“respond to Allāh’s herald”**<sup>54</sup>, so he responds, and repents to his Lord. And if the caller to whimsical desire calls him, he replies to it with the word of the Exalted: **“and do not follow the selfish desire, lest it should lead you astray from Allāh’s path.”**<sup>55</sup> And if the lower-self calls him, he replies to it with the word of the Exalted: **“Surely, man’s inner self often incites to evil”**<sup>56</sup>. And if the Satan whispers to him, he replies with the word of the Exalted: **“Surely Shayṭān (Satan) is an enemy for you. So, take him as an enemy.”**<sup>57</sup> He will be with his patience steadfast with his humanity i.e. he won’t shift from it to savagery by betrayal, or to beastliness by following passionate desires, or to perpetration of violations, separating people, bad conduct towards them, efforts in corrupting their community and all that contradicts the requirements of humanity which Allāh the Exalted favoured him with: **“O mankind, worship your Lord who**

<sup>53</sup> Sūra al-Zumar - verse (10).

<sup>54</sup> Sūrah al-Aḥqāf - verse (31).

<sup>55</sup> Sūra Ṣād - verse (26).

<sup>56</sup> Sūra Yūsuf - verse (53).

<sup>57</sup> Sūra Fāṭir - verse (6).





created you and those before you,”<sup>58</sup> i.e. worship Allāh who graced you with humanity, i.e. with bodies and beautiful appearances combined, and He blew into them a soul which inclines to intimacy, virtuous acts and gaining sciences, and He created those who were before you in the same manner and if they were to be beasts then you would have also been born as beasts, and the beast’s image is either frightening or not friendly. So, if He had blown your souls into the bodies of beasts then you would have fled and been angry at the bodies, let alone acquaint yourself with other than you. Glory be to the One Who knows the nature of souls and what they like, so He created bodies for them in the best form, in the image that Allāh eternally knew, that if the souls saw them then they would like them and if it was not for that, they would have been in the most severe torment.

Also, with patience he becomes one who answers the summon to the Real (glorified and exalted is He) when his lower self incites to evil and his devil with wrongdoing, so he is patient upon always obeying his Lord and upon leaving the passionate desires of his lower self. With his patience he goes against the commands of his lower self which is from the worst of enemies to him and which does not command except with evil, as long as it is not granted mercy. If Allāh shows it mercy then it is guided to Him by His light: **“Allāh guides to His light whomsoever He wills.”**<sup>59</sup> At that time the nafs will see the light of obedience so it will command to it and hasten to it, and it will see the darkness of disobedience so it will forbid it and flee from it: **“He said, “I seek refuge with Allāh. Surely, he (your husband) is my master. He has given me a good lodging. Indeed, the wrongdoers do not prosper.”**<sup>60</sup> He will contradict his devil when he brings him evil, vile deeds and wrongdoing; because the devil always and forever tries to harm the human and destroy him, make him sad and fear poverty, make him disbelieve and sin openly, make him leave the prayer, Zakāt, Ḥajj and fasting. So every time a person wants to perform prayer, if he is someone who neglects his prayers, he says to him: “Why are you praying now? You have abandoned the prayer for a long time, what will the people say to you? It is better that you leave it, as is your habit in case the people will laugh at you.” And if he is someone who prays regularly, he will say to him when the time of prayer enters: “There is still time left, leave it for a little, then a little bit more until you rest and pray after sleeping, prayer at its due time” until the amount of time lengthens and the time of prayer finishes and so the slave ends up under the threat which is in the word of the Exalted: **“Woe to those who pray. Who are neglectful of their prayer.”**<sup>61</sup> Woe: (Wayl) it is a valley in Jahannam for those who delay the obligatory (prayer) until its time elapses. He (the devil) says to the

<sup>58</sup> Sūra al-Baqara - verse (21).

<sup>59</sup> Sūra al-Nūr - verse (35).

<sup>60</sup> Sūra Yūsuf - verse (23).

<sup>61</sup> Sūra al-Mā’ūn - verses (4-5).



wealthy: “Indeed Zakāt diminishes your wealth, so don’t give Zakāt. All the people have already abandoned Zakāt, so will you alone give Zakāt? Be like the others from your community and do not isolate yourself from them,” until years pass by him without paying Zakāt, so then he falls into the threat that is in the word of the Exalted: **“And those who hoard gold and silver and spend it not in the way of Allāh - give them tidings of a painful punishment”**, (two verses)<sup>62</sup>. And he (the devil) says to the one who wants to perform Ḥajj: “Delay it to the next year, you are still young, instead of Ḥajj buy some land or a shop,” **“You intend to have the stuff of this world, while Allāh intends the Hereafter (for you).”**<sup>63</sup> So he remains like that until years pass and he has not performed Ḥajj and has gathered abundant wealth, and if he were to hear the word of Allāh the Exalted: **“And pilgrimage to the House is a duty unto Allāh for mankind, for he who can find a way to it. As for he who disbelieves, (let him know that) lo! Allāh is Independent of (all) creatures,”**<sup>64</sup> he listens to it as though he never heard it, and starts to resort to tricks like the tricks of a fox and presents excuses dictated to him by the devil and the Compassionate already knows their falsehood. And he (the devil) says to the fasting person: “Don’t fast, while hiding from the people in case your body becomes weak, or feign illness so that you can stop fasting for two or three days,” so he carries on with him until he plunges him in what Allāh has forbidden of fast breaking and so he falls into al-ḥamīm (the boiling water of hell).

The perfect, intelligent and patient believer is the one who responds to his Lord and contradicts his lower-self, whimsical desire and devil, and hastens to do good deeds before death, for indeed lifespans are not guaranteed, and there is no security from the fate of death. So the gatherer of wealth dies and leaves his wealth behind, and the gatherer of good deeds dies and his deeds are buried with him, so he knows his state. al-Bukhārī (may Allāh be pleased with him) said:

**Make use of your free time with the virtue of rukū’ (bowing)**  
**For it may be that your death will be sudden**  
**How many healthy persons without any illness have we seen**  
**His noble soul has departed suddenly**

And in my Lām poem:

**And remember death and do not be heedless for there is not**  
**Someone more ignorant than the heedless from death descending**  
**Using up his time accumulating wealth**  
**You have wasted your life on something flawed (khalal)**

<sup>62</sup> Sūra al-Tawba - verses (34-35).

<sup>63</sup> Sūra al-Anfāl - verse (67).

<sup>64</sup> Sūra Āli ‘Imrān - verse (97).



**Letter Wāw:** Alludes to scrupulousness (warā’), which is taking the most cautious approach in acts of worship, sincerity in dealings with others, taking the self to account at its due time, avoiding doubtful matters and turning to Allāh in all states. For this reason, he (may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said: **“Scrupulousness (warā’) is the master of action,”** narrated by al-Tirmidhī. When Shaykh al-Saqā (may Allāh grant him mercy) was asked about scrupulousness in these times, he was reading ḥadīth in al-Azhar al-Sharīf and he had just come across this ḥadīth, so he said: “Like Shaykh Muḥammad ‘illīsh”, for from his scrupulousness was that he used to have a bag in which he would carry his shoes when he entered the masjid, and he was firm in religion and was not affected in the way of Allāh by the blame of a critic, and he has many unprecedented books with the light of scrupulousness shining from them, and the fragrance of sincerity can be smelt from them, may Allāh be pleased with him. By fasting the heart softens and fills up with the fear of Allāh (the Mighty and Majestic), from there originates perfection of action and leaving what is doubtful in it, and taking the most cautious approach; because taking the most careful approach; the one who does it will be upon certainty about the validity of his deeds with all the Imāms, as is the habit of the righteous, and also abandoning excessiveness in speech, sleep, food and drink. Also from scrupulousness is to not occupy oneself with that which does not concern him, hastening to benefit Muslims, to have sincerity for the religion and homeland and to ponder over what will benefit the community. And from scrupulousness is to sell oneself in that path, for the scrupulous believer is he who makes his self and his wealth for the sake of Allāh and his homeland. As for the one who has no solicitude (ghīra) for his religion, land and honour then he is not scrupulous, rather he is not a complete believer. For the scrupulous one is at the forefront in an encounter, daring when the two armies meet, and who sees-in the sacrificing of himself-the power of the One who gives life after it so He will grant it to him generously for the sake of that: **“and they give preference over themselves, even though they are in poverty.”**<sup>65</sup>

All of that we gain by fasting, which unveils for us the sciences of the soul which are personal, eternal attainments for it (the soul) by godly instructions. Allāh the Exalted sent down the soul and blew it into this body to manifest sciences and perfections. Its sciences have been veiled by the thickness of the body, and its perfections by the darkness of the lower self, which is illuminated by fasting. And fasting also thins down the thickness of the body with activity and work, because every time the thickness of the body thins then the power of the soul manifests, which is characterised by

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<sup>65</sup> Sūra al-Ḥashr - verse (9).



activity, strength and speed, and every time the darkness of the self lessens, then the perfection of the soul and its amazing secrets are manifested.

I said in my tā' poem, called "Fathu l-Bābi ilā Ṭarīqi l-Aḥbāb":

**The soul has come to you and it is honourable**

**So be gentle with it by not letting it see you in baseness**

**And rise with it to the way above wearing**

**The garment of humility supported by honour**

**Then you will be helped by the presence of Allāh at His door**

**The people of fasting will triumph on the Day of Hardship**

**Far be it that the sleepers have a share in what**

**The one who is habitually awake at dusk, finds in Janna (Paradise)**

**Letter Mīm:** An allusion to muḥsin (one who is excellent or beneficent), i.e. a possessor of excellence (or beneficence), which is a matter containing all goodness. It is also being good with Allāh, meaning obeying His command and avoiding His prohibition, and to the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), meaning obeying his command, avoiding what he has prohibited and following his actions (Allāh bless him and grant him peace).

Then **al-iḥsān (excellence or beneficence)** to the self, is to take it to the path of goodness and to keep it away from the path of evil.

And al-iḥsān to created beings is good behaviour with them, doing that which is beneficial to them and leaving that which is harmful to them.

Al-iḥsān to animals is to not burden them with more than they can bear and to give them what is required of food, drink, shade and rest.

Al-iḥsān to animals to be slaughtered is to sharpen the butcher's knife and to put the slaughter animal at ease.

And if anything is killed from that which is permissible to kill, like harmful predatory animals and insects, then iḥsān to it is to take the swiftest approach in annihilating its life without torture.

And al-iḥsān to the wife is to shoulder that which causes her harm and pain, and carry out his duty towards her as much as he is able, and al-iḥsān to children is to take care of their subsistence and give them a good upbringing and education, and al-iḥsān to parents is to obey their command in that which he sees is helpful to the religion and helpful to them, and in that which brings about benefit to it and to them, and al-iḥsān



to full brothers is to respect the older of them and be merciful to the younger of them and to look at him with the gaze of a compassionate parent at his child.

In a ḥadīth: “**Verily Allāh prescribed al-iḥsān for everything,**” narrated by Muslim, Abū Dāwūd and al-Tirmidhī, and Allāh said: “**Verily Allāh commands justice and al-iḥsān,**”<sup>66</sup> So the one who has no justice has no iḥsān, because justice is to give every possessor of right-his right. The just one (al-‘ādil) is he who carries out the rights of the Creator and creation and puts things in their proper places. So the one who did iḥsān in the improper place is not just, or muḥsin, because his iḥsān turns into a misdeed, and his justice turns into oppression, for al-iḥsān is in everything based on justice. How excellent is the iḥsān that is preceded by justice (‘adl)! Now if he were to take the necessary expenditure incumbent upon him for his parents or the necessary expenditure incumbent upon him for his wife and children and give it in charity, then is he just or an oppressor? A muḥsin or a musī’ (wrongdoer)? He would be a sinful and oppressive wrongdoer, especially if they were poor or in difficulty.

Al-iḥsān also applies to the slave witnessing his Lord or that his Lord sees him, so fasting is iḥsān because it is iḥsān to the self which produces iḥsān to others.

It has been clarified for you that fasting is a good and pure tree whose roots are firmly established in the earth of the body and its reward illuminates the sky of the soul, which first shines upon the earth of the external body, so it becomes illuminated with the lights of the soul dwelling in the limbs. Then whenever its enemy approaches it, it drops the blazing lights of its remembrance (dhikr) from its sky, repelling its enemy; and every time the limbs become exhausted, it rains upon them with sweet water whose wise knowledge causes the limbs to shake, and commands and cultivates fear and trembling on their external being. It produces from the effects of its (the tree’s) actions, pious deeds that Allāh loves and also pleases Him.

Thus, the fasting person is the believer who has collected all the attributes of goodness and from the greatest of them are wisdom, abstinence, bravery and justice. The wise are unanimous that these four are the categories of virtue.

**Wisdom:** It is the virtue of the speaking and discerning mind; and it is that you know divine matters and their related knowledge bears fruit by that; and that you know what the plausible things are and which of them is necessary to do and which of them is necessary to abandon. Wisdom is strengthened by an empty stomach, it is enlightened by it and its full effects are manifested. In my lām poem:

**Wisdom in a person is known by being conscious of god (al-tuqā)  
And emptying the stomach from the disease of heaviness**

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<sup>66</sup> Sūra al-Naḥl - verse (90).



**Al-'Iffa (Abstinence):** It is the virtue of the covetous feeling (al-ḥiss al-shahwānī), and the manifestation of this virtue in a person, is that he disposes his desires (shahawāt) based on his individual judgement, I mean that he conforms with correct judgement so that he is not led by them (his desires), and by that he becomes free of his desires and not a slave to anything from them. And from his supplication (may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him): **“O Allāh, I ask you for good health and al-'iffa (abstinence),”** narrated by al-Bazzār and al-Ṭabarānī. In my lām poem:

**Be abstinent ('affan), indeed in abstinence is what  
Prevents a person from all slips**

The one who abstains from the wealth of people and from disgracing their honour, then Allāh grants him abstinence and protects his wealth and honour; and the one who overwhelms the people, then Allāh causes the people to overwhelm him; and the one who repents, then Allāh forgives him and transfers him to a better state: **“Surely, Allāh does not change the condition of a people unless they change what is in themselves.”**<sup>67</sup>

**Bravery:** It is the virtue of the angry self. It manifests in the human being depending on execution of it in the speaking and discerning mind, and using what is required of the individual judgement in frightful matters, i.e. he is not afraid of frightening matters, if doing them is graceful and being patient with them is praiseworthy.

In my lām poem:

**Be brave in the way of the truth, don't  
Show fear if war occurs  
A person's death is not in his bold undertaking  
Verily death is dependent on the appointed time  
How many a brave one received in his killing  
Honour everlasting and the sword did not kill!**

Bravery is manifested in fighting. The believer knows without any doubt that he will not die except by the permission of Allāh, and whoever doubts that has disbelieved. So, if he were to be assaulted by the guns of the world and its poisonous gasses and Allāh did not want him to die from them, then by Allāh, he will not die from them. And those in the rows of the battle will not die as well, except by the permission of Allāh. So his standing in front of guns does not change Allāh's decision in his life span; how many a soldier have we seen who has attended a number of war battles and now he is alive and safe with command of his senses, and how many a person in their home,

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<sup>67</sup> Sūra al-Ra'd - verse (11).



on their bed, dies in the blink of an eye! Therefore, know my brothers that the matter of death is separate from it, because it is known to all that lifetime is but one. We have all heard the word of Allāh the Exalted: **“No soul can ever die except by Allāh’s leave.”**<sup>68</sup>

**And he is dead by his life span, who is killed  
And other than this is false and not accepted**

**Then if it is asked:** If the matter is as has been mentioned, then for what reason are we cautious and do we tire ourselves in using masks and other things?

**Answer:** Allāh has ordered us to take caution whether He has decreed for us this thing that we are being wary of or not, the Exalted said: **“But take your precautionary measures.”**<sup>69</sup> So not exposing ourselves to poisonous gasses falls under this divine command, and from it is also is that we learn modes of resistance against the schemes of the enemies, and fortification of our homes and following our government in all that they order us to do from that which is beneficial for us, our army and country.

**If it is asked:** The enemy is not at war against us, so for what reason should we prepare that which we will combat him with, should we not leave it until he wages war against us?

**Answer:** Allāh the Exalted has commanded us to make use of power and prepare it before war takes place, have you not heard the word of the Exalted: **“And prepare against them whatever you are able of power.”**<sup>70</sup> Preparation does not take place except before fighting as with it (the time of war), it is not possible for someone to prepare anything, rather then it is only victory or defeat. If he was ready then he will be victorious, and if he was heedless and neglected preparation, then he will be defeated. In the word of the Exalted, **“Whatever you are able,”**<sup>71</sup> is an amazing secret, as though He is saying: “Every individual prepares his capability,” even the women participate in taking preparations, so whoever from them is rich, then it is incumbent upon her to help her army and the men of her nation.

As for the incidence of war and the enemy’s invasion into the country, then it is incumbent upon every individual man or woman to manifest fighting and severe resistance. This is if he is participating with the army from what they have of knowledge and taking of precautionary measures. As for if he is just a civilian, then he should hasten to do what is commanded to him by his government, and let his

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<sup>68</sup> Sūra Āli ‘Imrān - verse (145).

<sup>69</sup> Sūra al-Nisā’ - verse (102).

<sup>70</sup> Sūra al-Anfāl - verse (60).

<sup>71</sup> Sūra al-Anfāl - verse (60).



support be a manifestation of patience, steadfastness and al-taqwā (God-fear) with words of victory, especially in front of women and children: **“Give glad tidings and do not cause aversion.”**<sup>72</sup>

**Justice:** it is the virtue of the self which results by combining these three that we have enumerated, and like that in the conciliation of these, they strengthen each other, and they submit to a distinct power until they do not wrestle with one another or move in the direction of their wishes imposed by their natural dispositions. It (i.e. justice) produces for the person ,a trait by which he always chooses justice and demands justice for others and for himself.

Every one of these four, yield certain things:

**Wisdom:** Yields intelligence, al-dhikr (remembrance), discernment, swift understanding and its potency, pure mind and ease in learning.

**Al-‘Iffa (Abstinence):** Yields shyness, mild-temper, patience, al-sakhā’ (munificence), freedom, contentment, gentleness, order, excellent guidance, peaceful character, gravity and scrupulousness.

**Bravery:** Yields self-eminence, courage, great ambition, steadfastness, patience, forbearance, lack of fickleness, boldness and toleration of trouble. The difference between this patience and the one in al-‘iffa is that this is in frightening situations whereas the former is in rash desires.

**Al-Sakhā’ (Munificence):** Causes generosity, preference (preferring others to oneself), nobility, equality, tolerance and forgiveness.

**Justice:** Yields friendship, intimacy, maintenance of ties of kinship, compensation, good partnership, good judgement, affection, worship, abandonment of hatred, recompensing hatred with goodness, use of gentleness, being manly in all states, abandonment of enmity and refraining from narrating from someone who is not upright.

You know that all these attributes are from the soul and every time these strengthen, then its sciences increase, and it does not strengthen by anything, like it does by nourishing it with fasting and for that reason, Allāh the Exalted has obligated it upon the Umma (nation).

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<sup>72</sup> From a ḥadīth narrated by Muslim.





## The Sixth: From the Seven Subjects of the Noble Verse Relating the Fasting of those Before Us

In the words of the Exalted: **“Just as it was prescribed for those before you,”**<sup>73</sup> [NOTE: the Shaykh begins by speaking about the Arabic grammar of the verse:] in the confines of nasb (subjunctive) as it is a na‘t (adjective) for al-maṣḍar al-mu‘akkad (emphasised verbal noun), i.e. kitāban in the form of **“kamā kutiba (just as it was prescribed)”**, or that it is ḥāl (state) from al-maṣḍar al-ma‘rifa (definite verbal noun), i.e. **“kutiba ‘alaykum al-ṣiyām kamā (fasting is prescribed for you)”**, the kutiba here resembles bimā kutiba so the mā here has two meanings, either maṣḍariyya (absolute object), or it is a na‘t (adjective) for maṣḍar (verbal noun) from the word al-ṣiyām (fasting), i.e. fasting that is similar to the fasting of those it was prescribed upon before you, so the mā is mawṣūla (relative pronoun), or it is a ḥāl (state) from al-ṣiyām (fasting), i.e. ḥāl resembling limā kutiba (for what it was prescribed) [END OF GRAMMAR], I have mentioned the grammatical analysis (al-i‘rāb) here, so that we can take it into consideration in following the fasting of the predecessors: **“for those before you,”**<sup>74</sup> from the prophets (upon them be peace and blessings) and their nations since Ādam (peace be upon him). In it is assurance and awakening of desire for fasting, and making the egos (anfus) agreeable of those being addressed by it, because indeed if a difficult thing is generalised then it becomes easy to do—and what is intended by the similitude is either a similitude in the origin of obligation, or in time and amount, as it was narrated that the fasting of Ramaḍān was obligated for the Jews and Christians. As for the Jews, they left it and fasted a day from the year which they claimed was the day that Pharaoh was drowned, and they denied it (Ramaḍān), as indeed that was the day of ‘Āshūrā’. As for the Christians, they fasted Ramaḍān until they encountered severe heat, so they gathered the opinions of their scholars to specify one season between summer and winter, so they made it in the spring and increased it by ten days as expiation for what they did and so it became forty days. Then, their kings became ill or something happened, so they added ten days, so it became fifty.

In the mentioning of the obligation of fasting on those before us, is easing for us, concern for our situation and a favour upon us, since the Exalted prescribed for us that which will purify our egos, and make it worthy for spiritual morals and lordly secrets, as He did prescribe it for those before us. In it is also that which makes us be serious and work hard, so that we do not become the least of them in rank, because if we know that fasting was obligated on those before us, then our egos hasten to it, and

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<sup>73</sup> Sūra al-Baqara - verse (183).

<sup>74</sup> Sūra al-Baqara - verse (183).



refuse to fast except for the sake of our rank not being diminished on the Day of Judgement, less than the predecessors. How can that be and they are men and we are men? And we are greater than them due to the fact our Messenger (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) is the best messenger and by him we are **“the best community that has been raised up for mankind.”**<sup>75</sup> The poet Aḥmad Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-Sūdānī said:

**My land is not ever disgraceful**

**Verily the free soul (nafs) is disdainful of injustice**

**My soul is not purified and my body (‘awḍ) does not bear leaves**

**If I committed shameful deeds as a way of living**

Which disgrace is greater than the disgrace of the Day of Judgement? What humiliation is greater than the humiliation of disobedience? And which exasperation is more severe than the preceding before you of one who is less than you? Fasting was obligated on those before you and they are less than you in virtue, yet they complied and fasted for their Lord, and the ones who did not comply from them, were from the disbelievers. You are the best umma (nation) and the best messenger was sent to you, beware that something occurs from you that is not befitting of you, for indeed the disobedience of a noble and virtuous person is greater than from someone other than him. Indeed your Prophet (may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) will boast of you to the other nations on the Day of Judgement as you know, and boasting is not from an abundance of numbers only, verily it is by abundance and pious deeds, especially that the one breaks their fast (with no valid excuse) in Ramaḍān —Allāh’s refuge is sought—will not be, on the Day of Judgement, with those who will see the Messenger of Allāh (peace and blessings be upon him) feeling proud of them and drinking from his Ḥawḍ [lake]. How can they drink water in Ramaḍān during the day without an excuse and then drink from the Ḥawḍ which none will drink from except the one who suffered the thirst of fasting? Or how can they delight in the eating of the fruits of Paradise and they delighted in eating food during the day time of Ramaḍān and indeed the fruits of Paradise have been prepared for those who starved themselves with fasting. So it will be said to them: **“Eat and drink at ease for that which you sent on before you in past days,”**<sup>76</sup> i.e. in the days of fasting. Our Lord (exalted is He) is All-Knowing and just, so it is necessary that the eye that took pleasure by gazing at what Allāh has prohibited, that a day comes where it tastes the

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<sup>75</sup> Sūra Āli ‘Imrān - verse (110).

<sup>76</sup> Sūra al-Ḥāqqa - verse (24).



pain of that pleasure, and for the one who laughed at people out of mockery, that a day come where he takes the pain of that laugh.

## The seventh: From the Seven Subjects of the Noble Verse al-Taqwā (Piety)

**Taqwā (Piety):** The **Tā'**: Alludes to tawakkul (reliance), the **Qāf**: to qanā'a (contentment), the **Wāw**: to warā' (scrupulousness), the **Yā'**: to yaqīn (certainty).

Or: the **Tā'**: Alludes to tawhīd, the **Qāf**: to qiyām (carrying out) the rights of the Creator and the slaves, the **Wāw**: to wajd (ecstasy) and witnessing, the **Yā'**: to yaqza (waking) up to every day passing then never returning. I said:

**Taqwā of God is that you are seen listening  
To His Word and obediently acting upon it  
Supporting the Sunna of the Chosen One  
Avoiding gatherings of sin  
With seriousness in deeds and appropriate  
In speech, and asceticism, with litanies  
And that you study knowledge  
And be a helping guide with forbearance**

Al-Taqwā is the mount of all goodness, by which a person arrives to the goodness and felicity of this world and the hereafter. The one who has no taqwā, then there is no good in him and no felicity for him. The scholar arrives with it to the gnosis of the secrets of 'ilm (knowledge) **“Observe your duty to Allāh. Allāh will teach you,”**<sup>77</sup> i.e. act upon what you know, your Lord will teach you the secrets of knowledge and unveil for you its secrets, until its lights shine forth for you and its effects manifest upon you.

With taqwā, a distressed person gains relief and a way out: **“And whosoever keeps his duty to Allāh (wa man yattaqi Llāh), Allāh will appoint a way out for him,”**<sup>78</sup> I heard from my Shaykh, Muḥammad al-Samālūṭī (upon him be mercy and acceptance), a story that he mentioned when he recited the ḥadīth: **“Keep your duty to Allāh and He will take care of you.”**<sup>79</sup> he said: “a pious man fell into hardship and a woman called him to her house. Once he arrived to the house, she closed the doors and called him to herself. So he ordered her to bring food, so she went to bring it. He then got up and made ablution and prayed two rak'a, then said: “O Allāh this is taqwā, so where is the

<sup>77</sup> Sūra al-Baqara - verse (282).

<sup>78</sup> Sūra al-Ṭalāq - verse (2).

<sup>79</sup> Part of a ḥadīth narrated by al-Tirmidhī and Aḥmad.



way out?” So the wall broke for him, and he exited from it. Allāh made a way out for him because of his taqwā: **“Surely, Allāh is with those who fear Him,”**<sup>80</sup> i.e. by helping them and assisting them. He is there for them based on their situational necessities; the poor man requires food, the sick requires cure, the frightened one requires security, the weak needs strength, the oppressed requires justice, the beaten one requires victory and the idler requires activity. Thus, the Real (al-Ḥaqq) (Glorified and Exalted is He) is with every pious person, depending on what the pious person requires and He increases him from His bounty: **“And He responds to (the prayer of) those who believe and do righteous deeds, and gives them from His bounty.”**<sup>81</sup>

The Messenger of Allāh (peace and blessings be upon him) mentioned taqwā has two places, external and internal:

### The Place of the First Taqwā:

In his word (may peace and blessings be upon him): **“Fear Allāh wherever you may be,”** narrated by al-Dārimī, i.e. in any place you are, because Allāh the Exalted is with you wherever you may be: **“And He is with you wherever you may be.”**<sup>82</sup>, that is with His knowledge, power, gentleness, strength, pardon, forgiveness, mercy, care, choosing, planning, force, domination, majesty, grandeur, protection and protective jealousy (ghayra).

Then, if you wanted to say something or do something, then know that Allāh is with you with His knowledge. So beware of that which emanates from you that displeases Him, and beware of not doing a job perfectly with One who knows about you and your work.

If your lower self deems something as being far-fetched, like the occurrence of relief after hardship, healing after illness, wealth after poverty and guidance after error, then know that Allāh is with you, with His power, capable of everything that your mind can imagine from that which your lower self deems farfetched. Then, fear Allāh that you don’t seek it from other than Him **“Lo! Allāh is able to do all things,”**<sup>83</sup> anyone other than Him is unable to do anything, rather his fate is predestined.

If your lower self tells you to sin, then tell it that Allāh is with you with His power, capable of sending down punishment upon you right now: **“Say: He is able to send punishment upon you from above you or from beneath your feet.”**<sup>84</sup> And He is with

<sup>80</sup> Sūra al-Naḥl - verse (128).

<sup>81</sup> Sūra al-Shūrā - verse (26).

<sup>82</sup> Sūra al-Ḥadīd - verse (4).

<sup>83</sup> Sūra al-Baqara - verse (20).

<sup>84</sup> Sūra al-An’ām - verse (65).



you with His gentleness. Know when trouble, hardship or punishment descends on you, that Allāh was gentle with you, because there is no punishment except Allāh has something more severe than it. Fear Allāh in difficulties by being grateful to Him for His mildness with you. Do not be from those who He caused to forget the pain of distress accompanied with mildness, so he became displeased and denied, and said that which is not praiseworthy to say. I said:

**For Allāh is mildness with the slave**

**At the time of hardships and sorrows**

**Then thank your Lord always**

**Glorified be He! Knower of the Unseen**

If you wanted to oppress someone or wrong him, then know that Allāh is with you with His severe vengeance: **“Indeed, the vengeance of your Lord is severe.”**<sup>85</sup> Leave your weak force out of fear of your Lord’s powerful strike, otherwise you will be from those destroyed. Be afraid, and thus be safe.

I said in my lām poem:

**Abandon oppression upon the creation of Allāh, don’t**

**Forget the vengeance of our Master Allāh the Most Sublime**

In a ḥadīth: **“Woe to the one who gets angry and forgets the anger of his Lord,”** narrated by al-Daylamī, **“And when they get angry, they forgive.”**<sup>86</sup>

And if you feel despair, then do not forget that Allāh is with you with His pardon, and in a ḥadīth: **“Indeed, Allāh is shy, Generous, when a man raises his hands to Him, He feels too shy to return them to him empty and rejected.”**<sup>87</sup>

If you feel hopeless, then remember that Allāh is with you with His mercy, and that His mercy has surpassed His anger, as in a ḥadīth qudsī: **“Verily I am Allāh, there is no god but I, my mercy has surpassed my anger.”** If it was not for that, then the disobedient ones and sinners would have been destroyed, so glorified is the One whose mercy has surpassed his anger, so He was patient with the sinners hoping that they would repent to their Lord, so that they would be successful like their pious brothers. **“And repent to Allāh together, O believers, that you may be successful.”**<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Sūra al-Burūj - verse (12).

<sup>86</sup> Sūra al-Shūrā - verse (37).

<sup>87</sup> Narrated by Abū Dāwūd, al-Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah.

<sup>88</sup> Sūra al-Nūr - verse (31).



If the sins become abundant upon you, then remember the forgiveness of Allāh the Exalted and that He is with you with His forgiveness. When you seek His forgiveness, He rewards you and forgives you: **“Verily Allāh forgives all sins.”**<sup>89</sup>. But do not depend on forgiveness and then love to do depraved acts, such that if you are asked: what is this atrocity? You say: “Indeed Allāh is Forgiving, Most Merciful.” No. This sentence is said by one who has repented to Allāh and returned to sins when Satan says to him: “O sinner, you have already committed many sins which will not be forgiven and with them, repentance will not benefit you. Return to what you used to be upon from sins since there is no use in your repentance,” or this will be said to him by a person from the people of sin, so he will reply with his words: “Indeed Allāh is Forgiving, Most Merciful;” because now he deserves the forgiveness and mercy, because it is for the pious, repentant one and not for the obscene wretch.

As for the one who is immersed in sins, then it is necessary for him to say: “Verily Allāh is severe in punishment,” because his actions make him deserve punishment. If he is in the act of sinning and seeking Allāh’s forgiveness while doing it, then he is like someone mocking his Lord and in a ḥadīth: **“The one seeking forgiveness of a sin while he is doing it is like the one who mocks his Lord.”**

I said in my lām poem:

**Remember forgiveness and don’t forget the One  
Who forgives sin and accepts repentance  
Don’t say, “Forgiveness, my Lord!” while  
You are committing the sin, it is repulsively vulgar  
Indeed, this is for the one who has come to  
The pardoning of my Lord, repenting, hoping it will work**

If you are pious, then remember that Allāh is with you with His care, enabling grace, compassion, goodness, kindness and iḥsān: **“Surely, Allāh is with those who fear Him and those who are doers of good.”**<sup>90</sup>

The poet said:

**If the eyes of care (‘ināya) look at you  
Then sleep, for apprehensions, all of them, are secure**

I said in my tā’ poem:

**With your taqwā, O you, be honoured  
In the presence of Allāh, observed by the eye of concern**

<sup>89</sup> Sūra al-Zumar - verse (53).

<sup>90</sup> Sūra al-Naḥl - verse (128).



If you are uncertain between two matters or more, and the matter returned to you not as you desired, then know that this is by the choice of Allāh, so be pleased with it: **“And your Lord creates what He wills and chooses.”**<sup>91</sup>

And in a ḥadīth: **“O Allāh, choose for me and select for me.”** So do not be displeased or sad, rather be pleased with the decision of your Lord and be patient upon it. **“And be patient, [O Muḥammad], for the decision of your Lord.”**<sup>92</sup> If you are not patient and you wanted something other than what Allāh decided, then your decision is abrogated, and it will not be except what the Sublime Master decided. Do you not see how Allāh the Exalted dealt with His prophet Yūnus (upon him be peace) when he left the country of his people to go to another country, so Allāh returned him to his people. The Exalted said: **“And he thought that We would not decree [anything] upon him.”**<sup>93</sup> That is: he thought that Allāh the Exalted will not decree him returning to his people, and after his return to them, he learnt that Allāh the Exalted decreed his return to them because of their faith in Him. Because the prophets (upon them be peace) do not know the unseen, except what Allāh teaches them of it, and his travelling was by his ijtihād (independent judgement), not by revelation from Allāh the Exalted. Since it is for the prophet to formulate an independent judgement in what he sees is benefit and he is rewarded for acting upon his ijtihād, just as he is rewarded for acting on revelation when the endeavour (ijtihād) is in accordance with revelation. If it is not in accordance with revelation, then he is rewarded with a reward less than that.

If you wish to plan a matter, then fear Allāh who is with you with His planning, and who ordained for you your sustenance and arranged it for you five hundred thousand years before He created you.

And in a ḥadīth: **“Your Lord is finished with this world,”**<sup>94</sup> i.e. finished with his ordainment.

I said in my lām poem:

**Leave planning to Allāh who  
Planned everything before in eternity  
Nothing is added by planning  
By divine decree, everything has already happened**

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<sup>91</sup> Sūra al-Qaṣaṣ - verse (68).

<sup>92</sup> Sūra al-Ṭūr - verse (48).

<sup>93</sup> Sūra al-Anbiyā' - verse (87).

<sup>94</sup> Narrated by al-Ṭabarānī with a similar narration in *“al-Muʿjam al-Kabīr”*.



The Exalted said: **“He arranges [each] matter from the heaven to the earth.”**<sup>95</sup>

If laziness comes at the time of performing good deeds, then fear Allāh who is with you with His strength, able to strengthen you to perform them, so ask Him for strength.

In a ḥadīth: **“O Allāh! Surely I am weak, so strengthen my weakness in your pleasure,”** and ḥadīth, **“There is no ability or power except with Allāh, The Sublime and Mighty,”** narrated by al-Bukhārī. There is no renunciation from the disobedience of Allāh except by the protection (‘isma) of Allāh, no strength in the obedience of Allāh except with Allāh’s enabling grace, and no one intervenes between you and the Satan and whim, except for Allāh and no one invigorates you to obey Allāh, except for Allāh. My master Aḥmad al-Dardīr (Allāh be pleased with him) said:

**“O Almighty and Strong! Strengthen my resolve and ambition.”**

If your lower self tells you to subjugate His slaves, then fear Allāh who is with you with His dominance and omnipotence, and if you are subjugated to other than yourself, then know that this is a form of manifestation of the name of your Lord, **“al-Qahhār”** (The Subduer), since everything other than Him is subjugated to Him and there is no conqueror over Him (exalted is He). Even the wife subjugates her husband, the child subjugates his father, the slave subjugates his master, the herd subjugates its shepherd, the day subjugates the night by taking a part from it, the night subjugates the day also and so forth. The creation does not subdue its creator and (rather) He subdues it: **“He is the Omnipotent over His slaves.”**<sup>96</sup>

If there comes to you the feeling of grandeur and arrogance, then remember the majesty and grandeur of Allāh the Exalted, and fear Allāh who hates the arrogant and haughty one and loves the one who humbles himself for Him (exalted is He).

My master ‘Umar ibn al-Fāriḍ (may Allāh be pleased with them both) said:

**Humility is for the one who desires it since desiring it is not easy**

**For in its love, discredit and disgrace are sweetened**

What he meant by al-tadhallul (humility) is humbleness and diminution, just as he said:

**I humbled myself in humility and diminution for its honour**

**So my worth was honoured in its desiring humbleness**

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<sup>95</sup> Sūra al-Sajda - verse (5).

<sup>96</sup> Sūra al-An‘ām - verse (61).





Expose yourself to blame by an abundance of fasting, worship and litanies until it is said about him that he is like a madman. If that is for the sake of Allāh, then it is agreeable and its doer is praised, and if it is not for the sake of Allāh, then it is not good, but it has to be in conformity to the blessed sharī'a (sacred law) because al-taṣawwuf without it, is not called taṣawwuf, and al-'ibāda (worship) contradicting it, is not called 'ibāda.

The sign of the possessor of divine love is that whenever his love for Allāh the Exalted increases, his conformity to the Book and Sunna manifests upon him, and hastening to establish the prayer, giving the Zakāt, [and performs] Ḥajj, fasting, doing good deeds and abandoning sins; because disobedience and love are opposites that do not gather together. The one who claims to have gathered them together has lied, since the companion of love is obedience, and the companion of hatred is disobedience: **“Say (O Muḥammad): If you love Allāh, then follow me, Allāh will love you.”**<sup>97</sup>

I said in my tā' poem:

**The sign of love of Allāh is obeying his command  
And the sign for hatred is disobedience for the people of  
misfortune  
And the one who claims to love God and disobeys Him  
Then he is a liar, companion of ignorance**

If the devil whispers to you with apprehensions and fear, or a person threatens you with dangers, then fear Allāh who is with you with His protection and He will protect you from everything. He said (may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him): **“Be mindful of Allāh and He will take care of you.”** From that which is from Allāh is that I learned this ḥadīth with its commentary from my shaykh, Shaykh Muḥammad al-Samālūṭī, in Masjid al-Ḥusayn, he started explaining it after 'aṣr almost up to maghrib, and that was in the blessed month of Ramaḍān. From his words: Be mindful of Allāh in His commandments, He will take care of you in your religion, in your body, in you wealth, in your offspring, in your wife, in your family, in your life, in your death, in your grave, in your resurrection and at the Congregation (al-maḥshar: the great congregation on the Day of Judgment).

I say: Remember Allāh the Exalted inside yourself, for indeed He remembers you inside Himself whenever you remember Him, and it is impossible that anything overwhelms you and you are in that condition where Allāh the Almighty is remembering you in it. From the most important part of His remembrance of you

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<sup>97</sup> Sūra Āli 'Imrān - verse (31).



within that condition is: protection, so rejoice with His protection as long as you guard His remembrance in your heart, the Exalted said: **“Remember me, I will remember you.”**<sup>98</sup> **“Say: Who will protect you in the night and the day from al-Raḥmān (the Most Compassionate)?”**<sup>99</sup>

If your ego tells you to do evil or violate sanctities, then remember Allāh the Exalted, and fear Allāh who is with you with His ghayra over the violation of sanctities. He (may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said: **“There is no one more jealous (aghyar) than Allāh,”** narrated by al-Bukhārī, Muslim and al-Tirmidhī, then be wary of the ghayra of the One who does not care which valley his evil slave perishes. If you want to know your position with Allāh, then look at the position of Allāh in your heart, for if Allāh is venerated and revered to you, then you are also like that to Him, otherwise you are with Him as He is with you and your proof is in your actions.

Rectify your deeds, so that they are a support for you, and if you do not rectify them, then they are against you. **“Whoever does righteousness it is for his soul, and whoever does wrong it is against it.”**<sup>100</sup> How can you fight Allāh the Exalted, with all the evidence that there is of His oneness and dazzling power from His tremendous goodness to you? He ordered you with obedience and guided you to it, then He created it in you and then He attributed it to you: **“While Allāh has created you and that which you do.”**<sup>101</sup> And from His immense right guidance for you and His compassion for you, He prohibited you from disobedience and clarified for you its harm, yet after that you still do it, then if you repent to Him, He accepts you and forgives it: **“Forgiver of sin, Acceptor of repentance.”**<sup>102</sup> How heedless is the one who does not witness in his action, the sign of his Lord who has in everything-a sign that speaks of His oneness and indicates His magnificence and marvellous wisdom.

How excellent is the word of Abū l-‘Atāhiyya

How strange it is, how can he disobey God

Or how can the denier deny Him?

And in everything He has a sign

Which indicates that He is the One

And for Allāh in every movement

And stillness, is evidence forever

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<sup>98</sup> Sūra al-Baqara - verse (153).

<sup>99</sup> Sūra al-Anbiyā’ - verse (42).

<sup>100</sup> Sūra al-Fuṣṣilat - verse (46).

<sup>101</sup> Sūra al-Ṣāffāt - verse (96).

<sup>102</sup> Sūra Ghāfir - verse (3).



I said in my tā' poem:

The signs of your Lord are in all actions

They inform you truly about supreme power

In everything is a sign which guides to

The knowledge that, to God belongs all marvellous wisdom

So look, my brother, to the sky, how many are there

From signs, for the onlooker to reflect upon

And the earth, the horizons and the clouds that

Are amidst the sky, what a sign it is!

### The Place of the Second Taqwā

In his words (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him): “**al-taqwā is here,**”<sup>103</sup> and he pointed to his blessed chest three times.

The first place is “**wherever you are**”, the second is the place of its (taqwā) manifestation, and the heart is its abode and the place of its concealment; because the heart is like a ruler and al-taqwā is its just law, and the limbs are his subjects. So, if the matter is like that, then the effects of this law must manifest on the subjects and the ruler. The example of the heart is also like a dark house with many corners and its lamps are taqwā, and whenever the slave increases in al-taqwā, the lamps in his heart increase and with them he has control over his devil and ego. “**If you fear Allāh, He will grant you a criterion.**”<sup>104</sup> He is guided by it to the deeds of the people of goodness and righteousness, and to the travelling light of Allāh flowing in the names and attributes (of Allāh): “**Allāh guides to His light whom He wills.**”<sup>105</sup>

Then if you perceived, O believer, that your heart is the ruler of your limbs, then do not be heedless of it; and of supplying it with a just law for it. Do you want it to be an oppressor to its subjects and you know that the grazing land of oppression is fatal? He (may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him): “**Oppression is darkness on the Day of Judgement,**” narrated by Muslim and al-Dārimī.

I composed a poem about that, which I recorded in my Dīwān:

O oppressor of creation! Will you not

Desist from your sinful oppression?

Death is coming with a day

Where in it, you will be in your grave

<sup>103</sup> Narrated by Muslim.

<sup>104</sup> Sūra al-Anfāl - verse (29).

<sup>105</sup> Sūra al-Nūr - verse (35).





tranquillity of the heart for the umma, which is the life of the soul and its secret, and the light of the heart, and the director of the mind to reflection with deliberation and calmness, and that is the blessing of remembering Allāh the Greatest. **“Truly by the remembrance of Allāh do hearts find rest.”**<sup>109</sup> And he opened the door of contentment for the umma, and taught it how to be pleased with the decree of Allāh and His ordainment, so the umma of our Master Muḥammad (peace and blessings be upon him), possessor of immense status, became content with the decree and ordainment of Allāh according to what its Prophet (may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) taught them. So it acquired from Allāh the Exalted, that He said about the condition of its men: **“Allāh is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him.”**<sup>110</sup> They were pleased with the decree of Allāh the Exalted and were patient with His decisions, so they obtained contentment from Allāh the Exalted. I said in my tā’ poem by the bounty of my Lord:

**We are pleased with Allāh’s decision for us for indeed He is  
Fully knowing about us, He decrees with truth and wisdom  
And everyone who is pleased with the decision of his God  
Attains the greatest garden from the acceptance  
And in it, Allāh casts His pleasure upon him  
In an everlasting abode, in witnessing and blessing  
Then trust in Allāh and be pleased with His decision  
And don’t pay attention, even for a day, to the abode of estrangement**

Then, if you brought for the ruler of your limbs, by that I mean your heart, this just law: and they are the Book and the Sunna, you become blessed with prosperity in your life before your death, healthy in your body, wealth and offspring, and will live a life of one that is under the leadership of a just ruler who will not burden him with more than he can bear, and will not cast him into that which will destroy him, nor will He set the fools on him and nor will He wrong him in anything from his right. As for the sinner (fāsiq), indeed he is like someone ruled by an oppressive tyrannical ruler. He takes his wealth wrongly, which sends him to destructive perils and bear downs on him the oppression of a ferocious predator. So you see him suffering the most severe torment in the world and he is deprived from the worship of his Lord, which is the coolness of every good and pious eye.

If you know that, then you have understood from his words (peace and blessings be upon him): **“al-Taqwā is here”** a marvellous meaning and that is the law of managing a kingdom, it is only with its ruler, because he has a strong desire in executing it, his

<sup>109</sup> Sūra al-Ra’d - verse (28).

<sup>110</sup> Sūra al-Mā’ida - verse (119).



demand is heard, his command obeyed and he is not affected by the blame of the critic in issuing his orders and regulations. So pay attention, O believer, and rise with your contemplation in the gardens of the verses of the Wise Remembrance (i.e. the Qur'ān), and the aḥadīth of the Noble Prophet, you will see in them some sciences and secrets which will suffice you from the opinions of the philosophers and the writing of the writers, because there is in them that which does not end until time itself ends.

**And upon varied activity his life wavered in describing it**

**The time came to an end and it is what has not been described**

I said in my aphorisms, by the bounty of my Lord:

Make strong your soul before death—And make use of the pearls of meanings before passing—And know that when you die, your works will cease—Your hopes will be dashed—so do not be like the one who lived in it wretched—And left it bankrupt—Beware of despair and sorrow—Or that you refrain from action and say possibly—For 'Umar and Abū Bakr did not sit—Rather they did for Allāh all that He commanded—So focus and draw close—And be careful and take account—And do not turn your face to the sensual pleasures and every heedless action: **“And be patient. Your patience is bestowed by none but Allāh.”**<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Sūra al-Naḥl - verse (127)

